

# Combat issues in literary works of Nobel Laureates for Literature – an interdisciplinary perspective of *martial arts bibliotherapy*

## Authors' Contribution:

- A Study Design
- B Data Collection
- C Statistical Analysis
- D Manuscript Preparation
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## Abstract

The concept of *martial arts bibliotherapy* has a direct relationship with the dynamically developing *prophylactic and therapeutic agonology*. While recognized in the global world of science new sub-discipline: the new *science of martial arts* is located in *agonology* (science about struggle). The aim of this very general review are the most important – according to the authors of the work – issues of fighting raised in the work of Nobel Prize winners in literature, which may be an important inspiration for the emerging of *martial arts bibliotherapy* with- in the broadly understood *prophylactic and therapeutic agonology*.

Henryk Sienkiewicz (Nobel prize 1905), by compiling different sources and literary syncretism, created the original historical novel of the adventures of great action-escape, kidnapping, chases, liberation and other types of threats that the heroes of his works could overcome. Rudyard Kipling (1907) in colourfully and adventure led narrative released numerous parallels between the animal behaviour and the people, that very often cause conflicts and misunderstandings terminated by bitter fighting. Władysław Stanisław Reymont (1924) situates the fight for the rights and dignity of life in the environment associated with the world of nature and its impact on human life and its social environment. William Faulkner (1949) refers to personal observation and experience from the period of the service and fights for military aviation, while Winston Churchill (1953) describes an armed conflict in a global dimension, that is, the fight at the macro scale. Ernest Hemingway (1954) in the history of cultural and literary thoughts on the phenomenon of fighting of a man with the lively nature has left perhaps the most multifarious legacy. The main character of the famous novel by Boris Pasternak (1958) – *Doctor Zhivago* – struggling with adversity, pays a personal defeat and loses as a man ill-adapted to the new reality. John Steinbeck (1962), his loudest novel – *The Grapes of Wrath* – devoted to the fight against exploitation of farm workers in California and the nascent capitalism. Nobel Prize winners Mikhail Sholokhov (1965) and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (1970) show people who are not able to break no dramas of life (the war, the Nazi camps, Soviet gulags, loss of loved ones, the disease and the lack of prospects for life).

Regardless of the diversity of literary narrative at the highest level of all the works combine two common possibilities: 1) secondary interpretation of the descriptions of battles (including the inner fight of a man) using the concept and methodology *agonology* 2) generalization in interdisciplinary approach, which, on the one hand, enriches the cognitive layer multithreaded issues of struggle, on the other hand, facilitates the implementation of the specific objectives of the application – prophylactic or therapeutic – individually tailored.

**Key words:** agonology • prophylactic and therapeutic agonology • negative cooperation • science of martial arts

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**The Partitions of Poland** – the first one in 1772 by Russia, Prussia, Austria; the second one in 1793 (by Russia, Prussia); the third one in 1795 (again by Russia, Prussia, Austria).

**Moral strength** of a unit or a team in an unarmed struggle is a deep emotional and rational conviction about the need of continuing the struggle – regardless of changing circumstances – and about the possibility of winning, irrespective of the enemy's forces [20, 32].

**Negative cooperation** – struggle characterized by non-compliance purposes (rivalry) [58].

**Positive cooperation** – interaction for compliance purposes [58].

**Counterproductive** – from praxeological perspective certain action can be: productive – non-productive – counterproductive – neutral. The action is counterproductive when a doer achieved goal opposite than intended [58, p. 220].

**Bravery** – means efficiency in good deeds, efficiency combined with estimable aspirations [58].

**Martial arts** – plural noun any of various systems of combat and self-defence, e.g. judo or karate, developed especially in Japan and Korea and now usually practised as a sport [59].

**Martial Arts** – are systems of fight practices (practiced in many reasons: self-defence, competition, self-improvement, physical health and fitness, mental and physical development) [60].

**Martial arts** – fighting techniques, sometimes involving use of mēlée weapons. All martial arts are focused on training which teaches one self-defence, aggression and emotions control, and improves fitness. In contrast with combat sports, martial arts involve also spiritual and cultural development (traditional values) [61].

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of *martial arts bibliotherapy* [1-3] – after all, it is too early to talk about a fully defined scientific specialties and justifications based on clinical studies – has a direct relationship with the dynamically developing *prophylactic and therapeutic agonology* [4-8]. While recognized in the global world of science new sub-discipline: the science of *martial arts* is located in *agonology* (science about struggle) [8]. For a symbolic date of the *science of martial arts* you can accept year 2005, when Thomson Reuters started the evaluation of the magazines entitled *Archives of Budo*, dedicated to *martial arts and combat sports* [9, 10]).

The purpose of this very general review are the most important, according to the authors of the work – issues of fighting raised in the work of Nobel Prize winners in literature, which may be an important inspiration for the emerging of *martial arts bibliotherapy* within the broadly understood *prophylactic and therapeutic agonology*.

The ordinal variable of presented works is the year of the Nobel Prize award given to the individual winners. In this way, a reference to the theme of combat in their works highlight the historical context. We point to the crucial pieces of Nobel laureates, which customarily are referred to as a representative of the literary work of the laureate.

## NOBEL LAUREATES FOR LITERATURE – A GENERAL OVERVIEW

### Henryk Sienkiewicz (1846-1916: Nobel Prize 1905)

Polish Nobel Laureate Henryk Sienkiewicz, as the first of the winners of this prestigious award in the field of literature, left a wonderful artistic achievement, which closely corresponds with the vision and mission of the nascent *martial arts bibliotherapy* under *prophylactic and therapeutic agonology*. His most popular, socially recognizable as the *Trilogy: With Fire and Sword (1884)* [11], *The Deluge (1886)* [12] and *Fire in the Steppe (1988: originally published under the Polish title*

*“Pan Wolodyjowski”*, which translates the *Colonel Wolodyjowski* [13]) – deserve to be referred to as effective *bibliotherapy* measures from micro scale to medium scale (accepting the classification scale activities in accordance with the criteria of *agonology*. We include to them also probably the most valuable work *The Knights of the Cross* or the *Teutonic Knights* (Polish: “*Krzyżacy*” [14]) published in 1900. Poland did not exist as a State at the time. This is the result of three partitions of Poland.

An inspiration to write a novel relating to the historical glory of the Polish arms (*Trilogy* and the *Teutonic Knights* were the tales of the nobility, the old legends of the knight motifs (battles with giants fights with powerful animals, wars of the Gentiles), diaries records (soldiers' deeds of the nobility in the 17th century.) and historiography (e.g. *The Chronicle of Jan Długosz* [15,16]). Nobel Prize Laureate in a masterful way incorporated in these novels, descriptions of battles in micro scale, for example knights duels, but also the use of the *potencialisation* an elementary rule of *agonology* of tricks. They alluded to the ancient tradition and medieval epic (action heroization). An extensive description of the battle of Grunwald (1410), one of the largest in the middle ages, already applies to medium-higher scale. For the bibliotherapist – agonologist these are the evidence of the excellent intuition. To prepare the nation to the liberation fight (medium-higher scale), the widespread preparation is obligatory, especially of the youth, on micro scale. The Nobel Prize Laureate gave testimony in the ending sentence *Trilogy*: “This completes the series of books described within a few years, and in no small effort – for the encouragement of the hearts” [13, p. 301]. To 1969 more than 12 million of books by Sienkiewicz was issued.

Henryk Sienkiewicz has received, however, the Nobel Prize in 1905 for his novel about the times of Nero – published in 1896 – *Quo Vadis* [17]. The content refers to the birth of Christianity. The verbal, behavioural and verbal-behavioural

fighting thread, is one of the most important in *Quo Vadis*. There were plenty of description of combat defence of the valiant Ursus with Germanic aurochs on the Roman arena, but also the gruesome scenes wild animals used in the same place in the extermination of defenceless people, not excluding children, women and the aged. A symbolic warning of the sensitive Nobel Prize winner did not protect Europe and the world from the expansion of the technology of total destruction, or from the prospect of the threats of its use on human civilization.

No wonder that only work on the European culture brought attention to the individuals recommending Sienkiewicz to the most prestigious award. The novel *Quo Vadis* reached the recipients in many European countries and experts in culture also in countries outside Europe. Books by Nobel Prize winner “for cheering of the hearts” were dedicated to the population of the state which did not exist for more than a hundred years (the time of Partitions of Poland). As a long bibliotherapeutic effect of Henryk Sienkiewicz achievement certify thousands of Polish soldiers from the times of the first and second world wars and the Warsaw Uprising of 1944, who assumed the aliases protagonists of the Nobel Prize winner.

### Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936: Nobel Prize 1907)

English Nobel Laureate from 1907 (two years after awarding Sienkiewicz) grew up in India. A huge success gained due to a story about a child raised by wolves – *The Jungle Book* [18, 19] – part I published 1894, part II, 1895. He was a keen observer of people and animals in the biological, psychological and cultural aspects. His work is paradoxically an interesting combination of, on the one hand, the negative cooperation (the pursuit of power and dominance), on the other hand, positive cooperation. These relationships apply to both separately set of animals, as well as a collection of people. However, the peculiar relationships between human beings (the main character Mowgli) and two groups of animals - one remaining with him in return relationship of friendship, the second unilaterally geared hostile to him, appear here.

In colourful and adventure conducted narrative of Kipling, animals behave like people. Many analogies of behaviour very often cause conflicts and misunderstandings that end *fierce struggle*.

Metaphors and personifications relate to mutual relationships and build the message, the conventions of which are grounded on the tradition in the form of greatly enlightening ancient animal fables, fairy tales, legends and myth (binary systems type of good and evil, night – day, etc.).

Kipling illustrated multithreaded relationships excluding interpersonal struggles, the ground of which are generally skin colour, social position, financial status, etc. In this way, he is trying to reduce well-established pitch of English military environments of customs officials and the colonial service. These narrative threads *The Jungle Book* are a good, literary exemplification of the notion of “compromise” and “struggle” in *agonological* analysis by Jarosław Rudniański [20].

### Władysław Stanisław Reymont (1867 – 1925: Nobel Prize 1924)

Another Polish writer, Reymont, awarded the Nobel Prize in literature, for his novel *The Peasants* – issues of *struggle* persists mostly in the convention of “people against people.” The fight for the rights and dignity of existence takes place in the associated with the natural world and its influences on human life and its rural environment in which there is no lack of coarsening behaviour. One of the most important scenes of the novel is the dramatic battle of the court wood (wrongfully cut out), in which the two groups clash – the representatives of the court and the villagers. Devastating struggle also with the participation of women with the clubs, flails and fists held in groups and individually Are hitting the butt fusion, grips the hair and flipping. Hitting the butt rifle, grabs by the hair and turning take place. Many are bleeding, death is inflicted, some have broken arms and legs, mutilated horses suffer [21]. The defence of the forest by pre-emptive attack ultimately proved *counterproductive* for the defenders. The forest has survived, but the defenders were imprisoned in this way, and the main character soon suffered death as a result of the received wounds.

Reymont’s descriptions of fighting have a wider biosocial context and reveal the diversity of motivations. The summary of the primal instincts and precepts of ethics recognized by the community shows a community in which the status is determined by wealth and absolute power and regulates the social relations. Władysław Reymont, the original relationship of a man with nature, the

struggle for land (children with parents, neighbours with neighbours, the crowd with the court), the struggle for a woman and other conflicts, he describes masterfully, using the unlimited possibilities of the language of fiction. The agonologist analyses the same phenomena – out of the necessity – using precise but hermetic language of science.

**William Faulkner  
(1897-1962: Nobel Prize, 1949)**

Originating from the southern United States, William Faulkner, was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature in 1949. His novel *Soldier's Pay* (1926) [22] fight in military aviation. In the novel, he also takes up the issue of incompatibility between the ex-soldiers – veterans of the front fights – to a new post-war environment. The main disappointment referred to the unrealized ideals for which they fought. This situation has born internal rebellion, opposition, and a variety of interpersonal conflicts even with oneself. This theme returns in the novel *Sartoris* (1929) [23]. The descriptions of these fights may in the future constitute the bibliotherapeutic means of "fight with oneself" by sensitive, insightful observers of life, however, not involved in the *science about struggle*.

**Winston Churchill  
(1874-1965: Nobel Prize 1953)**

Winston Churchill, the English statesman and Prime Minister during World War II, also belongs to the ranks of the winners of the Nobel Prize for literature (1953). These are the memories: *The Second World War* (six volumes issued between 1948 – 1953) [24]. The themes of war and fighting is incorporated in the global (macro scale).

Literary works of Winston Churchill remain in different relationships to *agonology* than the other winners of the Nobel Prize for literature. Passed by Churchill the knowledge of the battle at the macro level may be difficult to overestimate the bibliotherapeutic value (also in the prophylactic sense) for people who, because of social roles performed, work on a scale macro code or only apparently at the micro level.

**Ernest Hemingway  
(1889-1961: Noble Prize 1954)**

In the history of cultural and literary thought over the phenomenon of man's struggle against lively nature the undeniable climax constitutes the commonly known Ernest Hemingway's short

story *The Old Man and the Sea* [25] This story has been recognized as the ground for the 1954 literary Nobel Prize. These parables synthesizing and accumulating the most important features of the work of a writer of the world output. It presents a long, debilitating bout of the old fisherman Santiago – first with the big Marlin, and then with gluttonous sharks to maintain prey. The emotional narrative of the **fight mutually destructive** (devastating battle the exact term of *agonology* featured in literature in a variety of ways to heighten the drama of events) is accompanied by a competitive instinct and desire to win at all costs. Santiago preparation for this fight in terms of physical and mental, amongst other things, winning in arm-wrestling on the hands (arm-wrestling) with athletic Negro. The victorious fight wrestling on hand (arm-wrestling) with athletic Negro. This fight is an example of the necessary balancing of permanent physical training and mental training to all categories of the fighting [25, see also 1, 26].

Ernest Hemingway hunting, catching marlin, having friendship with boxers and toreadors, like his literary heroes, professed principle of fighting against adversity and instruction not to surrender. He does not tolerate a weakness. Animal world in his philosophy of life played a special role. He is the author of a compendium of knowledge about bullfighting (Spanish: *corrida de toros* or *toreo*) also known as *tauromachie* or *tauromachy*. *Death in the Afternoon* (1932) [27] contains information on bulls, toreadors, the audience fills up the arena of Spanish cities and the course of the fighting with a strong and dangerous animal. The edition contains an extensive glossary explaining the meaning of Spanish words and phrases associated with bullfighting and bibliographical note. Discourse in the background refers to important for the writer's reflections on the courage, the fight against fate and death. This book is a close philosophical and pragmatic to premises, on which the foundation *agonology* is based [4-8, 20, 28-35].

One of the most known works of Hemingway *The Undeclared* (1965) [36] is the story of a typical attitude of his characters to life – you can lose, but the fight should not be stopped. It is important first of all to strive for victory and steadfastness. Manuel Garcia, called Manolo, an aging and almost forgotten participant of the fights in the arena, once again confronts, hired by the *corrida* organizer Retana. The last time there is by



his side also a picador Zurito. If it turns out that Manolo has no longer forces to continue fighting in the arena, then Zurito cuts off his *coleta* – a pigtail of a toreador. However, the laws of biology are inexorable. With the lack of interest from the audience, weakened and wounded by a bull, he loses. But does he lose as a brave man (**bravery** – a strict concept of agonology)? On the operating table, he does not admit defeat and stubbornly repeats: “Well I went, went ...”. An armed faithful Zurito is next to him [36].

Manuel Garcia, like many heroes of Hemingway, loses in the physical sense, but demonstrates the incredible **moral power** (another high-precision category of agonology). This is the highest level of literary Nobel Prize winner reference to elementary beings *profilactic and therapeutic agonology* or for shorter: *innovative agonology* [8]. In fact, it is a literary description of combat itself, their weaknesses, and in the background – with inevitable consequences of aging and his own helplessness.

Story *My Old Man* [37] refers to the traditional ties of a son with his father. Father is mentioned as intensely training jockey. Tells the story of his professional athlete carrier. Aging jockey fighting overweight, in Paris entangled in corruption, relating to manipulating the results, trying to return to active practice riding – is killed during the race. Paradoxically, the jockey, not fighting with the animal, but cooperating with him (praxeological case of positive cooperation) strives to victory. For the son, however, he will be remembered as a beloved father: the “Old” [37].

Hemingway heroes take part in the great national conflicts. These are examples of the involvement of individuals in the armed struggle and cruelty of war activities: on a macro scale – *A Farewell to Arms* [38] (World War I) and an upper-medium scale *For Whom the Bell Tolls* [39] (Spanish Civil War). The essence of this struggle on a micro scale he concluded in a play *The Fifth Column* and *Four Stories of the Spanish Civil War* [40]. The notion of *The Fifth Column* is a secret group inside the enemy’s zone defence and the country’s borders.

### **Boris Pasternak** (1890-1960: Nobel Prize 1958)

He received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1958. In his famous novel Doctor Zhivago [41]. the main character is subjected to a trial of

character in times of social change of the late nineteenth century, and ideological struggles and revolution in Russia. Struggling with adversity, he is defeated personally and loses as a man ill-adapted to the new Soviet reality.

A striking proof of moral transformation Doctor Zhivago words are spoken in a conversation with Lara: “I set very revolutionary, but now I think the violence will not achieve anything. The good should be encouraged at the goodness “[42 p. 284].

### **John Steinbeck** (1902-1968: Nobel Prize 1962)

Like Hemingway he was a correspondent reporting events of World War II, but also the war in Vietnam. John Steinbeck received the Nobel literature in 1962. Previously, the most famous his novels *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) [43] won the 1940 Pulitzer Prize. The novel concerns the fight against the exploitation of farm workers in California and nascent capitalism (in *agonology* is an example of mainly acute **non-arm struggle** on the mid-lower scale).

### **Mikhail Aleksandrovich Sholokhov** (1905-1984: Nobel Prize 1965)

The examples of the steadfast struggle and fortitude completes the Russian Nobel Prize winner Mikhail Sholokhov story *The Fate of a Man* [44]. Any dramas of life are not able to break the hero. A Soviet soldier is captured and consigned to the Nazi concentration camps. He suffers hunger, torture, and humiliation before finally managing to escape. However, his wife and children all die during the war. When peace and demobilization come, he sinks into depression and drunkenness, until he finds an orphan boy to care for, giving him a renewed reason to live. The story is the exemplification of many types of battles: military mutually destructive [28-30], defensive [34], “with himself” [8, 34].

The most worldly recognized work of the Nobel laureate *And Quiet Flows the Don* [45] describes the participation and role of the Cossacks in the revolutionary struggle. In the novel, there is no lack of references to *agonology*.

### **Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn** (1918-2008: Nobel Prize 1970)

The world of soviet camps is described by the Russian Nobel Prize winner in 1970 especially in the most famous story *One Day in the Life of Ivan*

*Denisovich* [46]. Solzhenitsyn shows the workings of the inhumane prison camp system. The measures and stratagems for survival, the survival of another day commit all the resources of strength, intelligence and instinct of people often trapped for imaginary crimes. Mental image of the hero implies the defence of the values that are life and humanity. Soviet prisons and labour camps are a testament to the totalitarian system, repression and enslavement of the human mind. Atavistic reflex fight for life requires adaptation to the rules and regulations prevailing in the world of force and violence.

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, also in *The Gulag Archipelago* (three-volume work) [47], showing the inhuman living conditions of the camp intimates that only the one who is smart, knows how to organize and loses human reflexes can survive, because in this world idealist has no chance of survival. It's not fighting, just the reality of cruelty and brutal adversity (bad weather, severe frosts, horrible barracks, malnutrition and hunger) and other convicts who also want to survive (ruthless criminals and criminals), but also with myself not to give up, break and be defeated. The camp is primarily an arena of bloody and relentless struggle of people against the persecutors finished, the place of active and passive resistance (beatings, intimidation, detention).

These examples of the works of Solzhenitsyn exemplify primary importance of moral strength of man in the defensive struggle, to fight for a decent survival in the battle for the highest value. Moral strength to fight precisely defines *agonology* [20, 32].

## CONCLUSIONS

Cited in this study the work of Nobel Prize winners focuses timeless universal values (present also in literary works of other eminent writers). The quoted exemplifications are diverse in nature, and consequently the diverse value of cognitive perspective of *bibliotherapy*: two- or multi-stakeholder destructive struggle, including with animals and using different means; defensive struggle from micro (self-defence) to the macro scale helpless struggle on the micro scale on the mid-lower average scale and only seemingly micro; struggle with himself. Although professional analysis of these struggles is owned by *agonology*, however, not possible without interdisciplinary references

to a number of particular sciences (psychology, sociology, political science, criminology, victimology, etc.).

Modern mass culture replicates and modernizes the very often classic schemes of descriptions of battles from the past in popular genres, such as fantasy, horror and comic, role-playing games and computer. New gladiatorship [4, 6, 7, 48] and the concept of "superman" fit, but in a completely different system of values and ethical principles (ludic commercialism and consumerism). Searching after the reading of the original meanings and meanings according to the experience and intellect of the recipients causes date the works even those from the past. The process of history, literature and tradition of works of art are an important context that facilitates the search for treatments and comparative, because the past always exists in the present and projects for the future. The correspondence and confluence of cultures in the global domination world of electronic media facilitates communication and connects remote areas of knowledge that should be used for the good and development of the modern man. Literary message of the sender – the author of the message to the reader (receiver) are decoded during the instantiation mainly on the principles inscribed in his intentions read.

These two categories of literature, willingly filmed have therapeutic relevance. Provide both positive and negative patterns. The ability to use these resources for therapeutic purposes, but also prevention, fits directly in the qualifications and competence of professional *martial arts bibliotherapy* [1-3, 8, 26].

The therapeutic value of words there is no way to deny the image, even using the most modern technologies. The effects have proven to be counterproductive [49-51]. The scientific concept of *catharsis* does not hold [34, 52, 53]. Contemplation and living particularize the strategies of reception about the limits that are difficult to predict (substitutive function). Therefore, it becomes important selection of texts (fragments) in the intentions of *bibliotherapy*. Interpretation of texts related to broadly understood martial arts, in fact analysed the issues on the ground *agonology*, requires the therapist this new specialty-specific competencies – literary skills and knowledge science about struggle [8, 26].

Regardless of the diversity of literary narrative at the highest level, all the work combines two common possibilities: 1) secondary interpretation of the descriptions of battles (including the internal struggle of man) using the conceptual and methodology *agonology*; 2) generalization of an interdisciplinary perspective, which on the one hand, enhances cognitive layer multi-threaded issues of struggle, on the other hand, facilitates the implementation of specific objectives of the application – preventive or therapeutic – individually customized.

Although the name of this new specialty *martial arts bibliotherapy* refers directly to the two categories of phenomena – struggle and therapy – includes the prophylactic aspect. Struggle symbolizes the term “martial arts” for it is the most

recognizable in the modern world, the name synonymous with the struggle in the immediate challenge [8-10, 54, 55] – from the oldest messages, through culture and chivalrous busido [56, 57] to Olympic combat sports and neo-gladiatorship [35, 48]. The preventive layer *martial arts bibliotherapy* is, among other things, converging complex *agonology* issues by reading the non-specialist. It is only one step to the greatest possible number of people got to know in a way accessible basic methods and means of *agonology*. There is no more simple, widely accessible way on the one hand to reduce the aggressiveness of individuals [2, 3, 26], on the second, immunization for progressive violence and aggression in interpersonal relationships, reinforced by the irresponsible promotion of such behavior especially by the electronic media.

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