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HABITUS OF MARTIAL ARTS IN RUSSIA

Alexey Kylasov

PhD in Cultural Anthropologies, ORCID: 0000-0001-5350-6214

Russian Heritage Institute,

Head of the Center for Traditional Sports and Games;

International Journal of Ethnosport and Traditional Games,

Editor-in-Chief;

E-mail: kylasov@yandex.ru

RUSSIA

Abstract

The article presents the results of a study of the habit of martial arts in Russia. The main trends in the development of martial arts and emerging contradictions are identified, factors for the steady growth of interest in them in society are identified. With an appeal to modern studies of myths and collective memory, a dichotomy has been established in the development of Russian martial arts: the pseudo-folklore (fakelore) project "Russian styles", which is the author's school of martial arts, is opposed by the folklore project for the restoration of authentic competitions "Russian Games". "Russian styles" were born under the influence and in the image of oriental martial arts. "Russian Games" is the restoration project of traditional sports and games based on historical sources by learned anthropologists, cultural scientists, historians, folklorists and ethnographers. Meanwhile, in the mass perception of both projects represents a single phenomenon of "somatic nationalism", which was determined in the analysis of a number of sociological studies. It is important to note that Russian martial arts are still noticeably inferior in popularity to other martial arts, among which Olympic sports dominate, as well as sports of members of the Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF). The development of Russian martial arts was strongly influenced by martial arts, whose enthusiasm is due to the European consciousness of Russians and therefore fits into the context of European orientalism. At the same time, the development of the martial arts of their people is perceived as useful and is determined by faith in the covenants of their ancestors, and the martial arts of other nations cause fears growing against the backdrop of patriotism. It is concluded that the steady growth of the tourism potential of the main event of Russian martial arts - the Atmanov's Kulachki traditional games, included in the Register of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Russian Federation and owned the Russian Events Award, corresponds to the global trend of growing interest in such events, many of which have been included to the UNESCO ICH List.

Key words: ethnosport, combat sports, traditional wrestling, traditional combats, traditional sports and games.



Folklore and Fakelore of the Martial Arts in Russia

In Western European and Russian sports science, martial arts are seen as a myth, which it is customary to appeal to when it comes to combat sports. The mythology of martial arts is a collective memory of peoples about social meanings and an educational example of the practice of military training of men. Meanwhile, modern researchers in repeated interpretations of long-known historical sources began to discover more and more (!) details in the mythology of martial arts. Thus, today the rethinking of martial arts myths is actively shaping “historical anti-realism”, presenting “the past as a fictional model” if we use the definitions of David Černín (2019)¹.

In the projections of Russian reality, along with the introduction of countless styles of oriental martial arts and under their direct influence, the so-called author’s “Russian styles” based on *fakelore* arise (we introduced this vividly evaluative neologism in the first issue of our journal):

- **Slavic-Goritsky Wrestling** (1993), which was created by Alexander Belov²;
- **Russian Hand-to-Hand Combat** (2003), which was created by Alexei Kadochnikov³;
- **Buza** (2006), which was created by Gregory Bazlov⁴.

The *fakelore* styles of martial arts appeared not only among Russians, but also among other peoples of Russia:

- **Zumid Osh** for Komi was created by Alexander Glukhanich⁵ (he practiced sambo and judo);
- **Pupikat-Berkat** for the Khanty created by Arseny Sosnin⁶ (he practiced karate);
- **Shodsanlat** for the Ingush created by Magomed Sukiev⁷ (practiced karate, taekwondo, kickboxing).

The continuation of the list of “*fakelore styles*” of martial arts and combat sports is carried out in real time. The creators of these styles copy the model of oriental martial arts that they practiced to stand out from the people. The thing is that the supporters of martial arts in the USSR were representatives of the *intelligentsia*, who could not come to terms with the real facts of the absence of sports martial arts as phenomena of the Russian heritage. Mostly, it was annoying that the roots of Russian martial arts are in the village, where miserable huts stand along the broken roads along which drunken men stagger – the true custodians of Russian Traditional Sports and Games (TSG). Here it is necessary to clarify that the *intelligentsia* is the middle and highest

¹ Černín, David (2019). Historical Antirealism and the Past as a Fictional Model. Institute of Philosophy of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences. Organon F, 1–25.

² Belov, A. (Selidor). Slavyano-gorickaya bor'ba. Iznachalie. M.: MPTP «Voskhod», 1993.

³ Kadochnikov, A. Rukopashnyj boj dlya nachinayushchih. Rostov-na-Donu: Feniks, 2003.

⁴ Bazlov, G.N. Derevenskaya artel' kulachnyh bojcov-rukopashnikov: Opyt rekonstrukcii: Po materialam severo-zapadnoj Rossii: dissertaciya ... kandidata istoricheskikh nauk: 07.00.07. Moskva, 2002.

⁵ Zumid Osh by Alexander Glukhanich. December 10th 2019, retrieved from: <http://anosplav.ru/>

⁶ Pupikat-Berkat by Arseny Sosnin. December 10th 2019, retrieved from: http://webground.su/rubric/2009/12/29/sport_boevye_iskusstva/retro/

⁷ Shodsanlat by Magomed Sukiev. December 10th 2019, retrieved from: <https://etokavkaz.ru/sport/shodsanlat-bolshe-chem-borba>



stratum of post-Soviet society, which stand out from the people by having diplomas of higher education: medicals, engineers, military, officials, teachers, etc. The *intelligentsia* opposed itself to the "hillbilly", but it was the inhabitants of the villages and the poorly educated layers of the urban population in the Russian outback who preserved the traditions of the TSG heritage. It is no coincidence that the main Russian traditional games included in the Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Peoples of Russian Federation were preserved and were identified in villages and small towns – Atmanov's Kulachki in the village of Atmanov Ugol, Tambov Region, and Seliger Ruhi in the town of Ostashkov, Tver Region.

The village past did not fit into the picture of the world of the *intelligentsia*⁸, the past required immediate deconstruction and a new assembly of facts and figures. In this situation, pseudo-folkloric "Russian styles" appeared. The creators of the remake relied on facts separately seized from the historical context that did not have mass distribution, and therefore created only the likelihood of the past in their remake. The "Russian styles", which became the product of the post-Soviet *intelligentsia*, are the author's schools of martial arts masters *quasi una fantasia* on the theme of the past.

The historical picture that arises in such styles is so fragmented that its holistic perception is possible only under the influence of exalted patriotism. It is this kind of patriotism that arose in the context of protracted processes of self-identification of Russian (Great Russian) and other peoples of Russia after the collapse of the USSR. The newly created mythological constructions were rationalized in the mass consciousness by the mobilizing idea of finding their own martial arts system by each of the peoples of the Russian Federation. The thing is that adherents of oriental martial arts tried to find an answer to the question: did the people of Russia, who won one sixth of the land on the planet, did not have their own schools and masters?

The negative answer to this question was obvious to scientists, but the sportsmen's intellectual snobbery did not allow them to accept this historical fact. The fact is that the Soviet education system allowed athletes only to be nominally students of higher schools, and diplomas without qualification exams were given to them in exchange for high sporting achievements. Successful athletes were needed by the Soviet regime as evidence of the superiority of the communist model. The use of this Soviet paradigm is continued in the Russian Federation, where athletes become members of parliament, ministers, governors and mayors. Famous athletes, taking historical and legal nihilism for granted, but denounced by the authorities, stimulate the creativity of the fictional styles of martial arts.

Meanwhile, the search for an answer to the question – how was the training of the invincible Russian Army soldiers? – were conducted in a competent environment of scientists who are passionate about the idea of reviving autochthonic Russian TSG. The methodology of this process was based on three fundamental works:

"Traditional hand-to-hand competitions in the folk culture of the Eastern Slavs of the XIX - early XX centuries" (1998) by the historian and master of sport in Greco-Roman wrestling

⁸ Here it must be said that among the intelligentsia there was an alternative movement aimed at pastoralizing the Russian village, it was expressed by village writers, among them Viktor Astafyev (1924–2001), Vasily Belov (1932–2012), Sergey Zalygin (1913–2000), Valentin Rasputin (1937–2015), Vasily Shukshin (1929–1974).



style Boris Gorbunov⁹, in which almost all known sources are classified, with a total of 2000 storage units in various funds;

“Russian hand-to-hand combat” (2002) by historian and coach of the highest category in Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) Anatoly Tedoradze¹⁰, who proposed a method of reviving traditional martial arts based on studying the remaining phenomenon of fist-fighting in the village of Atmanov Ugol, which held from 1648 to the present day, also referring to the work of Boris Gorbunov;

“Ethnosport Theory” (2011) by cultural anthropologist Alexey Kylasov¹¹ (author of this article), who justified the inevitability of sporting (or global localization in cultural and economic presentation) of an ethnic groups TSG, and proposed a method of safeguarding the authentic forms of physical activity¹².

The revival of the autochthonous Russian games with traditional combats began with the Russian Games folklore project of the Ethnosport Federation of Russia in 2012. Scientists of academic institutes took part in the project implementation, among which:

- RAS Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology;
- Lomonosov Moscow State University;
- Likhatchev Russian Research Institute for Cultural and Natural Heritage;
- Plekhanov Russian University of Economics;
- Derzhavin Tambov State University.

This activity was based on a model of Russian ethnosport, experimentally developed on the empirical research and authentic traditional games Atmanov's Kulachki in the Tambov region, entered into the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Russian Federation¹³. The result of the Russian Games folklore project under the leadership of Kylasov and Tedoradze (2016)¹⁴ was the revival of traditional combats – the traditional wrestling za-vorotok, wall fist-fighting, as well as power games – Rusmyach and Kila (as Rugby style). The Russian Games folklore project was implemented in Moscow and throughout Russia: Khanty-Mansiysk, Lipetsk, Omsk, Orel, Tambov, Tula, Voronezh, and other cities.

⁹ Gorbunov B.V. Tradicionnye rukopashnye sostyazaniya v narodnoj kul'ture vostochnyh slavyan XIX-nachala XX v: istoriko-etnograficheskoe issledovanie. M.: Institut etnologii i antropologii RAN, 1997.

¹⁰ Tedoradze A.S. Russkie rukopashnye sostyazaniya kak yavlenie social'noj istorii agrarnogo obshchestva. Tambovskaya guberniya, vtoraya polovina XIX – pervaya polovina XX v.: dissertaciya ... kandidata istoricheskikh nauk: 07.00.02. Tambov, 2002.

¹¹ Kylasov, A., Gavrov, S. Ethnocultural diversity of sport (2011) Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems (UNESCO EOLSS). December 10th 2019, retrieved from: <http://www.eolss.net/Sample-Chapters/C05/E6-168-59.pdf>

¹² Kylasov, Alexey (2012). Ethnosport. The End of Decline (Sport: Kultur, Veränderung / Sport: Culture, Change). Published by LIT Verlag, 2015.

¹³ Kylasov Alexey. Marketing support of the Ethnosport Challenge World Series of tournaments // Uchenye zapiski Rossijskoj akademii predprinimatel'stva. Nauchno-prakticheskoe izdanie. T. 17, № 4. M: Rossijskaya akademiya predprinimatel'stva; Agentstvo pechati «Nauka i obrazovanie», 2018. S. 145–152.

¹⁴ Kylasov A. V., Tedoradze A. S. Tezisy k formirovaniyu ponyatiya "tradicionnaya bor'ba" // V sbornike: «Boevye iskusstva i sportivnye edinoborstva: nauka, praktika, vospitanie». Materialy Vserossijskoj nauchno-prakticheskoy konferencii s mezhdunarodnym uchastiem. 2016. S. 144–151.



Thus, the Russian Styles *fakelore project* that started 30 years ago and the Russian Games *folklore project* that started less than 10 years ago is now in the mass perception have become a single phenomenon of “somatic nationalism, an integral feature of the global grammar of our time, manifested through numerous local varieties”, as defined by Mark Singleton (2010)¹⁵.

Perception of Oriental Martial Arts in Russia

I must admit that the authentic *folklore project* "Russian Games" and the *fakelore project* "Russian styles" did not receive any noticeable development among martial arts and combat sports in Russia, where Olympic sports and as well as combat sports members of the Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF) still dominate, according to Ministry of Sports of the Russian Federation¹⁶:

Aikido, All-styles Karate, Army hand-to-hand Combat, Arm Wrestling, Belt Wrestling, Boxing, Capoeira, Complex Combat, Eastern Martial Arts, Hand-to-hand Combat, Hapkido, Jiu-jitsu, Judo, Karate, Kendo, Kereshu Wrestling, Khapsagay Wrestling, Khuresh Wrestling, Kickboxing, Koresh Wrestling, Kudo, Kyokushin, Mas-wrestling, Mixed Martial Arts (MMA), Muai Thai, Sambo, Savat, Secret Service Combat, Sport wrestling – Freestyle Wrestling, Sport Wrestling – Grappling, Sport Wrestling – Greco-Roman wrestling, Sport Wrestling – Pankration, Shodsanlat, Sumo, Taekwondo, Taekwondo ITF, Fencing, Underwater Sports – Aquathlon, Universal Fighting, Wushu.

It is also important to note that the listed 40 combat sports account for 22.73% of the 176 sports developing in the Russia. Martial arts in Russia began to develop after the collapse of the USSR, in 2005 they were associated with some combat sports in the Russian Union of Martial Arts (RUMA), which declared its main task "the creative combination of martial arts of the East with the military traditions of the peoples of Russia"¹⁷. The mission of the Union stated that "the ancient methods of education, development of the mind and body united with the national spiritual and patriotic traditions, modern science of sports, the achievements of mass physical culture and sports movement"¹⁸. At first glance, it may seem that this is a comparison of the ancient traditions of the East and Russia, but in fact this is not true. The union has no federations developing Russian traditional martial arts, which has repeatedly led to embarrassment.

The first debunking of the creative union of martial arts of the East and the military traditions of Russia was the absence of Russian martial arts in the programme of the “II Sport Accord World Martial Arts Games 2013 in St. Petersburg”. The directorate of these games was formed from the leadership of RUMA, and to please the stakeholder in the Russian version the name of the event “combat sports” was

¹⁵ Singleton, Mark (2010). *Yoga Body: The Origins of Modern Posture Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

¹⁶ Unified All-Russian Sports Classification. Website of the Ministry of Sport of the Russian Federation. December 10th 2019, retrieved from: <https://www.minsport.gov.ru/sport/high-sport/edinaya-vserossiyska/>

¹⁷ Russian Union of Martial Arts. Federal Book “Sport of Russia”. December 10th 2019, retrieved from: <http://federalbook.ru/files/SPORT/soderganie/Tom%202/kirienko1.pdf>

¹⁸ Ibid.



replaced by “martial arts”¹⁹. *Sambo* was introduced as Russian martial art – initially a training system for officers of the NKVD, which was a combination of traditional wrestling styles of the peoples of USSR. However, not one of the peoples of Russia and the former USSR recognizes *sambo* as part of its Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). A vivid confirmation of this is the *Armenian Kokh* wrestling, the *Georgian Chidaoba* wrestling, the *Kazakh Kures* wrestling, and others listed in the UNESCO ICH Convention. By the way, such a situation does not harm one of the most striking modern combat sport of *sambo*, but only discredits the ridiculous myths of Soviet propaganda.

But the biggest embarrassment was the 2019 TAFISA²⁰ World Martial Arts Festival in Ulyanovsk, organized by RUMA as a national member of TAFISA. This event was the first international multisport project of TAFISA *without the patronage of the IOC*. The reason for the disagreement was the festival programme, in which the so-called parallel international federations were announced – a fake structure of the international federations of GAISF members. Since the GAISF is an umbrella structure for the IOC to work with organizations of the Olympic movement, the current situation with TAFISA, which is recognized by the IOC, has led to a conflict of interest. The IOC and GAISF demanded that TAFIS remove all competitions from the festival programme and replace them with master classes, which was performed.

However, such changes led to a scandal with a disproportionate expenditure of budget funds. Initially, the organizers announced that “The TAFISA World Martial Arts Festival will be a large-scale and significant event that can attract many guests and tourists to the region, representatives of about 100 countries will take part in it, and demonstrations by leading martial artists will take place”²¹. 120 million rubles (\$ 2 million USD) were allocated for the festival. But in reality, the festival turned into dull master classes, not even in the arenas of sports facilities, but in the office premises, of course, without spectators. The organizers – the Government of the Ulyanovsk Region and the RUMA – were severely criticized by the Civic Chamber of the Ulyanovsk Region²². At enormous costs, the social effectiveness of the TAFISA festival is not even measurable, the promises of the arrival of national teams and tourists from 100 countries turned out to be fiction, there were no references to the festival even in the federal Russian media, not to mention the promised inclusion in the global information agenda.

¹⁹ In the original, this name is in English – Sport Accord World Combat Games, it was in this version of the spelling that the event appeared in official documents of the Ministry of Sports of the Russian Federation and in the media during the first games in Beijing in 2009, but was changed in 2013 as Sport Accord World Martial Arts Games, but only in Russian version.

²⁰ TAFISA – The Association For International Sport for All.

²¹ Members of the Civic Chamber did not accept the report for 2017 of Sergey Kuzmin, Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Ulyanovsk Region. The official website of the Civic Chamber of the Ulyanovsk Region. December 10th 2019, retrieved from:

<https://opuo.ru/blog/2018/04/25/chleny-obshhestvennoj-palaty-ne-prinyali-otchet-zamestitelya-predsdatelya-pravitelstva-ulyanovskoj-oblasti-sergeya-kuzmina-za-2017-god/>

²² In Ulyanovsk, the results of the TAFISA World Martial Arts Festival are being summed up. Press conference. Information portal ulpravda.ru December 10th 2019, retrieved from:

https://ulpravda.ru/tv/press_konfernc/priamoi-efir-v-ulianovske-podvodiat-itogi-vsemirnogo-festivalia-boevykh-iskusstv-tafisa



Meanwhile, the conflict in Ulyanovsk was only the beginning of claims from the organizations of the Olympic movement to TAFISA, whose members are fake structures of international federations. It is important to note that RUMA is almost entirely composed of national federations affiliated with the same fake structures of international federations²³. Despite the similarity of cooperation with fake structures, TAFISA and RUMA have different motives for interaction. TAFISA is trying to reach as many sporting organizations as possible under its umbrella brand; governmental and non-governmental organizations received membership, which contradicts the declared status of a non-governmental organization (NGO). Consequently, the following claims will be from UNESCO, where TAFISA has accredited NGO statute. RUMA was obviously created to establish control over the activities of an increasing number of martial arts national federations, but after stabilizing their number, the need arose to legalize this union. For the sake of this legalization, the Ministry of Sports of the Russian Federation even introduced a special (unparalleled in the world because of its absurdity) sport "oriental martial arts", consisting of Japanese and Vietnamese remakes²⁴.

Thus, it can be stated that oriental martial arts are mainly developing in Russia with complete disregard for their own traditional martial arts, which is due to following the European trend of orientalism. Eastern martial arts cause empathy of Russians in the context of the image of the East designed by Europeans as a subordinated "Other", in the classical understanding of this definition by Edward Said (1978)²⁵. Against this background, it is important to note that in Europe, their own martial arts, along with African and Mesoamerican martial arts, also do not arouse interest. In this context, it is surprising and requires a separate study of the fact that in the homeland of oriental martial arts there is no reciprocal interest in European, as well as African or Mesoamerican traditional martial arts.

It is worth explaining here that modern sport was the result of a Pan-European (albeit without any convention between countries) nationalist "man-making" project. A good illustration is that along with the Anglo-Saxon sport in Europe, gymnastic exercise complexes developed in France, Prussia, Scandinavia, and Soviet Russia. These gymnastic systems penetrated to the East and became the basis for the emergence of ethnic styled sports, among which *Indian Yoga, Chinese Wushu, Korean and Japanese Martial Arts* are most famous.

This situation is connected with the idea that in the sport combats even a minimal set of ethnic markers, such as styled costumes and transcribed vocabulary, is sufficient to proclaim them complementary to the traditional culture of a particular people. It can be assumed that such a creative approach brings certain advantages in the promotion of ethnic styled sports in the oversaturated martial arts market. However, the well-known thesis that ethnic styled sport creates an interest in the traditional culture of an any people, still remains a mere assertion, which was proved in the course

²³ See the subsection "Members of RUMA" on the official website of the organization. December 10th 2019, retrieved from: <https://www.rsbi.ru/members>

²⁴ The sport is "Oriental Martial Arts." Unified All-Russian Sports Classification. Website of the Ministry of Sport of the Russian Federation. December 10th 2019, retrieved from: <https://www.minsport.gov.ru/sport/high-sport/edinaya-vserossiyska/>

²⁵ Said, Edward (1978). *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon.



of our research²⁶.

Analysis of the Martial Arts Development in Russia

We were able to identify that the development of our own and other people's martial arts in Russia is two differently directed processes, although not pronounced among all segments of the population. Interestingly, the perception of the martial arts of their people is *a priori* perceived as useful and is due to the belief in the ennobling function of the ancient practices of glorious ancestors. People tend to believe that the martial arts of their people have a positive effect on the athlete, similar to what is called a *placebo* in medicine. Given the high level of patriotism among athletes, the development in Russia of martial arts born of other peoples does not always have a positive perception and is akin to the *nocebo* effect in medicine, when a drug that does not have a real pharmacological effect causes a negative reaction in the patient in advance.

For 10 semesters in 2013–2017 my 500 students with a degree in management and marketing of the sports industry of the Plekhanov Russian University of Economics was asked to name the positive and negative factors in the development of their and others martial arts, identified and described by Anatoly Tedoradze (Russian hand-to-hand fighting, 2002). The results of the cumulative survey are set out on Descartes square and are presented in Table 1:

Table 1. Analysis of the Martial Arts Development in Russia

	What will happen in the country with the development of martial arts?		What will happen in the country if martial arts do not develop in it?	
	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>
<i>Their</i>	growing interest in the history and culture of the country; reduction of social aggression	the emergence of active nationalist groups; rising injuries in sports	growing interest in games and entertainment; reducing injuries in sports	reduced interest in the history and culture of the country; growth of social aggression
<i>Other</i>	dialogue of cultures; reduction of social aggression	cultural conflict; rising injuries in sports	nothing significant will happen (on the example of the absence of other sports)	
	What will not happen in the country with the development of martial arts?		What will not happen in the country if martial arts do not develop in it?	
	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>
<i>Their</i>	reduced interest in their own history and culture; increase social aggression	reduce social aggression; reduce injuries in sports	there will be no cultural conflict; there will be no increase in injuries in sports	there will be no interest in their own history and culture; there will be no reduction in social aggression
<i>Other</i>	cultural isolation; reduce injuries in sports	increased confidence in the benefits of their martial arts as a result of cultural conflict; reduce social aggression	nothing significant will happen (on the example of the absence of other sports)	

²⁶ Kylasov, A., Gureeva, E. (2019) Ethnosport and ethnic styled sport: comparative analysis of social efficiency. International Journal of Ethnosport and Traditional Games, (1), 60–68. DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.34685/HI.2019.1.1.010>



The Influence of Martial Arts on the Image of a State

In 2018, during the FIFA World Cup, we conducted a study to identify the impact of martial arts on the country's image. In numerous surveys of foreign tourists conducted by scientific and educational organizations, we were not able to find references to Russian “traditional games”, “martial arts” or “combat sports” among additional interests for visits. In this regard, it is important to note that at present there are no international martial arts tournaments, which cause widespread public interest, comparable to tennis Grand Slam tournaments or Formula 1 Grand Prix. While some traditional combats tournaments enjoy sustained interest, for example, oil wrestling *yagly guresh* at the festival Kirkpınar in Turkey, *bukhe-barildaan* traditional wrestling at the Naadom festival in Mongolia, the Royal *Laamb* traditional wrestling ceremony in Senegal, *Takanakui* fist-fighting in Peru, *Schwingen* traditional wrestling festivals in Swiss, etc.

In the future, it would be necessary to conduct research on incentives for tourism in those countries that are the place of origin or the constant holding of traditional martial arts tournaments. The number of tourists, inspired by martial arts, would allow not only to evaluate their share in the tourist flow, but also to reveal the role of martial arts in the formation of an attractive image of the country. In addition, one could compare these data with the irregular holding of international combat sports tournaments, the right to hold which was received from international federations (world championships, world cups, grand prix, etc.). Comparison of these data would more accurately calculate the expectations of the flow of tourists and draw up the parameters of the expected social effectiveness of the events.

Conclusion

Russian martial arts are developing in two mutually exclusive directions – the Russian styles *fakelore project* and the Russian Games *folklore project*, which are poorly distinguishable in mass perception and constitute a phenomenon of somatic nationalism. It is important to note that both projects have not yet received any noticeable share among all martial arts in Russia, where Olympic sports dominate, as well as combat sports members of the Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF).

The development of Russian martial arts takes shape under the strong influence of oriental practices, which also have a predominant number of fans. Passion for martial arts is due to the European consciousness of Russians and therefore fits into the context of European orientalism. At the same time, the perception of one's and others' martial arts in Russia seems dichotomous: the development of the martial arts of one's people is *a priori* perceived as useful and is due to the belief in the ennobling function of the ancient practices of glorious ancestors, but the martial arts of other people raise fears that reach a cultural conflict amid growing patriotism.

The influence of Russian martial arts on the country's image is minimal. However, in this regard, it is important to note that there has been a steady increase in the tourism potential of the Atmanov's Kulachki traditional games, owned by the Russian Events Award, which corresponds to the global trend with a similar increase in interest in such events, among which the most famous are held in Mongolia, Peru, Scotland, Senegal, Switzerland, and Turkey.



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