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The sportification of judo: global convergence and evolution*

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Abstract

This article re-examines our understanding of modern sport. Today, various physical cultures across the world are practised under the name of sport. Almost all of these sports originated in the West and expanded to the rest of the world. However, the history of judo confounds the diffusionist model. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a Japanese educationalist amalgamated different martial arts and established judo not as a sport but as 'a way of life'. Today it is practised globally as an Olympic sport. Focusing on the changes in its rules during this period, this article demonstrates that the globalization of judo was accompanied by a constant evolution of its character. The overall 'sportification' of judo took place not as a diffusion but as a convergence – a point that is pertinent to the understanding of the global sportification of physical cultures, and also the standardization of cultures in modern times.

Keywords cultural exchange, Japan, martial arts, non-western, sport

Introduction

In 1882, a young Japanese university graduate founded judo. The fact that judo originated outside Europe has given it a peculiar place in the gallery of athletic practices. Today, various physical cultures across the world are practised under the name of sport. Almost all of these sports originated in the West and expanded to the rest of the world. However, the history of judo confounds such a diffusionist model. In contrast to many other sports practised globally today, judo is commonly associated with Japan or more widely with Asian cultures such as Zen. Indeed, the Japanese nation itself sometimes sees judo as a symbol of its traditional values and competitiveness on the global stage. Whereas these conventional narratives revolve around exoticism or national pride, this article calls into question the underlying essentialist idea that judo is a Japanese martial art and hence should embody Japanese values. It locates the history of judo over the last 130 years within the wider process

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of the integration and standardization of physical activities that has taken place on a global scale in modern times.

Today, the website of the International Judo Federation (IJF) lists 180 member states spanning Africa, the Americas, Europe, Oceania, and Asia.[1] Given the scale on which judo is practised, one might be surprised to see that it has only been given scant notice in the literature. This article intends to advance the field by drawing on three strands of scholarship. The first involves works specifically on judo. In English-language literature, this body of work was pioneered by Shun Inoue and Kevin Gray Carr, who examined judo as an academic subject by building a more realistic history distinct from the traditionally more hagiographical accounts of the great judo masters.[2] More recently, a group of experts including Bianca Miarka, Tetsuya Nakajima, and Lee Thompson have advanced this line of scholarship.[3] However, their main focus is on understanding judo in the context of Japanese history, and thus the task of locating it within a wider global trend remains far from complete, particularly since most of the historical studies on the globalization of judo, such as the works by Naoki Murata and Yasuhiro Sakaue, are written in Japanese and are not readily accessible to English-speaking audiences.[4]

This leads to the second body of scholarship – the literature on the history of sports. Owing to the fact that a good number of modern sports developed, were institutionalized, and still thrive in the West, there is a great number of works examining the processes by which these sports originated in Europe and expanded to the rest of the world.[5] In particular, this article is inspired by Barbara J. Keys's argument about sports' ability to connect the national and international milieus.[6] However, these studies tend to overlook the dynamic working in the other direction: that is, sports that are undoubtedly rooted in the physical cultures of Asia, Africa, or Latin America.

As an examination of just such a sport, this article also builds on a third body of scholarship: works on global history illustrating connections that develop in directions that

1 IJF website, http://www.ijf.org/ (consulted 15 December 2012).

2 Kevin Gray Carr, 'Making way: war, philosophy and sport in Japanese *judo*', *Journal of Sport History*, 20, 2, 1993, pp. 167–88; Inoue Shun, 'The invention of the martial arts: Kano Jigoro and Kodokan judo', in Stephen Vlatos, ed., *Mirror of modernity: invented traditions of modern Japan*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998, pp. 163–73. I have used the English translation and transliteration given by the author wherever available. I have avoided using diacritics for proper nouns unless necessary.

3 Bianca Miarka, Juliana Bastons Marques, and Emerson Franchini, 'Reinterpreting the history of women's judo in Japan', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 28, 7, 2011, pp. 1016–29; Tetsuya Nakajima and Lee Thompson, 'Judo and the process of nation-building in Japan: Kano Jigoro and the formation of Kodokan', *Asia Pacific Journal of Sport and Social Science*, iFirst article, 2012, pp. 1–14.

4 Naoki Murata, *The internationalization of judo: its history and challenges*, Tokyo: Nihonbudokan (村田直樹『柔道の国際化：その歴史と課題』日本武道館), 2011; Yasuhiro Sakaue, ed., *Jujutsu and judo overseas: dynamism of Japanese martial arts*, Tokyo: Seikyusha, (坂上康博 (編)『海を渡った柔術と柔道：日本武 道のダイナミズム』青弓社), 2010. See also Takashi Ogata, Koji Komata, Motonari Sameshima, and Morio Suganami, *The internationalization of judo as a sport: forty years until the introduction of coloured uniforms*, Tokyo: Fumaido (尾形敬史、小俣幸嗣、鮫島元成、菅波盛雄『競技柔道の国際化：カラー柔道衣まで の 40 年』不昧堂出版), 2008.

5 Arjun Apadurai, *Modernity at large: cultural dimensions of globalization*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003, pp. 89–113.

6 Barbara J. Keys, *Globalizing sport: national rivalry and international community in the 1930s*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006, p. 3.

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do not flow from the West to the rest and thus are less noticed.[7] The history of judo provides a useful example through which this pathway can be studied – not because judo is a Japanese sport but because it is a global sport that evolved in a particular way. It illuminates a global physical culture that has its origin outside the West and that converged with different traditions across the world. As such, this article is a work on the global transmission, convergence, and evolution of bodily and spiritual cultures.

This article does not claim to reveal the essence of judo. Rather, it is more concerned with illustrating the historical evolution of its character. It argues that the global 'sportification' of judo did not so much go through a pattern of unilateral diffusion, whereby the unchanged essence was transmitted from Japan to the rest of the world, but rather followed a process of convergence, a collective construction emerging out of various physical cultures and ideas across the world.

By the term 'sportification', I intend to shed light on the historical process by which judo and other physical cultures came to attain the characteristics of what we call 'sport' today. Various authors have asked what makes a sport a sport.[8] Instead of attempting to identify the essence of sport itself or to strictly define the term, however, this article attempts to illustrate the wider context. What people meant by the term is one thing, but the very fact that they came to use it has its own significance. And it is from this angle that this article intends to analyse the sportification of judo. It will ask: what are the important economic conditions, cultural values, and epistemology (what Michel Foucault would have called the 'episteme') that underpin the ideas and practices of judo, and how have they changed?[9] It also addresses the dynamics of the sportification of judo, assessing whether this process was governed by a regulating agent or a central idea, or was more an accumulation of spontaneous decisions and practices.

In particular, this article will focus on the changes to the rules of judo. It examines how the geographical expansion of judo led to changes in styles, consequently affecting the rules, which in turn institutionalized those changes. Modification of the rules may be less spectacular than developments in the techniques or styles, but the long-term ramifications can be significant. Indeed, once a rule is changed, the effect can even be to transform the whole idea of what judo is. Furthermore, as will become clear, the whole idea of rule-making unconsciously carries certain assumptions.[10]

Many of the official documents recording the historical changes to the rules of judo remain either inaccessible or unknown, but I have been able to consult some of the

7 Patrick O'Brien, 'Historiographical traditions and modern imperatives for the restoration of global history', *Journal of Global History*, 1, 1, pp. 4–7, 15–32. See also Alan Bairner, 'When "East" meets "West": reflections on cultural exchange', *Asia Pacific Journal of Sport and Social Sciences*, 1, 2–3, pp. 87–96.

8 See especially Allen Guttmann, *From ritual to record: the nature of modern sports*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1978, pp. 54–5. See also Eric Dunning and Kenneth Sheard, *Barbarians, gentlemen and players: a sociological study of the development of rugby football*, 2nd edn, London: Routledge, 2005, pp. 30–1; Dominic Malcolm, Jon Gemmell, and Nalin Mehta, 'Cricket and modernity: international and interdisciplinary perspectives on the study of the imperial game', *Sport in Society*, 12, 4/5, 2009, pp. 433–4.

9 Michel Foucault, *The order of things: an archaeology of the human sciences*, London: Routledge, 2002, pp. xi–xii, xxii–xxiii, 183.

10 This article primarily focuses on the rules in men's judo, but there is a growing body of literature on women's judo that deserves much attention. See especially Kaori Yamaguchi, *History and challenges of women's judo*, Tokyo: Nippon Budokan (山口香『女子柔道の歴史と課題』日本武道館), 2012. See also Miarka, Bastons Marques, and Franchini, 'Reinterpreting'.

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unique primary sources of the Kodokan Judo Institute of Japan and the IJF. In particular, I have collected some of the IJF records of decision-making processes. These sources will be combined with some declassified documents from the British National Archives and other published primary sources, including many writings by the founder of judo himself.

The article will begin by setting out the origins of judo and asking whether it was originally designed as a sport. Second, it will locate the process through which judo spread around the world in the context of Japanese imperial expansion and collapse. Third, it will examine changes in the rules of judo and discuss the underlying epistemological shift. Fourth, it will look into some of the more recent changes, which are qualitatively different from the earlier ones. The conclusion will discuss what the findings of this article can reveal about the larger process of cultural exchange.

Judo and sport

Judo emerged out of various traditions of Japanese martial arts sometimes called *bujutsu* (martial technique) or *bugei* (literally, 'martial art'). These strands of martial arts were widely practised by the samurai lords as methods of physical training, particularly during the Edo era (1603–1868), when Japan was ruled by the shoguns of the Tokugawa family. Some scholars also claim that, during this period or even earlier, various traditional martial arts in East Asia contributed to the development of judo, although others dispute this.[11] After Japan initiated the shift towards rapid modernization and Westernization during the Meiji era (1868–1912), some strands of these martial arts started to emphasize the spiritual aspects of training and were renamed *budō* (martial way of life) or *jūjutsu* (technique of pliancy).[12]

In line with these traditions, in 1882 a young teacher, Jigoro Kano (*Kanō Jigorō*), opened a training hall in a wooden temple in downtown Tokyo. Kano was born in 1860 to a wealthy merchant family in western Japan.[13] After losing his beloved mother at the age of ten he moved to Tokyo; at fourteen, he entered a boarding school to be instructed by Dutch and German teachers and subsequently moved to a preparatory school to learn English. After this

11 Japanese scholars tend to be critical of the view that judo can be traced back to traditions that developed outside today's Japan. See Katsutoshi Ono and Hiroyuki Mizuno, 'Whether Japan is really the birthplace of judo (小野勝敏、水野博介「柔道発祥の地は本当に日本か」)', in Sakaue, *Jujutsu and judo*, pp. 168–76. See also Jigoro Kano, 'Judo and its educational value', *Dainipponkyoikukai Zasshi* (嘉納治五郎「柔道一班並ニ其 教育上ノ価値」『大日本教育会雑誌』), 87, 1889, pp. 446–9. For further discussion on the origins of various strands of martial arts leading to judo, see also Naoki Murata, *Learning from Master Jigoro Kano*, Tokyo: Nippon Budokan (村田直樹『嘉納治五郎師範に学ぶ』日本武道館), 2001, pp. 12–19; Kenji Tomiki, 'The history of classical *jujutsu* and the development of Kodokan judo', *Taiikugaku Kenkyu* (富木謙治「古流 柔術の歴史的変遷と講道館柔道の発展」『体育學研究』), 12, 5, 1968, p. 280.

12 Shun Inoue, *Origins of budo*, Tokyo: Yoshikawakobunkan (井上俊『武道の誕生』吉川弘文館), 2004, pp. 2–7. There are also empirical studies on the genealogy of jujutsu: see, for example, Tetsuya Nakajima, 'Verification of the genealogy of Jikishin-ryu-jujutsu through reading about and understanding the role of the Jikishin-ryu-yawara-jo', *Budogaku Kenkyu* (中嶋哲也「直心流柔術の検証：『直心流柔序』の読解を通して」『武道学研究』), 43, 1, 2010, pp. 9–17.

13 For the background of Kano's family, see Kendo Yokoyama, *Biography of Master Kano*, Tokyo: Kodokan (横山健堂『嘉納先生伝』講道館), 1941, pp. 3–15.

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deep and prolonged exposure to Western culture and languages, he eventually matriculated at the University of Tokyo, the first modern university in Japan. While young Kano thrived academically, he was less gifted in physical terms.[14] Japan was going through a rapid and drastic process of modernization, but underneath the cosmetic changes there was still a pronounced chauvinistic samurai culture among the elites, and Kano later recalled how he used to get frustrated with the macho attitude of his classmates.[15] Thus, he started to learn jujutsu (*jūjutsu*) at the age of eighteen. He was quick to prove his talent and was even invited to demonstrate his skills at an exhibition in front of Ulysses S. Grant when he visited Tokyo in 1879.[16] In fact, even from these early stages Kano's interest and ambitions transcended the confines of a nation. He later recalled that he had once studied Western martial art techniques in the library in order to develop a new method.[17]

Fired by his enthusiasm for jujutsu, Kano opened a training hall of his own in 1882.[18] In high spirits, he named his training hall Kodokan (*Kōdōkan*) and called his style of jujutsu 'judo' (*jūdō*, way of 'gentleness' or 'giving way', in Kano's translation).[19] This shift from jujutsu to judo was partly to do with image. Kano observed that jujutsu and bujutsu had come to be seen as barbaric, particularly by the aristocrats; he therefore branded his style using a new word.[20]

In more substantive terms, the difference between Kodokan judo and the other forms of jujutsu was defined by three characteristics that it shared with what we would understand today as modern sport. First, Kano categorized various techniques used in jujutsu and theorized them so that they could easily be explained in verbal terms. Inoue argues that Kano successfully promoted judo by giving it a scientific guise;[21] a series of articles entitled 'A general guide to Kodokan judo' published in 1914–15 conforms to this view.[22] Second, Kano established set rules for judo, the implications of which will be discussed in detail below.[23] Third, he consciously promoted judo outside Japan. Between 1889 and 1938, Kano toured around the world twelve times.[24] It is clear that he intended modern judo or Kodokan judo to 'go global' from the outset.

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14 See his pictures in *Kano Jigoro corpus*, Tokyo: Kodokan (『嘉納治五郎系』講道館), 1989, vol. 12.

15 Jigoro Kano, *Kano Jigoro: my life and judo*, Tokyo: Nihontosho Centre (嘉納治五郎『嘉納治五郎: 私の生涯と柔道』日本図書センター), 1997, pp. 11–13.

16 See especially Kano, *Kano Jigoro*, p. 16. See also Murata, *Internationalization of judo*, pp. 24–7.

17 Kano, *Kano Jigoro*, pp. 17–18. This technique later became called '*kataguruma*'.

18 Inoue, *Origins of budo*, pp. 11–15.

19 Jigoro Kano, 'Jujutsu and its origins', and 'Evolution of judo' (嘉納治五郎「柔術およびその起源」「柔道の発達」), in *Kano Jigoro corpus*, vol. 2, pp. 4–33. Jigoro Kano, *Kodokan Judo*, rev. edn, Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1994, p. 16.

20 Inoue, *Origins of budo*, pp. 16–17.

21 Inoue, 'Invention', pp. 165, 173.

22 Jigoro Kano, *Writings of Kano Jigoro*, Tokyo: Satsuki Shobo (嘉納治五郎『新装板　嘉納治五郎著作集』五月書房), 1992, vol. 2, pp. 11–55. The Japanese title of the article was「講道館柔道概説」. See also Kano, *Kano Jigoro*, pp. 103–11.

23 Kano, *Writings of Kano Jigoro*, vol. 2, pp. 55–66.

24 Ogata et al., *Internationalization of judo*, pp. 10–11.

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Although these three features would make judo a sport, this does not necessarily mean that Kano intended to make judo a sport as we understand the concept today. In 1906, when Japan was excited about its victory in the war against Russia, Kano claimed that judo had a distinctively Japanese character. In an interview with a Japanese newspaper, he argued that, although Chinese and Korean practitioners could improve their techniques with practice and that Europeans were perhaps physically advantaged, these 'different races' could not access the 'fundamental spirit' of judo with such ease.[25] In 1933, when Japan was pursuing an increasingly narrow path in international politics after its invasion of Manchuria, he gave a speech entitled 'The only way for the Japanese to win the competition among the best nations in the world' at a reception in Tokyo.[26] In fact, soon after the establishment of Kodokan, he had explained to the senior officials of the Japanese government that judo would be an effective tool to implant patriotism in the 'spines and brains' of Japanese youngsters.[27] He also once argued for the importance of embracing patriotism in one's everyday life.[28] Thus, Kano was both an internationalist and a nationalist at the same time.[29]

Furthermore, he rarely used the term 'sport'. In an article published in 1917, he defined the term 'competitive exercise' (*kyōgi undō*) as any exercise conducted for the purpose of competition, and he included judo as well as other martial arts in this category.[30] A decade later, he further advanced his idea and argued that judo can be understood as a 'competitive exercise' as long as it is practised at an amateur level.[31] He also used the term 'athletic competition' (*undō kyōgi*).[32] The only example I could find of him using the term 'sport' (*supōtsu*) is a short report he published in 1930, half a century after he had opened Kodokan. There he compares judo with 'other sports', which implies that he categorized judo as a sport. However, it is unclear what he meant by the term, beyond contending that judo should not be confined to reclusive training halls but should be opened up to the masses and media

25 *Yomiuri Shimbun* (『讀賣新聞』), morning edition, 8 February 1906, p. 3.

26 Kano, *Writings of Kano Jigoro*, vol. 3, pp. 373–87. The Japanese title of the speech was「世界の優秀国民間の競争において 日本人が勝ち得る唯一の方法」.

27 Kano, 'Judo and its educational value', p. 471. See also Tetsuya Nakajima, 'The body as seen by Arinori Mori and Jigoro Kano: two characteristics of the body of the modern Japanese', in Kunihiro Seto, Chizuru Sugiyama, and Nagako Hateruma, eds., *Rethinking Japanese bodies*, Tokyo: Meiwa (中嶋哲也「森有礼と嘉納治五郎にみる身体：近代日本人の身体における二つの性質」瀬戸邦弘、杉山千鶴、波照間永子『日本人の体 · 再考』明和出版), 2012, p. 87.

28 Jigoro Kano, 'Patriotism', *Kokushi* (嘉納治五郎「愛國心」『國士』本の友社), 1901, 4, pp. 321–4.

29 Jigoro Kano, *Teachings for youth training*, Tokyo: Dobunkan (嘉納治五郎『青年修養訓』同文館), 1911, pp. 371–403.

30 Jigoro Kano, 'The position of Japan's competitive exercise in the international scene', *Judo* (嘉納治五郎「本邦競技運動の国際間に於ける位置」『柔道』講道館、本の友社により1964 年再刊), 3, 5, 1917, pp. 2–8.

31 Jigoro Kano, 'Judo and competitive exercise', *Sakko* (嘉納治五郎「柔道と競技運動」『作興』講道館文化会), 8, 11, 1929, pp. 2–5.

32 Jigoro Kano, 'Speech of Master Kano', *Kano-sensei Kyoikukouroukinen Kaishi*, Tokyo: Kano-sensei Kyoikukouroukinen-kai (嘉納治五郎「嘉納先生御挨拶」『嘉納先生教育功労記念会誌』嘉納先生教育功労記念会), 1937, p. 16.

like 'other sports'.[33] Interestingly, before Kano used the term 'sport' in this report, a critique of Kodokan had employed the term in order to attack the mainstream judo establishment over which Kano presided. It argued, 'we shall not forget the fact that judo is a fully fledged sport', although 'few people in Tokyo where the bastion of Kodokan lies' would agree.[34] It is unclear whether Kano and his critic attached the same meaning to 'sport', but the two sides seem to have shared the view that some change needed to be brought to the mainstream judo circle in Japan.

Judo and the Olympics

While Kano and his critics were discussing the future direction of judo in Japan, judo was also expanding into the world. Kano's twelve world tours took him to Europe, North America, China, and Africa.[35] His students followed suit. In the early twentieth century, Japanese judo practitioners taught by Kano went to Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Hungary, Romania, Turkey, Egypt, the United States, and Canada. Kano himself took his first trip to Europe in 1889 at the age of thirty. At this point Japan had just established a constitutional monarchy modelled after European states, and the main purpose of his trip was to study the West. It was more about learning than teaching, apart from a notable occasion when he was forced to fight a Russian navy officer on a ship sailing the Indian Ocean.[36] From these early years on, Kano and his disciples – some of whom were already abroad – frequently exchanged views not only about judo but also about the changing political landscape of Japan and the world.[37]

After Kano saw the world outside Japan, his mission to expand judo globally became more pronounced. While Japan had made a mark in international politics following its wars with China and Russia, in 1909 the French ambassador to Japan contacted Kano with a letter from Baron Pierre de Coubertin. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) was seeking Japanese representation. Consequently, Kano became the first Japanese member of the IOC, making him one of the main people representing Japan in the world of sports.[38] In 1911 Kano became the first president of the Japan Sports Association. The next year, the Japanese Cabinet sent him to the Stockholm Olympic Games, the first Olympic Games

33 Jigoro Kano, 'Comments on the martial arts contests in front of the emperor', in Ministry of the Imperial Household and Dainippon Yubenkai Kodansha, eds., *Contests in front of the Showa emperor*, Tokyo: Dainippon Yubenkai Kodansha (嘉納治五郎「天覧武道試合所感」宮内省 (監) 大日本雄辯会講談社 (編)『昭和 天覧試合』大日本雄辯会講談社), 1930, pp. 443–4.

34 Kibizaburo Sasaki, 'On judo competition rules: a critique of the Kodokan rules', *Teikoku Daigaku Shimbun*, (佐々木喜備三郎「柔道審判規定に就いて: 講道館規定を弾ず」『帝国大学新聞』), 11 October 1926. See also Tomoko Mifune, 'The characteristics of "Kosen-judo" as a subculture of pre-war Japanese high schools: a study of university judo competitions during the Meiji, Taisho, and Showa eras (三船朋子「旧制高 等学校下位文化としての『高専柔道』の特徴: 明治・大正期における学生柔道から』)', unpublished master's dissertation, Tohoku University, 2013, pp. 58–9.

35 Ogata et al., *Internationalization of judo*, pp. 10–11.

36 Kano, *Kano Jigoro*, pp. 211–31. See also Murata, *Learning*, pp. 228–35.

37 *Kanojuku Dosokai Zasshi*, Kanojuku (『嘉納塾同窓会雑誌』嘉納塾), 5, 7, 10, 16–17, 22, 37, 1894–1918, microfilm, accessible at Meiji Shinbun Zasshi Bunko, Faculty of Law, University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan.

38 See especially Yokoyama, *Biography*, pp. 241–3. See also Murata, *Learning*, pp. 240–2.

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for Japan.[39] In the years to follow, he would go on to lead Japan to participate in and host the Olympics.

It is important to make a distinction between Kano's desire to increase the Japanese presence in the Olympics – which was clearly the case – and his desire to make judo an Olympic sport. As Richard Bowen points out, the latter is more assumed than demonstrated, and will need to be addressed with further research.[40] However, Kano's campaign to connect Japan with the Olympics certainly did go hand in hand with his promotion of judo overseas. He was a cultural ambassador for Japan with two hats: one as the founder of judo and the other as the Japanese representative in global sports. To this day, Kano is remembered not only as the creator of judo but also as the godfather of modern sports in Japan. For example, he was listed as the top figure in a sheet of commemorative postage stamps celebrating the centenary of sports in Japan issued in 2011.[41] The duality of Kano's role would connect judo and sports in the years to come.

The 1920s was a decade of internationalism in Japan, and so it was for Kano. Between 1920 and 1932 he went to the Far East Olympic Games in Shanghai and three Olympics in Antwerp, Amsterdam, and Los Angeles. By this point, he felt that his international promotion of judo over the years was bearing some fruit. He was asked to establish ties with Italy's judo federation. In London, the rapid growth of judo in a nation that, in his words, 'generally does not go for drastic change', took him by surprise. He was also welcomed by the local judo community in Berlin, which even showed him a book with his name on it – although it seemed to have the wrong interpretation of Kodokan judo.[42]

While Japan was becoming increasingly isolated in the international community, Kano kept on travelling abroad. Between 1933, the year that he met Hitler in Germany, and 1936, he attended IOC meetings in four countries.[43] The primary aim of the trips was to promote the Japanese case to host the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 1940, the 2,600th year in the Japanese imperial calendar.[44] In an article written in 1936, he stated: 'Japan is sending a larger and larger number of competitors to places very inconvenient from the point of time and expense. Can there be any reason why Japan should always bear the inconvenience, and European countries should go where it is convenient for them?'[45] Thus, before the opening of the Berlin Games, the IOC selected Tokyo over Helsinki as the venue for the twelfth Olympics. In 1938, Kano visited Cairo for another IOC meeting, but died on the ship on his way back to Japan. He was 79 years old.[46] In the wider scheme of things, Japan was on

39 Murata, *Learning*, pp. 248–50.

40 Richard Bowen, 'Origins of the British Judo Association, the European Judo Union, and the International Judo Federation', in Thomas A. Green and Joseph R. Svinth, eds., *Martial arts in the modern world*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003, pp. 173, 183.

41 'Japan sports 100th anniversary (記念切手「日本のスポーツ 100 年」)', commemorative postage stamp, Japan Post, 8 July 2011.

42 Kano, *Kano Jigoro*, pp. 188–93.

43 Kano, *Writings of Kano Jigoro*, vol. 3, p. 386.

44 See also Sumiyuki Kotani, 'Memories of Master Jigoro Kano', *Monthly Report Vol. 1 for Writings of Kano Jigoro Vol. 2*, Tokyo: Satsuki Shobo (小谷澄之「嘉納治五郎先生の思い出」『嘉納治五郎著作集 第 2 巻月報 1』五月書房), August 1983, pp. 5–8.

45 Kano Jigoro, 'Olympic Games and Japan', in Green and Svinth, *Martial arts*, p. 171.

46 Kano, *Kano Jigoro*, pp. 282–98.

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course for another major war, which resulted in the cancellation of the 1940 Tokyo Olympics.[47] Kano's dream for judo and the Olympics had risen with Japan's imperial expansion and went down with its implosion.

Convergence and changes of rules

Kano's vision and his disciples' international promotion gave judo a global character, but the globalization of judo went beyond their designs to affect the rules and even the underlying epistemology of judo. At an early stage this was manifested in the diffusion of jujutsu. While Kano attempted to differentiate judo from jujutsu and promoted judo through a series of world tours, jujutsu expanded beyond Japan through much less formal channels. For example, an American ex-sailor named John O'Brien learned jujutsu as an expatriate police officer in Nagasaki. When he returned to the United States, he even taught judo to President Theodore Roosevelt along with a Japanese teacher from Kodokan.[48] Arthur Conan Doyle has Sherlock Holmes practising 'baritsu', a martial art that is believed to have been derived from jujutsu.[49] Judo also seems to have been used by British prison officers to restrain inmates on some occasions. In 1939, the Prison Commission of Britain was considering to 'propose to issue a Standing Order to make clear to Governors and Staff the extent to which the use of Judo is permissible'.[50] A guide to judo published in London in 1958 listed techniques for 'a frail girl' to defend herself against a male assailant.[51] In Soviet Russia, judo and jujutsu merged with various local traditions of wrestling and became sambo.[52] Although sambo has developed as a different sport, its techniques are largely transferrable to judo and can be highly effective.[53] Georgia is also known to have developed effective judo techniques by introducing skills from its own tradition of wrestling.[54] Related to this, the Kodokan Library's collection has a handwritten Japanese translation of wrestling rules from around 1930, indicating that someone affiliated with Kodokan was

47 For the globalization of judo after this period, see Yoshizo Matsumoto, *Judo across the world*, Tokyo: Nippon Shuppan Kyodo Kabushikigaisha (松本芳三『世界の柔道』日本出版協同株式会社), 1952.

48 Kotaro Yabu, '*Jujutsu* versus western wrestling: the evolution of judo and the transcendence of "Jiu-Jitsu" (藪耕太郎「柔術 vs. レスリング：変容する柔術と継承される"Jiu-Jitsu"」)', in Sakaue, *Jujutsu and judo*, pp. 15–24. For the origins of *baritsu*, see Isao Takagi, '*Tomoenage* in Paris: the path towards French-style judo (高木勇夫「パリの巴投げ: フランス式柔道への道」)', in Sakaue, *Jujutsu and judo*, p. 122.

49 Kei Okada, 'Sherlock Holmes the *jujutsu* master, Theodore Roosevelt the judo master: Anglo-American *jujutsu*; judo fad and physical culture (岡田桂「柔術家シャーロック・ホームズ、柔道家セオドア・ルーズベルト：英米における柔術 / 柔道ブームの位相と身体文化」)', in Sakaue, *Jujutsu and judo*, pp. 72–80.

50 The National Archives, Kew (henceforth TNA), PCOM 9/214, 'Use of judo by prison officers', 23 August 1939.

51 Charles Yerkow, *Official judo: the authentic guide to sport judo and self-defense*, rev. edn, London: Arco Publishers, 1958, pp. 7–8, 14–15, 24–8.

52 Vladimir Putin, Vasily Shestakov, and Alexey Levitsky, *Judo: history, theory, practice*, Berkeley, CA: Blue Snake Books, 2004.

53 Toru Koga, 'Russian *sambo*: "a theory of *jujutsu*" (古賀徹「ロシアのサンボ：『柔術の理論』」)', in Sakaue, *Jujutsu and judo*, pp. 177–97.

54 Dai Nishimori, 'Georgia, a hidden bastion of judo (西森大「知られざる柔道強国グルジア」)', in Sakaue, *Jujutsu and judo*, pp. 198–205. See also 'Close-up: Georgia, USSR', *Kindai Judo* (「グルジア柔道探訪」『近代柔道』), October 1990, pp. 3–8.

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studying wrestling.[55] This hybridization of judo and jujitsu with various traditions of wrestling and martial arts around the world went far beyond the original expectations of Kodokan. If Kodokan manifested and spread the formal brand of judo, the spontaneous diffusion of jujutsu characterized the evolution of a parallel, sometimes informal, agglutinate strand.

The popularization of judo was accompanied by the development of different techniques and of changes in the idea of how judo should be practised and regulated. Today, judo has a set of clearly defined rules that allows competition in major matches such as those held at the Olympics or the World Championships. Two contestants, generally one wearing a blue uniform and the other wearing white, fight each other in a demarcated area sized between 8 metres by 8 metres and 10 metres by 10 metres for a fixed amount of time. A contestant can win the match by throwing their opponent, holding the opponent on his or her back for a certain amount of time, applying a submission hold on the elbow joint, or choking the opponent; a contestant can also win if the opponent commits certain rule violations.

Kodokan first established the formal rules of judo in 1900. At this point there was another body also regulating judo called Dainippon-butokukai, but in both organizations Japanese judo practitioners and trainers unarguably had the monopoly on rule-making. Imperial expansion and collapse over the following decades drastically altered this situation. As we have seen, during the early stages judo's social reach in Japan was expanded because it was promoted as an effective tool for education and the enhancement of national and imperial unity.[56] Soon after the Meiji emperor promulgated the Constitution of the Empire of Japan in 1889, Kano published an article clearly expressing his view that judo could be used to enhance 'patriotism' in the Japanese nation.[57] Later, with the effervescence generated by the Sino-Japanese War, Kano argued that judo would augment the imperial and patriotic spirit.[58]

The Second World War dramatically affected Japan's place in the world of judo overseas, however, and even shaped judo in Japan itself. The Anglo-Japanese Judo Club Limited, for example, which was incorporated in 1934, was questioned by the British Companies Registration Office in 1942 as to whether it was still in operation.[59] A month after Japan accepted the Potsdam Declaration in July 1945, judo was ousted from the school curriculum, as it was seen as one of the vehicles for promoting militarism in schools.[60] Kodokan managed to remain in place, but Dainippon-butokukai was forced to dissolve.[61]

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55 Kodokan Judo Museum and Library, Tokyo, handwritten translation of the USA amateur wrestling competition rules (as of 1930), author unknown (筆者不詳「レスリング審判規定 北米合衆国アマチュアレスリング規定 (一九三〇公認) 」講道館資料館).

56 For an analysis of judo's history in modern Japan, see Nakajima and Thompson, 'Judo'. See also Carr, 'Making way'.

57 Kano, 'Judo and its educational value', p. 471. See also Nakajima and Thompson, 'Judo', p. 13.

58 Tetsuya Nakajima, 'Criticism of the concept of Kodokan judo after the Japan–China war: an analysis of Yasutaro Fujio's assertion of "Japanese spirit"' (English translation of the title given by the author), *Supotsushi Kenkyu* (中嶋哲也「日中戦争期における講道館柔道への理念批判: 日本精神を主張した藤生安太郎を 中心に」『スポーツ史研究』), 24, 2011, p. 34.

59 TNA, BT/31/33903/292921, various documents.

60 Junzo Hasegawa, *Kano Jigoro's teaching and philosophy*, Tokyo: Meiji Shoin (長谷川純三『嘉納治五郎の教育と思想』明治書院), 1981, pp. 147–54.

61 Ogata et al., *Internationalization of judo*, p. 29.

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While Japanese judo practitioners were suffering in Japan, however, their peers in Europe were thriving. In 1948, representatives from Britain, Switzerland, Italy, and Holland established the European Judo Union (EJU).[62] In July 1951, delegates from Italy, Britain, Belgium, France, Holland, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland gathered in a Chinese restaurant in Soho, London, and formed another governing organization, the International Judo Federation, or IJF. Europe was so central to the IJF that the EJU was formally dissolved so that it could be replaced by the IJF, although as it happens the EJU was re-established in 1952 as a separate entity. At this point, however, Japan was out of the game,[63] remaining a mere observer until it formally joined the IJF in 1952. At that point Risei Kano, the son of Jigoro Kano, became its president,[64] but its global nature had been firmly established. Risei himself titled one of his articles at that time 'From the judo of Japan to the judo of the world'.[65]

In 1956 and 1958, when the Japanese economy was on the course towards recovery, Tokyo hosted the first two World Championships.[66] The 1964 Olympic Games were also held in Tokyo; they included judo for the first time as an official sport and Japan won three gold medals out of four. At that point, Japan's pre-eminent position once again seemed intact. The Olympics set separate rules, but these still referred to Kodokan rules.[67] A fundamental shift was about to come, however. In 1967 the IJF established its own refereeing rules. Until then, Kodokan in Tokyo had set the international rules of judo and Japan had effectively been the only law-maker for judo.[68] Although there had been some variations in the rules of judo within Japan, all major international judo matches including the Olympics had been regulated by the Kodokan rules for a decade after the first World Championships. But now both Kodokan and the IJF were going to have their own rules. This dual regulation system persists to the present day.[69]

The ramifications of the dual system proved to be serious. Japanese judo officials no longer had the monopoly on deciding what the rules of judo should be. They could hold on

62 The exact timing and location of the founding of the EJU is disputed: see Bowen, 'Origins', pp. 175–8. Ogata et al., *Internationalization of judo*, p. 16, count France instead of Switzerland as a founding member of the EJU.

63 Bowen, 'Origins', pp. 175–8. See also the EJU website, http://www.eju.net/history, and the IJF website, http://www.ijf.org/ (both consulted 2 July 2012).

64 Murata, *Internationalization of judo*, pp. 329–51.

65 Risei Kano, *Judo flourishing: eight years after the war*, Tokyo: Toindo Shoten (嘉納履正『伸び行く柔 道：戦後八年の歩み』桐陰堂書店), 1954, pp. 91–3.

66 A detailed list of world championships between 1956 and 2008 is available on the website of the All Japan Judo Federation, http://www.judo.or.jp/2009wjc/kiroku.pdf (consulted 1 November 2012).

67 Kodokan Judo Museum and Library, Tokyo, brochure, 'Rules of judo contest in the Tokyo Olympic Games'.

68 *Contest rules of the Kodokan judo*, English translation by Kodokan from the original Japanese text in 1951, revised in 1953, Tokyo: Kodokan, 1954; *Contest rules of the Kodokan*, revised 1951, 1955, 1961, Tokyo: Kodokan, 1961.

69 Koji Komata, Takashi Ogata, Isao Matsui, and Yoshinori Takeuchi, *Judo: rules and referee's officiating techniques*, Tokyo: Daishukan Shoten (小俣幸嗣、尾形敬史、松井勲著、竹内善徳監修『詳解 柔道のルールと審判法』大修館書店), 2005, p. 13. See also Hironobu Sato and Kosuke Nagaki, 'Japanese practitioners' understanding of judo rules: differences between the IJF and Kodokan rules', *Nippon-taiiku-gakkai Yokoshu* (佐藤博信、永木耕介「日本柔道実践者の競技ルールに対する認識について：『国際規 定』と『講道館規定』の相違から」『日本体育学会大会予稿集』), 58, 2007, p. 345.

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to their own rules inside their country, but international events were now going to be governed by rules that were decided by the IJF, which included different nations across the world. These changes in the rules at the international level were to have a lasting effect on the style and even the philosophy of judo, which in turn would change the idea of judo within Japan itself. As a result, the most widely available rule book distributed by the All Japan Judo Federation today gives the IJF and not Kodokan rules, even though the federation is physically located in Kodokan's building.[70] It is unclear whether the leading Japanese experts in 1967 anticipated such repercussions of the new rules system, but this was a major turning point in the institutional sportification of judo.

In a crucial move, the IJF rules introduced the principle of cumulative penalties, which allowed for the accrual of slight rule infringements that eventually became equal to a serious infringement, automatically resulting in the loss of the match. A useful analogy would be association football. If a system of cumulative penalties were applied in that sport, it would mean that were one side to commit minor infringements, such as an offside multiple times, it would automatically result in the loss of the entire game.[71] In judo, the scale of measuring the seriousness of minor infringements has varied over time, but the overall idea has remained the same as it was when it was introduced in 1967.[72] For example, Article 31 of the Contest Rules of the IJF published in 1974 reads: 'The referee shall declare shido (note), chui (caution), keikoku (warning) or hansoku-make (disqualification) according to the gravity of any infringement of the regulations in Article 30. In general a simple repetition in one of the above mentioned categories shall merit a penalty of the next highest category.'[73] Effectively this meant that trapping one's opponent into a situation where he or she is forced to commit a minor rule infringement can be as effective as actually attacking the opponent. Once this system became part of the IJF rules, the Kodokan rules eventually followed suit through a series of amendments in 1980, 1985, and 1995.[74]

In 1974 the IJF rules also introduced a penalty against non-combativity, stating that it was prohibited to 'adopt an excessively defensive attitude' and that 'a state of non-combativity may be taken to exist when in general for 20 to 30 seconds there have been no attacking moves on the part of one or both contestants. This period may be prolonged or shortened depending upon the circumstances.'[75] Non-combativity in itself is a minor rule infringement. Yet the system of cumulative penalties means that being taken to be in a state of non-combativity a certain number of times will result in the loss of the game. Coming back to the association football analogy, this means that if one side keeps passing the ball between its own players without a clear intention to attack the goal over a certain period of

70 *International judo federation refereeing rules, 2011*, Tokyo: All Japan Judo Federation (『国際柔道連盟試合審判規定 2011』全日本柔道連盟), 2012.

71 The details of the cumulative penalties in the latest IJF rules are available on the IJF website, http://www.ijf.org/ (consulted 1 November 2012). See also Ron Angus, *Competitive judo: winning training and tactics*, Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 2006, pp. 15–18.

72 *Handbook of the International Judo Federation, 1979*; *Handbook of the International Judo Federation, 1986*.

73 *Handbook: International Judo Federation, 1974*, p. 57.

74 Komata et al., *Judo*, pp. 17–19.

75 *Handbook: International Judo Federation, 1974*, pp. 56–7.

time, it automatically loses the match as a result. Or, alternatively, one side could win the match without scoring any goals, as long as it succeeds in creating a situation where the other side appears to be sufficiently inactive over a period of time. To that extent, making one's opponent look inactive has become a technique as effective and legitimate as actually throwing the opponent.

An interesting contrast with the IJF's non-combativity clause can be found in Britain. In its rule book published in 1960, the British Judo Association listed as one of the prohibited acts 'to attempt to avoid defeat by persistently adopting a defensive, negative, ugly, crouch'. However, the commentary reads:

> A defensive position is permissible, especially in the case of a lighter man, provided that he sometimes comes out of it to attack. When he does not make an attack for say two minutes, it would be grounds for warning him that a continuance would lead to disqualification. To ensure that the true spirit is maintained this rule should be conscientiously applied.[76]

Koji Komata et al. argue that the IJF's non-combativity clause symbolizes the fundamental difference between the Kodokan and IJF ideas of judo.[77] Whereas the former tended to emphasize the importance and beauty inherent in the application of an offensive technique, comparable to scoring a decisive goal in association football, the latter opened the door towards winning the match with a more negative tactic, such as the simple repetition of an offside trap. In 1990, the penalty against non-combativity was further toughened. It thus became even easier to win the game without actually throwing or performing an effective grappling hold on the opponent.[78]

Given the significance of the non-combativity clause, one would have expected the Japanese judo leaders and practitioners at that time to react to these changes, but instead there was an intriguing silence. Even *Judo Shinbun*, one of the most critical and reflective media publications on judo during the period concerned, took six years after the 1974 amendment to appreciate its implications fully. In 1978 it discussed the problem of the non-combativity clause, but only in 1980 did it report that the clause was being abused by contestants attempting to score by showing fake attempts to attack, thereby making the other side look defensive.[79] A similar pattern can be found in relation to more recent changes. For example, in 2012 the IJF took the drastic step of withdrawing the principle of cumulative penalties. However, Kodokan's reaction to this has again been surprisingly modest.[80]

These changes do not pertain to any particular technique, and hence appear to be relatively minor at first sight, and yet they turn out to have had a significant impact in

76 *Contest rules and commentary*, London: The British Judo Association, 1960, p. 18.

77 Komata et al., *Judo*, p. 17.

78 Ogata et al., *Internationalization of judo*, pp. 83–4.

79 *Judo Shinbun*, 10 March 1978, pp. 1, 3.

80 Referees Committee, All Japan Judo Federation, 'Seminar report on the IJF new rules', *Judo* (全日本柔道連盟審判委員会「国際柔道連盟新ルールセミナー報告」『柔道』), 84, 3, 2013, pp. 27–33; Hirotaka Okada, 'On the experimental introduction of new rules: comments on Grand Slam Paris (岡田弘隆「新ルール の試験的導入について」)', *Judo*, 84, 4, 2013, pp. 83–5. Note that *Judo* is published by Kodokan.

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deciding the course of judo's evolution. The Japanese judo establishment tends to be self-restrained and slow to digest their consequences, however. The most plausible key to understanding this contradiction is a difference in the ideas underlying the act of rule-making. On the one hand, the Japanese leaders seem to assume that judo should reflect a metaphysical ideal beyond what is stipulated in the rule book, an approach that was and is still shaped by the strong charisma of Kano. On the other hand, contestants want to win, and once a rule is codified and set, the rule itself becomes the ideal and the contestants do their best to win the match by using the rule to their maximum benefit. The difference between these two understandings seems to indicate a fundamental shift in the episteme of judo.

On the whole, these changes were viewed by the interested Japanese parties as an attempt by the IJF and more widely the international judo communities to move judo away from its origins. The idea was that judo, which had been founded not just as a martial art but also as a way of life – that is, the way of pliancy, embodying a set of values – was now becoming a sport, something resembling Western wrestling. Although there was little commentary on rule changes, in 1986 Yukimitsu Kano, the grandson of Jigoro and the then president of Kodokan, agreed that the question 'What is judo?' was one that needed to be answered.[81]

Commercialization

An even bigger shock to the Japanese judo leaders than rule changes came in the form of the introduction of coloured uniforms. The traditional colour for the uniforms had been white, but in 1997 the IJF decided to use blue in order to differentiate contestants. The main protagonist behind the introduction of coloured uniforms was also a former rival of Japanese judo. Anthonius Geesink was a widely respected Dutch judo master. He was awarded the 10th dan, the highest honour in the judo circle, and he also received the Order of the Sacred Treasure from the Japanese government. Earlier in life, he had won two world championships against top Japanese players and, most importantly, he won the gold medal in the open category at the Tokyo Olympics, which is still remembered in Japan as the moment when the Japanese hegemony in judo was decisively challenged. Twenty years later, in 1986, it was Geesink who proposed the introduction of coloured uniforms at the IJF meeting in Maastricht as a member of the IOC.[82]

It may sound logical to have one contestant in a white uniform and the other in a blue one in order to differentiate the contestants. Yet, once again, the issue was tradition. For the Japanese leaders the uniform was not just functional but had a cultural, symbolic,

81 Yukimitsu Kano, 'Foreword', in Kano, *Kodokan Judo*, p. 11. See also Kuniomi Kaneto and Kenji Tomiki, 'Judo matches and refereeing rules. part 1: the evolution of judo matches and refereeing rules in All Japan championships', *Nippon-taiikuyakkai Taikaigo* (金当国臣、富木謙治「柔道の試合方法と審判規定について:そのI全日本柔道選手権大会における試合方法と審判規定の変遷について」『日本体育学会大 会号』), 26, 1975, p. 596.

82 Seiki Nose, Eigo Nose, Wakaba Suzuki, and Hitoshi Miyake, 'Internationalization of judo and the challenges for Japanese judo, part 3: principles, internationalization and sportification of judo and the problems of its refereeing rules', *Saitama Daigaku Kiyo* (野瀬清喜、野瀬英豪、鈴木若葉、三宅仁「柔道の国際化と 日本柔道の今後の課題 (第三報): 柔道の理念 ·国際化 ·競技化 ·試合新版規定の問題点について」『埼玉大学紀要』 教育学部), 53, 1, 2004, pp. 252–4.

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and spiritual value. Changing its colour was seen as a major concession.[83] Why should a tradition of such spiritual importance be changed simply to make it easier for a third person to identify the different contestants? Unlike team sports such as association football or basketball, there is only one contestant on each side and the contestants themselves should know who is fighting on which side. Moreover, the referees should also be sufficiently acquainted with judo to tell which side is which.

The answer to this question can be found in the minutes of the IJF meetings. In 1993, the Directing Committee (DC) of the IJF gathered in Manchester to discuss various matters, including the introduction of coloured uniforms. At this stage, it 'was emphasized that the use of coloured judogis [uniforms] would be limited to Olympic Games and World Championships in order to improve acceptance by and income from TV'.[84] Commercialism was thus coming into play.

Later that year, the DC discussed the revenue from broadcasting rights.[85] In fact, just after Geesink started the campaign for the coloured uniforms, the committee contemplated a sponsorship contract with Adidas.[86] Concerns regarding revenue and public presentation went hand in hand. In a DC meeting held in 1996, the committee first discussed financial matters, including income from television rights and sponsorship from Hyundai and Coca Cola.[87] They then discussed how to promote judo to the wider public, including ways to make judo easier for the public and media to follow, such as greater differentiation of fighters, blue and white uniforms with names on the back, better identification of whether the contestants were medallists or champions, and commentary about the trend of the match and who was winning.[88]

In 1997, the DC again discussed new 'ideas on presentation in TV, in the venue, screen, public speakers, info on athletes, etc.' There was also a proposal for a 'fanfare or IJF tune' to announce the beginning of a competition.[89] Later that year, at another DC meeting, held in the Seychelles, one committee member suggested that there be 'more emphasis on the winners and make them like heroes and so make Judo more attractive and popular for the public'.[90]

The pursuit of an increasingly commercial path is, of course, not unique to judo. Indeed, it has arguably resisted financial temptation more than some other sports. In the case of cricket, for example, concerns have been raised about how commercial imperatives can be

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83 Seiki Nose, 'Internationalization of judo and the challenges for Japanese judo, part 1: women's judo at the Atlanta Olympics and its problems', *Saitama Daigaku Kiyo* (野瀬清喜「柔道の国際化と日本柔道の今後の課題（第一報）: アトランタオリンピック女子柔道の競技内容と問題点を中心に」『埼玉大学紀要』教育学部), 46, 1, 1997, p. 99; Nose et al., 'Internationalization of judo, part 3', pp. 70–1, 73–5.

84 IJF, Minutes of DC Meeting, no. 40, 7–9 May 1993, Manchester, UK. The IJF sources were originally downloaded from its former website (http://before.ijf.org/htmls/main_cong.html), which is now closed, before they were passed on to me. I thank Tetsuya Nakajima and Shusaku Kiryu for their cooperation.

85 IJF, Minutes of DC Meeting, no. 43, 22–23 November 1993, Lotte Hotel, Seoul, Korea.

86 IJF, Minutes of DC Meeting, no. 22, 12 January 1987, Tokyo, Japan.

87 IJF, Minutes of DC Meeting, no. 48, 20–22 May 1996, Austria Trend Hotel Bosei, Vienna, Austria.

88 IJF, Minutes of DC Meeting, no. 49, 7–8 October, 1996, Meridien Hotel, Oporto, Portugal.

89 IJF, Minutes of Extraordinary DC Meeting, 20 January 1997, Hotel Nankai South Tower, Osaka, Japan.

90 IJF, Minutes of DC Meeting, 23–23 May 1997, Hotel Meridien 'Barbarons', Mahe, Seychelles.

reconciled with moral principles.[91] Since judo is for the most part an amateur sport, it is less amenable to commercial incentives. Nonetheless, the adoption of a blue uniform for the TV audience marked a distinct change from what Kano envisaged in 1889 when he was promoting judo by distinguishing it from jujutsu:

> Jujutsu was at one time highly respected in our country as a noble art … later generations look on it as no more than a form of entertainment … many practitioners are obsessed only with mere appearance and beauty of form, and because of this jujutsu has come to be slandered as just a means of scraping out a meagre livelihood.[92]

Despite Kano's comments, however, the entertainment value of judo had been recognized much earlier than the 1990s. In 1923 an anonymous journalist published an article from Kodokan commenting that 'judo should be popularized as other sports (*kyōgi undō*) are and entertain many people watching it'.[93] Kano himself would actually come to share this view. In 1929 he confessed that he had been thinking 'for quite some time … whether it is appropriate to charge an entry fee to the spectator', and that he had reached the conclusion that it was, as long as the fees were used for good purposes and judo itself was practised as an amateur sport.[94] Yet it remains the case that in the early years Kano thought of judo as a 'noble art' and not primarily a spectator sport. Thus there is a significant distance between his aims and those of the IJF, which sought to make judo a 'form of entertainment' able to generate revenue from TV licensing rights, and which, in 2012, declared that 'Judo is a spectator sport'.[95]

Yong Sung Park was the president of the IJF between 1995 and 2007, the period when many of these new initiatives were discussed. Given his background with a master's degree from the business school of New York University, it might seem plausible that he would have exerted a great deal of influence on the commercial direction of judo.[96] However, there is no direct evidence in the IJF internal records that are available and other reports of the IJF discussions to support this case. He is said to have intervened in a heated debate about whether to introduce Spanish as an official language.[97] Other than that, however, the exact role of this long-time president in the commercial direction of judo remains unclear.

Most recently, the IJF announced further major changes to the contest rules, decided on unanimously by the committee members. First, it has banned the grabbing of an opponent's

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91 Russell Holden, 'International cricket: the hegemony of commerce, the decline of government interest and the end of morality?', *Sport in Society*, 12, 4/5, 2009, pp. 643–56.

92 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, morning edition, 16 May 1889, p. 2. English translation quoted from Nakajima and Thompson, 'Judo', p. 10.

93 Journalist A, 'Report on the Kodokan Headquarters Black-belt Council', *Judo* (A記者「中央講道館有段者会記」『柔道』講道館文化会), 8, 2, 1923, p. 48.

94 Kano, 'Judo and competitive exercise', pp. 3–5. See also Kano, 'Comments on the martial arts contests'; Tetsuya Nakajima, 'The popularization of budo', handout for a keynote lecture at the annual meeting of Japan Society of Physical Education, Health and Sport Sciences, 29 September 2011.

95 IJF, 'Refereeing & organizing rules and changes: explanations', 11 December 2012, http://www.intjudo.eu/News/cikk2389 (consulted 17 December 2012).

96 *Handbook of the International Judo Federation*, 1992, p. 3.

97 Saburo Matsushita and Shinro Fujita, 'Report of the IJF Congress', *Judo* (松下三郎・藤田真郎「IJF 総会報告」『柔道』), 72, 9, 2001, p. 59.

uniform anywhere under the belt, for the purpose of making judo 'more affordable [*sic*] to the public' – presumably meaning to make it easier to understand the intricacies of the techniques and more interesting to watch. Even more importantly, the IJF made the radical decision to withdraw the principle of cumulative penalties, 'in order to avoid that [*sic*] an increasing number of competitors trying to win by penalties instead of trying to win with a score, and in order to restore the balance in favour of the scores obtained by judo techniques'. It announced that: 'During the fight there will be three Shidos [warnings against slight infringements], and the fourth Hansoku-make (3 warnings and then disqualification). Shidos do not give points to the other fighter, only technical scores can give points on the scoreboard. At the end of the fight, if scoring is equal, the one with less Shido [*sic*] wins.'[98]

These changes mean that it has now become much more difficult to emerge victorious by merely trapping the opponent into a situation where he or she will commit minor rule infringements. The stated rationale for these changes was the need for 'a much more dramatic and attractive judo', but at the same time the IJF stated: 'Our aim is to preserve the spirit of judo'. Another line also proclaimed this double message: 'Judo is a spectator sport as long as the goal is clearly defined.'[99] Statements such as these signify the ongoing shift resulting from the attempted transformation of judo into a form of entertainment. But qualifications such as 'as long as the goal is clearly defined' or statements about 'the spirit of judo' may also indicate the IJF's desire to see judo as different and to differentiate it from wrestling as a unique sport in order to keep judo as part of the Olympic Games. Judo's process of constant change appears set to continue.

Conclusion

The rules of judo have undergone various changes, and the judo practised today in international competitions hardly resembles the judo of 1882, when it was officially founded. Jigoro Kano energetically promoted judo for the world, but its evolution went beyond his design. Whereas in the earlier years the changes in the rules appeared to be driven by Europeans' desire to make judo match their own traditions of wrestling, recent changes exemplify the commercial pressure to differentiate judo from other televised sports and make it easier for spectators to understand and appreciate. Thus, globalization has entailed a constant evolution in the character of judo and has changed even the very idea of what judo is and should be.

Overall, there have been four important dimensions to the sportification of judo over the last 130 years. The first was codification: ideas of judo were put into words and set as rules. This accompanied the second dimension, which was the increasing emphasis on competition. Kano placed a great deal of importance on the spiritual training and educational value of judo, but many practitioners started to pursue what they saw as the most effective strategy to win the game. The third important dimension was the presence of spectators and the shift towards entertainment. Kano despised some martial arts that were practised as entertainment,

98 IJF, 'Refereeing & organizing rules'.

99 *Ibid*.

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but today the IJF officially proclaims that 'Judo is a spectator sport'. Related to this is the fourth dimension: commercialism. The IJF records demonstrate that at least since the end of the 1980s it has become more conscious of increasing its revenue by attracting sponsorship and selling broadcasting rights. On the whole, these trends imply a fundamental shift in the episteme of judo, something that is mostly at an unconscious level and rarely directly addressed beyond reciting the tenets of Kano. Yet this episteme underlies the idea of what judo is and should be – for whom it is practised and for what purpose.

The sportification of judo is one example of the global sportification of physical cultures in modern times. It may also serve as an example of two larger trends in global history. The first is the importance of overcoming a diffusionist model of modernity.[100] The history of judo was more of a convergence than a diffusion. This suggests that the global sportification of physical cultures can be more fruitfully examined by widening our horizon to sports other than those that come, or are believed to come, from the West. In this new picture, sport is not something that unilaterally diffused from the West to the rest of the world, but more a collective construct with multiple strands expanding in various directions and fusing with each other. According to this line of argument, sport can be understood not as an idea or practice with an essence that one can grasp and transmit to others, but as an ongoing reverberation produced by the contacts between various physical cultures. It is a resonance and not an entity. Here I am inspired by C. A. Bayly's idea of the growth of 'uniformity' of 'bodily practices', which could be expanded to the standardization of cultures more generally.[101] Standardization does not mean that the world adopts a single monolithic culture; it refers to a process through which various cultures come to attain a certain level of similarity as a result of the synchronization effect. And this standardization may or may not take place with an overarching authority.

This leads to the second point, on regulation and spontaneity, where we can make an analogy with cheese and bread. On the one hand, Kodokan and later the IJF have been the central governing bodies in charge of the rules of judo. In this sense, the evolution of judo has been regulated top-down with a clearly stipulated set of rules, just like Camembert cheese, whose manufacturers are required to adhere to the *appellation d'origine contrôlée* standards. Authentic Camembert can only be produced in one region of France by those who follow these standards. However, the actual practice of judo followed a different trajectory. Various techniques were developed all over the world, and a transformation of judo also took place bottom-up. Here we can make an analogy with bread: there are many variations of bread all over the world, with different ingredients, recipes, shapes, and colours, and there is no point in declaring a certain type of bread as more 'authentic' than the others. These two dynamics, the top-down regulatory force and the bottom-up spontaneous momentum, are intrinsically related to each other, but the latter is often overlooked owing to the myth of cultural authenticity.

Finally, this article points to the significance of the standardization of cultures and systems. Standardization is a powerful platform for coexistence because it allows different agents to connect with each other. In the case of judo, the standardizing element was the norm of sport. By allowing itself to be defined as a sport, judo became more accessible to the

100 I thank Prashant Kidambi for illuminating this point.

101 C. A. Bayly, *The birth of the modern world: 1780–1914*, Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004, pp. 12–21.

broader population both inside and outside Japan. That was the attraction of standardization. However, standardization can also become an autonomous force. Once judo subscribed to the standardized norms of sport, it could no longer be controlled by Kodokan or by any particular individual or group, but had to change when those norms changed. This was the ultimate result of sportification.

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