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Author's reflections on the subject of jujutsu and self-defence tourism

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Abstract

The problem of relations between tourism for professional and academic development in the field of martial arts and martial arts tourism was analysed from the perspective of sociology as well as theory of tourism and martial arts, as exemplified by documents and reports from numerous methodological and training seminars dating from 1995 to 2011 involving the clubs from the central and northern parts of Germany. The qualitative methods of participant observation, textual analysis, face-to-face interview were used, complemented by comparative analysis. The results of the studies reveal that training locations are not incidental. These are usually martial arts schools and organisations with a certain degree of institutional and organisational experience as well as highly skilled masters. Additional cultural and tourist events are organised for foreigners. Cultural tourism is a leisure time activity realised between training sessions.

Introduction

The theoretical perspective is provided by the sociology of martial arts teacher profession, the sociology of tourism and travel, the systemic theory of tourism and the theory of martial arts. The issue concerns the relations between martial arts tourism and cultural tourism as well as, to some extent, scientific tourism. The scope of research covers Northern and Central Germany.

The qualitative methods of participant observation, textual analysis and face-to-face interview were used, complemented by comparative analysis. The basis for the research consists of reports of methodological and training seminars, diplomas issued by their coordinators. These represent “martial arts tourism” in its purest form. It is a type of cultural tourism. The main goal of the trip – participation in meetings aimed at professional development and the exchange of knowledge – is combined with cultural and social purposes, i.e. learning about history, monuments, national tradition and cuisine of a given country. Martial arts tourism is a form of cultural tourism [Cynarski 2009a, 2010].

Impressions and observations

International internships and training seminars I have participated in since 1995 have given me an opportunity to draw certain conclusions as a result of my observations. Anthropological observation of a great number of trainees in various German martial arts centres was a contributing factor in these reflections. At schools and martial arts centres where I work as a jujutsu (*jūjutsu*) and self-defence instructor I noticed that children and adolescents take great interest in recreational activities. They are particularly interested in jujutsu and self-defence courses, which instruct how to act and react in response to dangerous behaviour of other people, called prevention programs. These courses are conducted by martial arts teachers specifically trained for this purpose supported by psychologists, doctors and police officers.

A variety of courses offered to guardians and parents encourage whole families to participate in recreational courses. This situation is evident particularly during international martial arts courses. The participants perfect their skills on the mat mentally supported by their family. In the evenings, social meetings of various types are held that aim at broadening the knowledge about the culture, tradition and cuisine of a given region.

From my perspective, travelling for tourism and research is always connected with broadening the knowledge and skills in jujutsu martial art and self-defence. The development of martial arts teacher's professional skills calls for a variety of trips for the purpose of training and comparison. My own experience (of nearly fifty years) provides an interesting insight into the circumstances that encourage me to search for certain values in martial arts tourism or take part in it.

Expanding my knowledge of jujutsu martial art has always been of paramount importance in my professional life. Tourism for the purpose of studying martial arts is its unique and vital element. My studies cover tourist and research activity during the period between 1995 and 2011 carried out during international training courses in Germany.

In order to provide the background for my considerations it is essential that I refer to the events of the 1960s, when, as a student of primary school, I had the opportunity to participate in jujutsu training courses for the first time. It was in 1963, in Vienna (during a two-week-long family visit), that my adventure with jujutsu, as well as its study, began. The first jujutsu lessons in a Viennese club resulted in my interest in this martial art being transferred to judo as soon as I returned home. This happened for two main reasons: firstly, there were no martial arts schools in Warsaw; secondly, I noticed the striking similarity in technique between judo and jujutsu. In the 1960s, I travelled to Vienna six times in order to practice jujutsu for several weeks. Later on, I did not travel West for a couple of years due to pre-conscription period. In the 1970s, after performing regular military service I visited the Federal Republic of Germany several times for the purpose of work and travel. In my leisure time I attended the training courses of jujutsu martial art and competitive judo. At that time, I was motivated by a desire to verify my technique against the skills of German competitors. I found the results satisfactory and I was allowed to attend the course free of charge. The skills of a judo practitioner and the practical expertise in the field of jujutsu allowed me to prove myself professionally in combat and efficiently develop my knowledge of jujutsu martial art.

My previous travels as a tourist and student in the 1960s and 1970s led in the following years to similar training trips to various German clubs. In 1995, my cooperation with the sports club Tao in Aurich and European Budo Academy began. I have been conducting regular methodological training sessions there ever since. Participating in international training sessions and meetings with other masters allowed me to compare my skills with those of other jujutsu and self-defence teachers.

The international training sessions organised in Tao sports club are attended by renowned martial arts experts from Asia, America and Europe. This particular and unique circle of masters invited by the head of Tao school, Herbert Bruns motivated me to present my own insight into the training system and various technical elements of the jujutsu martial art and self-defence. I was not trying to imitate other masters' point of view or their methods of passing on their skills and knowledge. I designed my own teaching method and a way of interpreting individual aspects of technique. Because of the methods I employed I am to this day invited to visit various European clubs for methodological and training sessions. Every trip I take to Germany is always combined with cultural tourism which serves as means of learning about history, monuments, tradition and cuisine of a given region. All these aspects of travelling collectively create the "tourist map" of international martial arts community. Between classes and during my days off I devote my time to sightseeing.

Aurich – a district town in Lower Saxony, north-western Germany – is a tourist centre. It has numerous tourist attractions and lies in proximity of the North Sea, 60 km from the Netherlands. It has a population of forty thousand with majority living in detached houses of a unique design. Due to this, the town's area is vast, filled with greenery and crisscrossed by a great number of channels.

In 2004, I participated in a particularly interesting trip, which involved studying jujutsu and learning about various jujutsu schools. For ten days I conducted training sessions in different towns in Northern Germany, participated in an organisational and scientific conference and conducted a training course as a part of "Prevention" education program designed to teach the skills of jujutsu and prevent the undesirable phenomenon of sexual assault. I conducted training courses, toured historical monuments and took part in cultural and social meetings the towns of Aurich, Achim, Bremen, Bunde, Bad Driburg, Enger, Hohenkirchen, Oldenburg and Wilhelmshaven. During the period of ten days I managed to meet a great number of people studying jujutsu as well as their families. The trainees are not the only ones taking part in martial arts tourism – they are mentally and spiritually supported by their parents and guardians.

Getting to know each other is aided by the dialogue resulting from the self-fulfilling journey of the specific budo tourism [Cynarski 2005a].

For several years I have been involved in Internationales Herbstseminar in Wasserkuppe within the German state of Hessen (elevation 950

m). I stay at a hotel which used to serve as barracks for the United States Army. The surrounding area is notable for being the birthplace of non-motor activities in the 1900s, many of which survive to this day. On the way to the hotel situated on the mountaintop, where the training sessions take place, one can admire the Rhön Biosphere Reserve. The Hestia Project was conceived here which aims at improving the situation of women in rural areas. The pilot project “Rural Tourism in the Rhön Biosphere Reserve” is an opportunity for women from a disadvantaged area. Its goal is effective regional marketing cooperation through production of self-cultivated high-quality foods. The region’s women and their products (juice, liquor, jelly, cheese, milk and ham) are a testament to the quality and efficiency of this region.

At the height of 524 m we can find Museum Poppenhausen. The village of Poppenhausen was founded nine centuries ago. A particularly interesting landmark situated in this area is a historical St. George catholic church built in 1622. Apart from the spectacular views on landscape and architecture the area is known for Schleicher, the internationally renowned industrial enterprise, producer of gliders. We can also visit Judica Museum Schenklengsfeld, which depicts the religion and life of the Jewish rural community in eastern Hessja. Since 1933 the commune was an independent society of 160 members. It had its own Jewish state created in 1850 and a large synagogue built in 1883. In 1912-1913, a Jewish public school was established. In our leisure time, between the courses, we climb down sightseeing the monuments and admiring the magnificent views stretching out from the Wasserkuppe summit.

“Martial arts tourism” is dominated by attitudes driven by cognitive and self-development needs, we can talk about the self-studying and learning or (more generally) educational dominant characteristic of travelling resulting from the path of martial arts study. Actions advocating and promoting a given style contribute to the development of this specific tourist and recreational form. All these actions support the cultural encounter of the master-teacher with his students and cultural dialogue constituting the recurring influence of Far-Eastern martial arts [Cynarski, Sieber, Litwiniuk 2006].

As part of martial arts tourism Cynarski classifies: training camps and sessions, seminars, competitions and shows, travelling “to the source” and “organised” trips. It particularly concerns martial arts instructors, teachers and masters who at the same time act as coordinators, activists but also advanced and more ambitious students [Cynarski, Sieber, Litwiniuk 2006]. In the Turos’

concept of “tourism education” the question of cognitive and self-development motivation is especially important. This particularly concerns the participants of martial arts seminars, training sessions and camps [Litwiniuk, Cynarski, Piech 2005b; cf.: Raimondo 2011].

Tourism as an area of scientific reflection stems from systemic, humanistic theory of martial arts [Cynarski 2010]. It also refers to the geography of tourism, sociology of culture, physical, travel and tourism culture as well as to systemic anthropological concept of tourism. The sociology of tourism and physical recreation reveal jointly the relations between the travelling of martial arts practitioners and their lifestyle, trends as well as the axiology perceived by these tourists, but it is also related to physical practice of martial arts. The “tourist map” of martial arts community and contacts between experts and their students constitute an interesting social and cultural phenomenon described within the area of the theory of cultural dialogue, the analysis of globalisation process and from the perspective of the sociology of culture. Multi-faceted martial arts tourism is sometimes connected with cultural tourism, other times with scientific tourism or educational, research and self-development trips. Martial arts practice contributes to the development of tourism stemming from sports, cultural, cinematic or medical interests. It supports the rise of educational and martial arts tourism [Cynarski, Ebishima, Litwiniuk 2010; cf.: Ożdźniński 2009].

Conclusion

The location of meetings, seminars and conferences is not incidental. The centres where they take place are characterised by a certain degree of institutional and organisational experience and accomplishments in a given field. Additional cultural events are organised for foreigners. Cultural tourism is realised within the framework of training seminars or apart from it – in leisure time. Between classes I often had the opportunity to visit nearby martial arts schools and organisations. During such trips, I am often invited by families, which, apart from giving me a chance to taste the regional cuisine, allows me to learn about the private family history as well as the history of the region. Each martial arts school is characterised by a unique atmosphere and decor. The schools have their own traditions and master lineages and successors. The training trips have also given me a chance to meet a wide range of students and martial arts teachers. I help the students when it comes to learning and understanding the martial

art of jujutsu. The relationships between the martial arts practitioners, students' respect of their masters, testify to the fact that we all follow the ideals of old masters. Trips for the purpose of education, research and self-development are an integral element of broadening the professional knowledge and skills of a martial arts teacher. The contact with other teachers, their methods of teaching and different practical solutions they offer as regards the teaching system and the exchange of professional experience between the masters are beneficial to the practitioners' level of advancement. The lack of trips involving the combination of sightseeing and learning is equal to the lack of opportunity to verify one's knowledge with that of other martial arts experts. Confining oneself to a narrow regional student-teacher community may be a major obstacle on the road to professional development for a martial arts master.

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O turystyce sztuki walki jujutsu i samoobrony, refleksje własne

Słowa kluczowe: socjologia, turystyka, jujutsu, samoobrona, sztuki walki

Streszczenie

W perspektywie socjologicznej oraz teorii turystyki i sztuki walki poddano analizie problemy powiązań turystyki dla rozwoju pracy zawodowej, studiów sztuk walki z turystyką sztuki walki na przykładzie dokumentacji i raportów z wielu seminariów metodyczno-szkoleniowych „rozciągniętych” od roku 1995 do 2011, obejmujących kluby środkowej i północnej części Niemiec. Zastosowano metody jakościowe – obserwacji uczestniczącej, analizy tekstu i wywiadu bezpośredniego, co uzupełnia analiza porównawcza. Bazą dla badań są komunikaty o seminariach metodyczno-szkoleniowych, dyplomy wydawane przez organizatorów seminariów, będących „turystyką sztuki walki” w czystej postaci. Jest to swego rodzaju turystyka kulturowa. Cel główny wyjazdu, jakim jest udział w spotkaniach służących doskonaleniu zawodowemu oraz wymianie wiedzy, łączy się tu z celami kulturalnymi i towarzyskimi – poznawaniem historii, zabytków kultury i tradycji narodowej oraz degustacji kuchni danego kraju.

Wyjazdy turystyczno-poznawcze autora nierozłącznie są związane z doskonaleniem wiedzy i umiejętności w sztuce walki jujutsu (*jūjutsu*) i samoobrony. Dla rozwoju warsztatu zawodowego nauczyciela sztuki walki konieczne są różnego rodzaju wyjazdy szkoleniowe i porównawcze. Odbyte przez autora staże międzynarodowe, seminaria szkoleniowe dały mu okazję do pewnych spostrzeżeń w efekcie obserwacji własnych. Obserwacja antropologiczna w różnych ośrodkach niemieckich sztuk walki na dużej ilości uczestników szkoleń, skłoniła autora do pewnych wniosków. W szkołach i ośrodkach sztuk walki, w których autor prowadził szkolenia z zakresu jujutsu i samoobrony, zauważa się duże zainteresowanie dzieci i młodzieży zajęciami rekreacyjnymi. Szczególnym zainteresowaniem cieszą się zajęcia z jujutsu i samoobrony, uczące sposobu postępowania i reakcji dzieci na zachowania niebezpieczne ze strony innych osób, zwane programami prewencyjnymi. Szkolenia takie prowadzą specjalnie przygotowani do tego rodzaju zadań nauczyciele sztuk walki wspierani przez psychologów, lekarzy i policjantów. Bogata oferta zajęć kierowana do opiekunów i rodziców sprawia,

że całe rodziny uczestniczą w różnego rodzaju zajęciach rekreacyjnych. Szczególnie sytuacje takie mają miejsce podczas międzynarodowych szkoleń sztuk walki. Uczestnicy zajęć doskonalą swoje umiejętności na macie, wspierani mentalnie obecnością swoich opiekunów. Wieczorem organizowane są różnego rodzaju spotkania towarzyskie służące poznawaniu kultury danego regionu, tradycji i degustacji kuchni.

W „turystyce sztuk walki” dominują postawy wynikające z potrzeb poznawczych i samorealizacyjnych, można mówić o samokształczącej i wychowawczej lub (bardziej ogólnej) edukacyjnej dominancie podróżowania wynikającej z drogi studiów sztuk walki. Działanie na rzecz nauczania i promocji danego stylu – przyczyniają się do rozwoju specyficznej formy turystyczno-rekreacyjnej.

Nieprzypadkowe są miejsca spotkań, seminariów, sympozjów. Są to ośrodki o pewnej już dojrzałej postaci instytucjonalnej, organizacyjnej, o pewnym dorobku w danej dziedzinie. Dla osób przyjeżdżających z zagranicy organizowane są dodatkowo różne atrakcje kulturalne. Turystyka kulturalna realizowana jest w ramach programów seminariów szkoleniowych lub poza nimi – w czasie wolnym. Często podczas przerw między zajęciami autor zwiedzał pobliskie szkoły i organizacje sztuk walki. Każda ze szkół sztuk walki charakteryzuje się innym wystrojem i swoistym klimatem. Posiada ona własną historię i linie genealogiczną mistrzów i spadkobierców danej szkoły. Podczas wyjazdów szkoleniowych autor poznał szeroką rzeszę uczniów i nauczycieli sztuk walki. Wzajemne relacje pomiędzy osobami uprawiającymi sztuki walki, szacunek uczniów wobec mistrzów, świadczy o tym, że wszyscy postrzegamy wynikające z tradycji ideały starych mistrzów. Wyjazdy turystyczne dla celów edukacyjnych, poznawczych, samorealizacyjnych są nieodłącznym elementem doskonalenia wiedzy i umiejętności zawodowych nauczyciela sztuk walki. Kontakt z innymi nauczycielami, sposób przekazywania przez nich wiedzy, różne rozwiązania praktyczne systemu nauczania, wymiana doświadczeń zawodowych pomiędzy mistrzami, wpływają korzystnie na poziom wiedzy i umiejętności wszystkich uczestników takich spotkań. Brak wyjazdów turystycznych połączonych z edukacją to brak możliwości zweryfikowania swojej wiedzy z wiedzą innych ekspertów sztuk walki. Zamknięcie się w wąskim regionalnym środowisku uczniów i nauczycieli, może być znaczącą przeszkodą w rozwoju zawodowym mistrza.