

PROFESSOR KAZIMIERZ OBODYŃSKI AND HIS PATH OF FLEXIBILITY

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ABSTRACT

Problem: Is it possible to apply the principles of martial arts in life, in professional practice, and in management? We will check it on the example of Professor Kazimierz Obodyński. **Method:** The author uses the method of participant observation (1987–2015), document analysis, and content literature analysis. **Results:** *Judo* practice took place, but essentially the path of “spiritual *jujutsu* and *judo*” was implemented, which was associated with management and activities in various scientific and social organizations. **Conclusions:** In the analyzed case of Professor Kazimierz Obodyński, applying the principles of martial ways in life, in professional practice, and in managing various institutions proved to be possible and effective.

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INTRODUCTION

PHOTO 1. PROFESSOR KAZIMIERZ OBODYŃSKI



Source: *Prof. dr hab. Kazimierz Obodyński – wspomnienie, sylwetka, dorobek*, “Instytut Nauk o Kulturze Fizycznej – Kolegium Nauk Medycznych – Uniwersytet Rzeszowski”, n.d., <http://wf.ur.edu.pl/Wydzial/Historia/KazimierzObodynski.aspx>

Prof. Dr. hab. Kazimierz Obodyński (21.10.1941–14.10.2015) is known mainly as a representative of physical culture sciences, a sociologist of

physical culture, a specialist in the theory of physical education, and the organizer of the institution of physical culture staff training. The year 2020 is the fifth anniversary of his tragic death and the fifteenth anniversary of the Faculty of Physical Education at the University of Rzeszow. By the way, the Faculty created by Kazimierz Obodyński has become the Institute of Physical Culture Sciences, which has only become a part of Collegium Medicum, since October 2019. Less known are Professor Obodyński's connections with the area of fighting arts.

In the first period of Obodyński's scientific activity (until his habilitation, i.e. the postdoctoral degree), the scientific achievements of this "father" of physical education in Podkarpackie region were focused on sociological studies of student physical culture. Later, mainly in cooperation with Wojciech J. Cynarski, he dealt with the socio-cultural research of martial arts and theory of tourism.² Both Obodyński and Cynarski have been working together, since 1992, in the European Association for Sociology of Sport (EASS), in the International Association for Physical Education in Higher Education (Association Internationale des Écoles Supérieures d'Éducation Physique, AIESEP), and in several other organizations. They

² W.J. Cynarski, *Profile and achievements of Professor Kazimierz Obodynski*, [in:] *Studia z historii i teorii kultury fizycznej. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana Profesorowi Kazimierzowi Obodyńskiemu* [Studies in the history and theory of physical culture. Jubilee book dedicated to Professor Kazimierz Obodyński], W.J. Cynarski, A. Nowakowski, S. Zaborniak (eds), Rzeszów 2008, pp. 13–23.; W.J. Cynarski, *Scientific bibliography of Kazimierz Obodynski*, [in:] *Studia z historii i teorii kultury fizycznej. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana Profesorowi Kazimierzowi Obodyńskiemu* [Studies in the history and theory of physical culture Jubilee book dedicated to Professor Kazimierz Obodyński], W.J. Cynarski, A. Nowakowski, S. Zaborniak (eds), Rzeszów 2008, pp. 24–35; A. Nowakowski, W.J. Cynarski, P. Król, P. Świder, *List of achievements in scientific, didactic, organizational and social work of prof. zw. dr. hab. Kazimierz Obodynski in the years 1975–2013*, [in:] *Wierny sprawie kultury fizycznej. W hołdzie Profesorowi Kazimierzowi Obodyńskiemu* [Faithful to the cause of physical culture. In tribute to Professor Kazimierz Obodyński], A. Nowakowski, A. Rejman (eds), Rzeszów 2016, pp. 21–49; cf. K. Obodyński, W.J. Cynarski, *Oriental philosophy of sport as interpretation of martial arts of the Far East*, [in:] *Physical Activity in Integrating Europe*, J. Kosiewicz, L. Jaczynowski (eds), Warszawa 2004, pp. 46–55; *International Dialogue: Global, European, National and Multicultural Dimensions of Tourism*, K. Obodyński, W.J. Cynarski (eds), Rzeszów 2005; *Regional Tourism versus European Integration and Globalization*, K. Obodyński, W.J. Cynarski (eds), Rzeszów 2005; K. Obodyński, W.J. Cynarski, K. Witkowski, *Report from research the perception of martial arts. Case study of Southern Poland*, "Archives of Budo", 2008, vol. 4, pp. 78–81.

organized, among others the second EASS Conference; participated in numerous foreign international congresses and conferences; and since 2006, the Faculty of Physical Education of the University of Rzeszow has become an institutional member of AIESEP.³ Obodyński and Cynarski's joint idea was to establish IMACSSS – the International Martial Arts and Combat Sports Scientific Society.⁴

Is it possible to apply the principles of martial arts in life, in professional practice, and in management? The memory of Kazimierz Obodyński is here to be an occasion to reflect on this kind of martial arts practice. Participant observation method (1987–2015) was used as the main method in this article, as well as document analysis and content literature analysis.

PRACTICE IN MARTIAL ARTS

Kazimierz Obodyński successfully played rugby in his student years.⁵ It is a sport in some aspects related to combat sports. In addition, during his studies at the Warsaw University of Physical Education, the future professor also learned the basics of *judo*. As a sport-loving man and an activist of the Idokan Poland Association (IPA; Vice President for Science), he also undertook scientific reflection on the area of fighting arts.⁶ Combat sports are a discipline which in particular requires close cooperation with sports science (training and coaching) to achieve results and to protect players'

³ W.J. Cynarski, *Turystyka naukowa w perspektywie socjologii wizualnej* [Scientific tourism in the perspective of visual sociology], Rzeszów 2015.

⁴ K. Kubala, *Idea wyszła z Rzeszowa. Rozmowa z dr. hab. prof. UR Wojciechem J. Cynarskim, prezydentem IMACSSS* [The idea came from Rzeszów. Interview with Dr. hab. Prof. UR Wojciech J. Cynarski, President of IMACSSS], "Gazeta Uniwersytecka", November–December 2011, no. 5, pp. 84–85.

⁵ K. Obodyński, W.J. Cynarski, *Rugby jako sport walki* [Rugby as combat sport], "Ido – Ruch dla Kultury / Movement for Culture", 2006, vol. 6, pp. 92–99.

⁶ For example: K. Obodyński, *Specyfika jūjutsu i jūdō* [The specificity of jūjutsu and jūdō], "Ido – Ruch dla Kultury / Movement for Culture", 2001, vol. 2, pp. 46–51; K. Obodyński, *Theoretical principles of humanist science about martial arts*, [in:] *Humanistic theory of martial arts and combat sports: conceptions and problems*, W.J. Cynarski, K. Obodyński (eds), Rzeszów 2003, pp. 11–16; K. Obodyński, W.J. Cynarski, *Recreational values of martial arts Idokan budō*, [in:] *New ideas in sport sciences: current issues and perspectives*, W. Starosta, W. Osiński (eds), part 2, Warszawa – Poznań – Leszno 2003, pp. 197–200.

health.⁷ However, also in relation to non-competitive martial arts, science helps to solve many problems related to them: their use for recreation purposes, the motivation of exercisers, values related to them, their significance for identity and cultural dialogue, etc.

For his organisational activity, scientific work and supporting the community with his authority, the martial arts community awarded Professor Obodyński with master's degrees, with the right to a black belt in three disciplines of *budo*: *jujutsu*, *judo-do*, and *aikijutsu*. These are honorary degrees, respectively:

- 3 dan *jujutsu*, *Mukashi to Kindai* style/school, certificate signed by Dr. Jan Slopecki, 10 dan, *hanshi*;
- 2 dan *judo-do/ido* of *Idokan*, authorised by *meijin* L. Sieber, 10 dan and *shihan* W.J. Cynarski;
- 1 dan *aiki-jujutsu* *Idokan*, signed by Stanisław Cynarski, 9 dan, *hanshi*.

Professor Obodyński practically implemented the principles of “the art of flexibility”, as the term *jujutsu* (Japanese *jūjutsu*) is translated. The principle of softness and flexibility (Japanese *ju-no ri*) is the first principle of combat tactics. One avoids fighting, especially direct collision. It is better to bend or adapt to the situation, like water adapts to the shape of the dish. Professor successfully used this “spiritual” *judo*, *jujutsu*, or *judo-do* (*judo* of the “extended way”⁸). He also obeyed the principle of social good, *jita kyoei*, present in the *Kodokan judo* tradition (Dr. Jigoro Kano’s legacy).⁹

⁷ Cf. *1st International Conference Science for Sport and Health, Opole, December 15–16, 2008: proceedings*, M. Kuczyński, B. Wojciechowska-Maszkowska (eds), Opole 2008.; G. Arziutov, S. Iermakov, P. Bartik, M. Nosko, W.J. Cynarski, *The use of didactic laws in the teaching of the physical elements involved in judo techniques*, “*Ido Movement for Culture. Journal of Martial Arts Anthropology*”, 2016, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 21–30, DOI 10.14589/ido.16.4.4.

⁸ H. Klingerstorff, *Judo und Judo-Do: Die hohe Schule des Kampfes* [Judo and Judo-Do: The high school of combat], Wien 1951.

⁹ J. Kano, *Judo*, Tokyo 1936; J. Kano, *Jigoro taikai* [Collected works by Jigoro Kano], Tokyo 1988; cf. K.G. Carr, *Making Way: War, Philosophy and Sport in Japanese Jūdō*, “*Journal of Sport History*”, 1993, no. 2, pp. 167–188; D. Bolelli, *On the Warrior's Path. Philosophy, Fighting, and Martial Arts Mythology*, second edition, Berkeley, CA 2008.

JUJUTSU IN THE PRACTICE OF MANAGEMENT

Today's Japanese (and not only) businesspeople study the writings of the "sword's way" master Miyamoto Musashi, or use "negotiating *jujutsu*", including the "give way to victory" principle.¹⁰ The application potential of the "warrior's way" in various forms is enormous. For example, the principle of flexibility can be treated and analyzed as a tactical or a moral principle. Moral flexibility is questionable. Tactical one, on the other hand, is undoubtedly effective, at least from the perspective of pragmatism and praxeology. Avoiding extremes is consistent with both the Taoist pursuit of balance and the Aristotelian principle of moderation and that of the golden mean.

Obodyński was able to manage several institutions well, applying *jujutsu* principles. His skilful management practice translated into individual areas of the activity of the institutions he managed, i.e. the Institute of Physical and Health Education, and later the Faculty.¹¹ In addition to the principle of flexibility, the principle of *seiryoku zen'yo*, i.e. "economics in action" (minimum effort, maximum effect) applies to *jujutsu*-like management. Avoiding conflicts helped shape his good relations with various people and political forces. As the director of the Institute, and later the dean of the Faculty, Obodyński cooperated well with people with political views ranging from left to right, and with various environments (sports, local government, religious). One of his favourite reads was Mario Puzo's *The Godfather*. Hence, perhaps, his caution in conduct, and his search for beneficial relationships in various relational systems. These features of his can also be an echo of the teaching of Sun Zi master regarding, among others, acquiring allies.¹²

Even the very ability to maintain power in elective positions for a long time is in a way a proof of Obodyński's talents. It consists of psychological skills and the ability to manage teams of people. Obodyński was generally helpful for people, and he cared for the good of the institution for which he was responsible. He understood that people (the human capital) are

¹⁰ W. Ury, *Odczodząc od Nie. Negocjowanie od konfrontacji do kooperacji* [Departing from No. Negotiating from confrontation to cooperation], Warszawa 1998, p. 54; R. Pater, *Leading from within: martial arts skills for dynamic business and management*, vol. 5, Rochester 1999.

¹¹ K. Krupa, Complex and multi-aspect nature of knowledge and role of the best practices (chosen views), "Ido – Ruch dla Kultury / Movement for Culture", 2001, vol. 2, p. 283.

¹² Sun Tzu, *Sztuka wojenna* [Bing fa / The Art of War], translated by R. Stiller, Kraków 2003.

the institution's main assets. Thanks to this, Dean Obodyński was widely liked and respected.

PHOTO 2. JUBILEE SYMPOSIUM FOR THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF IDOKAN POLAND ASSOCIATION (IPA), RZESZÓW 2013. FROM THE LEFT, PROFESSORS: WOJCIECH J. CYNARSKI, LOTHAR SIEBER, JERZY KOSIEWICZ, KAZIMIERZ OBODYŃSKI, JÓZEF LIPIEC



Source: W.J. Cynarski, *Turystyka naukowa w perspektywie socjologii wizualnej*, Rzeszow 2015.

SUPPORT FOR MARTIAL ARTS INSTITUTIONS

Until his death, Professor Obodyński was the vice president of Idokan Poland Association (IPA), and in the years 2010–2014, he was also the vice president of the International Martial Arts and Combat Sports Scientific Society (IMACSSS). Thanks to it, it was possible for IPA and IMACSSS to organise conferences and congresses together with the Faculty of Physics

of the University of Rzeszow.¹³ Obodyński's ideas and the functions he performed influenced the reality and image of both IPA and IMACSSS as scientific societies. In addition, he also participated in research projects of these institutions.¹⁴ He supported the organisation of events and subsequent publishing projects.

A number of IPA's projects were consulted with and accepted by Obodyński, as Vice President for Science and Chairman of the IPA Committee of Scientific Research. The content of one of the documents is presented in Appendix 1. It follows from this example that Obodyński's assistance did not go into details, and did not interfere specifically with the content of the research; he accepted the leading role of specialised committees and individual IPA experts.

Due to the support he provided to both scientific and sports institutions, including the already mentioned martial arts institutions, often during the lifetime of Professor Obodyński there were expressions of remembrance and gratitude towards him. He became a topic of a master's thesis¹⁵, several commemorative books – scientific monographs – were dedicated to him¹⁶, the largest auditorium at the Faculty of Physical Education UR has been

¹³ Cf. Słopecki J., Obodyński K., *World IMACSSS Congress and extraordinary distinctions for martial arts experts*, "Ido Movement for Culture. Journal of Martial Arts Anthropology", 2011, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 67–76, photo 2.

¹⁴ Cf. Cynarski W.J., Obodyński K., Litwiniuk A., Sieber L., *Exemplification of the process of institutionalization of Far Eastern martial arts*, [in:] *Martial Arts and Combat Sports – Humanistic Outlook*, W.J. Cynarski (ed.), Rzeszow 2009, pp. 83–89.

¹⁵ G. Wolanin, *Prof. Dr. hab. Kazimierz Obodyński – precursor and pioneer of physical culture sciences in Rzeszów about the Podkarpackie region*, master's thesis written under the supervision of W.J. Cynarski at Faculty of Physical Education, Uniwersytet Rzeszowski, Rzeszów 2010.

¹⁶ Cf. *Studia z historii i teorii kultury fizycznej. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana Profesorowi Kazimierzowi Obodyńskiemu* [Studies in the history and theory of physical culture. Jubilee book dedicated to Professor Kazimierz Obodyński], W.J. Cynarski, A. Nowakowski, S. Zaborniak (eds), Rzeszow 2008; W.J. Cynarski, *Turystyka naukowa, op. cit.; ibidem, Memories of Professor Kazimierz Obodyński*, [in:] W.J. Cynarski, *Turystyka naukowa w perspektywie socjologii wizualnej* [Scientific tourism in the perspective of visual sociology], Rzeszów 2015, pp. 126–129; *Wierny sprawie kultury fizycznej. W hołdzie Profesorowi Kazimierzowi Obodyńskiemu* [Faithful to the subject of physical culture. In tribute to Professor Kazimierz Obodyński], A. Nowakowski, A. Rejman (eds), Rzeszów 2016.

named after him¹⁷, and memories about him have been published on the websites of Idokan Poland Association and IMACSSS.

CONCLUSIONS

Although Professor Obodyński practiced *judo* (in his student years), in principle he followed the path of both “spiritual *jujutsu* and *judo*”, which was about effective and long-term management and activities in various scientific and social organisations. At the same time, he implemented a specific form of *security culture*¹⁸, using principles of caution in operation and flexibility.

In the case of Professor Kazimierz Obodyński, applying the principles of martial arts in life, in professional practice, and in managing various institutions proved to be possible and effective. By the way, the Faculty of Physical Education at the University of Rzeszow was the first such university faculty in Poland. Professor also has had great merits for two martial arts scientific associations: IPA and IMACSSS.

APPENDIX 1

[Written by hand on the letterhead of Idōkan Poland Association[©], in Polish]

IPA Project no. 3/2014-16

Head Coordinator – Dr. hab. Wojciech J. Cynarski, Prof. UR

Leading topics:

- 3.1. Institutionalisation and adaptation of martial arts in Europe (cooperation with the *Shibu Kobudo* committee); main contractors: Dr. hab. W. J. Cynarski, *Sensei* S. Mor-Stabilini
- 3.2. Historical European fencing: factography, reconstruction, teaching (with the Fencing Commission): Dr. Gabriel Szajna, Prof. Dr. hab. W. Zabłocki

¹⁷ K. Kubala, *Aula im. Prof. Kazimierza Obodyńskiego pamiątką po wieloletnim dziekanie Wydziału* [Auditorium Professor Kazimierz Obodyński: a memory of the long-time Dean of the Faculty], “Gazeta Uniwersytecka”, May–June 2016, no. 3, pp. 28–29.

¹⁸ Cf. J. Piwowski, *Trzy filary kultury bezpieczeństwa* [Three pillars of safety culture], “Kultura Bezpieczeństwa. Nauka – Praktyka – Refleksje”, 2018, no. 29, pp. 9–21, DOI 10.24356/KB/19/1.

3.3. 65 years of *judo-do*: idea and technology (with JJK Schule L. Sieber):
Shihan Lothar Sieber, Prof. EJKC, Dr. hab. W.J. Cynarski

3.4. Martial arts tourism: analytical and explanatory research (with the
Tourism Committee): Doc. Dr. hab. Milan Duricek, Dr. Jan Slopecki
Approved, Rzeszow, 6 December 2013

Signed by: Prof. Dr. hab. Kazimierz Obodyński, Vice President for Science,
Senior Presidium

(signature on the stamp)

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