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Travel to the Polish borderlands. Martial arts training and meetings on the way

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Abstract:

The authors describe their car journey through Poland and a two-week stay on the Baltic coast, in Chłapowo and Świnoujście respectively. The description of events is complemented by a reflection from the perspective of the anthropology of tourism and with reference to a number of conceptual categories. This is a typical case study of martial arts, sightseeing and educational tourism (also to acquire knowledge of alternative medicine). The text provides a brief description of the twentieth anniversary Summer Camp of the Idōkan Poland Association, remarks about the stay in Świnoujście and a meeting with Prof. Wojciech Pasterniak. The trip under discussion also included Poland's northern and western borderlands.

Introduction

Cultural tourism is made up of a variety of objectives and motives, depending on the individual traveller. The authors have undertaken the task of describing the trip for "autocreative", cognitive, self-fulfilling, sports, recreational, and health-related purposes. Their first goal was to go to the twentieth anniversary Summer Camp of the Idōkan Poland Association in order to practise martial arts (martial arts tourism [Cynarski 2009]). Their next aim was to visit the Polish part of Pomerania and Świnoujście in particular, where the authors met and got to know a very interesting man.

These issues can be interpreted according to L. Turoś's concept of the anthropology of tourism and educational tourism: as a sightseeing trip, meeting new people and places, which together enhance personality [Turoś 1996, 2003]. The first of the authors has already used the conceptual category of a "meeting on the way" to describe educational research trips to study martial arts in Europe and Asia [Cynarski 2000a, b].

In both the physical and the sense of space, travel should be divided into three stages. The first stage was a journey from Strzyżów to Chłapowo. The first of the authors was the driver of a small private car. After two hour sleep, the authors set out on the journey at 03.20 and travelled for 11.5 hours. Every such journey is a challenge and its

completion gives one the same satisfaction as in sport. Chłapowo is a small tourist town between Władysławowo and Rozewie – the northernmost strip of Polish soil.

After staying in Chłapowo the second phase began. This was a journey from Chłapowo to Świnoujście taking about seven hours. The aim was to reach this town on the Baltic coast on the island of Uznam on the Świna River and stay there for 6 days. This time it was on the north-western edge of Polish, near the German border.

The third phase only consisted of the return from Świnoujście to Strzyżów.

Chłapowo '2012

Does a trip to the seaside give people a reason to be pleased that they belong to the minority spending their summer holidays away from home? In a way yes, but going to Chłapowo was primarily connected with participating in a training camp.

Does a martial arts tourist fit into the category of global 'tourist' (the privileged, the wealthy [Bauman 2000])? Inequality in access to tourism, especially its luxury products, is undoubtedly a fact. But these global tourists go to warmer places than the Baltic sea. In addition, staying in the same place does not give rise to snobbish pride.



Photo 1. First karate training in cold sea water

The warriors of the Idōkan Poland Association of St. Michael's were training at the Summer Camp for the twentieth time. A sunny Chłapowo hosted athletes who practise karate and jujutsu in the sections of the Rzeszów "Dōjō Budōkan" Centre. *Karate, jūjutsu* and *kobudō* in the Idōkan style were practised this time by both older people and a few children from the children's section run by *sensei* Paweł Szlachta (3 dan jujutsu) and *senpai* Przemysław Strzępek (1 dan).

Shihan Wojciech J. Cynarski (8 dan *jūjutsu*, 7 dan *karate*) lead the training as a technical director of the IPA. At the end 10 people took the exams for higher levels in *jūjutsu* and *karate*. These included the instructor Paweł Szlachta, *shihan's* assistant, passed the exam and received 2 dan in *karate* (*zendō karate tai-te-tao*), while the instructor

Sebastian Skóra from Rzeszów achieved 1 dan in *jūjutsu* (*idōkan yōshin-ryu*). The camp programme included, as every year, technical forms, self-defence, fights on the sand and in the sea. There was a meeting of the Board and Kolegium Dan of the Idōkan Poland Association (IPA), a *sayonara grill* barbecue, traditional night training and exams (photos 1-3) [Cynarska 2012]. That week was hard work with about 5-6 hours of training every day.

Martial arts tourism is in a way a working holiday for master-teachers, but is also the realization of a life-long passion, so a combination of "business and pleasure". For students and younger instructors is an opportunity for learning, self-improvement and to acquire competence.

In order to study or to find a master one can even go to China [Raimondo 2011]. On other



Photo 2. Throw into the water – a kind of baptism after passing the final test to a higher technical level



Photo 3. A group of participants at the end of the 20th Summer Camp – Chłapowo, August 2012

occasions masters of the highest rank [see: Slopecki 2012] undertake foreign or domestic trips in order to teach and to popularize their school.

Świnoujście

Trips to the southern and eastern borderlands Poland have already been described and interpreted by the authors. They were similar to this one as case studies of family trips mainly for sightseeing [Cynarski, Obodyński 2004; Cynarski, Cynarska 2009]. What for Polish tourists visiting the former eastern territories was a manifestation of sentimental or ethnic tourism may, in some cases relate to today's visits to Poland made by tourists from Germany [Cynarski, Cynarska 2009].

Such “over-representation” of German guests in Świnoujście is willingly accepted. Bilingual Polish and German inscriptions tempt these visitors at every turn. Historically, it used to be a German resort (German *Swinemünde*). Currently, the main reason for the presence of large numbers of tourists from Germany may be competitive prices and the proximity of Świnoujście (the border area).

For the authors the main reason for coming to this town was to meet Professor Pasterniak a versatile humanist, whose original methods (such as “effortless” sports training) have already been introduced to the readers of “Ido Movement for Culture” [Pasterniak 2005]. Not without significance was the unique climate, the sea air, very rich in iodine and the desire to explore the town.

Knowledge of traditional and non-conventional medicine is of interest to people studying martial arts because the medicine of *idō* martial arts is an inherent component of the old traditions [Cynarski 2010]. Pasterniak's psychological and biotherapeutic methods are not so much about the treatment, as about the patient's self-healing power [see: Weil, 1988, 1997; Loe 1999; Puczek 2009]. He prefers diagnostic and radiesthesia therapy, but he uses a whole range of methods and techniques, including music therapy, image therapy and dialogue. There was the opportunity to talk about many things and to conduct an interesting interview particularly considering the recent London Olympic Games [Pasterniak, Cynarski 2012].

Although the town of Chłapowo, founded by King Ladislaus IV is already well known to the authors thanks to the annual summer camps of the Idōkan Poland Association, they visited the town of Świnoujście for the first time. There was time to visit the city, take a photo at the monument of the White Eagle (photo 4), take a stroll along the seafront promenade, watch a Bolivian or Peruvian Indian singing and dancing for tourists and twice



Photo 4. At the monument of the White Eagle in Świnoujście

use ferries. Although the weather was not good, you could breathe iodine and toughen up in the wind and rain.

The return

The way back from Świnoujście was via Gorzów Wielkopolski, Zielona Góra, Głogów and Wrocław to Strzyżów (which is a rather longer route), only because these are good roads. On the Polish martial arts tourism map there is one important place on this route – the seat of the International Federation of Modern Ju-Jitsu in Głogów. Another town worth recommending is Strzyżów with *Shibu Kobudō* of the IPA. However, in the summer, the capital of martial arts such as Olympic judo is Cetniewo whereas for dozens of people studying martial arts at the Rzeszów Centre of the IPA the little town of Chłapowo is that place. That is why for the authors it was indirectly the return from Chłapowo.

The drive took about 13 hours, with a 15-minute nap in the car at one of the petrol stations. It was easier to plan the route thanks to GPS navigation. It was a new challenge for the driver to safely drive these 880 km. GM Lothar Sieber (10 dan) considers driving a car a specific type of training. The unforgettable Bruce Lee had the same attitude. In addition to exercising the reflexes, quick response, attention, specific and mental strength are all tested during a long ride.

Summary

Meetings on the way, in this case, included a meeting of the top (most advanced, ambitious and active) people from the Idōkan Poland Association. There

were also meetings with the families of practitioners, the neighbours in the guest house, at a camping site and in different circumstances, with different people. There was a meeting where the local Kashubian cuisine was served which constitutes a mass tourism product on a global scale.

The next meeting (maybe not so much on the ways of martial arts, but rather on scientific studies) was with a man of outstanding intelligence and interesting personality, Prof. Pasterniak. For the first time there was the opportunity to meet him directly in person, to chat and to experience the relaxing effect of his music, pictures, paintings and the conversation itself.

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Podróż do kresów Polski. Trening sztuk walki i spotkania w drodze

Słowa kluczowe: sztuki walki, turystyka, polskie wybrzeże, Idōkan

Streszczenie

Autorzy przedstawiają swą podróż samochodową przez Polskę i dwutygodniowy pobyt na wybrzeżu bałtyckim - kolejno w Chłapowie i Świnoujściu. Opis zdarzeń został uzupełniony o refleksję realizowaną z perspektywy antropologii turystyki i z nawiązaniem do kilku kategorii pojęciowych. Jest to studium przypadku wyjazdu charakterystycznego dla turystyki sztuk walki oraz turystyki krajoznawczej i edukacyjnej (m.in. dla wiedzy o medycynie niekonwencjonalnej). Tekst zawiera krótki opis jubileuszowego XX Obozu Letniego Stowarzyszenia Idōkan Polska, uwagi o pobycie w Świnoujściu i spotkaniu z prof. Wojciechem Pasternikiem. Omawiana podróż obejmowała północne i zachodnie kresy Polski.