

The beginnings of extreme tourism in Poland – Seweryn Goszczyński “Travel Journal to the Tatra Mountains” (1832)

Authors' Contribution:

- A** Study Design
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Leon Andrzej Krzemieniecki^{1ABCD}, Bartłomiej Jan Barczyński^{2CDE}

¹EKO-AGRO-FITNESS Prof. Roman M. Kalina, Piwniczna-Zdrój, Poland

²Archives of Budo, Warsaw, Poland

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Abstract

Background and Study Aim:

Although nowadays survival ability it is also a scientific term (belonging to the empirical category), it dates back to the time when man also shaped his cognitive abilities. The inclinations and desires to explore unknown lands, places and areas, as well as curiosity towards exploring the world, are as old as humanity itself. Since ancient times, the early men, fighting predators and dangerous nature have been overcoming huge spaces (the nomadic period). Wandering, hunting, food search and winning skirmishes with enemies formed their existence and set the limits of the tame, friendly and close world. The goal of the presented scientific essay is to generalize the knowledge of extreme tourism in the Tatra Mountains, based of a single document, namely the diary of the Polish traveller, Seweryn Goszczyński.

Material and Methods:

The scientific essay is based on an analysis the “Travel Diary to the Tatras” by Seweryn Goszczyński (1801-1876) from 1832 is still an interesting example of the attitude to high mountain hiking and extreme tourism in Polish literature (first, only excerpts were printed and in 1853 the whole book appeared in print). The author of the diary was a Romantic poet, a democrat and a mountain lover and his diary was written in a form of a travel guide to the Tatra region (Podhale, Spisz, the Tatras).

Results:

The authors of this scientific essay discuss the following issues: 1. The practical tourist guide (trail paving); 2. Struggle with nature – report on mountain hiking; 3. Mountain lovers, the price of risk and pioneer experiments; 4. Contemporary contexts and the integrity of information. 5. Extreme tourism and mountain expeditions in the message conveyed by Seweryn Goszczyński (science, practice and experience); 6. Contemporary interpretation of the work written many years ago; the beginning and end of the era).

Conclusions:

In our opinion, the essay goes beyond the scope of the issues pertaining to martial arts bibliotherapy. Although the reference to “struggle with himself” (internal struggle) in this essay as well as in the literature dedicated to extreme forms of tourism is necessary, limiting the discussion to martial arts bibliotherapy would be unjustified from the point of view of methodology. However, the postulate to develop the new bibliotherapy category of interdisciplinary nature and, at the same time, oriented towards human functioning under difficult and extreme circumstances, such as innovative agonology bibliotherapy seems convincing.

Key words:

bibliotherapy • innovative agonology • internal struggle • scientific essay • struggle with nature

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Author's address:

Bartłomiej Barczyński, Archives of Budo, Aleje Jerozolimskie St. 125/127 room 601B, 02-017 Warsaw, Poland; e-mail: barczynski@wp.pl

Extreme sport – *noun* a sport considered more dangerous and thrilling than ordinary sports and often involving hazardous airborne stunts and tricks [20].

EFPA – “extreme form of physical activity are extreme sports, often classified according to the environment in which they are performed (water, land, air), extreme form of physical recreation as well as gainful activity or voluntary service, and all varieties of physical activity that meet at least one classification criterion of the feature associated either with extreme risk of injury or death, or extreme body burden with high level of effort, or extreme coordination difficulty” [10, p. 19].

Intellectual violence – means actions verbal or preserved in a text as well as symbolic actions (mimics, gestures, leaving a group in a demonstrational way to which an entity being subject of intellectual violence had joined, failure to reply the letter, letter, etc.) undertaken by a given person towards specified entity (individual or a group) which result in *ad hoc* or relatively long-term humiliation of an individual in social environment or causing that this entity experiences reasonable sense of harm, mental and/or emotional discomfort along with negative health effects [7].

Institutional violence – is an action of at least one entity (an entity or a group which is a representative for a certain public administration, local government or another body, organisation, corporation, etc.) which using its privileged social or economic position (e.g. as a monopolist) undertakes actions towards certain entity (individual, group, institution, etc.), which are often perceived as unfriendly (exclusion, other forms of discrimination, excessive duration of affairs, etc.) or as inhuman (exploitation, isolating children from parents due to economic reasons, etc.), which results in certain material damage

INTRODUCTION

Although nowadays survival ability it is also a scientific term (belonging to the empirical category) [1-3]), it dates back to the time when man also shaped his cognitive abilities. The inclinations and desires to explore unknown lands, places and areas, as well as curiosity towards exploring the world, are as old as humanity itself. Since ancient times, the early men, fighting predators and dangerous nature have been overcoming huge spaces (the nomadic period). Wandering, hunting, food search and winning skirmishes with enemies formed their existence and set the limits of the tame, friendly and close world. People, usually instinctively, expanded the horizon of their cosmos. The stages of hiking and discovery took thousands of years. Settlement, exploitation of the land and less concern about safe existence began to foster the strategy and planning of their activities on an increasing scale. Since then, people have begun to adapt the closer and further reality with logic, persistence and consistency, facing new challenges, extreme conditions and fighting adversity.

The issues associated with the term “struggle” and its numerous synonyms (combat, fighting, wrestling, etc.) are analysed as part of a separate scientific discipline, namely agonology [4-6]. Moreover, the dynamics of struggles during the last decade, which as never before pertains to mental (intellectual and emotional) aspects, initiated the development of a new subdiscipline, namely innovative agonology [7]. The key terms related to this science include “intellectual violence” and “institutional violence” (see glossary). Many issues of pertaining to innovative agonology – including the issue of symbolic violence are addressed by a French sociologist [8, 9].

The concept of “extremeness” is no longer as precisely explored in a scientific sense as the concept of “struggle” being part of agony or the science related to struggle. Therefore, it is obvious that most of the publications dealing with science and popular science are associated with the terms “extreme sport” and “extreme form of physical activity – EFPA” [10].

When exploration of issues concerns overcoming difficulties such as the relationship between man and nature (not to mention interpersonal conflicts), both terms: “extreme” and “struggle” appear in multiple verbal combinations.

The goal of the presented scientific essay is to generalize the knowledge of extreme tourism in the Tatra Mountains, based of a single document, namely the diary of the Polish traveller, Seweryn Goszczyński.

THE PRACTICAL TOURIST GUIDE (TRAIL PAVING)

These most general premises included in the “Introduction” refer, first of all, to the works belonging to (travel) literature. This sort of literature, describing man and the surrounding world, deals with various aspects of human activities and struggle for existence, overcoming barriers and innovative or inventive achievements. The “Travel Diary to the Tatras” by Seweryn Goszczyński (1801-1876) from 1832 is still an interesting example of the attitude to high mountain hiking and extreme tourism in Polish literature (first, only excerpts were printed and in 1853 the whole book appeared in print [11]). The author of the diary was a Romantic poet, a democrat and a mountain lover and his diary was written in a form of a travel guide to the Tatra region (Podhale, Spisz, the Tatras).

The genre formula of the diary also determines the message for the reader and the idea of the book. It is a report on travel, and as such, usually classified as nonfiction. Despite the author’s subjective attitude, the described facts, events and persons remain authentic. This is an important objection connected with a Veristic understanding of the work written by the author of literature related to the Tatra mountains, a pioneer who described and documented the first high-mountain hiking in an extreme form.

The diary by Goszczyński is a historical fiction with elements of ethnography and ideology; it is

related to ethnographic research (description of the inhabitants, their clothes, language and the Podhale dialect, architecture, religion, beliefs and mythology, etc.); it suggestively presents wild mountain scenery, the little known places and presents accurate observations and rational comments. Trail paving in the Tatras, the beginnings of extreme high-mountain trekking, traversing mountain gaps, rocks and peaks, penetrating rocky caves and overcoming one's weaknesses while climbing. This is an important contribution and input in the history of this form of tourism and extreme sports in a wider (also psychological) context, also including the description of cognitive and health-related benefits of such activities.

The beauty, uniqueness and specificity of the mountain world, fascination with mountains, elite tourism, travel and excursions made the Poles treat mountain hiking as both an attractive form of pastime and a lifestyle in the first half of the nineteenth century (the origins of mountain hiking date back to the eighteenth century, and its dynamic development falls on the second half of the nineteenth century). The guides to these "exotic" places were skilful, watchful, resolute, brave and graceful local highlanders, as it is repeatedly pointed out by the author and the main character of the diary, distinguishing himself in greatly satisfying mountains hikes (elements of competition). Man has always dreamed of standing at the highest point and look at the surrounding reality from this perspective. This is an important prerequisite to their ambition and actions and overcoming their own weaknesses and extreme barriers.

STRUGGLE WITH NATURE – REPORT ON MOUNTAIN HIKING

The route described in the report leads from Wołoszyn along Roztoka, Siklawa Waterfall and the Valley of the Five Ponds to Morskie Oko (Eye of the Sea) (transcript of 13 August 1832). As mentioned above, the guides were the highlanders who knew the surrounding area best. They took with them stock of food and wine, equally divided as luggage among the individual participants of the expedition. The guides also carried some modest equipment, such as ropes (cords) and the so called *ciupaga* (ice axe) a shepherd's axe also used as a mountaineer's walking stick with a long wooden shaft and often a metal butt).

The manuscript from the 18th century entitled "Describing Interesting Tatra Mountains" recommended, among other things, taking a compass, binoculars and steel "pins".

Paving wild Tatra routes by the first tourists was, on the one hand, connected with being fascinated by the charms of the unusual areas and their dangerous nature. On the other hand, however, it required appropriate behaviour under extreme conditions and facing multiple threats (test of characters). The exoticism of places in the Tatras is characterized by: densely overgrown dwarf mountain pines, numerous rolling waterfalls, glaciation, creek beds and boulders and whiting trees. Such a kind of terrain required overcoming numerous difficulties and making adequate complex movements, even though the seasonal guides knew the passages, roads and trails. Goszczyński points out that the tourist was too tired to walk when, dazzled by the beauty of the mountain landscape, tried to avoid further obstacles. The hike was certainly hampered by the air that was thinning at this altitude. Marching in the mountains, the desire to get the heights, they had to rest "after every few dozen steps" [11].

While climbing higher and higher, the walking difficulties and the risk of injuries intensify. The climbers encounter the most frequent obstacles such as rocky slopes, wettened by humid air and slippery rocks. After reaching the snow line, the tired expedition members, half conscious and heated, fall onto the ground in the shadow of rocks. Before their eyes they have quickly falling roaring water, a thick fog and a persistent wet haze. Contemporary researchers and practitioners often refer to such descriptions [12]. The author [11] admits that the views captivate with their extraordinary beauty and the shining ice panes reflect colourful rainbows (light effects in the mountains hurt one's eyes making the climbers wear dark glasses).

Time pressure and the designated climbing route lead the hikers further, to the lake Morskie Oko (Eye of the Sea). Here the descent is only seemingly easier. Traversing the narrow paths along steep slopes and slippery descends carries the risk of falls and exposure to injuries. Numerous lakes, heat and crystal lake waters tempt the climbers to swim (The Valley of Five Lakes). Goszczyński, however, warns them that the water

and/or mental or emotional harm along with damage to somatic, mental and social health. Institutional violence almost always involves elements of intellectual violence, and sometimes of physical violence (intervention of police, etc.) [7].

is icy cold, therefore the bathing should be short. After dinner they head towards Morskie Oko. Next, numerous obstacles such as bare rocks, perpendicular cliffs and sharp slopes make the hikers choose an easier route. Due to the lack of confidence in fitness of their legs and the fear of vertigo, they decide to omit the encountered obstacles. They failed, however, to avoid difficulties and stumbling, and poor physical condition also made it felt [11].

The author says that while walking along passes the and narrow mountain paths with a slippery grassy or stony surface where only chamois and shooters (hunters) walk, the hikers employed a very simple and practical strategy (praxeological reasons, protection, safety). The hikers were blindfolded so as not to be scared by the views and two mountaineers, one in front of them and the other one behind them, lead them along the narrow paths above the precipices. It was not only courage and dexterity that determined the success of extreme tourism and mountain peak climbing [11].

MOUNTAIN LOVERS, THE PRICE OF RISK AND PIONEER EXPERIMENTS

Goszczyński [11] in his descriptions emphasized the power of mountains and, first of all, the threat and danger lurking on daredevils traversing high-mountain trails. As a romantic and idealist, he admired the mountains, discovered their beauty (aesthetics) as well as their healing effect on people (psychotherapy). Although he was a resident of the Ukrainian steppes, his love for the mountains is surprising and confirms his interest in the world, which often appears to us as distant and unexplored. The romantic creator mentions that rocky river banks at his homeplace, as well as the steep cliffs and waterfront grottoes he explored as a young man, prepared him for his mountain adventure. They also hardened his courage and resistance to hardships (the essence of the importance of preparation, that is, preparation for action).

In the mountains, on various occasions, whenever possible and in the lower parts, people (mainly the older ones and children) moved using horse carriages. Mountain picnics were organized at different altitudes. People usually walked, gradually getting used to being close to the mountains and their uniqueness [11].

The author also describes the risky expedition to the cave with the source of the river Czarny Dunajec [cave exploring in the Tatra Mountains]. For the first time he explored the cave having only wax candles and matches. The exploration was unsuccessful because a wind shift blew the candle out. Goszczyński withdrew guided by his memory in complete darkness and in the atmosphere of fear. That time cave explorers most often used torches to light caves. Taught by the previous experience, the speleologist used a torch when he wandered in cave streets looking for the origins of the Czarny Dunajec [11].

It is worth noting, as the author [11] reports, that the mountaineers' children were prepared to cope with the extreme environmental conditions. Hence, they developed such features as agility, tenacity, persistence and courage. The description of their climbing up eagle's nests and the overhanging cliffs over precipices is striking, especially that under such circumstances the climber's safety depended solely on hand grip and mutual confidence.

According to the traveller's diary, the magic and power of the mountains is determined by their forests, valleys, boulders, caves, mountain lakes, wildlife, ruins of castles and "exotic" inhabitants. The wild nature heals and strengthens people. Conquest of the mountains however, could not do without casualties. This is evidenced by human bones and skeletons encountered at different heights (compare fatal accidents encountered in modern times, caused by human frivolity or lack of help from other people [11].

CONTEMPORARY CONTEXTS AND THE INTEGRITY OF INFORMATION

In fact, the first guide to the Tatras written by Seweryn Goszczyński ["Dziennik...", p. 11] remains a reliable source of information and is one of the most frequently cited reference sources. Although it is written in a language used almost two centuries ago, it contains the most important information about the region, replicated afterwards and today in various travel guides and other sources. For example, the popular manual "Tourist Geography of the World" part 1 [13] informs us, among other things, that the Tatras are a highly appreciated tourist subregion, characterized by the high mountain alpine landscape, the construction

of rocks and karst phenomena, glacial lakes and rock carving waters. Such places as Eye of the Sea, the Valley of the Five Lakes and numerous caves attract most tourists, [13, pp. 308-309].

The author of "Geographical and country-cultural dictionary of Poland" [14] places emphasis on the information about the Tatras being the highest mountain group in the Carpathians and describes lakes and waterfalls, snow line, steep slopes and fogs, tall rocks and mountain tourism, and tourism in the Tatras that began as the equivalent to mountaineering, etc. He was believed to be one of the first authors who wrote about the Tatras and conducted the pioneering scientific research on this region between 1803 and 1805 [14 pp. 746-749].

The geography textbook for the year secondary school [15] from 1996 "Poland in Europe" regards the Tatras, which is obvious, as the example of the land with a mountainous landscape. The Tatra lakes and streams, moraines in the vicinity of Morskie Oko, the varied terrain and numerous climatic zones represent, among other things, the uniqueness of the Tatra area and the unique natural landscape ([15 pp. 53-58]).

The scientific and precise language of contemporary messages [e.g., 16, 17] does not blur the substantive values of the description written by the romantic poet of the 19th century. Goszczyński shows that mountains are both the element and the rival teaching us to be humble. Placing emphasis on the spiritual aspects resulting from extreme experiences of facing the mountains, he presented arguments beyond his era, concerning the motivation and limits of human potential (the ability to survive). As it has been emphasized earlier, the "Diary" written by Goszczyński [11] is a combination of a travel guide and ethnographic -sociological research. The abundance of descriptions and thoughts, the multilateral and emotional attitude to facts, the use of contrast, Veristic narration and variability of dramatic descriptions of situations and moods make up the unique thematic and formal whole. The conquest of mountain peaks is invariably accompanied by the accurate description of landscape attractions having a therapeutic effect on human personality and mental experience. These include the panorama of mountains, valleys and abysses, the history and structure of rock substrates, traces of animals and hunters, the dangers and hardships of hiking, and the ways of overcoming fear during high-altitude climbing.

It is not easy to find a similar narrative throughout the history, that would combine contemplation with the dramaturgy of events, the beauty and visuals of descriptions, while conveying the depth of mental sensations as a consequence of extreme circumstances. It is a combination of the crux of climbing, i.e. its aesthetic elements, social and at the same time ethical dimension and sports effort.

EXTREME TOURISM AND MOUNTAIN EXPEDITIONS IN THE MESSAGE CONVEYED BY SEWERYN GOSZCZYŃSKI (SCIENCE, PRACTICE AND EXPERIENCE)

Goszczyński – a sensitive witness and participant of expeditions, in his "Diary" describes a struggle between a man and mountains and the former has to be aware of the awaiting hardships and dangers. Hence, the mountain guides, usually local highlanders who know the terrain, and are physically fit, energetic and courageous, play a key role in mountain. They are caring caregivers, guided by their personal ambitions and men who know their "craftsmanship". Their role involves ensuring a proper organization of the entire expedition including supply and choice of relevant routes. Mountain hiking is not only an active form of holiday (care for health), but also a form of a specific life scenery, in which, however, they can be lost or seriously risk their health. The author of the "Diary" cannot imagine a trip to the mountains without experienced guides and adequate, previously acquired physical fitness (exercises of fitness and endurance in similar conditions).

Cocksureness and unconcern may, under numerous circumstances, lead to tragic consequences. Goszczyński warns against accidents without addressing them directly, however he does it through description of his search for the way out in a dark and unknown grotto with no light.

According to the author, mountain beauty is captivating, has a cathartic effect on man and can heal various psychophysical complains (the role of contact with nature). It does not, however, justify certain behaviours that pose threat to the hiker's own or other expedition members' lives (the essence of interpersonal relations ethical, proper behaviour). Extreme conditions require a particular caution

and responsibility. The terrain that changes with height and climate should be respected through a proper body response, and the aspects of adaptation and physical capacity (fitness).

The examples of such responses and suggestions can be found in numerous excerpts from the "Diary". The typical and one of the multiple (representatively cited and recorded on August 13th, 1932) excerpts suggestively presents the aura of the first mountain escapades and impressions experienced by the climbers: *At the beginning, the route in the Valley of Five Lakes was not very difficult – there were no such obstacles as huge structural basins packed with rocks, which most probably were lakes a long time ago, such as the Five Lakes today, but now completely devoid of water; only when we stood on the slope of the rock hanging over Rostok we realized what mountain expedition and vertigo really were. We can imagine this in any way, describing a mountain which is so high that the Rostok Valley which is at least one and a half miles long seemed to be only several hundred fathoms long and also smooth, almost perpendicular – and walking along? a path parallel to the bottom of the precipice and on slippery grass, with slightly visible traces of goats and shooter footprints. For me it was the moment of memorizing the delight of danger. This is one of the places which the less brave hikers traverse blindfolded and follow two mountaineers, one walking in front of them and the other one behind them* [11, p. 199].

CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION OF THE WORK WRITTEN MANY YEARS AGO; THE BEGINNING AND END OF THE ERA)

Until nowadays the diary written by Goszczyński [11] has preserved its historic, literary (it is included in textbook prints), sociological and practical values (utilitarianism); the author documents his pioneer expeditions in high mountains and presents the beginnings of hiking in Polish Tatras climbing (alpinism) with a realistic pietism. The aforementioned health-related and cognitive values have no negative impact on the literary values of the work. It is a clear example of knowledge enrichment and interdisciplinary actions, confirming the relationships between different domains connected by a creative thought. The numerous works with comparatist traits track the plots pertaining to travel, strangeness and identity, identify

the space, take a look at the philosophy of travel and therapy, the pathways at the border of antagonist worlds (societies) and martial arts; they treat traveling as world reading and deal with semantic aspects of travel ("cultural texts"). Literature is increasingly becoming a synthesis of knowledge about a human being regarding the anthropological aspects, processed and subjectively expressed. Therefore, it has a huge impact on the new understanding of the phenomena and abrupt changes in the surrounding world.

In the light of the issues discussed in this essay, tourism and recreation are the domains related to traveling to different places where we can identify our "ego", privacy, dreams, imaginings, beliefs, gestures, rites, learn about the role of traveling and ability test [18]. Having detailed maps at our disposal, we conquer spaces (contact and struggle with live and lifeless nature, exoticity of places, conquest of summits including himalaism and record breaking in climbing at high altitudes in the mountains), conduct "field studies" and create humanistic geography (including the world on the verge of extinction). Hence the works like the Diary by Goszczyński, showing men facing threat, as well as numerous oeuvres of that kind, never lose their values and never are out of date, especially that the idea of the contemporary alpinism is nowadays strongly criticized and infected by breaking the so far obligatory rules. We mean, among other things, the fatal accidents of Polish climbers in the Himalayas that could have been avoided, rampant individualism in peak conquest and vicious rivalry, lack of empathy under circumstances which threaten one's life and health.

All the above mentioned aspects make us reflect on the oeuvres written many years ago and, in fact, gradually forgotten by people in the process of losing cultural memory. At the same time, we can find out that nowadays polarization of interest, views and actions is present in the semiotic and axiological space of the contemporary tourism, including insistent struggle for advertising and breaking records at all costs serve as a result of manipulation of the good of man and nature.

CONCLUSIONS

In our opinion, the essay goes beyond the scope of the issues pertaining to martial arts bibliotherapy [19]. Although the reference to "struggle with

himself" (internal struggle) in this essay as well as in the literature dedicated to extreme forms of tourism is necessary, limiting the discussion to martial arts bibliotherapy would be unjustified from the point of view of methodology. However, the

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