



Gishin Funakoshi and his journey elucidated by Karate Coach Dr. Pradeep Kumar Yadav

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Legendary Grandmaster Gichin Funakoshi is generally viewed as the "Father" of modern Karate because of his endeavors to acquaint territory of Japan with the Okinawan Karate, from where it spread to the rest of the world. He was born on **November 10, 1868**, in Yamakawa, Shuri (Okinawa Prefecture). Being born into a family that had run into some bad luck implied that he spent his youth with his maternal grandparents. He started as a weakling, wiped out and in unexpected frailty, whose guardians carried him to Master Itosu for his karate preparation. His doctor, Tokashiki recommended certain herbs that would rejuvenate him. Soon Funakoshi got healthier. Master Gichin took coaching from **Yasutsune Itosu** in the initial stage of learning Karate. Funakoshi prepared with Azato stealthily since the Okinawans had their weapons prohibited and had to practice secretly. Master Funakoshi used to live in a small room with his students at **Suidobata**, Tokyo. He used to clean the dormitory during the day when the students were in their classes and take Karate classes at night. He made companion at school with the oldest child of the then popular karate ace, Master Anko Azato and through this kinship, he was acquainted with Karate. His style of Karate started from him having prepared under two renowned Okinawan Karate experts, Master **Anko Azato** (1827-1906) and Master **Anko Itosu** (1831-1915). This art charted an impressive course of his life. He had become well-known in Ryukyu-style hand-to-hand fighting soon. As throughout the years he sought after his preparation and ceaselessly built up his wonderful aptitudes, Master Funakoshi accepted a job as an associate teacher at the primary school at the age of 20, in **1888**. He soon became Chairman of the Okinawa Martial Arts Society.

In 1898, karate was resolved to be no danger to the legislature and was permitted to be exhibited and rehearsed openly. Master Itosu is credited with encouraging the first Karate class at the Shurijijo Elementary School in Okinawa.

In 1901, Karate training was legitimized in Okinawa, and its investigation got required in center schools. Being sure of consent from Azato and Itosu, Funakoshi declared that he would start officially educating Karate. Now he was 33 years old.

In 1902, when **Shintaro Ogawa**, the Commissioner of school education in the Kagoshima Prefecture, having seen a presentation of Karate given by Master Funakoshi, presented a report to the Ministry of Education in Japan about the advantages of the preparation in karate, Karate turned into a part of the educational plan in schools and started to be polished uninhibitedly in Japan.

In 1916, the historical Shotokan karate really started with Master Gichin Funakoshi's trip to Kyoto, where karate was shown without precedent for Japan, at the Butokuden. While the showing was effective and the Japanese were highly intrigued, there was no prompt race to carry the Okinawan art to Japan on a conventional premise. Although impressed with it, the Japanese, despite everything, would in general be dubious of anything simply

Okinawan, and they thought that it was convenient to see karate as a fascinating sideshow. This mentality could have been the end of karate in Japan had it not been for a serendipitous occasion on **March 6, 1921**. On that day, the Crown Prince (the Emperor Hirohito of Japan visited Okinawa while on his visit to Europe. Looking to impress the Prince with the rich culture of Okinawa, the Department of Education asked Funakoshi to give a karate show for him in the **Great Hall of Shuri Castle, Okinawa, Japan**. So entranced was the ruler by the exhibition that he talked about it enthusiastically all through the remainder of his journey. In this manner the Ministry of Education officially mentioned a karate show be performed at the main National Athletic Exhibition in Tokyo. Funakoshi was obviously picked to perform. It made a strong positive impression on the Japanese public also. The Japanese government appreciated this new way. From that point onwards, Karate turned out to be exceptionally prevalent and spread quickly in Japan. During Funakoshi's exhibition, he had made his Karate enthusiasts be dressed in a similar Gi as the Judo students do; at that point, he put the belts on them and had them show significant accomplishments. He renamed the technique from "To-Te Jutsu" (the method of the Chinese hand) to "Karate-do" (the technique for the Empty Hand).

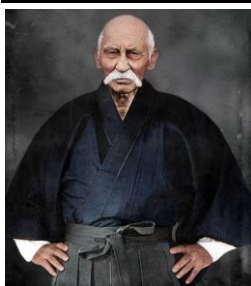


SHURI CASTLE, NAHA, OKINAWA, JAPAN. (Photo by CEphoto, Uwe Aranas. The aforesaid photograph has been taken from www.commonswikimedia.org and is being used as part of fair use. The copyrights and other intellectual rights of the said photograph belong to the respective right owners.)

He spread the specialty of Karate-do with endless enthusiasm, and this made him considerably fruitful. Now, Funakoshi turned into an exceptionally well-educated Master. Funakoshi additionally functioned as a calligraphist and creator, expanding his works under the pen name of "**Shoto**." He was notable in Japan and progressively found new Karate adherents from various colleges.

In 1922, at the age of 54, he presented Okinawan Karate-Jutsu before the Ministry of Education, Japan. This presentation, the first-ever openshowcase of Karate-Jutsu in Japan, was a dazzling achievement.

Promptly, the founder of Judo, **Master Jigoro Kano** and his student, **Gima Shinkin**, welcomed Master Funakoshi to give a presentation of Kata. Remarkably, Master Funakoshi was requested from all sides to remain in Tokyo. Energized by the chance to further advance the Karate that he had accomplished to such a great deal, in Japan, Master Funakoshi started showing it at Tokyo's Meiseijuku quarters for Okinawan. Here, it is important to emphasize that Master **Jigoro Kano** was the only man who invented **Judo-Gi** which was derived from the **KIMONO** dress, a Japanese traditional garment and later Master Funakoshi adopted and invented new **Karate-Gi** which was lighter in weight than Judo-gi. In 1922, Funakoshi published a book entitled "**Ryukyu Kempo: Karate**," which has the honor of being the first-ever book in the history of Karate and quickly made an exceptional Karate success.



Anko Itosu*



Jigoro Kano*



Sokon Matsumura*



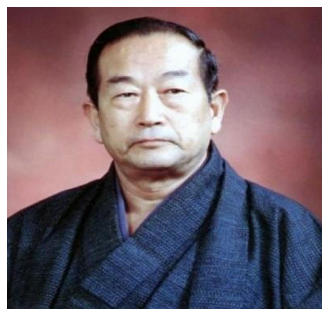
Hidetaka Nishiyama*



Hirokazu Kanazawa*



Keinosuke Enoeda*



Masatoshi Nakayama*



Teruyuki Okazaki*



KIMONO DRESS WORN BY A JAPANESE WOMAN. (The aforesaid photograph has been taken from www.yoycart.com and is being used as part of fair use. The copyrights and other intellectual rights of the said photograph belong to the respective right owners.)

The emblem for Shotokan Karate, "**The tiger in the circle**" or "**Tora no maki**" or "**The tiger roll**," was planned by the well-known artist **Hoan Kosugi** (December 30, 1881- April 16, 1964), a companion of Master Funakoshi, to represent his books about Karate.

The emblem is generally utilized and received all-inclusively by Shotokan Karate club affiliations till now. Respectfulness, regard, and protective qualities of Karate, which were secured as the fundamental topics in Funakoshi's standards, are altogether symbolized in the logo of Shotokan Karate. The tiger in the circle outlines the rules of Karate-do. The tiger represents the capacity to battle and win, yet the limits of the circle constrain its opportunity and forcefulness. The ring speaks of tolerance, though, sensibility, knowledge and control are the core of Karate-do.



SHOTOKAN EMBLEM

ARTIST HOAN KOSUGI

World War-II during 1939-1945, unleashed destruction on the whole world and the Karate world was specifically affected badly. Precious records of the history and legacy of Karate were lost during the attack on Okinawa; many Japanese Karatekas lost their lives attempting to safeguard their nation.

In 1922, Master Gichin Funakoshi, acquainted the people of Japan more with Karate during the 1st National Athletic Exhibition held in Tokyo. The exhibition ended up being an extraordinary accomplishment because of the rising fame of Master Funakoshi. He showed just a single strategy, a complete discipline, which spoke to a blend of Okinawan styles. This strategy was known as Shotokan.