

Scythe fencing in “Bartoszowe Troops” – the first original Polish school of martial arts (1903-1914)

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Abstract

The use of scythes in hand-to-hand fighting against regular enemy soldiers is an original Polish martial arts dating back to the turn of the 18th and 19th century. The goal of this review is to study three issues: (1) general knowledge about the historical context in which the so-called battle scythe was used by Polish peasants and about effectiveness of this weapon; (2) use of this original martial arts and the memory of heroic deeds performed by Bartosz Głowacki troop in order to brace patriotic, moral and physical values, in particular among Polish youth at the turn of 19th and 20th century, being an important part of the strategy adopted in order to regain independence; (3) description of motor properties exhibited during scythe fencing as an original form of martial art training.

It is believed that scythe could have been used in 1036-1037 during the peasant uprising. It was used during a fight at Orsza in 1514 and certainly during the Battle of Obertyn in 1531. In the 17th century, shepherds and the Zaporozhian Cossacks fought using scythes. Bartosz Głowacki troop proved that fighting with this original weapon is effective during the Battle of Raclawice (one of the first battles that took place during the Kościuszko Uprising against Russia on 4 April 1794). “Bartoszowe Troops” which followed patriotic traditions and made scythe fencing more attractive supported the independence aspirations exhibited by the rural youth. Together with the Polish Riflemen’s Association founded by Józef Piłsudski, the “Falcon” Polish Gymnastic Society and the Polish Rifle Squads, these troops formed Polish paramilitary movement established at the Austrian Partition before the First World War. Documentation preserved allows us to reconstruct this unique martial art regarding its motor properties. Similarities in this respect (also taking weapon length into account) may be noticed in the case of naginata (one of the Japanese budō arts), Portuguese jogo do pau, elements of Chinese wushu or Indian kalripayat.

Fortifying contemporary martial arts with various techniques using original weapons the basic application of which did or does not involve armed combat (such as scythe in this article) may have broad application in cultural diversity and health promotion. In spite of appearances, health-related training based on selected martial arts combined with martial arts bibliotherapy and other methods of innovative agonology may have a positive impact on all health dimensions (somatic, mental, social health) and increase the attractiveness of survival ability.

Keywords: Galicia (in Poland) • the “Falcon” Polish Gymnastic Society • innovative agonology • martial arts bibliotherapy

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Budo (Budō) – originally a term denoting the “Way of the warrior”, it is now used as a collective appellation for modern martial arts of *kendō*, *jūdō*, *kyūdō* and so on. The primary objective of these “martial ways” is self-perfection (*ningen-keisei*) [46].

Kalripayat – “Although India may have been the cradle of the spiritual martial arts – he adds – contemporary Indian systems of self-defence are not wide-spread and much of the knowledge has died out or is taught only secretly” [47, p. 7].

Method of potentialisation (endangering) – “(...) making an adversary comprehending that if he or she behaves as we want, will face an effective action from us, opponent to his or her aim” [33, p. 133, also 36, p. 260].

Global science space – conventionally, the global science space is associated with the ability to provide the latest scientific knowledge through prestigious electronic scientific journals [30].

INTRODUCTION

In the Old Polish language, the term “fighting with a weapon” [Polish *robienie bronią*] was used to refer to activities related the use of a weapon in direct contact, i.e. in hand-to-hand fighting [1, p. 244], as well as to swordsmanship or fencing. Attitude to fencing in Polish culture has been already displayed in ornaments on the statue of Svetovid from the 10th century. Fencing was an indispensable part of knightly training in medieval Poland. It was played during tournaments organised at the Piast courts fought by those to be knighted. With time these duels became a display of skills, fighting technique and knights’ prowess. As it bore the features of sports competition, fencing began to evolve, ushering in the contemporary fencing [2, p. 70].

Fencing was the most popular sport at school in the 18th century in pre-partition Poland. It was on the curriculum of knight schools (established for example by the Radziwiłł, Sanguszek or Sapieha families), Jesuit colleges (located for example in Warsaw, Poznań, Lublin) and Piarist colleges. Fencing was also taught at the Collegium Nobilium (1740) and School of Chivalry (1765-1795). Elements of fencing constituted an important stage for cadets being prepared for their future career. During the partition, fencing was also taught as part of physical education, for example in Cracow schools (in 1817-1821 and 1827-1831), military schools and the secondary school in Krzemieniec (1805-1831).

In the Polish territory, on 19th-century fencing was from the very beginning included in the charter of the “Falcon” Polish Gymnastic Society established in Lviv. The first fencing clubs were established at the Academic Reading Association in Lviv in 1878 and Academic Reading Association of the Jagiellonian University in Cracow in 1883. The first Polish fencing club (called the Fencing Association) was established on 20 March 1886 in Lviv. In Cracow fencing was developed by the Cracow Fencing Club established on 2 March 1889 (it was converted from the Fencing Club of the Filaret Fraternity formed four years earlier).

Skills during fights with sabres and bayonets were for the first time used during the First World War, for example during the famous cavalry charge at Rokitna 13 June 1915) and Rarańcza (14-15 February 1918). Fencing clubs and associations

were reactivated to a certain degree in the last year of the First World War. The *Bartoszowe Troops* (Figure 1) was one of them. Scythe fighting is a Polish phenomenon of a close-contact fight. This original martial art was practiced by members of the *Bartoszowe Troops*. Moreover, the *Bartoszowe Troops*, which followed patriotic traditions and made scythe fencing more attractive, supported the independence aspirations exhibited by the rural youth.

SCYTHE AS A WEAPON USED BY POLISH PEASANTS ON BATTLEFIELDS

A Polish martial art with the use of a war scythe was established at the turn of 18th and 19th century. However, its use on battlefield dates back to significantly earlier times. It is believed that scythe could have been used in 1036-1037 during the peasant uprising. It was used during a fight at Orsza in 1514 and certainly during the Battle of Obertyn in 1531. In the 17th century, shepherds and the Zaporozhian Cossacks fought using scythes. Bartosz Głowacki troop proved that fighting with this original weapon is effective during the Battle of Racławice (one of the first battles that took place during the Kościuszko Uprising against Russia on 4 April 1794).

During this period, Piotr Aigner published the first Polish instructions on how to use a scythe during a battle [3]. Martial art using this unique weapon was developed further in the 19th century. It was the January Uprising in particular that inspired others to create different varieties of martial arts using this weapon.



Figure 1. A badge carried by members of the *Bartoszowe Troops*.

BARTOSZOWE TROOPS

Genesis

Bartoszowe Troops were the first independence organisation of rural youth formed on the Polish land. Together with the Polish Riflemen's Association founded by Józef Piłsudski, the “Falcon” Polish Gymnastic Society and the Polish Rifle Squads, these troops formed Polish paramilitary movement established at the Austrian Partition before the First World War [4 p. 27]. Operating in Eastern Galicia (in Poland), they played an important role in the field of education, physical education and military training, in rural areas in particular. Their leaders came from the Lviv academia the members of which remained under the ideological influence of the National League and groups associated with the Polish Youth Union referred to as “Zet”.

Wawrzyniec Dayczak¹, a “Zet” member, a student of the Technical University of Lviv, is believed to be the major founder of the organisation. He had been seeking to enter this organisation into records already since 1907. After a one-year effort, *Bartoszowe Troops* were finally registered on 7 May 1908 with a rescript of the Lieutenancy in Lviv [5-8]. Special identification cards were an important part integrating their members (Figure 2).

Since he started his activity, Wawrzyniec Dayczak encouraged the youth to join the “Falcon”. After some time, he decided that it is high time to create a new community in which peasants could

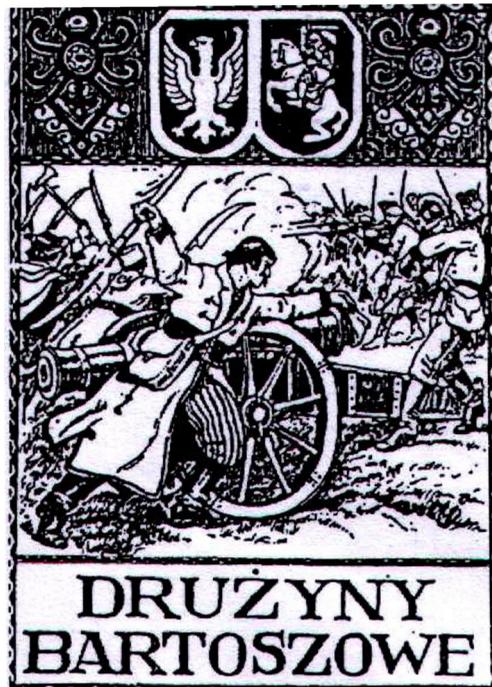


Figure 2. Title card of the identification card belonging to a member of *Bartoszowe Troops* dating back to 1913-1914 (designed by W. Dayczak).

have felt more unrestrained. In his memoirs he wrote: “Therefore, it is necessary to establish an organisation that would be socially useful in the village (...) and that the same time would cultivate a disciplined organisational efficiency and consciously develop readiness for combat not only for purposes related to self-defence but also in order to fight for national independence” [9, p. 67-68].

The *Troops* were also formed for the following purposes: protection of the Polish youth against denationalisation and self-defence against growing Ukrainian nationalism [10, 11]; lack of organisational structures of the “Falcon” on this area and failure to adapt its programmes to rural needs; development of military skills among peasants. The troops were supposed to remain in the centre of Polish language, culture and education. They were to integrate Polish community and awake its sense of unity and national awareness. Articles tackling this issue were published many times in “Bell”. They were called not to yield under Ukrainian movement, to organise themselves and defend the inhabitants of villages and towns threatened by the influence of the Ukrainian movement as part of the *Bartoszowe Troops* [12-15].

The political agenda of the *Bartoszowe Troops* envisaged the Polish-Ukrainian conflict after the

1. **Wawrzyniec Dayczak:** born on 27 July 1882 in the village of Reniów in Podolia. He completed his diploma at the Technical University of Lviv Faculty of Architecture and was strongly influenced by the activists of the National Democratic Party, for example by: Tadeusz Cieński and Ludwik Poptawski. Dayczak was a member of “Zet” organisation, an educational activist of the Folk School Society, founder of *Bartoszowe Troops* (1908) and an ideologue of the patriotic organisation of rural youth. He was the chief of this organisation in 1908-1912. Since 1910, Dayczak had become a founder and editor of the journal of this organisation published under the title “Bell” [Polish *Dzwon*]. He authored many projects, in particular of educational facilities at the territory of Galicia (for example a building of the “Falcon” Polish Gymnastic Society in Przemyślany was constructed in the spirit of the originally interpreted modernism and served educational, cultural and sports functions). As his design and construction of the Falcon building in 1912 was highly appraised by the National Department's experts, W. Dayczak was appointed as the chief designer in the architectural and construction office of this Department of Appraisers. Having taken over this governmental position, W. Dayczak was forced to resign from the position of chief of *Bartoszowe Troops* [5-8].



Figure 3. An exhibition drill with lances carried out by the *Bartoszowe Troops* at the Fifth Meeting of the “Falcon” Gymnastic Society held in Cracow in 1910 [17, p. 48].



Figure 4. Parade carried out by the *Bartoszowe Troops* at the Fifth Meeting of the “Falcon” Gymnastic Society held in Cracow [17, p. 83].

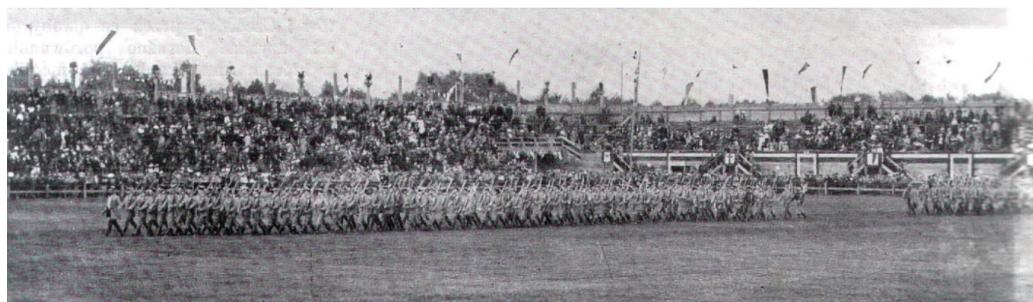


Figure 5. Parade carried out by the “Falcon” Field Troops during an exhibition drill with rifles at the Fifth Meeting of the “Falcon” Gymnastic Society [17, p. 88].

outbreak of war in 1914. The authorities of the *Bartoszowe Troops* issued a secret order [16] for their members to organise themselves to defend Polish community against Ukrainians. For example “(...) to protect people against instigators, who may easily emerge in particular in the east of the country

among the Russian population (...) team members in rural areas inhabited by Poles” [16, p. 1].

Public shows constituted an important part used to promote ideas and tasks of the *Bartoszowe Troops* as well as a practically applied method of

potentialisation (in this complicated geopolitical situation) (Figure 3-5).

Organisational structures and program activity of the *Bartoszone Troops*

At the time, physical education was considered to be motivating and binding the Polish community. With their physical education curriculum, the *Bartoszone Troops* were supposed to counteract propaganda and organisational action of the Ukrainian community that had been forming the Ukrainian Gymnastic and Fire-Fighting Societies “Sicz”² for 10 years. Such societies also attracted Polish rural youth with their interesting exercises [18, 19].

The *Bartoszone Troops* were permanently seated in Lviv. Their field structures were initially developed only in the Eastern Galicia. Afterwards, they expanded their activity to the areas of Western Galicia, Cieszyn Silesia and occasionally to the territories of the Russian partition and Bukovina. The formation of this civic and patriotic movement was favoured by the social atmosphere of Krakow and Lesser Poland. The troops were strongly influenced by poetic works of Stanisław Wyspiański, the tradition of the Great Emigration as well as the positivist attitude of the Polish

intelligentsia which was greatly reflected in national literature and socioeconomic journalism at the turn of the 19th and 20th century [20, p. 7-42].

The organisational core of Troops and its members was mainly (but not solely) formed of peasant youth. However, the leaders of this organisation, acting at the Chief Council and Supervisory Board, were mainly students of various majors at universities and technical universities. Stefan Wiktor Paweł Paśłowski (1885-1956), who later became the Brigadier General of the Polish Army, was one of the most prominent of them. Besides Paśłowski also acted as the voivode of Białystok and Stanisławów. He was among *Bartoszone Troops*’ leaders from 9 July 1908 to 31 July 1914. Paśłowski was also a member of the Chief Council of the *Bartoszone Troops* and member of the Organisational Section, the Gymnastic and Drill section and the Military Department since 1911. He became the chief writer in 1912 and deputy chief from 1913 to 31 July 1914. He worked on regulations and instructions.

Czesław Mączyński (1881-1935), Colonel of the Polish Army, junior high school teacher, deputy to the Sejm, a social and political activist, one of the commanders-in-chief of the defence of Lviv, was another outstanding figure. He was a co-founder of the *Bartoszone Troops*, in which he had been serving as a member of the Supervisory Board for 2 years (1908-1910).

The historical sources also mention the following figures: Stanisław Gieysztor (1891-1940), an officer of the Polish Army, mayor of the city of Kałusz and Jan Bach; Stanisław Bać; Stanisław Smigielski; Adam Tiger; Lesław Węgrzynowski.

Applications of statutory goals of the *Bartoszone Troops*

Taking into consideration the complex in the Eastern Borderlands and the specificity of the Galician villages, the activists of the *Bartoszone Troops* adopted the following statutory goals: creating centres of Polish cultural life for the rural population and working-class; propagating passion for gymnastics among their members; providing active assistance during firefighting [21].

The statute envisaged a broad physical education curriculum implemented by means of exercises, drills, sports games and fire-fighting exercises. The Gymnastics and Drill Section

2 **Vasyl Nahirny** initiated the formation of Ukrainian gymnastic and fire-fighting societies. He made his first attempts to register them already in 1886 with disseminating the fire-fighting ideas in “Batkiwyszczyna” journal. The first such organisation commenced its unofficial activity in the village of Rudna near Lviv in 1887. Although it satisfied the requirements laid down by the Austrian law, its registration failed at the first time. The causes of failure should be sought in reluctance of the Austrian authorities to disseminate any Ukrainian social movement during this period. The prior registration of Polish fire-fighting societies also prevented the Ukrainian society from being registered as their activity was considered sufficient at the time. The actions undertaken by W. Nahirny were a great help in the intended registration of Ukrainian gymnastic and fire-fighting societies. Having met the requirements for registration and being recommended by W. Ławriwski, the commissioner of the starosty in 1891, the Ukrainian fire-fighting society “Sokił” formed by Klim Żmur and Paweł Dumka under the influence of the “Falcon’s” ideas in Kopczyńce in the Tarnopol Voivodeship was registered as the first organisation. Kyril Trylowski is believed to be the ideologist and founder of the first formally registered organisation called “Sicz”. He was sued by the Austrian authorities already in 1899 for conducting activity as part of non-registered precursor “Sicz” organisation in the village of Uste on Prut. Nevertheless, the gymnastic and fire-fighting society “Sicz” was registered for the first time on his initiative on 5 May 1900 in the village of Zawale near Światyri in the Tarnopol Voivodeship.

functioning since 1908 pursued these tasks. The Section was managed by the Head who was at the same time a member of the Chief Council of the *Bartoszowe Troops*. In the first year of activity, the Gymnastics and Drill Section were developing a plan for teaching drills and sports games. It was sending instructions in this regard to Poviats Commissioners and Chiefs of the *Bartoszowe Troops*. It gathered a group of permanent inhabitants of Lviv who were being educated to become the *Troops'* inspectors, doing physical exercises and marches [18, p. 5-6, 22].

There is a certain similarity between the programme adopted by the *Bartoszowe Troops* and methods employed by the "Falcon" (in terms of physical exercises in particular). These groups organised poviats meetings and trips to celebrate religious holidays or significant national anniversaries. In the reporting year 1908/1909, two poviats meetings of the *Troops* of the Jarosław Land were held in Przemyśl to celebrate the 3rd May Constitution. They involved performances of horse teams. The poviats meeting of the *Troops* of the Brody Land took place in Bodduny in August 1908. It was combined with exercises on the occasion of blessing the foundation stone for the chapel. Furthermore, a joint trip of all *Troops* of the Body Land to the royal castle in Podhorze was organised in 1909 [9, p. 70].

In the subsequent year, the Gymnastics and Drill Section intensified its impact exerted on the youth. "Education in the military vein" was incorporated in the Section's tasks. The following directions have been exposed: internal work involving preparation, development and publishing of guidance needed to perform physical exercises essential at the *Troops*; external work to enhance the sense of discipline, brotherhood and military lustihood in the *Troops*. *The Rules of free exercises* [23] comprised general and detailed rules of physical exercises, emphasised their positive impact on health and relationship with drill, e.g.: "(...) *free exercises have a significant impact on shaping the military spirit, produce strength and endurance, create confidence in one's own strength, eliminate certain deficits in body posture and bad habits, make participants more resistant to difficulties*" [23, p. 1].

The *Rules of free exercises* [23] was supplemented with the *Rules of drills* [24] which set forth military objectives – education of a unit, platoon and team. The readers were informed in the

introduction that: "(...) *the goal of drills is to develop a sense of duty, physical fitness, courage and confidence in one's commanders (...). A strict school of the drill is the basic prerequisite of the ones exercising. It significantly toughens their will up, makes them familiar with bodily and mental habits and makes it easier to achieve tactical and even moral discipline*" [24, p.16].

Poviats commanders' reports informed that drill and field exercises were not frequently used in the Eastern Galicia. Gymnastic exercises using the Swedish method were preferred. Exercises were done outside the city or in gymnasium belonging to the "Falcon". Walking tours were supposed to shape stamina of the youth. Typical methods applied while working with the youth at the *Bartoszowe Troops* involved a combination of exercises with cultural and educational activities. Such exercises usually looked rather typical. The only thing that changed was the order and proportions of individual elements included in the shows. The *Troops* organised an event in 1911 in Rohatyń the programme of which included, i.e., the following: *»delegates delivered numerous speeches in the "green commons" after gymnastic exercises; afterwards a play was staged together with the "Falcon" and the Folk School Society. At the end, the orchestra was playing and a rally took place«* [9, p. 71]. Often the programme also included a church service, a parade, signing of patriotic songs or a choir performance.

The events that took place during the second Balkan conflict created awareness of more intensive military preparations. Patriotic and independence sentiment was strengthening in all societies (military training took on significance). Some members of the *Bartoszowe Troops* were convinced that they are preparing themselves to fight with Russia. Commanders were in fact opposed to an active conflict with Russia. Contemporary historians emphasise that *Endecja* also gained benefits from military training of the youth as it wanted to draw young people away from the attitude favouring the Austrians who avoided the independence programme [25, p. 380].

In 1912-1914, new elements were incorporated into the *Bartoszowe Troops*, in the programme, structural and practical areas. Statutory provisions were changed by introducing for example of the goals – military education: "(...) *promoting a passion for exercises and encouraging members to do military exercises. The programme was to be implemented*

by practising gymnastics, drill, field exercises, sports games, fire-fighting exercises, members learning how to shoot at the target, establishing shooting ranges, organising the courses of gymnastics courses and military exercises” [26, p. 3].

Organisational changes in the *Bartoszowe Troops* were related to the Gymnastics and Drill Section which at first was altered into the Department of Exercises and afterwards into the Military Department [27, p. 3]. *The Rules of exercises with a scythe* was published in 1913 in Lviv due to efforts were taken by the Chief Council of the *Bartoszowe Troops* [28]. The Military Department focused more on the military drill and gymnastics. The latter one was practised three hours per week on weekdays. Members were taught to sing patriotic songs while marching. On Sunday, exercises of whole teams in the field were organised, and field exercises with a rifle and a scythe were carried out. They consisted, i.e., in preparing the competitors to fight with a bayonet (drill with a rifle was adopted from the “Falcon” Gymnastic Society).

After 1912, the rules of the *Troops* became more of military nature and were the base of all exercises in 1913-1914. The Military Department issued *The Rules of Preliminary Exercises* which slightly differs from *The Rules of free exercises* of 1911. *The Rules of Drills* of 1911 were developed into *the Regulations of the Infantry Drills* of 1913 which unambiguously set forth the combat objectives of these exercises. The Military Department developed the rules for intelligence service, exercises with a scythe, messenger services. Shooting instructions were ahead of print. Instructions for infantry and scythe fighters as well as a manual for small tactical exercises were under development. They could not be published due to the outbreak of war [9, p. 7].

Women and children at the *Bartoszowe Troops*

In 1908-1914, the work with women headed in three directions. Cultural and educational activities were the first and most important one. The second one focused on economic activity, consisting in the organisation of lacing courses, country housewives’ organisations and cultivation of medicinal herbs. Activity in the field of physical education was mainly manifested with gymnastic exercises and drills.

In March 1914, the following item appeared on

the agenda of the Chief Council: “Scout Troops”. It was proposed to organise a group of 30 boys aged 12-14 like “Scouts”. In further discussion, it was suggested that children aged 7-13 should be grouped in “Children Troops” and boys aged 13-16 should be grouped in “Scout Troops”. It was assumed that this would be the first step preparing for work in the *Troops*. This step was supposed to involve children getting used to military exercises, exercises involving a long run, intelligence services, transferring orders, assessing a distance and tracking the traces. Trips, games and stories about the history of Poland, in particular mentioning the times of Poland’s splendour were recommended. Finally, the “youths” were called the “Brave Youth Troops” who greeted themselves saying “*Czuj Duch*” [9, p. 75-76].

Surveillance of and repressive measures towards the *Bartoszowe Troops*

During their entire operation, the *Troops* were observed by Austrian military organisations. They attempted to combine the *Bartoszowe Troops* with the Austrian Rifle Association (*Jungschützenverein*) in 1913-1914 in particular. However, the *Bartoszowe Troops* refused to join *Jungschützenverein* which resulted in repressive measures undertaken by the Austrian authorities and other difficulties (e.g. no consent to purchase new rifles and seizure of the ones already owned by the *Troops*). Despite this fact, the weapon was returned when the Eastern Legion was being formed.

***Bartoszowe Troops* in the activity of Polish Legions in 1914-1918**

By the end of July 1914, the *Bartoszowe Troops* together with the “Falcon” Field Troops appointed the Joint Command of Permanent Troops; “Falcon” Troops and *Bartoszowe Troops*. The *Troops*, however, remained under the dominant political influence of the National Democrats which opposed to their armed participation against Russia. Along with the formation of the Polish Legions, they became incorporated into the Eastern Legion. Refusal to make an oath served as a pretext to dissolve the Eastern Legion on 21 September 1914 in Mszana Dolna. Only some team members were later incorporated to other formations taking part in battles with the tsarist army [9, pp. 76-77].

On the outbreak of the First World War (1 August 1914), the Austrian authorities called up reservists who had to do their military service.

Paramilitary organisations also announced that they call up their members. A 200-person shooting company set off from Krosno to the rallying point along with father Kosma Lenczowski, chaplain and the Franciscan. At the beginning of September, members of the “Falcon” associations and the *Bartoszowe Troops* joined the so-called Eastern Legion commanded by Col. Józef Haller retreating from Lviv and after it was dissolved they joined the First and Second Legion Brigades [29, pp. 26-27].

In September 1914, the *Bartoszowe Troops* were incorporated into the Eastern Legion which was afterwards dissolved in Mszana Dolna. Unfortunately, they ceased existing as a military organisation, but their moral strength and defence potential made members of the *Bartoszowe Troops* join throughout the war the Polish Army being formed. Some team members, including also commanders and instructors, fought afterwards in the First and Second Legion Brigades, an army commanded by Gen. Józef Haller, defence troops, relief of Lviv and other formations. Some commanders of the *Bartoszowe Troops* joined a secret, interwar military organisation (Polish Military Contingent) formed by Capt. Czesław Mączyński, their former member. Some of them, for example, Wawrzyniec Dayczak, became members of the Supreme Command of the Lviv defence. Having been relieved from duty in the Austrian military during which he suffered a permanent injury on the Italian front, Dayczak joined the Polish Army as a second lieutenant on 1 November 1918.

FENCING SCYTHER PERFORMANCE

The basic formal exercises of the war scythe the art of “fighting with a scythe” (Polish *robienie kosą*) included basic and defensive skills, attack, dodges, snapping back and counterattacks (Figure 6-8). The technique of fighting with a scythe also included cuts (in order to optimally use the nature of a scythe mounted on a wooden shaft (Figure 9).

Sets of alternately used offensive and defensive techniques were the basic form of this specific military training: (1) back stance with the right leg, kneel on the right knee + scythe vertically forward, left palm on the left knee, right arm holds a scythe near the right shoulder, (2) rise,

1/8 spin to the right, legs remain the same, knees slightly bent + right arm moves downwards along the shaft, raises the scythe backwards and the scythe moves forward onto the left arm bent in the elbow, (3) upper cover kept internally, right arm above the head, left arm straightened forwards, scythe placed askew to the left with blade upwards, (4) downward spin on the left, upper cut (towards the head), arms straightened + forward lunge with left leg (Figure 10).

More sophisticated exercise sets involved a greater number of alternatively repeated offensive and defensive techniques: (2) forward foin + move right leg to the left leg, forward lunge with a left leg, (3) horizontal cover downwards, bend forwards with head up. Move the left arm towards the scythe, arms askew downwards + straighten the left leg, (4) vertical cover to the right, scythe vertically with blade forwards + lean backwards, bend right knee and straighten left knee, (5) hold the scythe downwards with blade upwards, left arm backwards, right arm bent in front of the torso + ½ spin to the right, left leg instance, (6) askew vertical cut. Arms straightened vertically and asker, a scythe with blade upwards to the right + forward lunge with a left leg, (7) upper cover held horizontally, arms vertically and externally + ¼ spin to the right, left palm to the straddle (Figure 11).

DISCUSSION

By the end of 1912, Wawrzyniec Dayczak resigned from the chief function at the *Bartoszowe Troops* due to the need to complete his studies and other professional reports. This function was served by dr inż. Stanisław Bac [PhD, Eng.] until the war outbreak, i.e. in the period of 1913-1914. In the final period, the *Bartoszowe Troops* had over 10 thousand members, and it was one of the largest organisations of such nature.

Taking into consideration nearly 7-year existence of the *Bartoszowe Troops* (from their formation in 1907 until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914), it was a significant military force both in a numerical and paramilitary sense. Their members possessed skills useful in military hand-to-hand combat, could fight using bayonets and peasant scythe. Thus it was not only the ideological and educational goal of Wawrzyniec Dayczak that was achieved. He overcame the former and

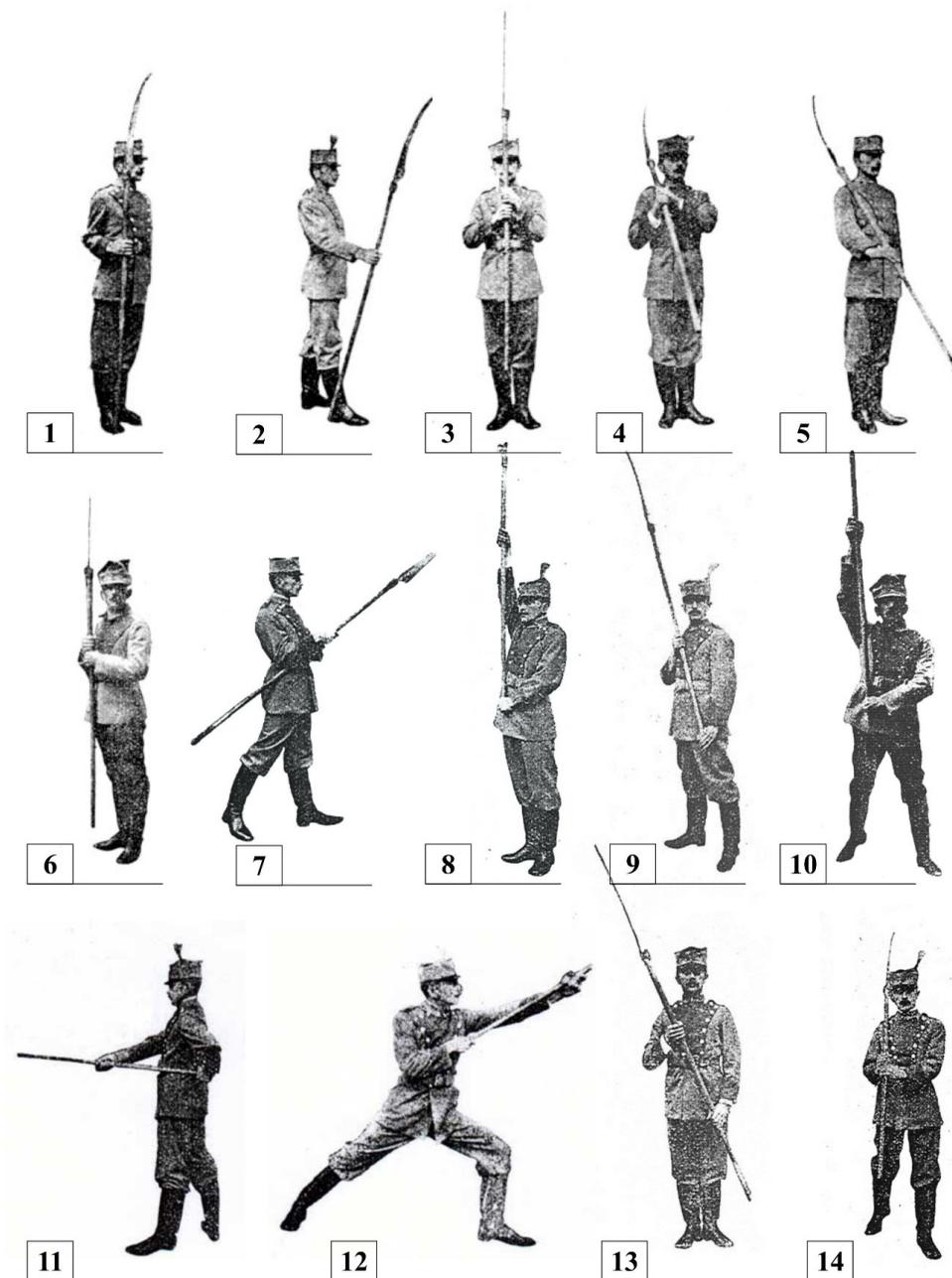


Figure 6. Basic techniques used during drills with a scythe: 1 basic posture, 2 stand easy, 3 present arms, 4-5 shoulder arms, 6-7 prepare to attack, 8-12 grab to cut, cut (or foin) with a scythe, 13-14 shoulder arms [28, p. 1-31].

mostly non-ideological stereotype typical for the older generation of Galician peasants among a large part of a young generation of a peasant from Lesser Poland. In combination with paramilitary training, this generation proved its patriotism and steadfastness in the struggle to regain independence.

The historical context of this work is only seemingly remote from the main profile of the journal. Although numerous publications about martial arts analyse issues related to motor skills (domain of kinesiology, physiology, biomechanics, motor control and other detailed disciplines of sports science), the need interdisciplinary approach becomes increasingly more apparent. The phenomenon of

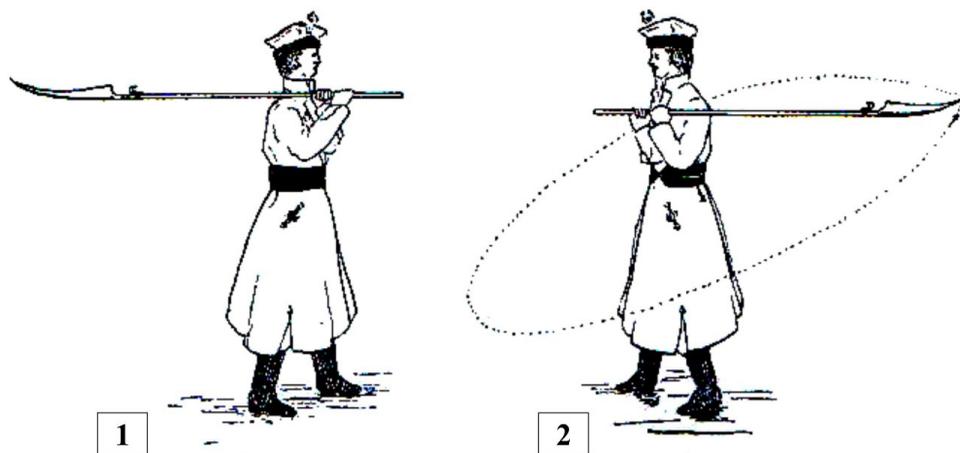


Figure 7. Preparation and attack with a battle scythe: stance (1) preparation for “fighting with a scythe”, stance (2) cut with a scythe along the arch to the left with arms stretched until the scythe is placed horizontally to the left [28, p. 16].

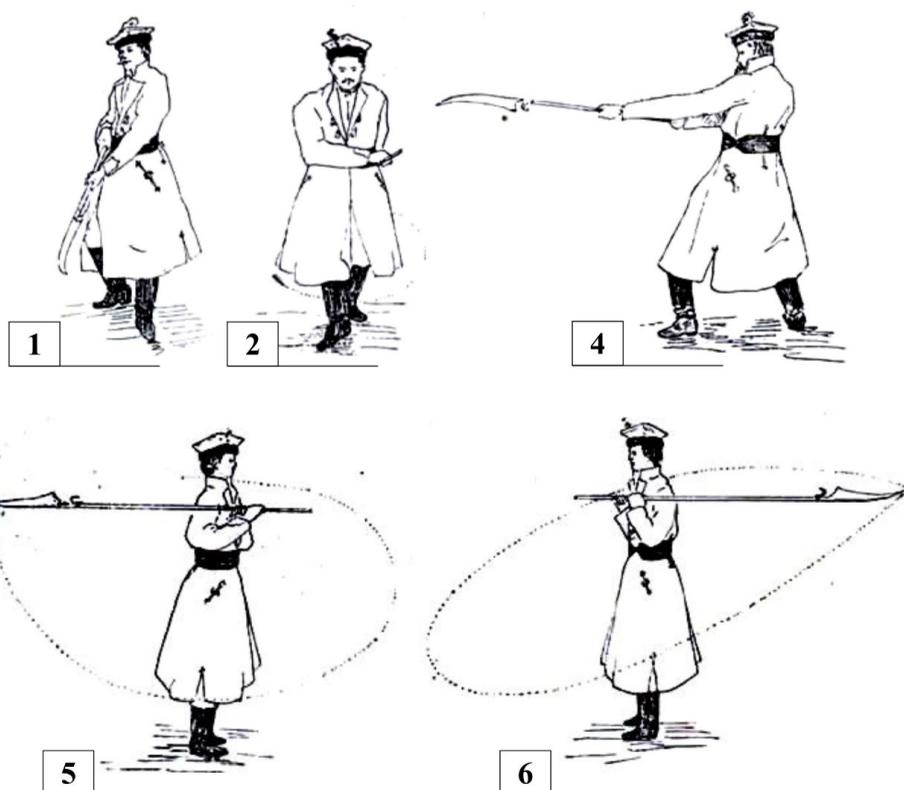


Figure 8. Defensive stance, dodges and counterattacks in the art of “fighting with a scythe”: (1) push away downwards to the right, (2) a scythe backwards to the left with a left arm backward, right arm bend to the waist + a backward dodge with a left leg and a slight forward bend, (4) forward foin, shoulders tightened + $\frac{1}{4}$ spin to the right on right heel, forward lunge with a left leg, (5) downward cut to the right with arms straightened to place the scythe horizontally to the right near the right shoulder + $\frac{1}{4}$ spin to the right to the straddle; (6) cut with a swing to the left with arms stretched to place the scythe horizontally to the left near the left shoulder [28, p. 16].



Figure 9. Using a body spin to increase the effectiveness of the attack (counterattack): a spin (5) with a cut with a war scythe (8) according to *The Rules of exercises with a scythe* [28, p. 16].



Figure 10. A set of four basic exercises with a war scythe [28, p. 16].

the revival of Bartosz Głowacki's legend by establishing an original Polish school of martial arts (1903-1914) that is necessarily analysed in this paper very generally falls on a specific period of geopolitical changes in Europe and throughout the world (the turn of the 19th and 20th century). If we combine the knowledge on creating the national identity at the time by means of this original Polish martial arts with another purely intellectual phenomenon, it is difficult not to take seriously the cognitive and educational values of a very young sub-discipline of the science of martial arts [30].

The popularity of literary works of one author who created “for the encouragement of the hearts”, unheard of in any culture, was this intellectual phenomenon [31]. Henryk Sienkiewicz (1846-1916) received “(...) the Nobel Prize in

1905 for his novel about the times of Nero – published in 1896 – *Quo Vadis* (...). The content refers to the birth of Christianity. The verbal, behavioural and verbal-behavioural fighting thread is among the most important ones in *Quo Vadis*” [31, p. 346]. However, the most important goal of Sienkiewicz was to increase the patriotism and independence aspirations of his countrymen. In his fundamental work referred to by the literature historian as the *Trilogy*, he tackles the historical glory of the Polish arms. Over 12 million of Sienkiewicz books were published by 1969 [31].

A critic will rightly notice: over 10 thousand members of the *Bartoszowe Troops* and millions of *Trilogy* readers; and ask which factor – practising martial arts or impact on the intellect, individual and social sensitivity, on the sense of

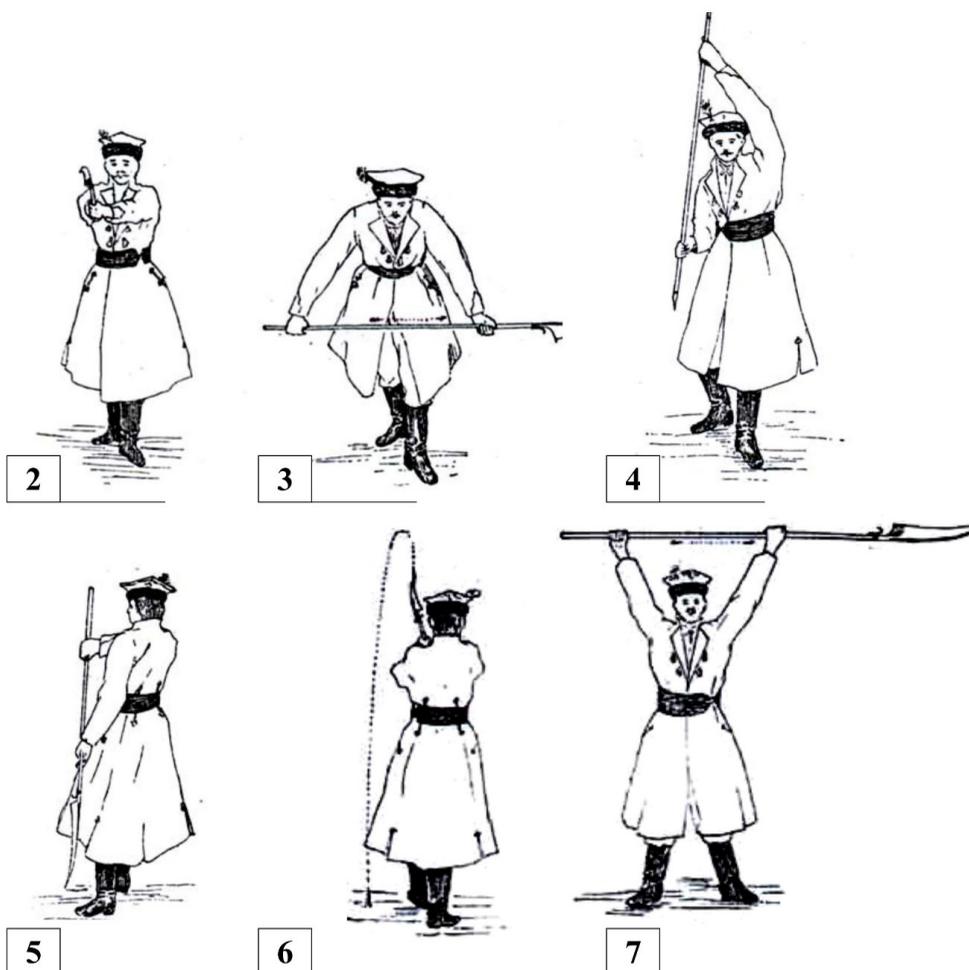


Figure 11. A multi-element set of formal (offensive and defensive) exercises with a war scythe [28, p. 16].

responsibility for others, on emotions, on ethics – ultimately decides on the survival ability?

History and many specific sciences provide evidence that all these factors are equally important survival education: of an individual, family, ethnic groups, nation, society and all human civilisation. The scientific argumentation of this most general conclusion justifies in an increasingly convincing manner. This was done by Krzemieniecki and Moska [31] in a publication dedicated to combat issues in literary works of Nobel Laureates for Literature. Agonology provides methodological tools [32-37]. The political barriers (Cold War and Iron Curtain [38, 39]) constitute the main reason that this knowledge only now has become present in global science space [37, 40]. The dilemma of the natural language in which all theories of agonology have been published (the first one in 1938 [32] and ultimately scientific (cognitive) consequences pose only secondary problems [41, see editorial note].

The contemporary technology is as if on the opposite side. Its attractive tools (the internet in particular) enable motor reconstruction of even the least known original martial arts (see video at <https://youtu.be/FUXMEE7vQUo>). The martial art that was available in social perception at the time of special ceremonies (Figure 3-5) may nowadays become an everyday element of complementary health-related training based on a broad offer of innovative agonology in the motor and intellectual dimension [31, 37, 42-45].

CONCLUSIONS

Fortifying contemporary martial arts with various techniques using original weapons the basic application of which did or does not involve armed combat (such as scythe in this article) may have broad application in cultural diversity and health promotion. In spite of appearances,

health-related training based on selected martial arts combined with martial arts bibliotherapy and other methods of innovative agonology may have a positive impact on all health dimensions (somatic, mental, social health) and increase the attractiveness of survival ability.

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