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JoFA

APPENDIX

Report on the International Scientific and Training Conference co-organised by the Polish Society of Facial Aesthetics, entitled: "Cultural Aspects of Beauty – Facial Aesthetics: Between Aesthetics, Medicine and Identity"

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ABSTRACT

Report on the International Scientific and Training Conference co-organised by the Polish Society of Facial Aesthetics, entitled: "Cultural Aspects of Beauty – Facial Aesthetics: Between Aesthetics, Medicine and Identity", held in Poznań on 20 March 2026 at the Congress and Teaching Centre of Poznan University of Medical Sciences, 37a Bukowska Street. As in previous years, the conference welcomed guest speakers from abroad. Its programme was exceptionally diverse, bringing together the perspectives of humanities scholars, physicians and dentists. The breadth of the topics meant that the nearly one hundred participants could find issues of particular relevance to their own interests and professional experience.

Keywords: conference, report, face aesthetics.

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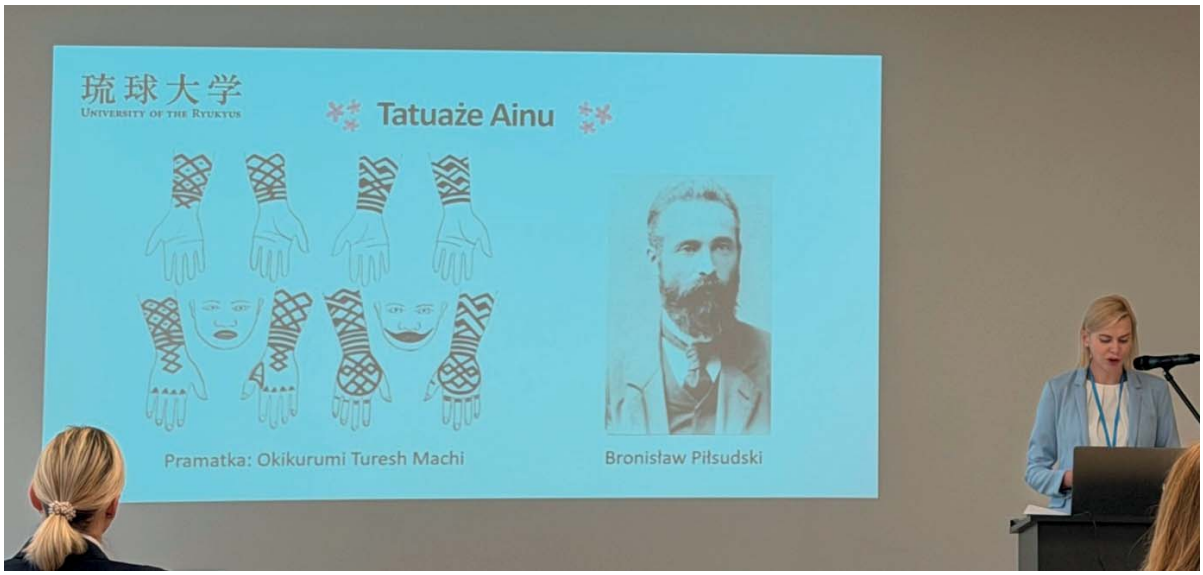
gramme was exceptionally diverse, bringing together the perspectives of humanities scholars, physicians and dentists. The breadth of the topics meant that the nearly one hundred participants could find issues of particular relevance to their own interests and professional experience.

After the Chair of the Organising Committee and the moderators had welcomed the dignitaries, lecturers, participants and guests, the conference was formally opened on behalf of the Rector of Poznan University of Medical Sciences, Prof. Zbigniew Krasiński, by the Vice-Rector, Prof. Justyna Gornowicz-Porowska.

Prof. Mariola Pawlaczyk Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Face Aesthetics (JoFA) and Prof. Marzena Liliana Wyganowska Editor-in-Chief of the Dental Forum, which provided media patronage for the conference, presented publication opportunities in journals published by Poznan University of Medical Sciences Press. They also emphasised the importance of high-quality research and an interdisciplinary approach, encouraging participants to share their findings and actively contribute to the development of both journals.

This year's conference focused on the varied perception of facial beauty across cultural contexts, the historical evolution of aesthetic standards, and the influence of aesthetic medicine, the media, art and new technologies on contemporary understandings of beauty and identity. Particular attention was paid to how the perception of the face and its aesthetics affects social relations, identity formation and value systems operating within a culture. The speakers also reflected on the evolution of beauty standards, including the reasons for the growing importance of the facial image in the media, art and public space. The conference created a space for interdisciplinary dialogue and reflection at the intersection of aesthetic, medical, technological and social discourses.

The lecture session was introduced by Dr Maja Matthews-Kozanecka on behalf of Prof. Ewa Baum. A paper entitled "One Face, Many Meanings. Facial Expressions in a Cultural Context" was then presented by Sylwia Wiśniewska-Leśków on behalf of herself and Prof. Ewa Baum. The speaker highlighted the significance of facial expressions in conveying thoughts, emotions, experiences and moods within a cultural context. She explained how non-verbal language can constitute a key element of interpersonal communication and how important, yet sometimes difficult, it is to read and interpret it accurately. Prof. Andrzej Bełkot, PhD, from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, captured the audience's attention with a cultural-studies perspective on beauty, introducing the audience to the mysteries of beauty as a sensory experience. Dr Krzysztof Prętki, in turn, took the audience on a historical journey, tracing the history of facial aesthetics and the influence of cultural values on the evolution of ideals and the sense of aesthetics. The next presentation focused on Japanese concepts of beauty as reflected in the visual and performing arts; this paper was delivered by Dr Sylwia Dobkowska from the University of the Ryukyus in Japan



▲ Figure 1. Lecture on facial aesthetics by Dr Sylwia Dobkowska from the University of the Ryukyus, Japan

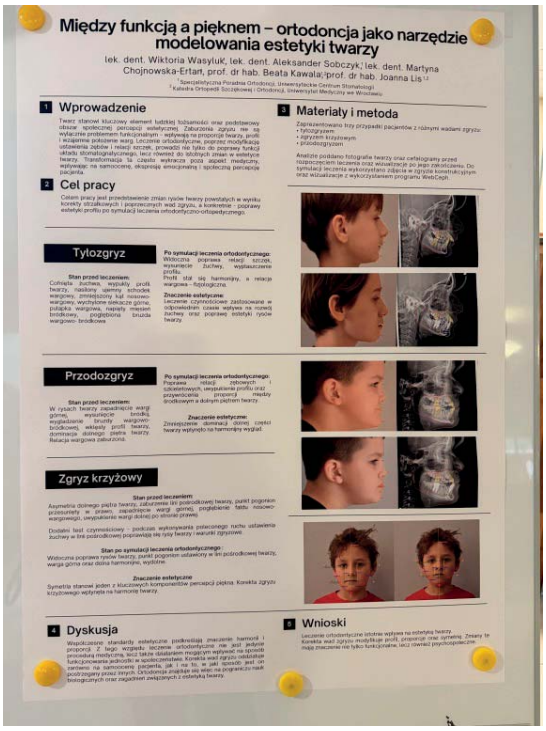


▲ Figure 2. Lecture on facial aesthetics by Dr Renata Śleboda

(**Figure 1**). Her lecture presented a perspective on beauty different from the European one: simplicity, delicacy and understatement come together, tradition is combined with modernity, and transience and the passage of time lend beauty a sense of nobility. These three lectures introduced such diverse aspects of beauty that the discussions continued long afterwards. The remaining 12 lectures did not allow for a prolonged focus on any single aspect of facial aesthetics; instead, they directed attention towards its various dimensions (**Figure 2**). Prof. Ewa Mojs focused on the perception of emotions and on distortions in the interpretation of other people's emotions, to which aesthetic medicine procedures may also contribute. Prof. Małgorzata Jałowska drew attention to the phenomenon of "skinxiety", i.e. the way in which social media shapes perceptions and thoughts about oneself and one's body. On the one hand, technology allows creative self-expression; on the other, it creates pressure to attain unrealistic standards of beauty. Building on previous presentations, Dr Magdalena Tuczyńska discussed facial aesthetics from the perspective of the manifestation and expression of orofacial pain, which plays a key role in emotional communication. Awareness of the cultural and aesthetic aspects of pain is crucial, particularly in the context of its impact on the doctor–patient relationship. Prof. Marzena Wyganowska presented the path to beauty through biostimulation, a minimally invasive procedure that stimulates facial skin regeneration, increases elasticity and improves skin tone. Subsequent speakers addressed, among other topics, the challenges posed by cultural diversity in orthognathic surgery, as discussed by Dr Artur Matthews-Brzozowski in his paper "Ethnic Differences in Orthognathic Surgery". Dr Sylwia Jagła spoke about the challenges of facial aesthetic services from a dentist's perspective, reflecting on whether a beautiful face is a necessity or a challenge in the modern world. Dr Maja Matthews-Kozanecka highlighted the challenges and opportunities involved in working with patients in a multicultural world. The lecture session concluded with a presentation by Dr Renata Śleboda on the significance of tattoos in a cultural context, emphasising how differently they may be perceived depending on the viewer's cultural background. In her talk, Dr Agnieszka Żak encouraged the audience to engage in physical activity, noting that exercise benefits health and well-being and may also influence the appearance and condition of the face.

The poster session was held as a continuous session, with each of the 12 posters presented for a few minutes. This format encouraged interaction with the authors and direct discussion; representatives of Student Research Societies also took part. The chairs of the poster session, Prof. Anna Surdacka and Dr Kornela Cieślik, selected two posters for first and second prizes and two posters for honourable mentions. First place was awarded to the poster by the team from Wroclaw Medical University entitled "Between Function and Beauty – Orthodontics as a Tool for Shaping Facial Aesthetics" (**Figure 3**). The poster session (**Figure 4**) preceded the final item on the programme: a workshop dedicated to the face. "Move Your Face – a Fascial Yoga Workshop" was led by Dr Agnieszka Żak.

The conference attracted considerable interest thanks to its broad thematic scope, and many participants have already confirmed their intention to attend the next event, scheduled for 17 April 2027 at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Bydgoszcz.



▲ Figure 3. First prize in the poster session



▲ Figure 4. The poster session attracted many interested attendees

Award-winning posters in the poster session:

› 1st place – "Between Function and Beauty – Orthodontics as a Tool for Shaping Facial Aesthetics" – Wiktoria Wasyluk, Aleksander Sobczyk, Martyna Chojnowska-Ertan, Beata Kawala, Joanna Lis (Wroclaw Medical University)

› 2nd place – "Cognitive Stimulation as a Factor Influencing Mental Well-Being and Self-Esteem – Marta Sikora, Nikodem Walczak, Antoni Obernikowicz, Alicja Rzymska, Maja Matthews-Kozanecka (Poznan University of Medical Sciences)

› honourable mention – "Automated Facial Expression Analysis (AFEA) for the Facial Action Coding System (FACS) in Artistic Projects and Neuropsychiatric Disorders" – Kamil Wnuk, Agnieszka Żak (Poznan University of Medical Sciences)

› honourable mention – "Non Omnis Moriar" – The Beauty Of The Face Captured In Photography, Then And Now – Renata Śleboda, Patrycja Rąglewska (Stanisław Staszic University of Applied Sciences in Piła).