

# Exemplification of the institutionalization process of martial arts: the new development

Wojciech J. Cynarski<sup>1</sup>, Artur Litwiniuk<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Physical Education, University of Rzeszów, Rzeszów, Poland

<sup>2</sup> J. Piłsudski University of Physical Education in Warsaw, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, Białá Podlaska, Poland

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## Summary

The issues of institutionalization of selected far eastern martial arts (MA) in Europe have been presented here on a few examples from the theoretical perspective of physical culture sciences, general sociology and the humanistic theory of martial arts. The aim of this piece of work is to indicate certain regularities occurring in the institutional development of MA. In all cases the process of unavoidable westernization and humanization of old martial arts occurs which, thanks to this, are introduced into the global cultural circulation.

Institutional stability of a given MA organization is confirmed by its unchanged name, stable position of a formal or informal leader, who supports the institution with his authority, regularity of organized events, publications issued etc. The level of institutional development is also displayed in the fact of adapting classical martial arts for the purpose of teaching children and teenagers within physical education classes or extra-curriculum classes. It applies to both S. Sato's attempts (nihon jujutsu) and those made by the representatives of Idokan Poland Association (idokan yoshin-ryu budo) as well as in case of the leaders of classical aikijutsu, although to a smaller degree.

Divisions, new adaptations and modifications of the contents taught in MA centers are probably unavoidable, although they may anticipate the end of classical traditions, and they are a proof that martial arts are still alive. Thanks to this budo evolves, develops. Moreover, founding of scientific associations for research of martial arts are the new example of the institutionalization process.

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## Introduction

The issues of institutionalization of selected far eastern martial arts (MA) in Europe have been presented here on a few examples from the theoretical perspective of physical culture sciences, general sociology and the humanistic theory of martial arts. The aim of this piece of work is to indicate certain regularities occurring in the institutional development of MA.

In the discussion of this development main attention has been drawn to organizational activity and teaching. Sociological qualitative analysis of three cases of MA organizations operating in Europe has been used.

## Main terms

The notion of institution will be viewed here as a set of rules with a given social context, which realizes similar socially significant functions [1, p. 285]. On the other hand, institutionalization is shaping, articulation and preservation of normative structures such as social rules, patterns, norms and values [1, p. 432].

A martial art is – in the light of the humanist theory of MA – a historical category of perfect systems and hand-to-hand fighting and wielding a weapon connected with elements of metaphysics; the ways of martial arts (budo) are certain forms of physical culture which, on the basis of the traditions of warrior cultures lead to psychophysical perfection and self-realization through the training of fighting techniques. At the same time those are the processes of education and positive ascetics. The concept of positive ascetics includes physical exercises connected with conscious self-discipline directed onto moral and spiritual advancement [2, pp. 20-21].

## Analysis of the process of institutionalization

In every organization of martial arts certain institutions are established. Changes and divisions happen due to many various reasons. The range of the organization may increase or decrease. Leaders change and so does the advertising policy, international activity, patronage. It applies to various schools,

associations and federations, although to different degrees. Let us observe it on three examples.

## I. IMAF – institutional stability

IMAF is an abbreviation of International Martial Arts Federation (Japanese Kokusai Budoin, Kokusai Budo Renmei) – the greatest Japanese organization promoting budo on the global scale. This federation was founded in February 1952 in Tokyo where it is still seated. It has its branches in Europe and in the USA and also individual domestic representatives as well as licensed instructors in 8 divisions: Judo, Kendo, Karate-do, Iaido, Aikido, Nihon Jujutsu, Kobudo and Kyudo [3, p. 1]. It organizes world Budo Galas, congresses, international training, it issues a magazine (Gendo Newsletter) as well as other materials [2, pp. 229-231].

Despite distinguishing a separate association named IMAF Europe due to actions undertaken by a group of Belgian activists and in spite of the fact that a few significant masters (Y. Sugino 10 dan, M. Mochizuki 10 dan and S. Sugiyama 8 dan have established International Federation of Nihon Budo, IFNB) left the original federation and a few others retired, this organization still operates increasing or at least maintaining its range. The patronage of the Emperor's palace as well as government funds for promotion of national culture might have contributed to this. The first president of the organization, which then had the name of National Japan Health Association, was prince Tsunenori Kaya [2, pp. 34-37].

For a long time the leader of IMAF responsible for teaching has been Professor Shizuya Sato (10 dan jujutsu, 9 dan judo). He attempts to combine the tradition of martial arts with modern teaching methods putting great emphasis on the educational values of budo. He is the founder of the nihon jujutsu style [4].

## II. Idokan – in the process of evolution

Since 1954 the organizational structures of Idokan have also appeared under various names. The consecutive leaders were Julius Fleck (Hungary), Wally Strauss (Australia), Josef Ebetshuber, Hans Schöllauf and baron Hubert Klinger von Klingerstorff (Austria). The organization was seated in Vienna, then in Ringwood in Australia and in Vienna again. Unfortunately in Austria it was divided into three separate organizations. One of them, namely Idokan Europe International (IEI), initiated development of Idokan in Germany and in Poland. In 1993 domestic associations were established [5-6]. Next H. Schöllauf and H. Klinger von Klingerstorff announced German master Lothar Sieber as their successor. However, later as a result of certain intrigues the IEI president was Sieber's disciple Dietmar Schmidt, who lives in Greece. A large group of members left German Idokan Europe e.V. at that time. This organization still cooperates, along with the Australian organization, with IEI. However, Idokan Poland Association accepts the holder of the highest degrees among still

active teachers, L. Sieber (10 dan ido, jujutsu and karate) as the leader.

It was the tradition here to organize budo seminars and congresses, combining teaching martial arts with traditional medicine practice, emphasizing knightly humanist philosophy, awarding honorary degrees in ido (a higher category of evaluating mastery in budo), honorary medals and the medal of the Fujiyama Knight. Unfortunately divisions and splits make cultivating this over 50 year old tradition significantly more difficult. The range of the organization also diminishes due to more and more numerous competition on the martial arts market.

At present within Idokan Poland Association and central dojo in Munich jujutsu (idokan yoshin-ryu), karate (zendo karate tai-te-tao or in other words idokan karate) [7-8 Sieber 2001; Sieber, Cynarski 2002], iaido are being taught as well as in addition judo and kick-boxing along with kobudo (only in Idokan Poland Association in Rzeszów). Since 1992 jujutsu competitions and summer camps of martial arts have been organized in Poland. A newsletter has been published and since 2000 – also Scientific Year's Issue "Ido Movement for Culture". Idokan Poland Association (IPA) also conducts scientific research concerning the use of martial arts in physical education of children and teenagers, research on the methods of sporting training, psychological, sociological and historical studies of martial arts.

The IPA members and other scientists and experts are creators of the new international association of MA researchers. There is the International Martial Arts and Combat Sports Scientific Society, IMACSSS, founded in February 2010. The new age of the world movement was begun this year, when in September 17-19 the 2nd World Scientific Congress of Combat Sports and Martial Arts took place in Rzeszów (Poland) [9-11].

## III. Takeda – ryu aikijutsu – modifications and divisions

Aikijutsu is not really an organization but a martial art taught for several hundred years in a few Japanese knightly clans and then, since 20th century, also outside those clans and outside Japan. However, traditional teaching within private schools and organizations still dominates here [12-13].

At present it is taught in two main lines of transmission: daito-ryu and takeda-ryu. Both schools are further divided into factions competing on the market of traditional martial arts. Divisions and modifications result here mainly from the leaders' preferences, their experience, dominating personalities and business.

In Europe concentrated around Roland J. Maroteaux (9 dan) European Sobukai Takeda-ryu Maroto-ha (ESTAM, seated in Avignon, France) has the greatest range. It organizes seminars, awards degrees and licenses in aikijutsu, iaido, jodo and ju-kenpo, issues a specialist magazine: „Aiki Goshindo Kaishi”. Revue Culturelle Franco-Japonaise d'Arts Martiaux Takeda-ryu. Dr. Maroteaux is the leader of the World Takeda-ryu Marotokan Federation, WTMF, too.

Shihan Maroteaux's disciple Siegfried Kobilza, who is also a disciple of their common master Hisashi Nakamura (10 dan), founded International Society for Takeda Budo (ISTB) in Vienna. He organizes seminars, congresses and tournaments. In turn, Alain Floquet and Gerard Clerin teach the original daito-ryu within the aikibudo system to a small degree. It really applies to a small group in France [13-14].

Splitting the movement does not serve well the promotion of classical aikijutsu since the rivalry of the leaders, schools and organizations does not contribute to raising the level of their activity. Further modifications of the old tradition happen, as shihan Maroteaux did. Original teachings of Japanese masters are expensive and along with high costs of trips to Japan or bringing Asian experts to Europe create a situation in which only very few chosen one may afford this kind of education. Thus, the same techniques within modified programs and with different names are taught by competent European specialists. However it often happens that incompetent people announce themselves masters of new varieties, schools and styles of martial arts. Thus, original schools with longer tradition and well-known reputation are more trustworthy.

## Discussion

The process of institutionalization of martial arts, especially those which are not strictly combat sports, has not been discussed by many researchers. It is true, however, that many authors, like e.g. Shizuya Sato [4], Roland J. Maroteaux [15] and Wojciech J. Cynarski [16] indicate the fact that budo is significantly different from sport due to different goals and the sense of practicing them. Nonetheless, a deepened sociological analysis (apart from historical works) of this issue has appeared only in a few dissertations.

John J. Donohue [17] writes about perception and adaptations of MA in American culture. A similar research problem has been put forward by the researchers from Idokan Poland Association from Poland and from Germany [18-19].

Changes occurring in Japanese jujutsu [4,20] and aikijutsu [13] as well as local identifications of national traditions of martial arts [21] and global cultural exchanges with the participation of different varieties of budo [6,22] have been studied. In addition, attempts at wholesome description of the issue of institutionalization of MA have been made and in particular they include the problem of teaching them (also at the academic level) [23-24].

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IMAF is a big and stable organization. Despite presumed conservatism it has under its patronage tournaments and it promotes the new style created by S. Sato. In turn, Idokan is at the same time a style and an organization. It evolves towards combining various aspects of martial arts with scientific studies and attempts at adapting MA to be taught within physical education lessons. On the other hand aikijutsu takeda-ryu enters the sporting path (the nakamura-ha version, ISTB) or it emphasizes the utilitarian dimension of the Samurai tradition more (maroto-ha, ESTAM and WTMF). In all those cases the process of unavoidable westernization and humanization of old martial arts occurs [21,22] which, thanks to this, are introduced into the global cultural circulation.

## Conclusions

1. Institutional stability of a given MA organization is confirmed by its unchanged name, stable position of a formal or informal leader, who supports the institution with his authority, regularity of organized events, publications issued etc. The level of institutional development is also displayed in the fact of adapting classical martial arts for the purpose of teaching children and teenagers within physical education classes or extra-curriculum classes. It applies to both S. Sato's attempts (nihon jujutsu) and those made by the representatives of Idokan Poland Association (idokan yoshin-ryu budo) as well as in case of the leaders of classical aikijutsu, although to a smaller degree.
2. Divisions, new adaptations and modifications of the contents taught in MA centers are probably unavoidable, although they may anticipate the end of classical traditions, and they are a proof that martial arts are still alive. Thanks to this budo evolves, develops. One may also expect that the time will come for the tendency to unite the martial arts movement into larger, more stable organizations.
3. The new age of the world movement was begun with founding of the International Martial Arts and Combat Sports Scientific Society, IMACSSS, in February 2010. It is the first scientific society established in order to study and conduct research on martial arts, combat sports and related systems. It brings together practitioners, experts and academics from around the world. The goal of the IMACSSS activity is to develop knowledge and integrate the research community of the martial arts.

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**Address for correspondence:**

Wojciech J. Cynarski

Wydział Wychowania Fizycznego, Uniwersytet Rzeszowski, Rzeszów, Poland

Zawale 27 str., 38-100 Strzyżów, Poland

tel. 606 826 342, e-mail: [ela\\_cyn@wp.pl](mailto:ela_cyn@wp.pl)

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