

EDITORIAL

SERGIO RAIMONDO^{1(ABD)}, WOJCIECH J. CYNARSKI^{2(ABDEF)},
MOHAMAD NIZAM MOHAMED SHAPIE^{3,4(BDG)}

¹ University of Cassino and Southern Lazio, Cassino (Italy)

² University of Rzeszow, Institute of Physical Culture Studies, Rzeszow (Poland)

³ Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor (Malaysia)

⁴ Seni Gayung Fatani Malaysia Association, Shah Alam, Selangor (Malaysia)

Contact: Prof. Dr Wojciech J. Cynarski, e-mail: ela_cyn@wp.pl

Training, fighting and fighting arts: Introduction for Volume 21

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Abstract

This is a conceptual, review and overview article. Part 1 consists of a design overview of the concepts of fight/fighting and training, and the relationship between these concepts as part of the phenomenon of fighting arts. The second part is a description of the state of the martial arts and combat sports community in our two associations: IMACSSS and Idokan Poland Association (IPA), and in our Journal in 2021. It was written within a historical and cultural context. The whole is an introduction to the scientific considerations and content of volume 21. This is a view from the headquarters of IMACSSS and IPA (in Rzeszow), as well as the Editorial Office.

Introduction

One should look simply at the state of scientific knowledge, and also at the sciences of man, health and physical culture. In some areas there is reliable knowledge, in others it is doubtful or there is just a lack of knowledge; it is neither tested, nor described or explained. The task of the scientific community and scientific institutions, including scientific periodicals, is to contribute new knowledge and settle disputable issues, to make bold hypotheses and test them, as well as to determine the conceptual language. The traps described from the perspective of the sociology of science which also occur in the sciences of physical culture and related disciplines, should also be avoided [Cynarski 2020].

It is worth explaining and deciding on the meaning of the phenomena of training and combat/fighting, and the relationship between them. Let the systemic approach (processual, temporal and relational dimensions) be the basis here [Figueiredo 2009; Cynarski 2014; Papakitsos, Katsigiannis 2015]. Ontologically speaking, training is a process of training, practising and teaching/learning. It is a kind of maturing, of becoming either alone or with the help of a coach. Sometimes a whole team of specialists work for the success of an athlete. This was, for exam-

ple, the case of two outstanding Polish judokas, Rafał Kubacki and Paweł Nastula [*cf.* Witkowski 2001]. And there are no shortcuts. How do different nutrition and supplementation strategies affect health and fitness? We already know some of the critical opinions [*cf.* Nurchis 2002; Cynarski 2019b]. The most important of these is regular, solid daily training.

Training may refer to one player (examples above), but more often to a group or several groups. This applies to both the training process extended in time and the methods of action (training methods, and loads). Traditional methods, used in martial arts (like technical forms), are used for generations. New training methods, especially in combat sports, are only now being applied today. Sport is about equipping a competitor with the appropriate resources of technical and tactical skills [*cf.* Arziutov *et al.* 2016; Blach *et al.* 2021]. Different exercises are performed depending on the goal, i.e. the training method is adjusted to its expected effects. Is it, for example, about victories in sports competitions, about real skills in self-defence, or self-realization or good physical recreation? Training measures and loads are selected accordingly. Training is also an often long-term, process, such as the pursuit of championship in sport (to become

a ‘champion’ or perhaps ‘super champion’), or on the path of martial arts (to become a ‘master’ or perhaps ‘grand master’). It is determined both by the commitment and consistency, ambition and perseverance, activities resulting from one’s own strong internal motivation; and the role of the master-teacher in motivating and mobilising the student. This is explained in Milan Duricek’s concept [Duricek, Cynarski 2017], and confirmed by the results of research into the routes to victory. The effects of training are also influenced by many factors, such as the application of training loads. Obviously, one should minimize risks, maximize the chances of success, and optimize training loads.

While training, especially using the concept of “holistic training” [Ambrozy 2004], can comprehensively develop and perfect a person by improving their motor skills and helping them acquire motor competence, combat skills training focuses specifically on combat effectiveness. The factors that strengthen the potential of a fighting person undoubtedly include, a high level of general physical fitness and the efficiency of the organism, as well as the technical and tactical skills themselves or psychological (volitional, character) and intellectual (knowledge, experience) components.

One method of learning to fight is the fight itself. **Fighting** is a confrontation of skill and strength. In a real situation, in a fight for life, it is the greatest human effort, carried out in a situation of high stress and using many available means. The goal is to neutralize the enemy. However, in a sports fight, the opponent must be “outplayed” according to the activities permitted by the regulations. These are examples of negative cooperation. However, in the case of recreational practice to improve personality, it should be positive cooperation; Practitioners learn from each other and help each other in mastering technical and tactical issues. This is the case with the *Zendo karate Tai-te-tao* style, for example [Sieber 2011].

Fighting arts is a collective term for various martial arts, combat sports, self-defence, combat systems, and related activities. The General Theory of Fighting Arts has been founded and its conceptual language has already been established [cf. Bolelli 2008; Cynarski, Skowron 2014; Cynarski 2017; Pawelec 2020]. Fighting in different fighting arts looks different, depending on the style, school and skill level of fighters and their individual preferences. The methods and forms of training have been adapted to it.

The ontology of the place of practice also depends on its purpose, the type of fighting art and a number of external conditions (economic, fashion, intellectual, etc.). The room with a *tatami* mat for *judo* looks different from the room with a ring for kick-boxing, another with a fencing board or wooden dummy weapons for *kenjutsu*. The relationship between training and combat

usually takes place in such a place. It can also be carried out during sports competitions (starting method) or in the field. Fighting with weapons or against weapons, sparring one-on-one or several-on-one, require both a certain area, amount of space, but also accessories. These are traditional weapons or their mock-ups, pads, and appropriate costumes. In turn, practising on appropriate training equipment requires the use of dummies, bags, *makiwara* boards, etc. Fighting can also be practised alone, such as a boxing “shadow fight” or performing technical arrangements (Japanese *kata*).

Fighting can be physical or spiritual. “Fighting does not have to be associated only with brutality and violence. It can be a noble art of combating all evil, a way to develop valuable nature traits, a form of effective defence of many values” [Czuba, Blazejewski 2020: 33]. In the spiritual dimension, it is a fight against evil forces, such as in Tolkien’s anthropology, or against one’s weakness and temptation. Man thus fits in the eternal struggle between good and evil. The deeper meaning of the Way (*Tao*) warrior is just to overcome their own weakness and become a better person. The teacher helps the student in this process and should be not only a trainer, but also an educator-educator and a guide “on the right path”. The phenomenon of combat can be compared with war due to the similarities in the general canons of strategy. Sun Tzu wrote that “war is the art of misleading” [Sun 2003: 21]; he recommended – “Know the enemy and know yourself, and (...) you will be safe” (p. 43); finally, he stated that “The best of skill is to defeat an opponent without a fight” (p. 36). The same applies to self-defence, and some principles (such as misleading or recognizing one’s own and opponent’s strengths and weaknesses) are also used in sports combat.

The relationship between combat and training can be expressed in three simple precepts: 1) the way you train, the way you fight; 2) persistent hard training leading to high skills; 3) both in training and in combat, it is worth following the principle of the golden mean, moderation and common sense. Especially in a training fight and in sports competitions, you must always retain a healthy restraint. While a sports performance requires strenuous training to exceed the limits of possibilities, pro-health training recommends using moderate training loads. Since people are different, one of the canons of today’s sports theory, physical education theory and training theory is the individualization of training (teaching, loads). It is also a fairly universal principle of the didactics of sports training [Arziutov *et al.* 2016]. This applies, for example, as GM Lothar Sieber points out, to individualization in teaching *karate* techniques, as well as to technical forms (*kata*). “He referred to the problem of individual approach in teaching, suggesting it was necessary to customise instruction of technical forms” [Cynarski 2019a: 63].

Can a martial art be analyzed as an area of sport, especially combat sport – the sport of competition? Definitely yes; even when people practicing a given martial art do not engage in any competition with other groups and do not participate in competitions. In this case the competition can then take place in at least three ways:

1. We try to be better than ourselves and continually improving, according to various criteria (each individually, according to the perfectionism paradigm);
2. We compete with competitors of a similar level in order to achieve a higher level of fitness and skills, even without direct combat;
3. We try to achieve a certain pattern of technique or ideal form, shown to us by the master-teacher, and then develop subsequent patterns.

In those schools where technical grades are awarded, competition may concern progressive grades, which are awarded through technical examinations or at the discretion of the teacher and his/her expert assessment. Martial arts training can therefore be treated as a kind of sports training. At the same time, in some martial arts, as they are traditionally understood, it will be more of a component of the educational process, while in others it will be a pro-health practice. The excellent recreational potential of traditionally-practised martial arts [Bielec *et al.* 2021] still seems to be underused.

Year 2021 and Volume 21

From the Polish perspective, it is the 410th anniversary of the Szujski tsars' tribute to the Polish king – after the great victories of Hetman Stanislaw Zolkiewski (*Żółkiewski*) of the Lubicz coat of arms. It is also a jubilee year – the 230th anniversary of the adoption of the first constitution in Europe and the second in the world. This constitution was enacted on 3 May 1791 in the capital of Poland, giving other countries a model of a modern, democratic state system. In addition Witold Pilecki of the Leliwa coat of arms (1901-1948) was born 120 years ago. He was a Polish officer who fought against two totalitarianism: Nazi Germany in World War II and Soviet Russia in the war of 1920 and after World War II. He represented the spirit of Western civilization and the chivalrous ethos. He handed over to the Western Allies the report on the German death camp at Auschwitz. Pilecki was a hero of the free, democratic world. He died, murdered by communists, on 25 May, 1948, in Warsaw [*cf.* Sieber, Cynarska 2016: 59-60]. Significantly, between 1944 and 1963 Polish soldier-patriots fought in the anti-Soviet and anti-communist uprising, opposing Poland's subordination and keeping the soldier's oath. Fortunately, today Poland and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are independent.

This year, Prof. Lothar Sieber, an expert who collaborates with our journal, celebrates his 75th birthday.

We cordially congratulate him. Prof. Stanisław Sterkowicz (1951-2018) who was born 70 years ago, is also an associate of our editorial office. It is he, along with Prof. Cynarski, who awarded the honorary title of Professor to Dr Krzysztof Kondratowicz (1928-2010), a promoter of martial arts and a teacher of instructors from the Polish *jujutsu* and self-defence community. A number of martial arts masters, some of whom have achieved a high level as an expert/ professor, have been immortalised in several important publications [Sieber, Cynarski 2004; Cynarski *et al.* 2015; Sieber, Pawelec 2016; Figueiredo *et al.* 2020; Cynarski 2021]. The outstanding masters from Japan and Poland, *meijin* Yoshio Sugino (1904-1998) and Prof. Wojciech Zablocki (1930-2020) respectively, were compared twenty years ago in a contribution to their bibliographies [Cynarski 2002]. Among the masters of the highest rank, people practising martial arts, and eminent educators dominate, but there are also researchers, empiricists (such as the above-mentioned Prof. Sterkowicz) and philosophical thinkers, such as Dr Roland J. Maroteaux, Prof. EMAC). The European Martial Arts Committee has been awarding titles and medals to experts in practice and knowledge for over 10 years.

For Europe, 2021 was the second year of the pandemic. This made many activities complicated. Fortunately, medical knowledge and the efficiency of institutions in individual countries has helped to control this situation. A specially financed programme of economic reconstruction is also underway. In particular, in Poland, the New Deal programme comes into force, which should have a significant positive impact on the sustainable development of the Polish economy. In addition, people have learned to function alongside the threats of a pandemic, which is not only true of Europe.

In turn, for martial arts and martial arts research, it was a time to overcome the pandemic and for new hope, opening training rooms after the enforced break, switching back to direct forms of training. The most important event is the 10th IMACSSS Conference in Chongqing, China (October 2021). We will write more about this event in the next volume of our Journal. In contrast, extended abstracts of the approved works are to be published in „Revista de Artes Marciales Asiaticas”. In sport, *karate* should be noted as included among the Olympic disciplines at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo, which were delayed by a year.

Like athletes in sports arenas, rings and on mats, scientists compete in research and for publication of their efforts, and many scientific periodicals (as well as ours) are among similar periodicals. Here our work (authors of works, reviewers, and editors) brings results. The „Academic Accelerator” has shown a 2-year Impact Factor of our Journal for 2019-2020 (IF = 1.148) and the „Annual Growth Rate” of 24.3%. In the Scopus database, we improved the Cite Score (2.0 for 2020) and SJR (0.348). The Cite Score is comparable to the IF calculated

by the Web of Science. For 2020, we have already had an indexation in the Journal Citation Reports (JSR) with the Journal Citation Indicator (JCI) = 0.41. In the category „hospitality, leisure, sport & tourism” it is 77/128, Q3, and 40.23 JCI percentile. It can therefore be said that our Journal is growing and „going up”.

Volume 21 contains 34 articles in permanent subject sections. The most (13 of them) appear in the thematic section “Kinesiology and Coaching”. The whole volume begins with an article introducing scientific research in various areas entitled “Martial arts: travel and purpose”. In particular, on the subject of martial arts tourism there is only one article, a very interesting study on *karate* and *kobudo* tourism in Okinawa [Gonzalez de la Fuente 2021]. This island and the entire Ryu Kyu archipelago, where *karate* was born, benefit from being home to not only monuments but also to authentic masters in this martial art. The use of the Chinese tradition of “soft” *taijiquan* and *qigong* exercises for medical purposes is the subject of a meta-analysis that attempts to assess the impact of these exercises on the emotional states of the respondents/patients [Skrzeta *et al.* 2021]. It can be assumed that this pro-health potential is still not fully utilised.

One of the invited keynote speeches for the 9th IMACSSS Conference in Putrajaya (Malaysia, October 10-12, 2020) was the lecture: “Fighting arts: between formality and spontaneity”. It is also an in-depth reflection on drawing from the centuries-old tradition and contributing to today’s training work in a wide spectrum of fighting arts disciplines. The best works from the Putrajaya conference have been included in this year’s Special Issue of our Journal. The Guest Editor for this edition is Dr Mohamad Nizam Mohamed Shapie.

On behalf of the editorial team and publisher (IPA), we wish you good health, the best sporting form and scientific creativity, and encourage you to read.

Europe, Anno Domini 2021

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Trening, walka i sztuki walki: wprowadzenie do tomu 21

Słowa kluczowe: sztuki walki, trening, walka, zdrowie, historia, rok 2021

Abstrakt

Jest to artykuł koncepcyjny, poglądowy i przeglądowy. Jego pierwsza część zawiera omówienie projektujące koncepcji walki, treningu oraz relacji między tymi pojęciami w ramach fenomenu *fighting arts*. Druga część jest opisem stanu społeczności sztuk walki i sportów walki, naszych dwóch stowarzyszeń: *International Martial Arts and Combat Sports Scientific Society* (IMACSSS) i Stowarzyszenia Idokan Polska (SIP), oraz naszego Journala w roku 2021. Została napisana w kontekście historycznym i kulturowym. Całość jest wprowadzeniem do naukowych rozważań i treści tomu XXI. To jest spojrzenie ze strony siedziby IMACSSS i SIP (w Rzeszowie) oraz Redakcji.