BOOK REVIEW

Encounters, conflicts, dialogues. Analysis of selected areas of physical culture and cultural tourism. (Original title in Polish: *Spotkania, konflikty, dialogi. Analiza wybranych obszarów kultury fizycznej i turystyki kulturowej*)

Wojciech J. Cynarski

Publisher: Rzeszów University Press, Rzeszów

2008. Hard cover. 220 pages. ISBN 978-83-7338-381-4.

Reviewed by Prof. Kazimierz Obodyński, Ph. D., Faculty of Physical Education, University of Rzeszów, Poland

Professor Wojciech J. Cynarski is the Head of the Department of Humanist Sciences at the Faculty of Physical Education at Rzeszów University. He is a representative of the physical culture sciences and a sociologist who has produced something both useful and interesting with this monograph. In his academic writings, he creatively develops the humanist theory of physical culture and the theory of cultural dialogues. In this sixth independent monograph he develops threads from his previous five books, the most notable being *Sztuki walki budo w kulturze Zachodu* (*Budo martial arts in the culture of the West*) (2000) and *Proces globalizacji. Dialog kultur czy konflikt wartości?* (*Process of globalization. Dialogue of cultures or conflict of values?*) (2002). Professor Cynarski is probably the first researcher and theoretician to introduce the term ‘martial arts tourism’ and fully explore the meaning and implications of martial arts for those interested in the study of tourism. The book should be of interest and use to any scholars interested in the interaction between martial arts and tourism but it will also be of interest to those scholars interested in leisure and tourism.

Professor Stanisław Tokarski, the publishing reviewer of this latest of Cynarski’s books is a specialist in cultural dialogues and the philosophy of martial arts. Professor Tokarski is enthusiastic about the book, as shown in his review (an excerpt has been published on page four of the cover). He writes of Dr. Cynarski’s thesis, “This effort of unification of perspective is successful thanks to combining the concept of cultural tourism with studies on the cultural grounds for combat sports and martial arts. Interesting synthesis and original semantic entity is a final result.”

The monograph is divided into four main chapters complemented by *Introduction* and *Conclusions*, indexes of tables, photographs and figures, *Filmography*, *References*, list of other sources (direct interviews), maps and photos included in the *Appendix*, indices of names, geographical and historical names as well as *Contents* and *Summary* in English. In the introduction, the Author explains within which research program the

book has been created, what is the aims of the book are and the methodology to be used.

Theoretical perspective is the subject of the first chapter. It contains references to the scientific school of sociology and philosophy of physical culture by Zbigniew Krawczyk and to studies and works by American cultural anthropologists. The theoretical perspective for analyses included in the book is constituted especially by the humanist theory of physical culture (based on the 'Polish School' by Z. Krawczyk) and the theory of cultural dialogues from Mircea Eliade's school.

In the second chapter (*Sport and martial arts in the process of globalization*) the author presents criticism of contemporary show-like sport as a part of mass culture drawing main attention to the problem of aggression and violence in sport. He compares the axiology of sport and martial arts and describes the phenomenon of martial art movies as another element of mass culture on a global scale.

Chapter three (*Tourism and recreation vs. cultural dialogue*) is devoted to first reflection on the humanist dimension of these areas of physical culture. The Reader finds here an interesting reflection on physical recreation from the perspective of philosophical anthropology. Next the author describes tourism of sports interests and cultural interests explaining their factors and barriers.

The author focuses mainly on 'tourism of interests in the field of physical culture' which is included in cultural tourism. Basic terminological assumptions and definitions are included in Chapter one (pp. 13-14) and their further elaboration – at the beginning of Chapter three (pp. 59-63). Professor Cynarski presents his original concept of anthropology of recreation and tourism (pp. 63-72). He also describes postulates for its economic side. The section *Towards humanist economy of tourism and recreation* (pp. 72-80) has been devoted to this subject.

Apart from interesting parts on tourism of sports interests (pp. 80-91) and of cultural interests the widest description concerns the tourism of martial arts (the whole Chapter four, pp. 97-143). The cultural side of this form of tourist activity has been shown – with architectural values taken into account (which has been illustrated by numerous photos) as well as explication of numerous examples of journeys and analysis of cultural climates accompanying studying Asian martial arts.

This tourism participates, as the Author explains that in Chapter five, in cultural encounters and dialogues. *Cultural encounter and dialogue* is the title of Chapter five. Cynarski does not limit his elaboration just to martial arts but expands it onto various forms of psychophysical activity and analyzes *Dialogue and cognition through physical action* (pp. 162-166). Connections between dialogue and action have been discussed with reference to J. Habermas, H. G. Gadamer, E. Fromm, M. Buber, M. Eliade and John Paul II. In present-day global dialogue of cultures he describes the role of tourism and movement recreation as well as Asian traditional forms of physical activity. According to him, tourism and recreation as parts and factors of cultural

exchanges and at the same time “derivatives of the process of cultural globalization are becoming more and more significant for global rapprochement and dialogue. In particular Asian traditional forms of physical activity serve well the cultural dialogue and encounter contributing to better understanding between the people of the West and of the East” (p. 171).

In *Conclusions*, there are theses that tourist encounter “between the guest and the host, the newcomer and local community” (p. 173) serves well the intercultural dialogue as well as practicing far eastern martial arts, their presence in the film and media, Chinese medicine being fashionable etc. Practicing martial arts contributes to the development of special interest tourism (sport, cultural) and education. Generally dialogues are discussed in interpersonal and intercultural communication, in their connections with activity and the spheres of influence on carnality (patterns of somatic culture) and morality in the aspect of cognitive and self-realization needs.

Professor Cynarski’s monograph reflects the author’s scholarly maturity and builds upon the author’s years of analysis on the problems of tourism and recreation. The vast experience of the author can be confirmed by the rich reference section (pp. 178-197) including works by specialists in many fields (humanism, architecture, cultural sciences, physical culture sciences, and tourism) and from various countries. It is also worth drawing attention to the professional editorial side of this book. The book contains well-elaborated indexes, carefully drawn maps, quality photographs, clear charts, an attractive hard cover and an interesting and attractive graphic arrangement.

This publication is recommended to researchers in field of physical culture sciences, tourism, and sociology of culture and leisure time.

RECEIVED: 01.10.2008