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## SCIENTIFIC TRAVEL TO BRNO: THE NEXT STEP TOWARD INSTITUTIONALISATION OF MARTIAL ARTS RESEARCH GROUPS

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### Keywords:

- scientific tourism,
- travel,
- conference,
- IMACSSS,
- martial arts.

### Abstract:

**Problem and Aim.** The aim of this study is to describe and review the scientific event, another conference of one of the international scientific societies. The issue is presented from the perspective of the concept of scientific tourism and as a manifestation of the process of institutionalization of the international community of martial arts researchers.

**Method.** The basic method is participant observation by the authors – a kind of form of field studies. Moreover, they analysed the facts as well as statements of the participants, and subject literature.

**Results.** We have shown the journey, purpose, conduct and evaluation of the Fourth Conference of the IMACSSS, and summarized the decisions of the IMACSSS society meeting, in terms of current and planned activity. The main objective of most participants was to attend this conference and this meeting.

**Conclusions.** The conference was a success for both organizers and the participants. We shared the most recent knowledge – and the research results. Arrangements for further joint initiatives implemented in cooperation between different institutions were also made.

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## INTRODUCTION

Any international scientific conference is worthy of description and evaluation – and report and review. This gives a factual picture of international cooperation of scientists. These individual facts co-create the modern history of individual disciplines – the process of their institutionalization and development, or possible regression.

In this case, the aim of this paper was a description and review of scientific event, which was another conference of one of the international scientific societies, namely IMACSSS – the International Martial Arts and Combat Sports Scientific Society. This issue is presented from the perspective of the concept of scientific tourism and at the same time as an expression of institutionalization of the international community of martial arts researchers.

Theoretical perspective for scientific research undertaken here co-create: the anthropological-system concept of tourism theory [Obodyński, Cynarski 2004], as well as specific concept of martial arts tourism as a form of non-leisure tourism [Miller 2010; Cynarski 2012; Munsters, Melkert 2015: 11-21]. Travel to this kind of academic conference is obviously not a typical display of martial arts tourism, because there is no practical (physical) manifestation of martial arts study present here. There are also additional parts of entertainment as well. Basically, we have here an example described in the literature as travel for scientific purposes. So we have to deal with an area of scientific and educational tourism [Kosiewicz 2011; Cynarski, Ďuriček 2014; Cynarski 2015].

Let us explain here what exactly is the IMACSSS. It is a society, including representatives of the scientific community – researchers of various forms of martial arts, combat sports,

self-defence systems – from around the world [Kubala 2013]. These are mostly representatives of the science of sport (sport sciences, physical culture sciences), but not only. Passionate about martial arts are representatives of various fields of science. IMACSSS coordinates international research, and is a patron of the further conferences [Cynarski, Kubala 2013; Pawelec *et al.* 2015] and scientific publications.

The basic method used here is the participating observation of authors – a kind of form of field research. Moreover they analysed the facts and statements of the participants, and literature (content analysis of a broad discourse) [Krippendorf 2004; Richards, Munsters 2010]. Photographic material was used as well.

## **RESULTS 1. JOURNEY AND ITS GOALS**

Journey of the authors has been made by car. However, for one of the participants it was a fairly long flight, deliberate journey from South Korea to the Czech Republic. In any case, it was associated with an extra effort, some difficulty and dedication, a dose of risk and investment. So we can conclude that participation in the scientific event was worth it for participants – is more valuable than the effort to take a trip and the cost of leaving other matters for the time being.

In a geographical sense, participants reached their destination, which was Brno – the capital of Moravia, a university town. The local Masaryk University and its Faculty of Sport Studies organized another **IMACSSS Conference**. It was connected with organized in a two-year cycle 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Kinanthropology “Sport and Quality of Life”. The co-organizer of the conference was University of Zagreb (Croatia).

Before the IMACSSS conference proper was held, there was a meeting of deans of cooperating universities and faculties, with presentations on specific research units. Later – 18 November 2015 – was the official opening of the conference at the local “Scala” Cinema.

The proceedings of scientific researchers of martial arts took place on 19 and 20 November. Then was held symposium on various issues of martial arts and combat sports, and (separately) on injury and trauma in combat sports. The venue was the Congress Centre of Continental Hotel (\*\*\*\*) and facilities of Faculty of Sport Studies, Masaryk University.

The aim of the travel participants, and in particular primary goal (cognitive, educational, self-realization) was to attend a scientific conference, to exchange knowledge and findings on scientific cooperation. So we can talk about a specific scientific tourism, which is a variant of cultural tourism (study visits and seminars) [*cf.* Kosiewicz 2011; Cynarski, Kubala 2013; Cynarski, Ďuriček 2014].

## **RESULTS 2. THE 4<sup>TH</sup> IMACSSS CONFERENCE IN BRNO ‘2015**

The organizer was Doc. Dr Zdenko Reguli, head of Department of Gymnastics and Combat Sports in Faculty of Sport Studies at the Masaryk University. For his organizational efforts Doc. Reguli was honoured with a commemorative plaque of IMACSSS (photo 1).



**Photo 1.** Prof. Cynarski, President IMACSSS, awards a commemorative plaque to Doc. Reguli – organizer of Fourth IMACSSS Conference. Brno, November 2015 (photo K. Kubala).

Prof. Dr. W.J. Cynarski, president of IMACSSS, **was invited keynote speaker** of this Conference. He presented lecture: *The meaning of self-defence: an expert definition. A contribution to the theory of self-defence and combat. Presented in a lecture opinions of experts inspired a reflection and raised substantial discussion.* After that Prof. Cynarski was a chairman of the symposium. The next speakers were Dr Zbigniew Bujak, Dariusz Gierczuk, Jarosław Sołtan (PL) with a paper: *A four-year study of taekwon-do injuries of senior national competitors.* Next presentation of the team (D. Gierczuk, Z. Bujak, J. Sołtan) was: *Coordination-related success factors in Greco-Roman wrestlers aged 17-18.*

John Johnson (KR) in his paper: *The pedagogical process of taekwondo* drew attention to the deeper meaning of the way of the warrior and Japanese loans in the ideological foundation of Korean martial arts. Jindriska Kohoutkova (CZ) covered topic: *The flow experience in qigong and its impact on quality of life.* So – how soft, “internal” martial arts variants or exercises tied to practicing martial arts *qigong* influence health and life quality. Lykkegaard Martin (DK) spoke on: *Connection between martial arts & rough and tumble play.* It was an interesting analysis from the perspective of school teacher of physical education. Zdenko Reguli, Martin Bugala and Michal Vít (CZ) discussed topic: *Educational background of security bodies identification in the study programme of applied sport education of security bodies.* This topic, as well as other papers were interesting contribution to the debate on a deeper reflection on the ground of martial arts science (photo 2).



**Photo 2.** A group of participants of the Symposium of IMACSSS, Brno 2015 (courtesy of the Faculty of Sport Studies, MU)



**Photo 3.** Prof. W. Pieter during the symposium on injuries in combat sports. The third day of the Conference in Brno, 2015 (courtesy of the Faculty of Sport Studies, MU)

Several more papers of researchers of martial arts were covered in a poster session, and a few – in a session devoted to sport injuries. Zdenko Reguli led both of these sessions.

Symposium on Sport Injuries was held on the third day of the conference. Provided were seven speeches of three invited speakers: Prof. Dr Eric D. Zemper from USA, teacher of Professor Willy Pieter in investigating of injuries in sport, Willy Pieter (photo 3) and Peter Harmer. Especially Dr P. Harmer (Australia/USA) is a figure significant for both judo and fencing, and W. Pieter is so well known as a scholar of martial arts that we do not need to introduce him closer here.

The conference was held at a high level – both in strictly scientific terms and organizationally. There were no distinctions between scientific disciplines and sports, but the main theme was the study of martial arts and combat sports in terms of multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary view. Indeed, separate problem of traumas was investigated during the distinct symposium with the participation of world-renowned experts.

### **RESULTS 3. SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITY IN DIVISIONS OF IMACSSS**

After the deliberations of the conference there was an open meeting of Board of IMACSSS. They discussed various areas of activity. The president reported that several research projects carried out by individual Divisions were already finished, or were in the closing stages. E.g. one article from Division of Biomechanics/Kinesiology, under Direction of Prof. Antonio Vences de Brito, was already published [Vences de Brito *et al.* 2015; *cf.* Zeng *et al.* 2015].

Discussion about new projects of IMACSSS was started by Dr Michal Vit. He presented the concept design of the study European Network of Combative Activities (ENOCA, coordinated by Dr Michal Vit). It will concern of martial arts, combat sports and self-defence teaching in various European universities and other institutions. Then was presented the general concept under the name: Project IMACSSS/Social research III: *The perception of martial arts and combat sports by the practicing youth. Motives and effects of training and martial arts values in relation to other values* – coordinated by W.J. Cynarski (Divisions of Sociology and Pedagogy).

Planning of next conferences and special sessions was the next subject of discussion. Dr Krzysztof Kubala presented a proposal of the University of Rzeszów for organisation of the 7<sup>th</sup> International IMACSSS Conference in Rzeszów in 2018. All Board members supported the proposal. Conferences in Rio Maior 2016 (Portugal, Prof. Vences de Brito) and in Osaka 2017 (Japan, Prof. Fuminori Nakiri) were already decided last year.

May be, that IMACSSS members will have the opportunity to meet in special session or symposium during EASS Conference in Copenhagen 2016, and ECSS Congress in Metropolis Ruhr 2017, additionally. Board of IMACSSS is waiting for confirmations from EASS and ECSS.

On the meeting in Brnower present: W.J. Cynarski (president), Z. Reguli (vice-president), K. Kubala (general secretary), Prof. Dr Zbigniew Borysiuk (president of the audit committee), Board members – as M. Vit, old IMACSSS members – as Prof. Dr J. Wąsik, new members, as Dr John Johnson and Mr Martin Lykkegaard. Z. Reguli and M. Vit received from IPA (Idokan Poland Association) master titles in *goshinjutsu* – art of self-defence – respectively 4 dan and 3 dan (photo 4).



Photo 4. Certificates from Idokan for colleagues from Brno [photo K. Kubala].

## CONCLUSIONS

Scientific meeting of researchers in the area of martial arts science was the aim of coming to Brno and spending a few days here by an international group affiliated to the IMACSSS. Most of the participants arrived to take active part in both the conference, as well as in meeting.

The conference was a success for both organizers that the participants. We shared the most recent knowledge – there search results. Decided were arrangements for further joint initiatives implemented in cooperation with: IMACSSS, IPA (Idokan Poland Association), and IATR (International Association for Taekwondo Research), etc.

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