MARTIAL ARTS STUDIES

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THE DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL JARGON OF 'AUTHENTIC' SHOTOKAN KARATE IN 1940S–1980S BRITAIN: AN ADORNOIAN SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

ABSTRACT

In this article sociological theory is utilised to generate a critical interpretation of the process, politics and practice of Shotokan karate's development in Britain. Multiple histories of Shotokan's development were analysed thematically. Adornoian sociological concepts were used to interrogate secondary historical documents. A negative dialectical perspective that sought to understand the lack of synthesis and continued contradiction between British Shotokan organisations was applied. The continued pursuit of 'authentic' validation and how this resulted in a 'McDonaldised' production of Shotokan is explored. How authenticity was commodified by different organisations such as the Japanese Karate Association is elaborated upon. It is concluded that although the fetishisation of authentic origin and technicality could be productive, perhaps other factors such as community building and creative pedagogy could be centralised.

CONTRIBUTORS

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INTRODUCTION

This research explores the development of *Shotokan karate* in Britain from the 1940s to the 1980s utilising an Adornoian perspective. This is done to explore the history of Shotokan in Britain linked to struggle for the development of an 'authentic' commodity. The Adornoian perspective is assessed throughout based on how effectively it explained Shotokan's development. Second-hand karate histories were analysed to achieve this. Authenticity, "political" resistance through Shotokan, future research directions and how this perspective might have implications for karate practice are discussed.

The narratives surrounding karate's origins affect its perceived authenticity (Cramer, 2018; Wetzler, 2014). The discussion in this article is set out chronologically using Adorno's (1964/2003) sociological concepts to analyse key historical transformations, continuities and operations of power. This article explores the perception of "authentic" karate through the concept of 'the culture industry' to assess how the sociological operations of power developed "authentic" karate in Britain (Cook, 2001). Less emphasis is placed upon *what* happened and more on *how* and *why* as the article examines how ideologically invested parties attempted to maintain their hegemony.

Multiple histories have been generated on Shotokan karate's emergence and development in and outside of Britain. Histories have been mostly descriptive as opposed to analytical. Cook (2001) provides a comprehensive account of early Shotokan in Britain detailing the arts origins in Japan and its formation in England. Butler (2004) analyses the 1970s influence of Keinosuke Enoeda in the formation of the Karate Union of Great Britain and its relationship with the JKA. He documented the processes which cemented the key organisations, hierarchies and figures in modern British Shotokan karate. Layton (2002a; 2002b) generated two extensive works on the development of karate in the UK from first hand source material. However, Layton's accounts seem drawn to differentiating between "inauthentic" instructors and "authentic" JKA actors. This narrative dictates the way his history is formulated. Equally, biographical accounts by later JKA actors like Kanazawa (2003) suggested the style that was presented in the UK prior to their intervention was inauthentic. These accounts suggested JKA karate is the only official karate and other styles are building blocks to this finalised point. Other histories of karate's globalisation provide similar but limited accounts of early karate in Britain (Cramer, 2018; Hassell, 2006; Plée, 1962). Cramer (2018, p. 183) provides a more critical account on the "illusion of style" in karate and Cook (2001) is less concerned with a history that preserves JKA hegemony.

The descriptive histories of karate provide ostensibly factual accounts (i.e. dates, names and places) but limited critical interpretation of power balances, politics, divisions, transformations and their impact on the development of karate in Britain. Shotokan's development has not yet been analysed sociologically in a British context, which may have varied from mainland Europe, America or South Africa (Layton, 2002a; Cook, 2001). The JKA were later to send a official representative to Britain making it an interesting case study of culture industry processes in Shotokan's embodied development (Layton, 2002b). I explore this development sociologically throughout the discussions that follow and contextualise it in the trajectory of karates globalisation.

I will first briefly outline how Shotokan karate emerged in Japan. I then contextualise my Neo-Marxist approach alongside the dominant theories that have been used to explore martial arts development. Having done this, I then return to the descriptive histories already outlined. I critique them through the lens of Adorno to better explore the ideologies and power dynamics of Shotokan's development. This dialectical approach enables a unique interpretation of political and commercial issues.

SHOTOKAN KARATE

Karate is a martial art that, it is claimed, originated in Okinawa (Hassell, 2006). Different associations, styles and teachings have developed throughout karate's dissemination (Cramer, 2018; Hassell, 2006). Styles (e.g. Shotokan, *Goju-ryu* and *Wado-ryu*) have different competing traditions, trajectories and leaders emerging and transmitting throughout Japan and then globally (Cook, 2001). Shotokan's dominant development in Britain has been documented in depth. It is therefore a suitable case study for sociological interpretation.

Initially, in Japan, it has been claimed little conflict was found between different schools of martial arts (Hassell, 2006). Shotokan karate follows this pattern: different masters began to teach it as it spread across Japan (Cook, 2001; Hassell, 2006). The Japanese Karate Association (JKA) was established in 1948 by the students of the claimed founder of Shotokan, Gichin Funakoshi. It was later recognised by the Japanese ministry for education as the official organisation for karate (Hassell, 2006). Despite the official capacity of the JKA, the globalisation of Shotokan karate is fraught with complexity and variability (Cook, 2001; Hassell, 2006). It moved away from the vision Funakoshi (1975, p. 38) had of one shared practice with "no place for different schools" so that "orderly and useful progress" could be pursued. Notwithstanding, Funakoshi (1975) recognised that the style would change over time and was somewhat open to this. His vision had implications for Shotokan's global development.

In 1956 the JKA sought to internationalise karate by sending delegates to teach in the Americas (Hassell, 2006). They did not immediately do the same in Europe, leaving it relatively uninhabited by an 'official' karate body or representatives from the JKA (Krug, 2001; Layton, 2002b). Without the continuity of an official body, three groups sought to develop karate: *judoka*, unaffiliated Japanese *karateka* and individuals setting up in their own countries. These parties often worked in unison and antagonism (Layton, 2002a; 2002b); each group promoted different ideologies about what 'true' karate was, influencing the

actions of others (Layton, 2002a). This crystallised in karate's emergence in Britain.

In the 1950s and 1960s, off-shoots of karate were being developed branching from the teaching of Funakoshi (Cramer, 2018; Hassell, 2006). In 1964, the Federation of All Japan Karate-Do Organisation was founded with the intention of unifying the different off-shoots; although this had limited success, all branches were recognised under it (Lawton and Nauright, 2019). Being the self-acclaimed most 'official' karate organisation in Japan, the JKA still had the power to dictate dominant ideology on what 'authentic' karate was (Clayton, 2004; Johnson, 2012). The JKA's 'authentic' origin story was backed by the Japanese government, and it was the most influential organisation in nationalising karate (Hassell, 2006; Johnson, 2012; Wetzler, 2014). In contemporary Japan, although the JKA is still the largest recognised organisation for a karate style, many other organisations are recognised (Cook, 2001). This is considered when exploring Shotokan's globalisation.

DOMINANT SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACHES: SITUATING NEO-MARXIST THEORY

In this section, I argue for the relevance of Adorno's neo-Marxist negative dialectics of history to critique the formation of karate in Britain as a product of a culture industry (Adorno, 1964/2003; 1991/2001; Bowman, 2022). Specifically, I use the formative work of Paul Bowman in Martial Arts Studies to demonstrate both the value and shortcomings of the post-theory approach: namely, that post-theory risks disconnecting ideology from the material conditions that produce it. Ideology is a term used by Marxist thinkers to denote something that is untrue and justifies exploitative economic, political and social practices (Roberts, 2009). Ideology has been critiqued by many post-theorists as they adopt a constructivist ontology in which truth is socially constructed and therefore, they question if there can be "truth" or what opposition to truth would be (Vighi and Feldner, 2007). Therefore, many, but not all post-theorists, adopt the term *discourse* to recognise subjectivity and engage in deconstruction of truth claims. As I will demonstrate, however, attention to discourse alone overlooks the material stakes of cultural formation.

Both post- and Marxist theories oppose neo-liberal readings of cultural formation, which tend to uncritically celebrate cultural production. Kotek (2016), for example, positioned Shotokan as a product that is modified and domesticated in different localities. He argued that Shotokan's guild like organisational structure made it resistant to Western appropriation (Kotek, 2016, p. 70): "Commercialization, professionalization, and the making of Japanese-ness as an inherent feature of Shotokan karate-do, played a critical role in its ability to put up a defence in the face of Euro-American attempts of appropriation". Kotek analyses the JKA's marketing strategy, but he assumes neoliberal business ideologies are productive; it operates almost as a "how to sell karate" guide. Similarly, figurational sociology aptly applies to understanding the dynamics of organisations and their swaying interdependence in the formulation of martial arts. Garcia and Malcolm (2010), discuss how figurations like the World Karate Association (WKA) succeeded in combining Japanese and American strands to form kickboxing styles. This approach perhaps does not reflect upon the rupture, contradiction and resistance that has occurred in martial arts development in the style enabled by both Marxist and post-theories – that is, the set of theories (e.g., post-modernism, post-structuralism, post-colonialism, etc.) that share focus on language and culture as the primary sites of ideology production, rather than the economic or material (Zavarzadeh and Morton, 1991). There has been a need for these interventions to critique neoliberal business ideologies. By focusing on the concepts of ideology and discourse, these approaches are better for describing power that renders the development of karate as more dialectical or diffusely culturally/socially constructed. Thus, these approaches have beneficial implications for critically exploring power and analysing karate's development.

Post-modern, post-Marxist and neo-Marxist approaches enable an analysis of martial arts history which is more critical of neoliberal ideologies and business structures. Bowman (2007; 2020a) has applied critical theory and post-Marxist interpretations to explore how Eastern martial arts have been (re)packaged for consumption by Western audiences. He deconstructs how discourses on martial arts are (re)produced via media to influence Western subject's ontological interpretations of what martial arts are, their cultural significance and how they ostensibly ought to be engaged with. Thus, he gives less reverence to the functional aspects Kotek (2016) outlines in pursuit of exploring the diffuse cultural factors that shape martial arts development. Similarly, figurational approaches account for the networks between martial arts instructors, organisations and other "figurations" (García and Malcolm, 2010). Therefore, they account for contingent cultural impact and unintended consequences influencing the formation of martial arts practices. For example, analysis of MMA's development by García and Malcolm (2010) could also apply somewhat to Shotokan, as different figurations self-impose different etiquette and rules with increased variety but diminishing contrast (García and Malcolm, 2010). This would mean there are a variety of karate styles developing but in relatively similar directions. The sociological approaches outlined would therefore do some justice to exploring Shotokan's development in Britain as an interdependent, culturally constructed phenomena.

Within Martial Arts Studies, Bowman (2007; 2020a) uses post-approaches to cultural theory to deconstruct how discourses on martial arts are (re)produced by media to influence Western subject's ontological interpretations of what martial arts are, their cultural significance and how they ought to be engaged with. For example, Bowman (2020a; 2020b; 2022) explored how contingent variations in styles coded as "authentic" have been (re)interpreted through political and cultural discourses. These styles, he (2020a

p. 207) argued, begin from a wide conception perpetuated through cultural globalisation, especially via media that disseminates regularly reoccurring "images, ideas, traits, tokens, rituals and tropes". Bowman (2020a, p. 206) suggested there is no "authentic style" as martial arts are done "just that little bit differently every single time" they are performed, but there is cultural (re)production. This was fruitful for exploring the multiple sites martial arts are (re)constructed from. However, Marxists may be critical of how these perspectives underplay capitalist dynamics that can result in exploitation or be resisted (Bowman, 2007). I argue on this basis, that there is a benefit to reverting to a neo-Marxist understanding of martial arts as a physical site of political struggle.

Bowman (2007; 2013; 2017) adopts a complex position that has incorporated theoretical considerations of others, namely; Derrida, Hall, Chow and Žižek. To unpack this position fully from a neo-Marxist position is beyond the remit of this article and would itself have numerous limitations. However, Chow and Žižek's positions are of significance as they further illustrate a reduction of the materiality of representation in the way Bowman utilises or challenges their theories to explore martial arts cultural transmission. This is not to say that Bowman (2020b) rejects the material, but he privileges discourse over it. Chow claims that *visuality* – the way culture is seen by people and how it governs them – is essential for acknowledging discourse's role (Bowman, 2013). She asks how "Chineseness" has been transmitted as a sign of authenticity in arts such as cinema. This moves away from the institutional politics, economic struggles and material considerations of martial arts development. How "Japaneseness" brings authenticity might be key to understanding the globalisation of Shotokan, but I discuss how this could also be a product of social and political struggle rooted in histories of creative labour.

Similarly to how Chow's critique centres ideology over the material conditions that produce it, Bowman (2026) wrestles with how Žižek's brand of ideology critique explains people's fantasy laden narratives as a result of their castration or alienation. For Žižek, the subject (believer), is alienated from "the Real" (Vighi and Feldner, 2007). A believer might be someone who is engaged with a particular branch of martial art and perceives their lineage to be the most authentic or true way to practice it. The Real is both the thing to which direct access is not possible; such as a finalised true version of karate, and the obstacle that prevents this direct access; such as their committed belief in the "truth" of their karate which closes them to other narratives. Bowman (2017) perceives Žižek as a passive sparring partner (uke) for the development of his theory. He draws upon Žižek to explore how "Eastern" culture, in this case, martial arts culture, functions as a sublime object for "Westerners" – a sublime object being one in which believers imagine there to be a hidden truth, though in reality such a truth does not exist (Žižek, 2008). This again might be reconcilable with the Adornoian approach I present. Different groups attempt to control the material conditions in which these truths are constructed and make them absolute. However, from this position, it would seem they are grasping at air as they can not reach the truth. As I describe later in Adorno's negative dialectics, there is ultimately contradiction.

From his post-theory perspective, Bowman critiques approaches that engage with big processes or fundamental ideas about reality rather than about the "particular" details and matters of reality (Bowman, 2022). This criticism could hold across neo-Marxist approaches. For example, while Bowman (2022) utilises the theories of Laclau and Mouffe (1985) to explore the hegemonic power dynamics involved in the media construction of martial arts. He also argues that they do not engage enough with embodied dimensions of culture. Notwithstanding, their use of the concept of hegemony enables him to explore martial arts development through embodied practices. This has implications for the study of martial arts development: the embodied ontology of karate is important to explaining its development. However, rather than exploring this as deconstructive texts or feelings, I argue it may be beneficial to revert to a neo-Marxist understanding of martial arts as a physical site of political struggle because it recentres issues of capital, alienation and resistance. This article acts as a test of how effective neo-Marxist theory can be to explaining histories of specific martial arts practices in comparison to other 'contemporary' theories. What are the benefits, limitations and practical outcomes of its application?

The purpose of this discussion is not to undermine Bowman's position, but to explore the viability of taking the material more seriously via a traditional neo-Marxist analysis. It is important to recognise where this analysis is situated in wider theoretical debate to acknowledge its benefits and limitations. Utilising Adornoian theory could enable considered reflection of martial arts development with relevance to contradiction, resistance, embodiment and capital. There are some distinct limitations when compared to the other approaches outlined. If the ontological critique of post- approaches holds, it might lead to this analysis viewing power as purely constraining, limiting explanation of how power in embodied practices can be productive to identity and agency. This also means that resistance in Adorno's (1991/2001) conception is opposed to capitalist ideologies whereas post- perspectives might view it as more subjective struggle. Indeed, the analysis in this article could be subjected to deconstruction but it is still valuable in that it provides a stepping point for a situated understanding of Shotokan's development, especially regarding economic and cultural systems. I am reflective of and responsive to these limitations throughout and this enables a critical evaluation of the application of Adorno's concepts to martial arts histories.

Applying neo-Marxist analysis helps to explore contradiction and resistance in how Shotokan developed in Western capitalist economies. It relates to notions of if and how Shotokan was able to maintain its authenticity. *Negative dialectics* underlies much of Adorno's (1966/1990) work; this approach allows recognition of the contradiction of what authenticity is by rejecting the notion of synthesis in the relationship between thesis and antithesis

(Adorno, 1966/1990). The relationship reverts to continued contradiction. For example, one faction may have a thesis about what Shotokan ought to be. Another may have an antithesis that it should be something else. These ideas interact through materials (e.g. historical texts, taught lessons, community politics and syllabus adjustment) and this leads to either synthesis (the ideas cohere), or more likely, Adorno argues, contradiction. It can then be questioned which thesis is most "true" or "authentic".

The theoretical approach taken in this article incorporates a critically applied analysis of how authenticity, truth, power and consumer culture have impacted the historical process of Shotokan's 'development' in Britain. This approach retreats from and reflects on but does not undermine the theoretical assertions of Bowman (2020a; 2022), in pursuit of a more traditionally consolidated neo-Marxist analysis. It also builds on the commercially informed analysis generated by Kotek (2016). This promotes a negative dialectical perspective that moves away from focus on processes (figurational sociology) and diffuse discursive interactions (post-modern perspectives) to illuminate the ideological contradictions of martial arts in the culture industry.

Adorno: Authenticity and the Culture Industry

Kracauer (1963/1995) suggests that the core affliction of capitalism is not that it is too rational but that it is not rational enough. Capitalism imposes an ideological form of rationality which has implications for how people can think (Kracauer, 1963/1995). This makes the culture industry appear modern and rational while it operates with a cult mentality (Kracauer, 1963/1995). Capitalism produces *ornaments*, or patterns made by people to distract and mirror workplace logic; and *products*, commodities produced by workers using the means of production owned by bourgeoise capitalists (Kracauer, 1963/1995). The consumer fetishises products, and in doing so, engages with ideology so that the consumers themselves become ornamental (Marx, 1976). Adorno (1966/1990, p. 182) argues that ideology is necessary for capitalism to function but reflects that it is a "web of illusion" in that it conceals the social domination it enables.

Adorno (1991/2001) applies negative dialectics to exploring and critiquing the culture industry. The term *culture industry* in Adorno's work tends to refer to mass media organisations that oppressively structure cultural consumption (Roberts, 2009). However, I apply this more widely here to incorporate leisure as an industry that shapes cultural sensibility. Adorno explores how industry attempts to turn culture into a commodity by interrogating the relationship between culture and administration. Specifically, Adorno (1991/2001) uses rituals like music, art and sport to elucidate how the jargon of authenticity is applied.

The *jargon of authenticity* refers to how rationalised knowledges or administrational language are used to commodify products. Some argue notions of authenticity are a red herring (Heath and Potter, 2006); however, authenticity continues to be attached to descriptions of martial arts practices. Academics discuss building authentic communities or maintaining authentic techniques (Bowman, 2019). This represents a yearning for fulfilment in practices, but also could fall prey to traditional historical notions of what is proper based on "official" gate keepers. Authenticity activates senses and feelings of taste from which certain martial arts 'styles', practices, groups or people can become hierarchise (Bowman, 2020a). Krug (2001) explores how martial arts "masters" served as symbols of the legitimate, but this was ultimately simulation. Judkins (2016) deconstructs how, what an authentic martial art is, might be tied more to values and embodied feelings of participants than to sustained histories. Through this logic, he argues lightsaber combat is an authentic martial art. Yet, in the karate history analysed, there is an evident fetishisation of sustaining ostensibly legitimate historical syllabuses and connections to official bodies. Whether 'authenticity' can be tied to history or not, these lay ideas of it still seem to impact the trajectory of Shotokan's development. From an Adornoian perspective, official histories rely on authenticity to alienate their cultural production from the material conditions of their formation. The inauthentic (deemed less historically/traditionally legitimate) becomes devalued by some groups in historical accounts and it is difficult for practitioners and academics to interpretate a "true form" of, in this case, karate.

Karate institutions adopt jargon from multiple areas such as Japanese culture, neoliberal businesses, sports science, youth development, aesthetic considerations and more. This contributes to notions of the institution's authenticity. Generally, the jargon of authenticity ties into the popularised existential vein of continental philosophy because elements of the individual sphere such as "theological tradition, existential philosophy, the youth movement, the military or expressionism – are institutionally absorbed" (Adorno, 1991/2001, p. 125). Adorno (1991/2001) describes that these factors are then, to some extent, returned to the private sphere so that the individual subject can speak authentically about their cultural encounter. However, Adorno (1991/2001, p. 125) argues that in reality this is just "putting on airs", in that individuals are simply reselling themselves through association with what has been constructed as authentic. From this perspective, I argue, a martial art is a culturally produced and embodied "authentic" encounter.

Adorno (1991/2001) argues that economic criteria are transferred onto cultural production which totalises products like sport. The use value of goods is replaced by their exchange value – how much capital they are worth to trade. Thus, the exchange value is enjoyed as opposed to the cultural good itself (Adorno, 1991/2001). In karate, for example, it might be that the exchange value of having an authentically graded blackbelt is prioritised over the embodied use value of doing the moves. The practice of karate as a martial art therefore becomes reproduction as opposed to innovation. Consequently, karate practitioners also become administered ornaments (Kracauer, 1963/1995). I interrogate these patterns throughout the histories of Shotokan's development.

Due to rationalisation, karate styles largely have disregarded a logic specific to each and are now an amalgamation of cultural quirks commodified for the purpose of exchange value (Adorno, 1991/2001; Ritzer, 1993). Rationalisation concerns conducting things in the most efficient way (Roberts, 2009). Ritzer (1993) extended and adapted this concept to explain how it has taken shape in consumer services and private sector bureaucracies. He coined the term *McDonaldisation* to express how services are now uniform, calculable and efficient through automation and control (Roberts, 2009). I argue that McDonaldisation detaches Shotokan somewhat from the realm of tradition, it is no longer a unique ("authentic") occurrence, but a vast number of manifestations tied to business interests. It supports Adorno's (1991/2001, p. 124) assertion that "even that which deviates is by no means secure from standardisation", the culture industry is adapted to the fetishes of the masses and appropriates products like Shotokan. Although Shotokan has often been framed as a community based non-profit practice, it has still conformed to market logics leading to accumulation of cultural, social and economic capital for its governing bodies and practitioners.

Certainly, the expansion of karate as a cultural product has positive aspects such as community cohesion, identity development, and health benefits. Neo-Marxist perspectives are perhaps limited in recognition of the productive elements of powers operation in these practices (Foucault, 1988). They might also generalise too harshly the complex practices of practitioners who pursue martial arts for a variety of reasons (Bowman, 2007).

But at the same time, as the values of karate become packaged into a product, they sacrifice complexity for sellability. Benjamin's critique of the popularisation of art (1935/2008) offers useful insight here. Artworks are increasingly produced for the masses in ways that are spatially and humanly more accessible. They are rationalised, simplified and repackaged. As a result, Benjamin (1935/2008) suggests that there is a disintegration of what he calls *aura* – the appearance of autonomy embedded in the art itself. This autonomy, Benjamin elaborates, is fetishised by mass audiences through cult and exhibition value. The cult status of artworks, he argues, gives them the appearance of being worthy of reverence. However, once art became technologically reproducible, he claims appearance of autonomy was dissolved irrevocably. This is noticeable in the organisations that sought to authenticate their control of British karate. The appearance of autonomy again reverts to questions of how freedom is regulated by jargonistic repression of what art ought to be. If the same karate is practiced consistently in a McDonaldised way across each dojo, it could be argued something core to the aura and autonomy of karate is eliminated. This could be both productive and repressive to how karate is consumed. Paradoxically, having consistent features (materials, equipment and teaching styles) might also maintain the aura of authenticity. It makes karate accessible to masses, but equally may water down its "authenticity" as an art.

If it is assumed that Karate has essential essence, values or virtues, these can be distorted through the process of McDonaldisation because business ideologies move it away from the ideals of what Funakoshi advocated. I take this approach in the discussion to align with neo-Marxist theories. Notwithstanding, post approaches could legitimately question if this essence exists. For example, it could be questioned if it is possible to separate Funakoshi's ideals from the development of karate as a business enterprise in Japan and internationally. His ideals align with the business interests of the JKA maintaining a monopoly over karate. McDonaldisation as a process of repackaging karate could also be seen as ossifying what was initially an organic practice. This would not necessitate Shotokan having an essence. Each of the positions described are viable. However, the materiality of Shotokan karate and how the notion of authenticity is used to legitimise different stakeholders is centralised in this discussion. This is because, I argue, it better allows an exploration of how ideology impacts material change. Therefore, ontologically it is assumed in the discussion that there is something essential to Shotokan karate.

The jargon Adorno critiques in existential philosophy can equally be seen in the simultaneous rationalisation and mystification of martial arts practices. Adorno (1964/2003) suggests the 'aura' of an art becomes manipulated through lay persons' false consciousness. His advocation of negative dialectical philosophy is a response to this. How a martial art is perceived could therefore be described as a result of the construction of its exchange value through the culture industry. The concept of sportification is utilised by Adorno (1991/2001, p. 89) to explore the "dissolution of aesthetic semblance" in social life. By this he means that the borders between art and reality are broken down. Adorno (1991/2001, p. 89) asserts that sport is "imageless" repetition and self-affliction of political repression on oneself: "Sport itself is not play but ritual in which the subjected celebrate their subjection". To some this might be seen as reductive to martial arts embodied practices and use values (Bowman, 2022). However, the sanitisation of these practices, making them commodified and administered in pursuit of capital generation, cannot be overlooked, nor can the ideological elements of these practices.

Notwithstanding, Bowman's (2022) focus on potential liberation through embodiment must be reconciled against this. Does rationalised administration not banish potential for festivity and resistance? To what extent can the subject be liberated from or struggle against the monopolisation of the culture industry through martial arts? How much can this be seen as symbolic repetition and self-infliction of the discomforting symbolic violence of neoliberal capitalist economics and hegemonic ideologies of the body? These questions are explored throughout the historical discussion. The development of British Shotokan karate is an embodied site of social and political struggle in its resistance to culture industry processes.

METHODS

This research was generated through a thematic analysis of the described second-hand histories of British karate. There are limited academic histories constructed on the division that occurred in British Shotokan following the death of Enoeda. Therefore, lay secondary sources (e.g. organisational documents) were purposefully sampled and applied to constructing the details of Shotokan's division and contemporary situation (Bryman, 2016). This was done by searching for relevant organisations, instructors and clubs detailed in the academic histories. All of the sources were read in full to familiarise myself with the content. Notes were then used to generate initial codes from the histories. This was achieved by establishing similarities, differences and evaluating critical nuance. Often, it required returning to the source texts and reworking codes. Examples of codes included: idealisation, means of transmission and demonstration of authority. Initial themes were generated from reinterpretation of codes (Clarke and Braun, 2017). These themes were refined further by applying Adornoian theory which generated the following discussion.

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF BRITISH SHOTOKAN: AN ADORNOIAN PERSPECTIVE

Emergence of 'Pure' Shotokan Karate (1940s – 1960s)

Vernon Bell, the instructor given the credit in Layton's (2002b, p. 197) histories for Shotokan's initial development in Britain reflected on karate's emergence: "It was all so new, fresh and mysterious… It was the golden age of karate in this country". Within martial arts there is often an explicit desire to return to find a historically prescribed "golden" standard (Krug, 2001). The transformations I explore related to perceptions of 'authenticity' as change was prompted by fetishisation of 'truer' commodities to learn karate from (Krug, 2001).

First knowledges of karate outside Asia came through the media, particularly film (Layton, 2002a). 1940s audiences were exposed to films containing Japanese martial arts (Lawton and Nauright, 2019; Layton, 2002a). Ideologies were perpetuated that Japanese martial arts were deadly forms of fighting prompting interest in Asian culture (Layton, 2002b). Japanese martial arts were pre-packaged through the culture industry in pursuit of economic capital (Adorno, 1991/2001; Bowman, 2020a). This pre-set an ideology in Britain about what was deemed to be "true karate" (Cook, 2001). A utopian idea of fighting was disseminated through this cultural jargon (Adorno, 1991/2001), which provided foundations for the embodied practices to be marketed in Britain.

The way karate was perceived by lay public audiences, it seemed, had vital implications for marketing and embodied practice. Adorno (1991) asserted that public opinion has become a commodity and language the means for promoting it. While other arts like judo were already embodied products often consumed by upper-middle classes, karate in early 1950s Britain had not been marketised for the public (Layton, 2002a; Rashid and Ellis, 2022). Judo organisations attempted to construct ideologies of karate as dangerous because it might subtract from judo's commercial monopoly (Layton, 2002a). As karate was not distinctly branded, it "collapsed into a homogenous imaginary block" with judo (Krug, 2001, p. 398). Rebranding was needed for karate to develop as a coherent product. Re-shaping public opinion was necessary for establishing Shotokan as a distinguishable product.

Karate organisations and practitioners themselves were key to reconstructing ideologies. America became saturated with karate clubs earlier than much of Europe (Hassell, 2006; Krug, 2001). Karate was sportised and Americanised (Lawton and Nauright, 2019). Aspects of sportisation that were recognisable in Shotokan's globalisation included: regulating violence; developing formalised sets of rules; developing governing bodies and shifting the body habitus of students (Krug, 2001; Hassell, 2006). Karate became Americanised; it adopted capitalist commercial and competitive ideologies (Cowie and Dyson, 2016).

Layton (2002a) argues that Bell was the first to create a distinct karate organisation in Britain. He was a judo instructor, but he sought to separate the British Karate Federation (BKF) entirely from judo (Cook, 2001; Layton, 2002a). However, Bell's knowledge of karate was generated through communications with judo masters and later via Japanese texts (Layton, 2002a). This impacted the ideological grounding of his practice. Bell influenced the training of students in Britain based upon his interpretations of "true" karate, as promoted to him through various culture industry actors (Layton, 2002a). He set up his karate club when in contact and training with the French Federation of Karate (FFK) (Layton, 2002a).

The FFK held the "authentic" culture industry position to develop in Europe, reinforcing their hegemony (Adorno, 1991/2001; Layton, 2002a). In the 1950s, the FFK was recognised by the French government as the country's official karate organisation (Layton, 2002a). The FFK was founded by students of Minoru Mochizuki, a student of Funakoshi (Layton, 2002a). Mochizuki was also a judo and kendo martial artist, his karate organisation was named Yoseikan (Layton, 2002a). He was not associated with the JKA, which later resulted in questioning of his credentials (Layton, 2002a). The condition of karate in Europe in the 1950s was heavily dictated by those in charge of the FFK, such as Plée (1962), whose communications with the Yoseikan through letters and media sources informed other affiliated associations (Layton, 2002a). Bell saw the Yoseikan as the 'authentic' origin of Shotokan. From association with the FFK, he was granted the power to establish the BKF in England (Layton, 2002a, p. 95): "the FFK appointed… Vernon Bell as their official karate representative… to establish true karate". The FFK was effective at marketing itself and maintaining hegemony across Europe (Layton, 2002a). This was achieved through using jargon from Japan that was difficult for 'Westerners' to comprehend. Initially, Bell tied the BKF's authenticity to what was sold through the FFK

(Layton, 2002a). It was not clear to the BKF what style of karate they were practicing. This later caused problems establishing their legitimacy thus affecting their hegemony (Adorno, 1991/2001).

The beginning of the Shotokan style of lessons occurred because Bell was concerned about authentic practice (Layton, 2002a). Karate was marketed to him as less of an art or creative endeavour and more of a consolidated structured "Shotokan experience". Bell appropriated this from cultural influencers (Cook, 2001). He had detailed communications with Plée in France about what karate should consist of and he read the limited written guides he could access to construct his pedagogy (Layton, 2002a). Bell had a pre-existing relationship with Plée as they had both been Judo instructors:

> As a Judo 2nd Dan, I was quite well known in the Judo world. I had a friend in Paris, Monsieur Henri Plée, who was a 3rd Dan in Judo and Assimilated Arts. Plée and I corresponded for quite a time on Judo matters and others. He sent me a programme of a Japanese master called Minoru Mochizuki who had been an early pupil of Gichin Funakoshi, the founder of Shotokan karate. (Layton, 2002a, p. 33)

Karate moved from something mysterious that provided opportunities for adaption, to a highly appropriated and restrained commodity (Adorno, 1991/2001). This was accentuated the more Bell accessed prescribed materials. The moves Bell taught became an ornament as the result of the "enlightened" rationality of the "mystical cult" of Shotokan (Kracauer, 1963/1995). True karate, for Bell, was justified on this pseudo-rationalised basis where experts authenticated and stood in for what could be considered rational karate.

In 1963, the BKF officially aligned with the JKA. Cook (2001) and Layton (2002a) explored how, prior to this, association between the BKF and Murakumi – another Yoseikan instructor – was marketed as official through tenuous connections to various institutions in Japan. Murakumi was able to sell his Shotokan to the BKF based upon their lack of knowledge. When his authenticity was questioned, his hegemony over British karate was challenged as was that of the BKF, based on the notion that "true karate" was that taught by the JKA, and Murakumi was not an official JKA instructor (Layton, 2002b; Wetzler, 2014). A new hegemonic order to British karate began. There was a need to re-monopolise the BKF as the only "authentic" organisation practicing "official" karate in Britain and thereby cement its position (Krug, 2001; Layton, 2002b).

The BKF actualised itself as the owner of the official means of production. This was the case both metaphorically and literally. Metaphorically, as the BFK felt they had the authority to dictate the arrangement of karate as an art. And literally as they generated the materials and pedagogical practices through which it could be rationalised and communicated to students. Layton details Bell's control of the means of production as he regulated grading across different levels prior to JKA association by communicating with Plée. He had the authority and dictated what was required to achieve a 5th or 6th kyu grades:

> Each man had to demonstrate (a) preparatory exercises with the class for three minutes, (b) eight techniques of kento, eight techniques of shuto, eight techniques of hiji-ate, five techniques of ashi-waza, (C) 1st kata – attack, first kata attack and defence with partner, first slowly and quickly, plus conventional kumite, free kumite with brown belts and five one-minute shiai each. We think the standards were good and the results were merited. (2002a, p. 129)

This is a vague description of a grading syllabus created from Bell's initial communications with Plée and readings of guides. Later with JKA intervention the syllabus becomes more refined and measureable. Layton (2002b, p. 159) cites the full grading form of Edward Whitcher. It lists his present grade (2), basic (5.5), from (5.5), kumite (5.5) and a total of 15. The form is much more business focused, with exact amounts of money to be returned to Mr Whitcher should he fail elements of the grading.

I argue Shotokan under the JKA became more rationalised. They moved to "the official system of Japanese karate" (Layton, 2002a, p. 220). This gave them power over those seeking to learn karate and competing organisations (Layton, 2002b). Power was achieved by deferring to the hegemony of the JKA as the most reputable karate organisation in Japan, certainly more official from the BKF's perspective than the Yoseikan of Murakumi. If Murakumi's karate was the *thesis*, then JKA karate was the *antithesis,* and the BKF's acceptance of the antithesis resulted in temporary *synthesis.* However, ultimately there was still contradiction as a new antithesis was generated. The negative dialectic persisted (Adorno, 1991/2001).

McDonaldisation and Commodity Fetishism (1960s – 1970s)

The systems implemented by JKA representatives reproduced karate as a structurally distinct commodity across Britain. They administered systems through processes of instrumental reason on which they had been schooled in Japan (Cook, 2001). This had been refined throughout their global exploits (Butler, 2004; Kanazawa, 2003). In 1965, the JKA sent four masters who had previously been promoting karate in America to the UK. Kanazawa (2003) is often recognised as the man who brought karate to Britain. Others suggest that Enoeda had greater long-term impact (Butler, 2004). However, transformations in British karate's development should not entirely be attributed to them individually. Kanazawa was seen as the catalyst for the split of the KUGB from the BKF (Layton, 2002a). Kanazawa left in 1968, but Enoeda remained in Britain, specifically Liverpool, to reinforce the dominance of JKA Shotokan through the KUGB (Butler, 2004).

Hegemonic ideology about what karate was made it rationalised, distinct from other martial arts or karate styles. I argue this was a significant shift from karate as an embodied physical expression sought after for its use value to a more routinised prescribed practice based upon exchange value. Initially, Kanazawa (2003)

travelled the country giving demonstrations and grading students to the standard of instructors (Layton, 2002b). This enabled the implementation of JKA regulated systems and grading criteria (Layton, 2002b). These values were not completely dichotomous, but a contradiction was increasingly established between them over time. At this initial phase, JKA instructors had technical proficiency that far surpassed any Brit, meaning perhaps there was more use value in subscribing to JKA methods (Layton, 2002a). However, when further fractionalisation of Shotokan occurred use value seemed to be used more as a ploy to reappropriate control over the means of production that gave it an exchange value (Adorno, 1991/2001). For example, at demonstrations Kanazawa was seen breaking bricks and wood with his fists to demonstrate the use value of his JKA technique (Layton, 2002b). This drove up the exchange value of the JKA's karate, both in terms of cultural capital (more "authentic" and thereby more effective) and pecuniary capital: JKA karate quite literally sold better.

Kanazawa made Shotokan a valuable product through its institutionalisation and standardisation. Thus, in line with Ritzer's (1993) theory of 'McDonaldisation', Shotokan dojos increasingly became ornaments of calculability for making black belt karateka. They became regulated dojos under JKA influence; a globalised, commodified and authentically presented means of production (Adorno, 1991/2001).

At this point, Kanazawa's cultural value was too intertwined with the JKA for the BKF to capitalise on karate's authenticity. Kanazawa established hegemonic ideologies to actualise positions of others as instructors and spread his teachings (Adorno, 1991/2001; Kanazawa, 2003), replicating his JKA style nationally. Although Kanazawa was extremely influential, the BKF was still controlled by Bell, who terminated Kanazawa's contract when he went to South Africa (Kanazawa, 2003; Layton, 2002b). Kanazawa was not fond of Bell's actions, and this translated later into division within the BKF (Kanazawa, 2003; Layton, 2002b). One faction desired Kanazawa back and another remained with Bell (Layton, 2002b). Bell dismissed a refractory group of instructors who desired the return of Kanazawa (Layton, 2002b). The divide of the BKF and the emergence of the KUGB began (Layton, 2002b). This divide was caused by individuals' commitments to JKA ideologies about "authentic karate". The aim of those forming the KUGB was to have a ready-made organisation for Kanazawa when he returned to Britain (Layton, 2002b). A series of ideologies about the BKF were transmitted by the KUGB, concerning the quality of its instruction and the 'authenticity' of karate compared to that taught officially by Kanazawa (Layton, 2002b). Thus, the KUGB used the power afforded via their association with the JKA to perpetuate ideologies that effected the position of the BKF (Layton, 2002b). Rumour spread that the BKF had been disbanded entirely and the KUGB had replaced it (Layton, 2002b). The KUGB continued to grow and the BKF remained practicing, but its numbers decreased (Layton, 2002b). The KUGB was perpetuating ideology in order to actualise their position of authority, due to their already increased hegemony in the culture industry (Adorno, 1991/2001). The capacity to contradict others' truth-claims and perpetuate "authentic" ideology affected the development of karate as throughout its globalisation (Adorno, 1991/2001; Krug, 2001; Wetzler, 2014). This reflects a more dialectical conflict than has previously been explored from post- perspectives, and centres the monetary as well as cultural value of this conflict.

Indeed, it should be noted that the non-profit set up of many Shotokan clubs might again undermine elements of this analysis. There was limited account of how economic capital was distributed in the histories analysed; however, Layton (2002a) evidences that Shotokan was largely affordable and accessible for working class participants due to JKA intervention. This, it seems, was maintained in Shotokan's development (Butler, 2004). However, the concept of commercial monopoly through the culture industry still applies when considering the accrual of soft power and cultural status.

Monopoly over cultural and economic production remained a key factor in the conflict between the JKA, BKF, and KUGB. For example, Enoeda played a key role in cementing KUGB hegemony over British karate (Butler, 2004). Culturally, JKA curriculums shaped the movements and bodies of his students with little variation (Butler, 2004). Thus, while as Bowman (2020a) argues, there is always some variation between martial arts delivery, Enoeda in this instance was able to somewhat resist the wider cultural influence and use JKA hegemony to impose their technical models. Enoeda used his connections to bolster his reputation and advertise JKA karate into an intelligible product (Kotek, 2016). There are various examples of him doing this, such as at Buckingham palace and on the golf course (Butler, 2004). His title of "Tiger" was a way of selling his prestige and had connotations of the Shotokan values associated with the KUGB brand (Butler, 2004).

At the same time, his persistent presence as a cultural actor meant that he had control over the formation of karate as an economic product as well. Butler (2004) describes some of the actions Enoeda undertook when achieving this such as national squad training, instructor courses and written grading standards many of which still underpin much of karate organisations structures in Britain today. This gave key Shotokan instructors a form of cultural status and ensured that any economic production of karate was funnelled through their organisation. Enoeda's own embodiments of Shotokan "values" were jargonistic mechanisms through which he could influence those in his circle (Adorno, 1964/2003). But this production was material, not merely cultural; books, videos, advertisements and community displays produced a consistent message about what "authentic" Shotokan was.

These products made practitioners into ornaments, patterns made by people to distract from and mirror workplace logic, by coaching and grading them in a consistent manner. Not only were the JKA representative's excellent karateka, but they were organised businessmen who used their influence in the culture industry to cement the JKA style. This reduced the variety and

contrast of Shotokan in the UK resulting in regulated dojos. These principles were used to extend bureaucratic logic into the management of karate (Ritzer, 1993). Efficiency in how the JKA communicated their style was refined by coaching instructors and setting written standards. Updated systems like national training camps to check consistency in standards with Japan, increased the predictability of what to expect in a JKA dojo. There was also a calculability to scaling up JKA Shotokan. British KUGB Shotokan became a refined synchronised ornament which its members would claim was distinct to other karate like that practiced by the declining BKF clubs (Kracauer, 1963/1995; Layton, 2002b).

Enoeda increased numbers through mass appeal compared to other organisations like the BKF who had restrictive selection criteria (Butler, 2004). Many of these outcomes were achieved by making Shotokan commodifiable using cultural jargon to reaffirm their organisations authority in British karate. It should be noted that the concept of ornament is critiqued even by some neo-Marxists including Adorno as being too surface-level and neglecting aspects such as agency, creativity and pleasure which are often feelings karateka describe (Kracauer, 1963/1995; MacLean, 2021). However, ornament is still a useful metaphor to describe how the structure of the KUGB syllabuses regulated participants bodily expression and what they saw karate as when they entered the dojo (Reeh, 2004). The JKA met the uncritical need of the mass fetish for authenticity that was produced through the culture industry (Adorno, 1991/2001). However, this synthesis was not sustained after Enoeda's death.

Contradiction split the KUGB. There was disagreement about who should lead the organisation (Butler, 2004). The KUGB withdrew from the JKA and appointed Andrew Sherry as its chief instructor (KUGB, 2022). This led to Yoshinobu Ohta, the JKA's selected representative, breaking off to form the Japanese Karate Association England (JKAE, n.d.). Throughout the history described other smaller Shotokan offshoots with different instructors existed but where not recognised in the way the KUGB or the JKAE are. I argue this was a result of McDonaldisation by the JKA masters, which gave their brand "authentic" recognition (Ritzer, 1993, p. 1). These organisations were able to connect more with the *aura* of what karate was fetishised as in Britain (Benjamin, 1935/2008).

The continued fractioning of karate and the spurious disagreements about authenticity of origins and technical aspects, from an Adornoian perspective, reflects the ever-changing dialectical drive for truth. The culture industry obscured the means of production that turned "JKA karate" into "authentic karate" into simply "karate," with the goal of making it impossible to question if this aura was a truthful representation or even what a truthful karate representation would consist of, and who has the right to cast judgement on it (Heath and Potter, 2006). Contradiction is both the cause and result of this drive.

CONCLUSION: TOWARDS AUTHENTIC SHOTOKAN?

Perpetuation of ideologies regarding authenticity allowed Shotokan organisations to construct knowledge about what karate was, who was in control of it and how it should be practiced. There was movement away from Shotokan as creative community endeavour idealised in Bell's descriptions of a "golden age". The golden age itself was perhaps a way to reimbue Bell's authority claims. It seemed that what was being sacrificed by British karateka in the entrenched pursuit of origin or technical authenticity in Shotokan, was the possibilities of change and adaption beyond loyalty to a particular branch. This could reflect Funakoshi's concern about the division of different schools. Perhaps attempt to maintain hegemony due to traditional concern for authentic karate values has resulted in harsher fractures. It is likely that karate traditions will continue to sell themselves and fetishise what is most authentic. This will have implications for the embodied practice of Shotokan and the pedagogical philosophies that inform it. The conservativism embedded in Shotokan to maintain its aura continues to be the seed of its organisational conflicts. This might be productive for selling karate, but it should be questioned how beneficial this is to holistic development of karate communities and students.

Bell's assertion that his karate was more "real" when he established it because it was more community than commodity is of interest (Layton, 2002b). He contrasts his approach to the later establishment of regulated dojos which both enabled (increased access) and inhibited (overly bureaucratised) community building. Embodied political resistance to the culture industry and fetishisation of authenticity as an individual project seemed to stall once it became enmeshed in wider power relations. JKA jargon was used as gospel to create hierarchies instilled through business principles. The embodiment in these practices was so routinised that it could be questioned how much it can be emancipatory as opposed to ornamental (Kracauer, 1963/1995). There was less focus on what karate could be and more on what hegemonic ideologies deemed it ought to be. For example, it could be questioned if Bell's embodied practice was more authentic when it was a process of solo discovery that did not rely on organisational actors. His body was the site of political struggle for individual autonomy and resistance to the culture industry. However, I have explored how this can be re-interpellated using jargon to sell cultural authenticity. I argue that karate was most authentic not when marketised through cultural jargon but when it engaged community, provided space for creativity (technically, pedagogically and socially) and was politically resistant.

Political resistance in an Adornoian (1991/2001) sense was against pervasive ideologies of economic capital and cultural jargon. There were elements of this in the Shotokan histories. For example, the courses and activities Enoeda held, Bell's teaching despite not knowing what was "official", and the KUGB's break from the BKF could be alienating but also productive. Similarly, a more actionable idea of resistance might be negotiation of multiple discourses through karate practice that emphasises:

(re)construction of identity (Foucault, 1988), curation of community dialogue and shared rooted experience (Weil, 2023). Resistance then takes on a wider notion which, despite being marketised, Shotokan can contribute significantly to if delivered in considered ways. There are limitations on how much karate can do, but there are trajectories it could take.

Authenticity reflected upon from a historical legitimacy perspective does not seem to hold when the embodied experiences of martial artists are accounted for. While there was a pursuit of authenticated practice "like what was done in Japan" the JKA instructors still engaged people in community building practices in and through their sport. Modern karateka would likely highlight that karate is an art that provides them with feelings of agency and escape from monotony (MacLean, 2021). This reflects a key limitation of removed historical document analysis and of the Adornoian perspective. It demonstrates that even if karate has become increasingly subject to capitalist ideologies, hegemonic maintenance of soft power or karateka have been ornamental at an embodied level, they still see their experiences as freeing and authentic.

Martial arts scholars could explore how to draw on the historical and the contemporary to re-animate community, creativity and the political in martial arts practice. Specifically, they could explore the contemporary karate context from different sociological perspectives to explore notions of regulation, resistance, management and marketisation. Pedagogical practices from the past might also be reused by contemporary practitioners to create a 'new' karate that not only captures tradition but reinvents what is expected or possible.

There are limitations in the extent histories can fill in the gaps of recent Shotokan karate development trends in Britain. However, the sources provided a narrative from which a distinct sociological analysis could be generated. It is possible some of the interpretations generated are subject to the authors' present-day reinterpretations and based on incomplete accounts that might be limited compared to that produced through primary data generation. Notwithstanding, Adornoian theory enabled a coherent negative dialectical perspective of Shotokan's development in Britain. Despite the limitations to this outlined throughout, there is potential for further research and praxis. Studies on karate should consider the value of neo-Marxist analysis for exploring the arts contemporary relationship with neoliberal capitalist culture industries. Specifically, karate's online media portrayal as the forum for the dynamic division and mixing of pedagogies by various practitioners should be explored. Has the fetishisation of 'authentic' history been broken down and what criteria is being used to promote modern forms of martial art as 'authentic'? How is Shotokan justifying itself as a practice with the advent of modern variations and sports like MMA which are perceived as a more 'effective' sport fighting style?

British Shotokan's history was not only about technical practices or organisational hegemony; it was about people who believed in what they were doing. The analysis explored how these naïve intentions have often resulted in karate becoming a product of the culture industry through which alienation can occur. However, it has also generated potentialities for resistance to culture industry processes by maintaining the aura of karate through community. This aura, I argue, can disappear via mechanical reproduction of karate and has potential to be recirculated and fetishised. However, judging authenticity based on evidence of participant and community development as opposed to historical ties and technical particularities might be a more productive dialectic. The contradictions I have explored seem inescapable, but there is a need to explore new contradictions in different directions. Community development and creative pedagogy are ways to rethink Shotokan based on its historical development in the UK. There is a need for karate that recognises its internal contradictions and vies for what it could achieve as opposed to what it "authentically" ought to be.

Declaration of competing interests

The author affirmed that they had no competing interests relevant to the work underpinning this manuscript.

Declaration of artificial intelligence use

The author affirmed that no artificial intelligence applications were used in the preparation of this manuscript.

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