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Innovative Agonology – Its Definition, Detailed Theories, General Rule of Struggle, and Laws

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ABSTRACT

The idea of 'innovative agonology' came into being in 2016 in the *Archives of Budo* journal with the thematic section "Prophylactic and Therapeutic Agonology". Innovative agonology (IA) is an applied science dedicated to promotion, prevention and therapy related to all dimensions of health and regarding the optimization of activities that increase the ability to survive (from micro to macro scales). The basic method of IA in the research and application sphere is a complementary approach in the broadest possible cognitive-behavioural perspective. At the essence of any particular science is the substantiation of its theorems. Since any time one needs to either maintain health, survive, eliminate or slow down the effects of destructive factors, the key phenomenon is some form of combat, so the justification for these necessary actions is provided by the science of struggle. All five existing theories of struggle are published in Polish, with the terminology of Tadeusz Kotarbiński's (1938) general theory of struggle (agonology) is more general than the others. Since the usefulness of almost every scientific discovery is considered from a military perspective, it is not surprising that another theory (detailed one) by Józef Konieczny concerns destruction (1969). Paradoxically, Jarosław Rudniański published the theory of non-armed struggle during martial law in Poland under a camouflaged title (1983). In 1989, when Russian troops were still stationed (they left Poland on September 17, 1993), he re-issued the work (without camouflage) and supplemented it with the theory of compromise. At that time (1991) I published the theory of defensive struggle together with the theoretical basis for complementary prevention and therapy of somatic and mental health and increasing personal safety (survival), and next theory of combat sports (2000) – this theory includes, the law of the only possibility.

Keywords: Health prevention, Survival, Therapy

INTRODUCTION

Innovative agonology appeared in the global science sphere before the COVID-19 pandemic and Russian aggression against Ukraine launched on 24 February 24, 2022 'struggle' or its synonyms became keywords for newspaper titles, social media, etc., and even articles in scientific journals (Kumar and Morawska, 2019, Ruiz-Gómez and Fernández-Niño, 2022). Agonology is synonymous with the general theory of struggle created by Tadeusz Kotarbiński a year before the outbreak of World War II (Kotarbiński, 1938).

After the end of World War II, Polish scholars working with Kotarbiński created two detailed theories of struggle: the cybernetic theory of struggle, in fact the theory of destruction (Konieczny, 1970), and Jarosław Rudniański, also a student of Kotarbiński, the theory of non-armed struggle (Rudniański 1983, 1989). Rudniański's student, in turn, created two other: the theory of defensive struggle and theory of combat sports (Kalina, 1991, 2000). All these theories have been published in Polish. Solely for promotional purposes and editorial convenience, the name agonology was used in the contractual sense as science on struggle (Kalina, 2015, 2016). Thus, the term agonology is used either in the broad sense, as above, or in the principal (narrow) sense, as a general theory of struggle.

The turning point for the development of agonology, precisely as a separate science, was the theory of non-armed struggle (Rudniański, 1983), originated by Jarosław Rudniański. Its first edition was not on sale due to the communist censorship. The second, uncensored edition, was supplemented by the theory of compromise (Rudniański, 1989). Long before the contemporary popularity of the word 'struggle,' Rudniański estimated that this very word in the Polish Thesaurus, published in 1959 (the date is relevant here) was actually mentioned most frequently and as many as 81 lines were devoted to it. Admittedly, the word 'colorful' is mentioned more often, but colors and their shades are listed here as synonymous words. The collocations of 'struggle' are used in a much wider sense: 'struggle against nature', 'struggle against the elements,' 'man's struggle against himself,' 'struggle against misery', 'struggle for existence,' 'struggle between reason and emotions', and in the area of artistic creation, 'struggle against resistant material', etc. In everyday language, many of these expressions have existed for hundreds of years and are still in use.

These are by no means Rudniański's breakthrough insights. Instead, they reveal how vast the areas of human activity are, where the word 'struggle' or its synonyms are used, especially when describing extreme events with high emotional tension without simultaneous danger. Whether it is right or wrong is a matter of secondary importance. It is not the word itself (and actually it is hard to come up with a more precise one), but the circumstances and the frequency with which the word 'struggle' is used in connection with those circumstances that inspired Rudniański to the extent that he discovered the most general rule of struggle. Therefore, he went beyond the definition of the phenomenon of 'struggle' in the narrow conceptual terms of Tadeusz Kotarbiński. From today's perspective, it would be reasonable to say something different: that he went beyond the classical approach to the phenomenon of 'struggle'.

The aim of this paper is implicit in its title.

THE ORIGIN OF INNOVATIVE AGONOLOGY AND THE PROSPECT OF IMPLEMENTING ITS OUTPUT

The idea of 'innovative agonology' came into being in 2016 in the *Archives of Budo* journal with the thematic section 'Prophylactic and Therapeutic Agonology' (Kalina, 2016).

Innovative agonology (IA) is an applied science dedicated to promotion, prevention and therapy related to all dimensions of health and regarding the optimization of activities that increase the ability to survive (from micro to macro scales).

Only on the surface is the focus of this new science (identified with the phenomenon and the term 'struggle') shifted closer to survival. In almost every aspect of health promotion, prevention, and therapy, a factor of necessary counteraction or intervention is perceived, not always of a defensive nature, sometimes even more active (of course, irrational names such as 'aggressive therapy' do not come into play). Thus we need to refer to actions and justifications, which are the domain of science of struggle in its broadest possible sense. This strictly methodological criterion is met precisely by innovative agonology (IA).

The term 'innovative,' according to the general definition of the word, emphasizes openness (but with all the standards of science) to continuous improvement of one's creations.

Since the basic products of scientific research (theoretical sciences and applied sciences) are scientific theorems, or, to be more precise, theorems considered legitimate and included in a given science (Nowaczyk and Żołnowski, 1974), and since the object of research of this new science is the phenomenon of struggle in a broad sense, then clearly the range of application of IA products is possible in a great many, even distant scientific disciplines. Perhaps the argumentation will prove more convincing if the issue of 'theorems considered legitimate' is broadened by explaining that the most valuable products of any science are laws, hypotheses, theories, especially those that can be applied to the territory of other theoretical sciences and applied sciences.

Innovative agonology is an applied science, and from a methodological point of view, the main purpose of this category of sciences is to justify theorems about how to make desirable changes. Although justifying descriptive-explanatory theorems is the domain of the theoretical sciences (and the applied sciences rely on these justifications), the applied sciences themselves often justify descriptive-explanatory theorems (Nowaczyk and Żołnowski, 1974) - and this is the case of IA.

In the conventional first category of IA creations we will include descriptive and explanatory theorems (more broadly: laws, hypotheses, theories), while in the second, also conventional category, we will include theorems that justify ways of making desirable changes (to be precise, also ways of slowing down undesirable changes under all circumstances, when positive change is impossible). The practical dimension of this conventional second category of IA creations are the recommended unique methods, methodic and tools applicable mainly to the diagnosis, prevention and therapy of the phenomena referred to in the languages of praxeology and agonology as the "dispositional-" and "situational capacity for action" of a human (Kotarbiński, 1982, Kalina and Barczynski, 2018).

Both (contractual) categories of IA creations, can be implemented in many segments of practical human activity (medicine, education, defense, art, sports, etc.). There is a fundamental provision here: the purpose of application of both IA creations is neither to appropriate the competencies inherent

in other sciences and specialties, nor to displace services based on repeatedly verified knowledge. This repeatedly verified knowledge is derived from practice and established by the tradition of higher education of specialists (e.g., in the areas of physiotherapy, psychotherapy, music therapy, bibliotherapy, and physical education).

The mission of innovative agonology, on the macro level, is to supplement knowledge and recommend applications about ways to make such changes, so that the concern of a great many people, nations and subjects of greatest social influence for the supreme values of global civilization: the survival of us humans, and nature in a non-degenerate form and responsibility for coming generations - becomes real. At the micro level, the focal point of this mission is the development of the individual in every possible aspect, and the primary means is continuous, proper education. Thus, IA is a science that supports **development** and **survival** from the micro-scale to the macro-scale. It is not 'offensive' science, although it is more accurate to use the word 'expansionist' in the sense that it does not claim any dominance. Instead, IA is defensive in the sense that it does not tolerate passivity in circumstances when it is necessary to eliminate or at least reduce the impact of destructive factors in relation to health and/or survival; factors that harm development. This universal principle is dedicated to activities from micro- to macro-scales, with the key word being precisely '**development**', consistently used in a positive sense (Kalina, 2020).

Although innovative agonology is an empirical discipline, but with a unique potential for substantiating descriptive and explanatory theorems (agonology and four detailed theories of struggle are in evidence). Moreover, it is a discipline with the potential for possible and in many cases necessary implementations at the interface with other theoretical and empirical sciences. Therefore, the basic method of innovative agonology in the research and application sphere is a complementary approach in the broadest possible cognitive-behavioral perspective.

GENERAL RULE OF STRUGGLE

Tadeusz Kotarbiński was inspired by the struggles between people. However, the reason was not parallel to the IA mission formulated above in the third decade of the 21st century. In creating praxeology, Kotarbiński proceeded from the premise that "a human being uses the greatest amount of energy and wit in constrained situations. Precisely in the course of a struggle an adversary does his best to obstruct an action of the other side" (Kotarbiński, 1938). In numerous kinds of struggle there are plenty of such situations. Since this is the case, it is the knowledge of how a person copes with constrained situations (and struggle provides many examples) that can be most valuable in formulating the most generalized rules of *good work* (praxeology). And such was the understanding of the creator of first agonology (1938), then praxeology (1955).

Kotarbiński, in the broadest sense defines 'struggle' as "any activity that involves at least two subjects (assuming that a team can be a subject) where at least one of subjects hinders the other" (Kotarbiński, 1982, p. 221). As

the most curious case of a struggle, however, he shows a situation where both subjects not only tend objectively to the discordant aims, but are also conscious of that and count in building their plans on activities of the opposite side, too.

Rudniański was interested in all kinds of struggle. He noticed fittingly that a man uses the most often the words 'a struggle,' 'to fight' and synonymic terms when "a given action is distinguishable by a high level of difficulty and cognitive suspense" (Rudniański, 1989, p. 16). Hence, he took into account even such actions of a person when they do not directly fight the other person but overcome the resistance of a thing or state of affairs (a material and/or other circumstances), and the most appropriate term to call these actions is struggle or its synonym.

In accordance with the methodological principle that the basic concepts of a specific discipline can be defined using the concepts of a more general discipline, Rudniański was careful to keep the terminological order of the widely understood agonology (for which praxeology is a more general discipline). He accurately defines the concept of a non-armed struggle (that is, taking place on an 'intermediate floor') and in an armed struggle ('on a ground floor'): "in the vast majority of cases (except, for example boxing or wrestling, partly also in teaching and parenting) in a non-armed struggle the main material of the actor is not his opponent or not only his opponent. … In armed combat, on the other hand, the main material of the actor is his opponent and the tools used by the opponent (Rudniański 1989, pp. 16–17).

Kotarbiński uses interchangeably the words: 'rule,' 'directive,' 'stratagem,' 'trick,' 'principle,' 'postulate,' 'method' when talking about the technique of struggle. Rudniański tries to be consistent in this regard when he discusses this issue on four pages of a subsection entitled "A General Rule of a Struggle. An Outline" (Rudniański 1989, pp. 23–26).

He reasons, however, that it is impossible to formulate **a general rule of struggle** that would encompass all types of actions called struggle (and only them). Such a rule would have to have a lower degree of generality than a general rule of efficient action (formulated by praxeology), and at the same time a higher degree of generality than all other rules specific only to struggle. Thus, he pointed out the possibility of formulating several rules equivalent in generality, which would be more general than all other rules specific just to struggle. Thus, Rudniański's formulations give rise to the possibility of formulating other rules that meet this criterion.

He formulates the most general directive for the effective conduct of any fight in the following way: "when fighting, act in such a way that, under the given circumstances, you achieve your immediate main goal in the shortest possible time and at the lowest possible cost to yourself" (Rudniański 1989, p. 24).

Actions in a wide class of combat, the most specific feature of which is taking into account the counteraction of the opponent, are characterized as "reckoning throughout the duration of the action with strong and varied resistance, located in a constant and independent movement of the acting subject of either the material or the environment, or both together" (Rudniański 1989, p. 24). He broadens examples of such actions as 'fight with fire,' 'fight

against tuberculosis,' 'fight against storm,' etc., by forming mutations by bacteria or viruses to adapt to vaccinations and antibiotics as extreme cases of counteraction. The fact that these living organisms do not have human consciousness has no crucial meaning for those who fight them. For this class of actions Rudniański formulates a rule with the highest grade of generality: "in an action in which the material or environment throughout the action is in motion independent of the acting person, while creating strong and varied resistance, act in such a way that you can change both the plan of action and its manner at any time" (Rudniański 1989, p. 25).

THE LAW OF THE ONLY OPTION AND UNIVERSAL ASSUMPTION OF SELF-DEFENCE TRAINING

The theory of combat sports is dedicated to the struggle of human against human in a certain sense under laboratory conditions. In any case, the results of scientific observation of these fights provide perceptual theorems directly based on experience, so they have the characteristic of empirical obviousness (Nowaczyk, Żołnowski, 1974).

This is not the only value of a methodological nature. The method of studying the dynamics of combat (this is a conventional term), as the basic tool of this theory, supported by the technological possibilities of observing the actions of fighting people repeatedly, provides results with a high degree of reliability. These results can be analyzed from various perspectives of cognitive and application criteria. Among other things, to verify the question of whether the law of the only possibility is applicable in interpreting the events of observed combat for cognitive purposes (rather than to satisfy other needs of the observer), and whether it can facilitate the justification of both descriptive and explanatory theorems and theorems about ways to make desired changes. To date, the most valuable knowledge on this topic concerns judo fights at the highest level of sports championships (Boguszewski, 2006, 2014).

This law goes like this: "each of the fighting parties, as a result of the course of events determined by the dynamics of forces with a multiplicity of vectors, is at least once in a positive position in relation to the aim of the fight, and thus has at least one opportunity to resolve the fight in their favor" (Kalina, 2000, p. 91).

The terms 'positive position' and 'negative position' are defined by praxeology: 'the acting subject is in a positive position with respect to the purpose of the action if he does not need to exert himself to realize that purpose... in a negative position... if he needs to exert himself in order to achieve it, because the spontaneous course of events without his interference tends to a state of affairs that is inconsistent with the intended one" (Kotarbiński, 1982, p. 131).

Every combat sport is also an art of self-defense, but for obvious reasons, correlating the results of observing the dynamics of sports fight is possible, for the most part, only with the results of motor simulations and tests. Thus, it is difficult to resolve the question of to what extent a person's motor and mental competencies, which are combined with his combat sports training

effects, would be relevant in circumstances that required opposing the physical aggression of anyone. Therefore, today it is difficult to state unequivocally that it is right to adopt a universal assumption of self-defence training: "If you have learned to act wisely and effectively in a situation, in which the goal of someone's actions would be harming or killing you, each different situation would be incomparably easier and you will certainly solve it" (Kalina, 1997, p. 43).

The basic justifications for the theorems that remain in relation to self-defense are provided by the theory of defensive struggle. In the area of combat sports and self-defense, where the scopes of many issues overlap, the theorems of each of the other three specific theories of struggle apply.

CONCLUSION

Creating a universal theory of the human struggle against himself is an extremely difficult, ambitious and fascinating challenge, but at the same time a necessary one. Russia's aggression against Ukraine clearly shows that despite the experience of the horrors of World War II, there are individuals, dictators, with the power to bring about the annihilation of life on Earth. Thus, scientific research on a seemingly micro scale makes sense, not post factum, but when new life begins. Only then will truly free people, regardless of their background, worldview, education, wealth, talents, etc., be able to influence the promotion of future leaders, so that in the end, in a truly democratic way, reliable coordinators of world affairs (from micro to macro scale) will be elected.

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