

総合英語レベル8 第4回 武道について

予習課題：次の英文を読んで、内容を理解しなさい。

Martial arts, a sub-category of combat sports, includes numerous activities that share a concern with defensive and attacking strategies of individual fighters in, usually, unarmed physical combat. These are often linked to philosophical beliefs and ethical principles, sometimes derived from a military tradition or rationale.

Martial arts have largely emerged from traditional practices in societies across the world, most prominently and influentially the countries of the Far East: judo from Japan; karate an adaptation in 1930s Japan (Okinawa) of ancient Indian and even Chinese practices; and taekwondo, an ancient Korean practice established in its modern form in the 1950s.

There are many different forms of martial arts styles—31 identified in the UK alone. A national survey in England in 2005/6 found 93,000 practitioners of karate, around 21,500 practitioners of taekwondo, and a further 141,250 adults practicing one of other martial arts. In the USA in 2007, the number of children and adults engaging in one or more of the martial arts at some level was 6 million, but judo featured at a competitive level in the school curriculum for only around 1,000 children, all but nine of whom were in Hawaii.

Karate means “empty hand”. Numerous national and international associations represent its 70 styles. The World Karate Federation claims 10 million members and 100 million supporters, and is said to be the most widely practiced Oriental martial art.

Clubs have prospered in western countries, and classes for children are particularly popular, with many parents perhaps seeing karate as a controlled channel for excessive aggression. It teaches breathing as well as fighting techniques, and emphasizes silent meditation.

Tae means to kick with the foot; *kwon* means to destroy with the fist; and *do* is the art or method of the practice. Points are scored by striking an opponent with combinations of kicks (these can be jumping or flying kicks) and punches. Taekwondo, for both men and women, was introduced into the Olympic program as a demonstration sport at Seoul 1988, and established fully within the Games at Sydney 2000. Koreans have dominated gold medal positions at the Olympics.

In Japanese, judo means “the easy way” or “the way of gentleness”, and the object of the contest is to disable an opponent, or score an *ippon*—the equivalent of a knockout punch—by throwing, arm or neck locks, or holding him or her down. Punching and kicking are not permitted.

Judo is the longest-established martial art form in the Olympic program. Men’s events were introduced at Tokyo 1964, women’s at Barcelona 1992. Japan is way ahead in the gold medal league table, but France has a particularly strong record compared with other European countries.

(注) rationale : 原理、controlled channel : 制御法、demonstration sport : 公開競技