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Spiritual and practical origins of traditional sport events

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the cultural and historical analysis of the role that national sports play in the formation of moral, spiritual qualities of the youth and the historical prerequisites of their emergence and development as well. Traditional martial arts, existing in the Kazakh culture, are a result of centuries-long mutual interaction of numerous cultures of Central Asia, which had impact at a certain stage of history.

In modern days, in the era of high technology and fast-paced life, the role of the traditional sport events, various combat sports and wrestling has immensely increased because of the fact that they contribute to healthy mental and physical development, harmonization of people's daily living. The encouragement of martial arts among the younger generation subtilizes their sense of beauty, of nature and art, and it nurtures their will power; hence, it solves many training and moral educational tasks.

Keywords: national games, sport traditions, martial arts

1. Introduction

Sovereign Kazakhstan continues to follow steadily and proudly its own path, reproducing its ancient history and national culture, originality and greatness of Kazakh steppes - astonishingly unique civilization, the roots of which go deep into the past. Nowadays the Republic of Kazakhstan can be presented as a complex hierarchy of several cultures, in which the unity is accompanied with a great variety, where each of the cultures coexist with the others on a basis of mutual exchange and on equal rights within the same community. One of the most distinctive features of any nation can be represented in its sport games. Since the early days these games have always been accompanying people's daily routine, contributing to the formation of certain mentality and personal qualities.

"We should keep and develop our important heritage – national culture and traditions", the head of the state N. Nazarbayev noted in his recent State of the Nation Address.

National sport events are an essential part of our national heritage, which should be properly preserved. A lot of national sports have developed so far, that became extremely popular among 166 thousand of people (in 2009 – 123 thousand of people). The reason for that was the staging of annual championships, republic and international tournaments, including The 1st Togyzkumalak World Championship, the first Youth Rural Games, World and Asian Kazakh Kures Championships, National Sports games for the prizes from the President of Kazakhstan, opening of national sports departments in sports schools and clubs.

The National Sports Association was created in May of 2004. It consists of the following Federations: national equestrian sports; kokpar; togyzkumalak; berkutchi; kazakh kuresi; asyk atu and etc. The Association has 18 regional, around 80 urban and district, around a thousand rural branches. Federations of first equestrian sports were organized in all regions in 2004-2005. Kazakhstani citizens have become the first Audyraspak champions of Asia. Eurasian National Univeristy named after L.N. Gumilyov took an active part in the first World Festival of Hunting with eagles.

Currently more than 20 national sports are encouraged in Kazakhstan. Summarizing the results of 2013 analysis about 208 thousand people are engaged in national sports. At present 357 departments of national sports are operating within different sport organizations. There are 12 equestrian sports schools across the republic. All types of national sports are oriented in the development of physical and spiritual qualities of young people: strength of body (kazakhshakures), endurance (alamana-bayga), dexterity (kumys-alu), precision (archers' contest), development of mind's capacity to analyze (togyz-kumalak).

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Aside from that, many national sports instill the will to goal achievement, to unity with the nature of steppes and other cultures in youth.

2. Methods of research: The methods of comparative analysis, structural analysis of traditional communities, and analysis of written sources have been applied in this research.

3. Results of research and discussion.

The ancient mythology of nations narrates the events that resulted in the creation of the world, or a statement about the space-based structure instead of the primitive chaos. For instance, the plot of the creation of the world in ancient Turkic mythology, that is mentioned in the text of Kul-Tegin inscriptions states: “When the blue sky (Kok-Tengri) was created, and the ground (ydyser-su) - beneath, sons of men were created in between.” [1, p.19]

Traditionally games and sport events, primarily wrestling, appealed to the hierarchic structure of the world. According to A.M. Sagalayev and I.V. Ocityabrskaya, the contradiction of the sides divided the primitive united world, and afterwards by equating the elements of macro and micro space (including “anatomic” and “architectural” models), synthesized it in a new shape. The end of competition symbolizes the rebirth of harmony [2p, 127]. The urge to achieve harmony and equilibrium, that are usually unreachable in real life, made it an important tool of social control. In this case the social order correlated with the harmony of higher spheres [3].

Ancient martial arts and modern oriental martial arts had and still have more great value for the humankind than it’s commonly believed. They are very crucial in cultural-historical, socio-patriotic, military strategic and even biological terms. It can be confirmed that the art of combat was one of main factors of the rise, evolution and preservation of “homo sapiens”, hence of civilization itself. The martial arts had existed long before the emergence of “homo sapiens”, but precisely due to the martial art it evolved to much higher level. In the world of animals the main food of predators was herbivores, as a rule, predators didn’t consume alike ones. And only a human-being was forced to risk his life in order to find flesh-meat, not excluding the use of predators, which undoubtedly required good martial arts skills.

Many ancient nations that resided on the territory of Kazakhstan perfectly and skillfully possessed different techniques of martial arts. Rock carvings and ancient manuscripts may serve as an evidence for that. Kazakh national games and contests emerged in ancient time as a result of labor process and military activity. National sports, including wrestling “kazakhsha-kures” that is one of national combat sports, have been represented in the creations of famous Kazakh enlightener Abay Kunanbayev. Certainly, throughout the process of their establishment national sports have gone through a long evolution, which yet provides more proof that there are a great deal of wonderful and versatile Kazakh works not only of art and literature, but of sport as well [3].

The ancient tradition that has a direct relation to the birth of martial arts in Central and Middle Asia as a institute of competition was the tradition of arranging pair combats and fights before the battle of tribes among the small troops. The history of Kazakh national combat tradition – “zhekpe-zhek”, literally meaning “a straight fight”, “hand-to-hand”, goes back to the times when only strong soldiers fought in that kind of single combat to keep alive the main mass of troops. The victory of the representative of one of the forces, usually the

leader of a tribe, meant the defeat of the opposing force.

Hence, with the help of “zhekpe-zhek” they could solve different conflicts not spilling blood, keeping alive the main human resources.

What is interesting is that the analogous custom was known in one kind of martial arts of ancient Kyrgyz nation – “er-saiysh” (fight while horseback riding). In that kind of combat one of the contestants was destined to die or to get maimed. And the victory was attributed to the whole troop. Such fights are similar to fence play, knights tournaments and modern ultimate fighting [4].

Although the date of the emergence of this combat maintenance ideology hasn’t been established yet, the combat “zhekpe-zhek” was mentioned in the Chinese chronicles of the previous millennium referred to as “khun-fu” – martial arts of Huns tribes, whom, as it’s well-known, the Kazakh tribes were related to. This fact once more demonstrates that centuries-long interrelation and interexchange of cultural traditions, due to which many elements of martial arts of the East, together with the Kazakh national culture and sport traditions have produced one more unique kind of martial arts. It’s worth mentioning that the martial arts in Kazakhstan had lasting and interesting history. Its origin and development is also linked with the Great Silk Way that connected Kypshak steppes with the Eastern countries. Precisely at that ancient time the process of mutual penetration and enrichment of different kinds, in various shapes and forms, sport, religious and philosophical flows started. The centuries-long correlation and mutual cultural exchange of various nations that got through this Great Silk Way turned out to be the propitious base, upon which many martial arts – aikido, tekvando, karate, thai boxing, ushu, in forms of modern oriental martial arts, are developing now in Kazakhstan.

In 1938 for the first time in the history of this type of martial arts three weight categories were introduced: light weight (till 65kg), middle weight (till 76 kg) and heavy weight (76 and more). In 1957 “kazakhsha-kures” has already 8 weight categories. This was a progressive fact, bringing it closer to the modern classic types of sport wrestling. In other words, kazakhsha-kures began to have the same number of weight categories as did freestyle and classic wrestling. In doing so kazakhsha-kures included many international elements in its very name. It’s worth noting that kazakhsha-kures plays a positive role in spreading and developing classic sports.

Kazakhsha-kures has become one of the most promising types of wrestling now. Exclusively useful innovation has been introduced – the arbitrary seizure of the belt. This made the event more spectacular and rich in content, because the fighter received broad scope of applying the techniques which exist in the arsenal of different types of wrestling [3].

The important stage of using the Kazakh national sports came in the XXI century. All national sports and competitions in it provide solutions to the problems connected with health, education and sports. It should be also noted that the competitions in national sports, in particular for children and teenagers, are full of huge reserves, due to the fact that in most cases they contribute to the comprehensive development of the different qualities needed for the growing organism formation. Wide range of problems of physical and moral education is rather effectively solved with help of them.

In the third millennium sports and applied-military significance of martial arts has not decreased, but on the contrary, considerably increased. At the current stage of development of military equipment any conflict, even without nuclear weapon, becomes primarily a struggle for survival.

And here, certainly, the crucial role is assigned to individual ideological, psychophysiological and sports preparation. Nowadays martial arts on the basis of sports in the armies of most countries, figuratively speaking, are in service.

4. Conclusion. National games and modern combat sports are socio-cultural phenomena. Created by the ancient civilizations, they have no analogs in the western culture. For the Eastern people martial arts have always been versatile, as they are not separated from the philosophy of self-defense techniques. They are both spiritual discipline and the art of self-defense, a way of socio-cultural education and ritual sport. Competitions in national sports are an important factor of social and educational development of physical culture and sports of the highest achievements, they also create reserves for many other types, developed in our country.

The national and international traditions existing in the field of oriental martial arts sports competitions aren't a dogma, but they are in a condition of transformation and development. However, it should be noted that the form is more conventional, while the contents of national sports keep the dynamic structure and are capable to operate in changing conditions, keeping thus the main didactic and educational efficiency. These dialectic specifics include many opportunities and transformations, the integration of means of national pedagogics in the solution of educational tasks with help of sports competitions, including the competitions in oriental martial arts.

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