

## TOURISM OF MARTIAL ARTS

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### Scientific travel to Osaka: the next case study of martial arts tourism

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#### Abstract

Background. The issue is presented from the perspective of the concept of scientific tourism and martial arts tourism, as a manifestation of the process of the institutionalisation of the international community of martial arts researchers.

Problem and Aim. The aim of this study is to describe and review the scientific event, a conference of two international scientific societies: The Japanese Academy of Budo and the International Martial Arts and Combat Sports Scientific Society (JAB and IMACSSS).

Method. The basic method is participant observation by the author – a form of field study. In addition, factual material, pronouncements by the participants, and the subject literature are analysed. The third method used is a form of visual sociology adapted to analyse a tourist event. Photographs are presented in this study to illustrate the descriptions.

Results. The article describes the journey, purpose, conduct and evaluation of the 6<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the IMACSSS, and the JAB 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference. The main objective of most participants was to attend these two conferences.

Conclusions. The conference was a success for both organizers and participants. It was an opportunity to exchange most up-to-date knowledge and research results. Arrangements for further joint initiatives to be implemented between different institutions were also made.

#### Introduction

There is not much literature on scientific tourism. However, authors have focussed on its importance for scientific improvement and for individual careers [*cf.* Kosiewicz 2011; Cynarski 2015; Slocum, Kline, Holden 2015]. When it is part of cultural tourism [West 2008; Cynarski, Duricek 2014; Cynarski 2015], where the individual travels to another cultural circle, this dimension becomes even more important. The scientist accomplishes his scientific goals, but he also wants to see new things, to explore and to taste. The scientific goal is linked to a passion for martial arts, in particular when a scientific conference is devoted to martial arts and combat sports which thus becomes a special form of martial arts tourism [Cynarski 2012; Cynarski, Kubala 2015; Pawelec *et al.* 2015].

When the warrior's way is in line with the Way of Heaven, the power is directed to protect life and to fight evil [Gradek 2014: 221]. This moral dimension of the warrior's way complements the quest for the truth, which is consistent with the sense of doing science. Together,

this leads to the domination of the pursuit of self-reliance according to the paradigm of perfectionism as it is broadly understood. Both scientific and martial arts tourism are a type of non-entertainment tourism.

For a practitioner of Japanese martial art, travelling to Japan is a journey to the source – to the birthplace of a martial art, where one can feel the cultural context of its existence. This includes for example the *Bushi* culture and *Bushido* ethos [Kuehn 2014; Gil 2016]. In Japanese culture physicality exists in conjunction with physical culture and education [Miller 2013]. The ways of martial arts (Jap. *Budo*) are held up to be the best way to combine noble tradition with modernity.

There are institutions that focus on cultivating *Budo*, both in teaching and research in this field. One of them is the Japanese Academy of Budo (JAB), which has been working for 50 years. This article features a presentation on the JAB jubilee conference. As any analysis of tourism includes the functioning of institutions (such as the JAB and IMACSSS) [Kubala 2013] this article has also factual value.

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## Methodological note

The aim of this study is to describe and review a scientific event, another conference of two international scientific societies. The issue is presented from the perspective of the concept of scientific tourism and martial arts tourism, as a manifestation of the process of the institutionalisation of the international community of martial arts researchers. An anthropological and systemic approach [Obodynski, Cynarski 2004; Salazar, Graburn 2014; Munsters, Melkert 2015] seems to be the most appropriate in this situation.

The basic method is participant observation by the author – a form of field study. In addition, factual material, pronouncements by the participants, and the subject literature are analysed [Krippendorf 2004; *cf.* Richards, Munsters 2010].

The third method used here is a form of visual sociology adapted to analyse a tourist event [Sztompka 2004; Cynarski 2015: 7-11; *cf.* Pasini 2011]. Photographs are presented in this study to illustrate the descriptions.

## 1. Conference in Osaka

For the second time the IMACSSS in cooperation with the JAB organised the Japanese Academy of Budo 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference and the Second International Budo Conference along with the 6<sup>th</sup> International IMACSSS Conference in Osaka, from 6-8 September, 2017. The JAB brings together university scholar-teachers and master-practitioners of traditional Japanese martial

arts, while the IMACSSS gathers researchers into various martial arts, combat sports and self-defence systems. The venue of the meeting was Kansai University.

### 1.1. Journey

The author first travelled to the nearest airport by car. He then flew to Warsaw, on to Dubai (Emirates Airlines had the most attractive offer), and from Dubai to Osaka. The flight was pleasant and the meals were tasty. Tourist tastings on board already included Japanese cuisine, e.g. *teriyaki* salmon was on the menu [Cynarski, Obodynski 2006].

At Osaka Kansai Airport it was necessary to find the right train to get to Osaka (about 60 minutes) and then walk from the station to the hotel (it was quite close once one knew the way). The journey took almost two days and the same on the way back. Interestingly, while in Dubai at night the temperature was 37 degrees Celsius, in Osaka the temperatures were moderate. The leaders of IMACSSS and JAB had already arrived in Osaka. Different original Japanese dishes could be tasted in the adjacent hotel restaurant (proper “tourist tasting”). Some of the European participants in the events described here extended their stay in Japan to practise further at their chosen grand master’s school, or to do some sightseeing. This was not the case for this author.

### 1.2. Conference Programme

The first event of the JAB anniversary meeting was the JAB board meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> of September, 2017. After



**Photo 1.** At the Conference in Osaka in September 2017, before the “Memorial Lecture”. From the left are seated: Dr K. Kubala, Prof. Dr W.J. Cynarski, Prof. Dr A. Figueiredo, Above standing: Doc. Dr Z. Reguli and Dr M. Vit [courtesy of A. Vences de Brito].



**Photo 2.** Concert of traditional Japanese music and singing during the reception, Kansai University, Osaka 2017 [courtesy of K. Kubala].



**Photo 3.** Invited speakers and honoured guests receiving jubilee souvenirs [courtesy of K. Kubala].

lunch, there were five parallel sessions: Humanities, Natural Sciences, Budo Instruction, International, and Poster session.

After the break the “Memorial Lecture” entitled ‘the sword and the gun’ given by Prof. **Tetsuo Yamaori** was held in the main auditorium. This Professor Emeritus from the International Research Center for Japanese Studies talked about *uchigatana* and *naginata* as masterpieces etc. It was a strictly humanistic and cultural reflection.

That evening a reception was organised. After a short speech by the President of the JAB and some other speeches a concert of traditional Japanese music and singing was presented (photo 2).

The invited speakers and honoured guests were introduced during the banquet and received jubilee souvenirs from the JAB (photo 3). After that, Prof. Dr **Fuminori Nakiri** (President of the JAB) received a special plate-diploma for organising this 6<sup>th</sup> International IMACSSS Conference and congratulations on the beautiful 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of JAB, from the President of IMACSSS (photo 4).

September the 7<sup>th</sup> was the second day of the event. A number of eminent people attended the opening of the International Symposium including the President of Kansai University (photo 5).

During the Symposium on “Budo and Martial Arts: Crossover of Traditional Culture and Popular Culture”,



**Photo 4.** A special plate–diploma from IMACSSS for Prof. Dr Fuminori Nakiri [courtesy of K. Kubala].



**Photo 5.** Prof. Keiji Shibai, President of Kansai University at the Conference, Osaka 2017 [courtesy of K. Kubala].

the first Plenary Session was about “Traditional Culture and the Martial Arts: Preservation, Discovery, or Invention?”, there were three key papers:

Doc. Dr **Zdenko Reguli** (Masaryk University in Brno), editor-in-chief of our Journal, presented the

paper: “Does the image of Japanese martial arts in Euro-American pop-culture fit true budo? Cinematography examples” (photo 7);

Dr **Andreas Niehaus** (Ghent University): “<<Popularising judo through manga: “Tanoshimi nagara judo no rekishi ga manaberu”>>”;

Prof. Dr **Wojciech J. Cynarski** (University of Rzeszow), President of IMACSSS and IPA, a lecture on: “Budo in Global Culture: From the Traditional to the Popular” [Kubala 2017; photos 6 and 7].

The invited keynote speakers also included the well known sociologist Prof. Emeritus Dr **Shun Inoue**, Assoc. Prof. **Andrea Molle** (Chapman University, USA), and **David Groff** (Meiji University) [JAB 2017].

On the same day the IMACSSS Board meeting was held. It concerned a new, Gold Medal of Honour and Merit, the next conferences (Rzeszow and Viseu/Portugal), and on future activity of IMACSSS.

Then the panellists, and IMACSSS and JAB leaders, went for a Japanese style dinner. While sitting at a low table they had the chance to try local delicacies (photo 8).

On September the 8<sup>th</sup> the next parallel sessions were held. Chairmen included Susumu Nagao, Wojciech J. Cynarski (photo 9), Michael Callan, and Zdenko Reguli among others. Among the authors of presentations were: Alexander Bennett (*Jujutsu as a physical culture system in early twentieth-century New Zealand*), Cristino R.A. Barreira (on the phenomenology of combat sports and MMA), Michal Vit (on teaching combatives in Czech Republic), and Abel Figueiredo (*Budo interfaces in martial arts and combat sports*) (photo 1).



**Photo 6.** Panellists of the first plenary session: Z. Reguli, A. Niehaus, and W.J. Cynarski [courtesy of K. Kubala].

The workshops also included ‘Judo’, ‘Kendo’, ‘Karate-do & Kyudo’, ‘Naginata’ and ‘Budo for the Disabled’, as well as a poster session. Demos of *budo* technical training for people with disabilities (*aikido* and *karate*) made a great impression. Karate exercises for people with disabilities are an integral part of the proposition for including karate competition at the 2020 Olympic Games, which was repeatedly raised at the conference.

In the closing session of the General Assembly, Dr Krzysztof Kubala (General Secretary of IMACSSS) invited all participants to the 7<sup>th</sup> International Congress of IMACSSS and World Congress of Combat Sports and Martial Arts in Rzeszow [Kubala 2017]. This conference will be held at the University of Rzeszow from 17-19, October 2018.

### 1.3. Observations and evaluations

Great cooperation between these and other scientific institutions is the result of the professional management of JAB by its President, Prof. Dr Fuminori Nakiri [*cf.* Cynarski, Kubala 2013] and the organisational effectiveness of JAB activists. Around 300 participants attended the conference, including guests from Europe and both Americas, including a group of IMACSSS members.

Other observations come to mind. There is still no agreement among participants on the definition of basic concepts such as ‘budo’ and ‘martial arts’, despite attempting to organise the conceptual language [*cf.* Cynarski 2013; Cynarski, Skowron 2014; Nakiri 2015; Bennett 2017]. This dispute is similar to many other issues in



**Photo 7.** Doc. Dr Zdenko Reguli’s speech – beginning of the plenary scientific discussion in Osaka ‘2017 [courtesy of K. Kubala].

the circles of scholars and social scientists. In general, however, there is a recognition of the methodology of qualitative research and the humanistic approaches, which dominated both the plenary sessions and the parallel sessions [JAB 2017].

The Conference was important for Japanese *budo* and for the people who are part of JAB and IMACSSS. However, it was also important for the world, and the international community of researchers who study mar-



**Photo 8.** Japanese style Party – only for invited guests [courtesy of A. Vences de Brito].



**Photo 9.** Prof. Cynarski as chairman of a session, Osaka 2017 [courtesy of K. Kubala].

tial arts and combat sports. We may even talk about the next milestone in the process of institutionalisation in area of martial arts' science and in the activity of specialised scientific institutions.

## 2. Discussion

The anthropology of the Taoist pathway is connected with moral values and the noble way of martial arts (*budo*) [Cynarski 2014; Leaf 2014] and creates symbolic and axiological dimensions for both forms of tourism: the scientific and martial arts tourism.

One can look at the impact of this symbolism and the set of values that will vary by degree in individual

cases. In cultural tourism and martial arts tourism, it will be large, as is implicitly indicated by the authors of *Japanese Tourism: Spaces, Places and Structures* [Funck, Cooper 2013; cf. Miller 2010]. In the case of scientific/congress tourism, this influence will be relatively smaller [Cynarski 2015, 2017]. Obviously the way of the warrior and martial arts tourism need not be implemented on the foundation of Asian cultural heritage but only on the foundation of martial arts and *budo* [cf. Griffith 2016].

*Budo* has been used for patriotic education and been connected with national politics since the 1930s. It was adopted into official school curricula as a traditional form of physical education. Now the Japanese sport is connected with the Olympic Games and international rivalry in sports competitions [Manzenreiter 2014: 70-80,

214-221]. In this context, focussing on *karate*, as the next Olympic discipline, is well understandable.

## Conclusions

The conference was a success for both organisers and the participants. It was an opportunity to exchange the most recent knowledge and research results. Arrangements for further joint initiatives to be implemented between different institutions were also made. It was probably a very important step in the process of institutionalisation in area of martial arts' science and the activity of specialised scientific institutions.

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3. Photos – courtesy of Prof. Dr Antonio Vences de Brito and Dr Krzysztof Kubala.

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## Podróż naukowa do Osaki – następne studium przypadku turystyki sztuk walki

**Słowa kluczowe:** turystyka naukowa, podróż, konferencja, IMACSSS, sztuki walki

### Abstrakt

Perspektywa. Podjęte tu zagadnienie jest przedstawione z perspektywy koncepcji turystyki naukowej i turystyki sztuk walki, jako manifestacja procesu instytucjonalizacji środowiska badaczy sztuk walki.

Problem i cel. Celem tego studium jest opis i recenzja wydarzenia naukowego, jakim była konferencja dwóch międzynarodowych towarzystw naukowych – Japońskiej Akademii Budo (JAB) i IMACSSS – Międzynarodowego Towarzystwa Naukowego Sztuk Walki i Sportów Walki.

Metoda. Podstawową zastosowaną tu metodą jest obserwacja uczestnicząca – rodzaj/odmiana badań terenowych. Co więcej, analizowane są fakty i stwierdzenia uczestników, oraz literatura przedmiotu. Trzecią użytą tu metodą jest forma socjologii wizualnej zaadoptowana do analizy wydarzenia turystycznego. Zdjęcia są tu pokazane, jako ilustracja do głównego tekstu opisu. Wyniki. Została pokazana podróż, cel, program i ocena VI Międzynarodowej Konferencji IMACSSS oraz Jubileuszowej Konferencji 50-lecia Japońskiej Akademii Budo. Celem głównym większości uczestników był udział w tej konferencji i tym spotkaniu.

Wnioski. Konferencja była sukcesem zarówno dla organizatorów, jak i dla uczestników. Była okazją dla wymiany najnowszej wiedzy i przedstawienia wyników badań. Zostały także podjęte ustalenia dotyczące dalszej współpracy pomiędzy różnymi instytucjami.