

SINGLE COMBATS AND THEIR ATHLETIC PRACTICE

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Summary

The complex historical-theoretical review of philosophy, psychology, pedagogy, history and sociology of single combats is presented. A concrete-historical analysis of anthroposociogenesis, sociocultural evolution, scientific-futurological prognosis of existence of combat sport is performed. The presented materials can be used in practice of an educational-training and competitive process both in combat sport and martial arts.

1. Introduction

The importance of the problem of research of the phenomenon of single combats, in general, and their sports traditions in particular, is defined by that important role, which single combats as institutional systems with a millions-strong social base and corresponding directions of organization of mass life activity of people, played, play and, undoubtedly, will play in the history of humankind and in the life of a society.

First of all, single combats, as a matter of fact, are the derivative of the most ancient patrimonial types of human activity, for example, the derivative of military activity. But at the same time, single combats act as quintessence, the center of that creative matter, developing a person, the creating beginning, which dialectically counteracts the destructive features of this kind of activity. This is not a pure accident. Over more than a thousand years of history of existence of martial arts (single combats) they do not remain an appendix of the mentioned types of human activity, but have generated their own social institution, which exists, being guided by its own purposes and tasks, and a certain logic of development. At the heart of this logic - aspiration to provide own reproduction, reproduction of single combats relations and activity, reproduction of the typical personality of a fighter, brought up and trained so that such education guarantees reproduction of the same properly developed fighters in the future. Martial arts (single

combats) form powerful stimulus for formation of an ideal of a complete and viable person. This ideal unites in itself understanding of such fundamental functions, as aspiration to self-improvement, self-control, self-defense from aggressive, destroying influence.

Secondly, single combats not only have carried through all their history firm and invariant understanding of an ideal of human perfection, as a unity of perfection of biosomatic, psychophysical and spiritual features, but also they have offered concrete methodological and methodical forms, methods and means of solution of important problems. For fighters concrete models of socialization, social adaptation have been developed, through which or by means of which directly or indirectly, professionally, at the applied or amateur level the problem of reproduction of a system of martial arts as an institution is solved. Thus, martial arts (single combats) have generated their own philosophy of versatile socio-cultural orientation, their own socially comprehensible, even called-for pedagogy, capable, with high degree of efficiency, of forming an especially concrete-historical type of an individual, in which general and personal features are dialectically bound.

Thirdly, single combats, having united hundred millions of people, have turned into a rather influential sociopolitical factor. The world history teaches us that ignoring or underestimation of this factor should be considered as manifestation of obvious political short-sightedness. Consequences of unreasonable thoughtless-scornful or, on the contrary, aggressive-dictatorial attitude to martial arts (single combats) from the side of a state administration can be the extremely negative for a society on the whole, for example, because of a potential ability of martial arts (single combats) efficiently to promote growth of criminogenic strata and environment, to strengthen and to organize anti-governmental oppositional movements.

At last, importance of the problem of the given research results not only from purely sports prospects and forecasts, but also from social prospects of development of martial arts (single combats):

- In the sense of subsequent valuable and social orientations
- In respect of implementation of economic, political potential
- In the context of their use in struggle against such public phenomena, as alcoholism and narcomania
- In the sphere of expansion of general cultural potential and humanistic possibilities

The history of martial arts (single combats) is represented in publications quite poorly and very fragmented. It reminds us rather of mythology with elements of annals and chronography, than a separate section of a historical science. For a number of reasons information concerning martial arts of China, Japan, Korea and the history of martial arts over the last two centuries, is more detailed. Unfortunately, currently the international history of martial arts is studied very poorly, logics of its history, its ethnographic, ethno-historical roots, ties with general laws of the world history are not demonstrated. At the same time, historical and ethnographic materials, revealed and created by specialists in the 19-20th centuries and capable to clear up the range of

problems of interest to us, exist already for a long time period and wait for their interpretation with reference to history of martial arts (single combats).

We can say the same about political science. In spite of the presence of the general theory and philosophy of political processes developed in detail in the classical works of Aristotle, Niccolò Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, in works of scientists of the 19-20th centuries, serious attempts of application of philosophical-political methodology for estimation of dependence of international and national practice of existence and development of martial arts (single combats) on laws of a sociopolitical and production-economic character were not undertaken till now.

Culturological researches of martial arts (single combats), their cultural traditions, mentality, and philosophy, basically concern the East, and especially Japan and China, that managed to preserve their traditionalism up to now. This fact explains the persistent interest of scientists in problems and genesis of the Chinese civilization, supported by fundamental treatises “Tao Te Ching” and “Zhuangzi”, works of Confucius, Sun Tzu, Chzhan Zhenzi, Wuzi and other oriental wise men and teachers, allows us to draw a conclusion about uniqueness of the Chinese civilization, parental for the Far East region on the whole. Precisely in these treatises and doctrines modern specialists very reasonably search for ties between the Eastern philosophy, psychoculture and martial arts (single combats). These connections are traced, proved, and studied. But, unfortunately, in this conglomerate that invariant basis, that integrative whole, the backbone kernel, which would allow us not only to compare the western and the eastern civilizations, but also to distinguish their universal value, to use scientifically-practically knowledge of laws of development of martial arts (single combats) in one region for analysis and reconstruction of their existence in other regions, is not traced yet.

Practice of martial arts (single combats) in their literal sense is generated by philosophy of human life and, simultaneously, generates own philosophy, philosophy of practical experience, based on sports and applied psychology and pedagogy. This was evidenced and widely publicized by such recognized authorities in the world of martial arts, as Bruce Lee and Roland Haberzettser.

Thus, it is possible to conclude that necessary conditions for complex, system analysis of martial arts (single combats) are already created, and therefore, preconditions for scientific theoretical-practical representation of them in the form of a specific social-historical institution also exist. Though this institution has also generated in due course its own social-pedagogic system, it has not found a theoretical justification for its implementation in modern social and economic conditions till now.

2. The General Concept of Single Combats (Martial Arts)

2.1. The Concept and Systematization of Single Combats (Martial Arts)

“Martial arts” (Arts of Mars) is widespread at the end of the 20th century, characterized by extensive systems of codified practices and traditions of combat, practiced for a variety of reasons, including self-defense, competition, physical health and fitness, as well as mental and spiritual development.

According to our point of view, presumably, the term “single combats (martial arts)” in essence is a transformed phrase “oriental martial arts”, originally meaning a complex of Indian (Yoga), Chinese (Wu-Shu), Japanese (Karate-Do, Jujitsu), Vietnamese (Viet Vu Dao), Korean (Tang Soo Do, Hapkido, Taekwondo), Thai (Muay Thai) and other oriental systems of self-defense and attack, named so to underline a fighting reality of their techniques or their military-applied character.

It is easy to notice that the presented nominal definition specifies only a subject of research, but does not reveal essential attributes of a studied subject. To solve this problem it is necessary to pass to real definition of the term “single combats (martial arts)”.

Real implicit definition allows us to reveal an approach to substantial analysis of the concept of “single combats (martial arts)” through the reference to specific context, namely to translation of words, traditionally connected with oriental combat sports and gymnastics: “Wu-Shu”, “Gun-Fu”, “Qigong”, “Do”.

The term “Wu-Shu” in translation from the Chinese means “military art” or “military technique”. “Gun-Fu”(the term, incorrectly transcribed in the European languages as “Kung-Fu”) means skillfully executed, irreproachable work at its final stage, in any arbitrary area. Gun-Fu also means “master”, “mastership”, “asceticism”, “self-cultivation”. At consideration of the term “Gun-Fu” in relation to single combats it must be premised by reference to a specific fighting school, for example, Wing Chun Gun-Fu, Hun Gar Gun-Fu. Many kinds of the Eastern gymnastics, also not connected directly with military activity, are named “Gun” - work, action, a feat. In particular, “Qigong” literally means “work with vital energy”. And the last syllable “Do”, used in names of oriental single combats Karate-Do, Judo, Taekwondo, Hapkido, etc., is translated as the Way, a process of self-improvement, selfless devotion, long and tough work, the chosen way of life, the path.

From the aforesaid it follows that oriental martial arts (single combats) are focused basically on long and tough work of a fighter in the process of self-cultivation with the purpose of mastering, perfection, of personal skills in the area, directly or indirectly connected with military science.

For the Western culture the term “martial arts (single combats)” was unusual, people used words “duel”, “pair fight”, etc., that is these terms underline that ideal fight (battle) takes place between two opponents in approximately equal conditions. Self-cultivation was not considered as military exercises, though all trainings implied pair or group (not single!) work.

Thus, we approach the real, obvious, complex definition of the term “pair fight (single combat)”, as proceeding on biosomatic, mental, spiritual levels individual or pair armed or unarmed duel with one real or imagined opponent for the purpose to inflict real or conditional damage on a contender up to his/her real or conditional destruction, and also as a tactical-technical system or a system of preparation and conducting of such duel.

Systematization of martial arts (single combats) includes three complementary procedures: definition of types, classification and formalization (Table 1).

Systematization of single combats (martial arts)	Definition of types and formalization of single combats (is based on social-historical)	<i>General forms (models) of single combats</i>	Shadow-fighting or virtual single combats
			Pair duel or real single combat
		<i>Historical types (traditions) of single combats</i>	Religious-magic
			Military-religious, military or fighting
			National or territorial
			Physical culture - sports
		<i>Organizational forms of single combats</i>	Deadly duel
			Duel «to the first blood»
			Exercises and exams
			Fair, show, circus performances-duels
			Single combats – dances (art forms)
		Classification of single combats	<i>Directions of single combats</i>
	Internal (is based on work with energy)		
	<i>Kinds of single combats</i>		The basis of classification – national identity
			The basis of classification – attitude to arms
Are classified according to technical priority (punch/kick, throwing/grappling)			
<i>Styles of single combats</i>	Single combats with different tasks, rules and technical characteristics		
<i>Schools of single combats (martial arts)</i>	Author's tactical-technical systems, distinctions between which are not outside the limits of a certain style		

Table 1. Systematization of single combats (martial arts)

Typology of single combats considers as the basic traditions steady, transferred from one generation to another, cultivated by certain social strata and classes, general historical models of single combat practice. There are four historical types of single combat traditions:

- Religious-magic
- Military (fighting) or military-religious
- National (festively-self-defense)
- Physical culture - sports

Classification of single combats usually implies distinguishing of directions and kinds of single combat practice. In the history of single combats and martial arts two directions (internal and external) were created, they developed in parallel, generating sometimes various synthetic, incorporated varieties.

The internal direction was cultivated basically by efforts of Daoists and focused main attention on work with internal energy. Being based on good knowledge of human anatomy and psychophysiology, outwardly not so strong and spectacular actions led to serious internal damage of vital organs of a contender. Creation of single combat technical systems, allowing not only one to treat efficiently, but also not less productively to kill, is attributed exactly to Daoists.

The external direction has much wider geography. It is typical for many Eastern and Western nations. External styles use basically muscular force, are based on physical laws, on work with matter.

Thus, external and internal directions differ from each other, first of all, by used material substrate: matter and physical power or energy, energetic influence.

Kinds of single combats are concrete tactical-technical systems, complexes of holds for defense and attacks, different by their concepts, rules of conducting a duel, tactical-technical characteristics. Combat sports are their analogues.

Sometime, depending on degree of contact destructive influence specialists distinguish various styles of the same kind of single combat, as, for example, in Karate or Kickboxing.

Formalization of single combat culture (not considering its historically caused modeling specificity and concrete content of single combat styles, kinds, directions) represents the most general sides of single combat practice.

As it often happens at adoption of alien, though outwardly similar culture, the hasty statement - “Well, our fighting practice is the same! And their single combats are similar to our national pair fights “one-to-one”!” - does not lead to real understanding of the problem, since such statement leaves “in a shade” and underestimates the major aspect of any oriental single combat, in conformity with which single combat in the East means not an antagonism, not struggle against own contender, but SINGLE fight, that is a process of individual mastering, cultivation of techniques IN PRIVATE, without an opponent.

How to practice single combat IN PRIVATE? For what purpose? Right answers to these questions can be found only on the basis of consideration of centuries-old philosophical-religious traditions of the East.

For the sake of justice it is necessary to notice that the tradition of single combat as self-cultivation is widespread not only on the East, but also on the West (shadow-fighting, trainings with a punching bag, with a dummy). But here we are interested not in specifics, but in pure form of practice. In this context there are two such pure forms of single combats: real and virtual. The basis of systematization in this matter is presence of a real or virtual (imagined) contender. Formalization of single combat culture is not limited only by distinguishing of two general forms, but implies also five organizational forms - models of social-historical practice of single combats.

2.2. Definition of Types of Single Combats

2.2.1. The Basic Types (Traditions) of Single Combats

One of rather significant and widespread errors is consideration of single combats as certain extra-social cultural formation. Single combats in the East and in the West were created and developed by different castes, social groups, classes, have incorporated their specificity and have reflected their interests and life conditions. We will stop on four basic social-class historical traditions of single combats, meaning not only their national, but global, international character.

One of the most fundamental social traditions, which have become the basis and structural components of a social-historical institution of single combats, is a military (fighting) tradition, including fighting holds, complexes, systems, practice of their usage by military estates and generations in their basic professional and applied spheres of activity. Exactly here, first of all, the process of formation of traditions of pair fight or a duel with arms or without it, takes place. By the way, “fight” is usually understood as the organized armed struggle (encounter) of army groups, divisions. The term “fight without arms” fixes a military-applied aspect of battles.

The second significant tradition of single combat (in both senses) is a religious tradition, that is social-historical practice of use of military symbols, arms, fighting holds and other military-oriented elements in the course of individual-group religious practices and actions, and also in collective mystic-magic ceremonies (mysteries), including military dancing, ceremonies of arms spelling, military dedication, prayers, etc.

The third, national tradition of single combats is connected with use (basically by commoners, “low” or “mean” estates) of holds of wrestling, fist and universal hand-to-hand fight in mass national celebratory events, for fun, entertainment, such as Novgorod hand-to-hand fight-entertainment “wall-to-wall”. Some authors have an opinion that such “wall fights” served as applied military preparation of warriors-civil guardsmen (merchants, handicraftsmen, peasants). This point of view gives rise to doubt, since in their history people’s volunteer corps always was the weakest army unit. The leaders always staked on fighters-professionals and mercenaries.

The other direction of national traditions is connected with the fact, that in conditions of existence of a tough caste-class system and monopoly on arms carrying/holding from the side of ruling classes and privileged military groups - generations, oppressed and deprived of civil rights masses created various complexes of holds of self-defense (without arms or with improvised arms, transforming usual working tools - a knife, a stick, a staff, a beater, a sickle, a bench axe, a scythe, etc. – into arms). We must add, that some authors, reasonably marking great love of people to dancing, artificially try to attribute symbolical and ritual military dances and music to national tradition of single combats. That is not an absolutely right approach, since in the majority these dances go deep to early religious customs and rituals (and we will discuss them in detail later), and they are not connected with marriage duels of primitive men.

The fourth basic social-historical tradition of single combats goes back to ancient and, apparently, at the same time extra-class area of cultural heritage. We mean own tradition of physical culture in single combats. Single combat physical culture, most likely, represents itself development of natural psychophysiological needs of a person in warm-up, keeping of good physical form, testing of own power, dexterity, courage, abilities. In other words, according to an opinion of supporters of the biological theory of origin of physical exercises, this tradition, obviously, also should be directed to development of a corresponding state of human body and spirit. Growing from judicial and competitive duels, military games and tournaments, duels to “the first blood”, this tradition created specific conditions for the most all-round, complex development of an individual, therefore, on its basis systems and techniques of mass training and education have been created.

2.2.2. Processes of Convergence, Unification of Single Combat Traditions

Though the above mentioned basic traditions of single combats developed not separately from each other, nevertheless, it is possible to specify processes and reasons, directed to their closer convergence, providing essential expansion of their general social base (Table 2).

<i>Type of single combat traditions</i>	<i>The process of unification, typical for this type of traditions</i>
Religious-magic tradition	Process of secularization (clearing of mystical-magic military-ceremonial complexes of influence of religion and their transformation into secular, temporal ritualized systems)
Military or fighting tradition	Process of deprofessionalization (caused by technical progress in military science and connected with disappearance of old military castes and estates from a historical arena)
National tradition	Process of professionalization (based on active introduction of national single combats on circus arena and on use by them of the applied niche, free from obsolete military estates and their fighting systems)
Physical culture – sports tradition	Process of globalization and cultural integration (generated a powerful general social and international institute of modern sport)

Table 2. The processes, directed to convergence of the basic types of single combat traditions, providing significant expansion of their social base

For religious tradition this is a process of secularization (from Lat. *secularis* - worldly, secular), the process of increasing clearing of a mystical-magic military ceremonial complex of influence of religion initiated by different social-historical preconditions, its gradual transformation into secular, temporal ritualized systems, still sated with mysticism and elements of magic cult, with call to the supernatural. Hereinafter we will trace this regularity, analyzing occurrence and evolution of the so-called “animal” styles of single combats, and also single combat systems of an “internal” direction.

Secularization of religious single combats is connected basically with development of the main world religions, replacing by themselves patrimonial beliefs, tribal and national religious systems, and also with extermination and enslavement of nations, practicing these religions.

Regarding military or fighting single combats, their wide subsequent “civil” social adaptation and distribution were based on a process of de-professionalization, connected with disappearance of old, obsolete slaveholding or feudal military castes and estates from a historical arena; with development of scientific and technical progress, manifesting itself in military science, in particular, at the creation of fire-arms.

Modification of national single combat traditions, their penetration, diffusion into other social strata (including new military estates) can be explained, on the contrary, by the process of gradual professionalization of national single combats, actively appeared on a circus arena and occupied a military-applied niche of expelled fighting systems of old military estates. The real example of this process is the history of development of national and international kinds of wrestling in Russia and the European countries.

Own tradition of physical culture of single combats has turned in due course into a basis of combat sports, accumulating around itself many elements of other single combat traditions. It took place because an institution of physical culture and sport gained strength together with the process of growing globalization in contrast to social-class, national institutions, losing their historical value.

2.2.3. Military (Fighting) and Sports Single Combat Models

In the consideration of industrial and social revolutions of the early capitalist society as certain “watershed”, then in relation to this line of demarcation, it is possible to distinguish conditionally two main backbones, equally efficient vector traditions: pre-capitalistic, military or fighting, on the one hand, and sports, growing from own traditions of development of physical culture – on the other. Accordingly, it is possible to talk about two main complex models of single combats: military and sports. These models are united by their basis - rivalry as antagonism with use of physical force, i.e. with use of power antagonism. In both models this power antagonism takes place in the form of a pair duel “face-to-face” with or without arms. In both models preparation for a duel requires regular and serious training, training activity for maintenance and development of necessary general and special physical and mental conditions. Both models imply that single combat takes place according to certain, rules, stipulated in advance or typical. Even the presence of referees is not a basic difference of sports model, since fighting single combats, as a rule, also does not exclude presence of seconds, witnesses, guarantors, organizers, elders, army foremen, individual people or groups, performing the role of referees, estimating behavior of opponents from the point of view of corresponding canons and confirming results of a duel. From this point of view it sounds like sport that can be called the limiting form of bloodless military single combats, and fighting duels, on the contrary, can be called bloody or deadly sport. But there is one circumstance, significantly (sometimes even principally) rendering the mentioned models of single combats different. We mean conditionality of game reality of sports competition.

Artificiality, conventionality of a game situation of sports competition leaves its stamp on all other things, for example, on the results of a duel, doing it is equally conditional. In fighting single combat to some extent there is a question concerning human life and death, at least, concerning “the first blood” or physical defeat, symbolizing death/destruction. In single combat sports victory means not destruction (as a fact or a symbol) of a contender, but only conditional defeat, though accompanied sometimes by real psychophysical damage. The sports victory means advantage, superiority of a winner over a loser, sometimes very short-term. This difference represents itself such humanistic charge, which by other way, absolutely differently places many accents in the system of training and education of a fighter.

So we see absolutely different illustration of philosophical dialectic law of transition of quantitative changes into qualitative and vice versa. Indeed, it is enough to remove this (providing humanism of sports competitions) specificity of rivalry, and sport promptly becomes absolutely different, slipping to such “primitive”, wild kinds of single combats, which by their cruelty, ferocity, cynicism eclipse the most bloody military games, before which even gladiatorial fights look like innocent entertainments.

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Biographical Sketch

Alexey Anatolyevich Peredelsky was born on January 26, 1961 in Moscow. In 1986, he graduated cum laude from the Philosophical Faculty of the Moscow State University named after M. V. Lomonosov. He worked as a teacher, trainer, tutor, head of educational and sports-educational institutions, head of the Department of Youth Affairs, Physical Culture, Sport and Tourism of Balashikha city district of the Moscow region. In 1991, he has defended the Ph.D. thesis in philosophy with a topic: “Church in political organization of a society”. In 2009, he has defended the Ed.D. thesis with a topic: “Formation of a social-pedagogical system of single combats and its development in modern conditions”.

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