

MARTIAL ARTS TOURISM

WIESLAW BLACH^{1(DE)}, PAWEŁ SWIDER^{2(BF)}, LOTHAR SIEBER^{3,4(AG)}

¹ Department of Sport, University of Physical Education in Wrocław (Poland)

² Institute of Physical Culture Studies, College of Medical Sciences, University of Rzeszów, Rzeszów (Poland)

³ International Martial Arts and Combat Sports Scientific Society, branch in Munich (Germany)

⁴ European Martial Arts Committee, branch in Munich (Germany)

Contact: Dr Paweł Swider, e-mail: pswider@univ.rzeszow.pl

Tourism of martial arts: the inspiration for Prof. Cynarski's new book

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Abstract

Background. Fighting arts and travel related to their learning are mainly of interest to physical culture researchers. One of them is W. J. Cynarski, who develops the theory of cultural dialogues and the General Theory of Fighting Arts, examining, among others, the phenomenon of martial arts tourism.

Problem. This is about discussing and evaluating this book on martial arts tourism. To what extent and for whom can it be useful and inspiring?

Method. This is a review of a scientific book using the methodology of Zbigniew Krawczyk's academic school. An analysis of the literature on the subject and references to numerous sources have been added (qualitative analysis of documents and mass media content).

Results. The author of the book in question was introduced; reference was made to the content of the book by reviewing it. Substantive assessment was carried out. This rating is high.

Conclusion. This first scientific monograph on the theme “martial arts tourism” is a valuable and recommendable book – not only for researchers, but also for practitioners and travellers in the field of fighting arts.

Introduction

One of the first researchers of the cultural phenomenon of martial arts was Prof. Stanisław Tokarski, Polish philosopher and orientalist, eliadist, creator of the theory of cultural dialogues by Eliade and Tokarski. He applied this theory to the interpretation of Asian martial arts [cf. Tokarski 1989]. The continuator of Tokarski's studies and research is Prof. Wojciech J. Cynarski – author of most of the indexed works in the Scopus and Web of Sciences databases that deal with martial arts tourism. Before the review of his latest book is presented, let's get to know the figure of this researcher.

Who is the author?

The author of the book is known as a martial artist, a significant figure in this field on an international scale. He is

a double *hanshi*, 9 dan – both in *jujutsu* and *karate*, with the title with the title *kaiden shihan* in *judo-do / ido* of *Idokan*, a person respected as a specialist in several varieties of martial arts and in combat sports. He was a pioneer of classical *aiki-jujutsu* in Poland and *kenjutsu / kobudo* according to the *Tenshinshoden Katorishinto-ryu* school (uninterrupted tradition since the 15th century). He was the first in Central and Eastern Europe to hold master degrees at *Takeda-ryu Nakamura-ha* and *Tenshinshoden Katorishinto-ryu*. He is still an active *shihan*, technical director at IPA – Idokan Poland Association [Maroteaux 1993, 2010; DDBV 1999; Borowiec W. 2004; A.O. 2009; Ettlin 2013; Zielinska 2013; Kubala 2015; Sieber, Pawelec 2016; Swider 2018; Pawelec 2019b]. He is also the legal holder of the highest degree of 10 dan in *judo-do ido*, in the over 70-year tradition of the Idokan organisation [Ettlin 2013; Sieber, Cynarski 2013].

Professor Cynarski, as a scientist, university Full Professor and an important expert, is known for numer-

ous scientific publications. He is invited to European, Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese) and American universities. He is the author of the recognized scientific theory – the General Theory of Fighting Arts [Obodyski 2005; Zaborniak 2005; Bonusiak 2006: 23-24; Helion 2007; *Hubners Who is Who*, 2007; Koyama 2012; Beta 2013; Kubala 2015; Borowiec L. 2016; Ozog 2016: 26; Bielec 2017, 2018; Pawelec 2017, 2019a, 2019b; Swider 2017]. He is also known and respected as a social activist and leader of three associations: first Polish Union Kobudo & Aikibudo (PUKiA, 1992), then IPA (since 1993) and IMACSSS, the International Martial Arts and Combat Sports Scientific Society (since 2010). As the president of IPA and IMACSSS, he coordinates several research projects socially [cf. Krowiak 1992; Urbanik 1994; Borowiec W. 2004; Cynarski 2005; Cynarska, Cynarski, Slopecki 2008; Kubala 2011, 2016; Cynarska 2012; Kubala 2015; Pawelec *et al.* 2015; Cynarski, Kubala 2017; Pawelec 2019a].

The scientific and popularizing achievements to date of W. J. Cynarski show him as the author of most of the scientific works on martial arts tourism that have entered the global scientific circulation. He has been dealing with this topic since 2002, publishing mainly in the agreed thematic section of the quarterly “Ido Movement for Culture. Journal of Martial Arts Anthropology.” However, his scientific interests are much broader. Wojciech J. Cynarski has written the Humanistic Theory of Martial Arts [Kosiewicz 2005]. In his two subsequent books (837 pages in total) he has included his theoretical concept of martial arts recognition and its empirical testing [Cynarski 2004, 2006]. It is an interdisciplinary approach that goes beyond physical culture sciences towards broader anthropology. This also applies to reflections at a higher level of generality

Cynarski’s achievements in the field of philosophical reflection on the phenomenon of martial arts were significant for the Polish philosophy of physical culture before 2007 [Kosiewicz 2007: 21-23]. However, more mature concepts in martial arts anthropology, general reflections on the philosophy of martial arts, and on the general canon of the philosophy of *karate* and *taekwondo*, were created later during next years [cf. Cynarski 2012, 2013, 2019a]. For the pedagogical application of the educational potential of martial arts paths, Cynarski proposed the concept of New Paradigmatic Pedagogy [Kobylecka 2017; Pawluczki 2017]. As a sociologist of physical culture and free time, he is the author of the first Polish textbook in this subdiscipline [Dziubinski, Jasny 2017; Kubala 2018]. This handbook refers, among others, to the sociology of martial arts and to the sociology of tourism. In turn, ‘scientific tourism’ also received its first monographic study using the methodology of visual sociology – also by Prof. Cynarski [Sawicki 2016].

Rzeszow Professor is the author or co-author of numerous papers (probably most scientific articles that

are available in major scientific databases) on martial arts tourism [cf. Cynarski 2018a, 2018b, 2019b; Kubala, Cynarski, Swider 2019; Sieber, Cynarski 2018; Swider, Cynarski, Kubala 2018; Sieber *et al.* 2019; Cynarski, Johnson 2020]. He also introduced into the scientific circulation the concept of “martial arts tourism”, which took place in the early 2000s.

The new book

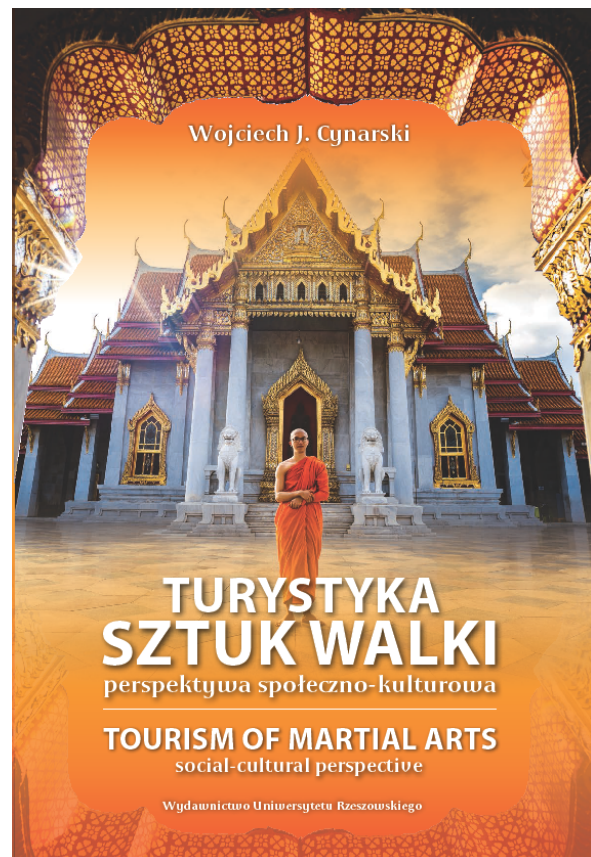


Fig. 1. The monograph on the martial arts’ tourism [Rzeszow University Press 2020].

Book entitled *Tourism of Martial Arts: Social-Cultural Perspective* [fig. 1] is the 17th book (monograph) written by W. J. Cynarski. According to the methodology used, it is similar to the monograph *Scientific Tourism in the Perspective of Visual Sociology* [Cynarski 2015]. This new book is, however, a slightly more comprehensive (160 pages versus 136 in the *Scientific Tourism*) and bilingual (published in Polish and English) study. The publisher is the Rzeszow University Press (*Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego*).

Let us start with the structure and content. The author adopts a clear division into nine chapters in the main part. Everything is preceded by Preface and ends with Summation. The structure of content in this system is justified as well as coherent. The author consistently follows the terminology and methodology adopted at the beginning.

The following chapters include: 1. Methodology of research; 2. History and *Mushashugyo* today (including three subsections); 3. Geography of the tourism of martial arts (here we find the idea of two crowns, related to the one present in Himalayan mountaineering); 4. Typology of participants (here the typology is included and an example case is given); 5. Varieties of martial arts tourism (this chapter contains five subsections); 6. Different directions of trips – examples and case studies; 7. Relationship with sports tourism; 8. Martial arts studies and scientific tourism; 9. Rzeszow, as a destination for martial arts tourism. In the sixth chapter we find a description of many travel destinations, especially between Europe and the Far East. Polish military culture destinations and the example of Soviet-Russian *sambo* tourism are also described here. Relationships with sport and scientific tourism are also illustrated by examples. The last chapter is devoted to the city of Rzeszów, as a research center for various fighting arts varieties. Summation is more personal. The author narrates in it in the first person and explains the autobiographical justification for this publication.

The research methodology used in this book is as follows: the visual sociology, the analysis of literature on the subject and broad discourse, a kind of field research and long-term participant observation. “The core of the research material is constituted by photographs, mostly from the author’s own collection, illustrating the events described. Also included are reports on scientific-research and conference trips (concerning martial arts tourism), promotional articles on trips for martial arts studies, direct reports, and selected documents or artifacts.” [Cynarski 2020: 11]. In addition, the content presentation methodology means that this monograph can also be used as an academic textbook. There were also indexes of names and geographical names.

The editorial aspect, including the aesthetics of the edition, deserves a high rating. It consists of: a cover (the design was made by Julia Sonska-Lampart), a professional language preparation and numerous illustrations (109 colour photos and four figures). Illustrative material plays a dual role here – a source of knowledge, in the method of visual sociology, as well as illustrations to text and creating a special, cultural atmosphere. When assessing the language used in terms of communication skills, it is necessary to state the clarity of statements that are also understandable by lay people. The fact of bilingual publication (columns in Polish and English) means that this book can also be used by a reader who does not know Polish.

The book’s strong point is, in particular, excellent knowledge of the many varieties of fighting arts and direct (or “first-hand”) knowledge of the facts described. Many authors make numerous mistakes in this respect. However, Wojciech J. Cynarski is a leading specialist here on an international scale. Therefore, the book seems to be addressed not only to researchers-scientists and stu-

dents, but also to the combat sports and martial arts practitioners.

The bibliography of this book is an intrinsic value; is a relatively complete set. This applies to both source materials and scientific studies. This literature includes publications on the subject of “martial arts tourism”, but also other – in the areas of cultural anthropology, tourism theory, tourism geography, martial arts theory, sociology of tourism, leisure sociology, research methodology; both Polish and foreign, multilingual; from books and major scientific periodicals; new and some older, but still current and important.

Conclusions

This is the first monograph of its kind that fills a gap in the world scientific literature on the border between tourism research and martial arts. This book is largely based on the author’s own experience, among which study trips dominate – trips for thematic studies. It covers numerous aspects of martial arts tourism, deliberately avoiding a strictly economic dimension.

According to the authors it is a valuable monograph, cognitively and practically interesting. It is a source of knowledge about this type of travel. It is worth recommending it not only to researchers, but also to travellers and practitioners in the field of fighting arts.

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Turystyka sztuk walki: inspiracje nową książką Prof. Cynarskiego

Słowa kluczowe: Wojciech J. Cynarski, sztuki walki, turystyka kulturowa, turystyka sztuk walki, podróż studyjna

Abstrakt

Tło. Sztuki walki i podróże związane z ich poznawaniem interesują głównie badaczy kultury fizycznej. Jednym z nich jest W. J. Cynarski, który rozwija teorię dialogów kulturowych oraz Ogólną Teorią Sztuk Walki, badając między innymi fenomen turystyki sztuk walki.

Problem. Rzeczą dotyczy omówienia i oceny książki poświęconej turystyce sztuk walki. Na ile i dla kogo może być ona przydatna i inspirująca?

Metoda. Jest to recenzja książki naukowej według metodologii szkoły naukowej Zbigniewa Krawczyka. Dodano analizę literatury przedmiotu i odniesienia do licznych źródeł (jakościowa analiza dokumentów oraz treści przekazów masowych).

Wyniki. Ukazano sylwetkę Autora omawianej książki; odniesiono się do treści książki wykonując jej recenzję. Dokonano oceny merytorycznej. Ocena ta jest wysoka.

Wnioski. Ta pierwsza naukowa monografia tematu „turystyka sztuk walki” jest książką wartościową i godną polecenia - nie tylko badaczom, ale też praktykom i podróżnikom w dziedzinie sztuk i sportów walki.