

**The Gracie Clan and the Making of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu:
National Identity, Culture and Performance, 1905 - 2003**

By Jose Cairus

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
of York University in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

©2012

Permission has been granted to a) YORK UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES to lend or sell copies of this dissertation in paper, microfilm or electronic formats, and b) LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA to reproduce, lend, distribute, or sell copies of this dissertation anywhere in the world in microform, paper or electronic formats *and* to authorize or procure the reproduction, loan, distribution or sale of copies of this dissertation anywhere in the world in microfilm, paper or electronic formats.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the dissertation nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

Abstract

This dissertation examines the transformation of a modernized Japanese school of martial arts, alternatively known as jiu-jitsu or Kodokan judo, into a Brazilian combat sport. It encompasses jiu-jitsu's introduction in the early 1900s, the creation of a native style in the following decades and its globalization under the hybrid form known as "Brazilian jiu-jitsu."

The adoption of jiu-jitsu in the military is part of a larger project of modernization conceived by the Brazilian elite aiming to provide the emergent middle-classes with innovative fitness trends. Around the World War I, however, a branch of the Gracies, a Scottish cum Rio de Janeiro family with genteel pretensions, joined a troupe of Japanese martial artists and adopted jiu-jitsu as part of their circus act.

In the following decades, the Gracies supported by their upper class peers and by a nationalist regime, launched a comprehensive process of jiu-jitsu reinvention that evolves into a hybrid combat sport exported worldwide at the end of the twentieth century.

Using sources such as state and private archives, newspapers and magazines this study suggests that the making of Brazilian jiu-jitsu through the agency of the Gracie family reflect historical constructed values stemming from a patriarchal culture, social and racial inequality and nationalism.

Dedication

To my father, Omar, to my mother, Luiza, to my brothers, Omar Junior and Marco and to my father-in-law Jorge (all in memoriam).

To my beloved wife, Khadija Brigitte, to my brave son Yunus and to my daughter, *ya nour el-ain*, Hana Barjut, all of whom tenaciously shouldered the burden of this over-stretched journey.

Acknowledgements

I am in debt to many people who, in a way or another, have contributed to this dissertation. Yet I would like to thank particularly and foremost my supervisor Anne G. Rubenstein as well as the members of my advisory committee, Michele A. Johnson and Nicholas C. Rogers for their invaluable support and guidance along the way. I am also grateful to Carolyn Podruchny, Director of the Graduate Program in History, who gave me much needed moral support in the final stages of my dissertation.

My work made me meet amazing people and profit from their insightful feedback on my topic. In Toronto, I was fortunate to find help from colleagues (and friends) like Ricardo Sternberg, David Sheinin, Francis Peddie, Frank de Luce, Gillian McGillivray, and Orde Morton among many others.

In Brazil my network of friends encouraged me to finish my work and write the first doctoral dissertation about Brazilian jiu-jitsu. I would like to mention a few names starting with my longtime friend, Denys Darzi. Then, my dear friends currently living and teaching in Chicago whose story inspired my Brazilian jiu-jitsu's showcase: André Terêncio, and his wife, the Brazilian jiu-jitsu virtuosi Hannelle Staack. On the Gracies side, I must mention Robson Gracie for his colorful and relevant information about his clan. I cannot forget to thank Rildo Eros de Medeiros

for his sharing of unpublished material on the Gracies and the Japanese in the Amazon. Another important contributor was the diplomat and Kodokan judo master, João Gilberto de Souza. He provided me with precious information about the early stages of jiu-jitsu in Japan and enriched my work by sharing his personal experience with the Gracies. This became so relevant that I included it in form of vignette placed in the opening of my last chapter. My special gratitude to my father's friend and martial arts "lineage disciple," the army paratrooper lieutenant-colonel (retired) Manoel Pacheco, who shared with me his personal participation in the martial arts realm during the military rule in Brazil.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iv
Dedication.....	v
Acknowledgements.....	vi
Introduction.....	1
A Brazilian jiu-jitsu showcase	6
The Gracie – jiu-jitsu connection.....	15
Chapter 1 - Modernization and nationalism: the origin of Brazilian jiu-jitsu, 1905-1920	24
Introduction.....	24
Round 1: Japanese jiu-jitsu versus Brazilian Capoeira in Rio de Janeiro’s Belle Époque, 1909	25
Round 2: Kodokan judo versus Capoeira in the Brazilian Amazon, 1915	30
Turn of the century modernization: Navy and Japanese jiu-jitsu.....	35
Japanese jiu-jitsu in the Amazon: Enter the Gracies.....	44
Conclusion	58
Chapter 2 - Between tradition and modernity: the birth of Brazilian jiu-jitsu, 1921-1934	60
Introduction.....	60
We are refined people!.....	61
We are authorities!.....	62
The Gracies’ predicament	63
The Gracies’ social redemption through Japanese jiu-jitsu	65
Conclusion	86
Chapter 3 - Nationalism, immigration and identity: the making of Brazilian jiu-jitsu, 1934-1943	87
Round 1: A “fight of honor,” George Gracie versus Yano Takeo	87
Round 2: Jiu-jitsu, football and dictatorship, Rio de Janeiro, 1937	89

Introduction.....	91
The Gracies versus the Japanese martial artists: fighting for jiu-jitsu’s supremacy	93
Public performance, Politics and the Gracies' patriarchy	104
Conclusion	117
Chapter 4 - Brazilian jiu-jitsu in the mainstream: media, ethnicity and populism, 1951-1960	120
Introduction.....	120
Round 1: Hélio Gracie’s “moral victory,” Rio de Janeiro, 1951	122
Round 2:.....	125
Y.M.C.A Gymnasium, Rio de Janeiro, 1955 - “The black man with a black soul”	125
The Gracies’ return: Challenging African-Americans pugilists but fighting Japanese martial artists.....	126
The final gentrification of jiu-jitsu’s space and style.....	144
The creation of Hélio Gracie’s patriarchy.....	149
The racial showdown: Hélio Gracie versus Waldemar Santana	152
The “larger-than-life” Gracies: radio, television and comics.....	167
Chapter 5 - Authoritarianism, democratization and globalization: hybrid Brazilian jiu-jitsu, 1963-1993	180
Introduction.....	180
Round 1: A hybrid martial art in a futuristic city: Brasilia, 1981	180
Round 2 -The global breakthrough: Mac Nichols Arena, Denver, Colorado, 1993	181
Conspiracies and failed globalization	185
Fall of populism and twilight of Brazilian jiu-jitsu.....	186
The social breakthrough: Middle class Brazilian jiu-jitsu and hybridization	200
Immigration and globalization: exporting violence “made in Brazil”	215
To Japan and beyond	224
Conclusion	232
Bibliography	237
Appendix.....	255

Table of images

Figure 1: Rio de Janeiro’s map. Source: rioservicetour.com.br, 2011.....	3
Figure 2: The Cairus family at their dojo in Rio de Janeiro, early 1970s. From the left to the right: Luiza, Omar senior, Omar junior, Osman and the author. Source: Author collection.	5
Figure 3: From left to the right: Peter Mac Nichols Gracie, Maria Carolina Gracie, Frederico Gracie, Gastão Gracie, Cesarina Gracie, Carlos Gracie, Oswaldo Gracie, Gastão Gracie Junior, George Gracie and Hélio Gracie carries Carlson Gracie. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1956.....	17
Figure 4: Pavilhao Internacional known as <i>Concerto Avenida</i> . Source: rioquepassou.com.br, 2010.	27
Figure 5: <i>Morote-Gari</i> : The technique attempted by Sada Miako. Source: kodokan.org, 2010.....	27
Figure 6: Rabo-de-arraia (stingray tail’s sweep), technique applied by Cyriaco. Source: <i>Gymnastica Nacional (Capoeiragem) Methodizada e Regrada</i> , 1928.....	28
Figure 7: “A capoeiragem vencedora do Jiu-Jitsu.” Source: Revista Careta, 1909....	29
Figure 8: “Jiu-jitsu Contra Capoeira: Cyriaco o heroe.” O Malho, 1909.	30
Figure 9: Mayeda Mitsuyo as Kodokan judo black belt. Source: Meiji Bankara Kaijin Den, 1989.	33
Figure 10: Mayeda Mitsuyo, the “Count Koma” performing a reverse armlock (<i>ude-garami</i>) as a professional wrestler. Source: Meiji Bankara Kaijin Den, 1989.	34
Figure 11: Troupe Koma” touring in Latin America. Left to right: Mayeda Mitsuyo, Satake, Ono and Ito. Source: Meiji Bankara Kaijin Den, 1989.	34
Figure 12: Japanese jiu-jitsu beats French Savate. Source: Le Judo, 1996.....	35
Figure 13: “Jiu-Jitsu Contra Capoeira.” Source: O Malho, 1909.	42
Figure 14: Wrestling prizefighting in circus, early 20 th century. Source: Le Judo, 1996.....	57
Figure 15: Gastão Gracie and his gambling carrousel assembled in the Rio’s International Exposition. Source: Fon-Fon, 1923.	64
Figure 16: Geo Omori was the first Japanese martial artist to fight the Gracies. Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1932.....	67
Figure 17: The Gracies’ debut in São Paulo. Source: Folha da Manhã, 1930.	69
Figure 18: The building of the first Gracie Gym (dojo) established in 1930 surprisingly still standing today surrounding by high rise apartments. Source: author collection, 2010.	72
Figure 19: Kodokan judo ranking belt. Source: http://www.judoyukon.ca/ , 2011.	73
Figure 20: On the left, Gaucho troops tying their horses around the obelisk at Rio’s downtown, 1930. On the right, the rise of Getulio Vargas at Palacio do Catete few blocks from the Gracies’ gym. Source: CPDOC/Fundação Getulio Vargas.	75

Figure 21: “Sports activities of Special Police.” Source: O Globo Sportivo, 1934....	77
Figure 22: An Impressive Performance: The Special Police formed by sportsmen parading on the streets of Rio de Janeiro. Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1933.	78
Figure 23: On the left, “The Gracie Brothers Arrested and Sentenced to Two Years in Prison!” On the right: Manoel Rufino dos Santos (picture) assaulted by the Gracies’. Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1934.	80
Figure 24: The Gracies against muscular wrestlers. Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1933.	86
Figure 25: Yano Takeo. Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1934.	88
Figure 26: “Ono is an outstanding fighter: Captain Luis Souto, Count Koma’s student.” Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1935.	98
Figure 27: “Ono wants to fight in Rio: an extraordinary jiu-jitsu master.” Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1935.	100
Figure 28: <i>Osaе-komi waza</i> (pin down technique). Kodokan judo rules give the victory to those able to pin down their opponent for thirty seconds. By contrast, the Gracies adopted the rule in which victory only could be achieved by submission (surrender or tapping out). Source: Judo Information, 2011.	103
Figure 29: <i>Nage-Waza</i> (throwing techniques). According to Kodokan rules, a “perfect” (clear) throw ends the fight according to the concept of “sudden death” (knock-out). Source: Judo Information, 2011.	103
Figure 30: The “guard” (<i>do-osaе</i>) position hallmarked the Brazilian jiu-jitsu by emphasizing ground combat. Source: Beginning Bjj Ecourse, 2011.	103
Figure 31: Copacabana 1930s. Source: Flickr, 2007.	105
Figure 32: “Jiu-jitsu and Wrestling Tournament Kick-Off” Copacabana Beach, Rio. Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1937.	105
Figure 33: “Sporting Evening at Gracie Academy with the Best Individuals of Our Society” Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1936.	106
Figure 34: Fascism “made in Brazil.” Integralismo became a patchwork of nationalistic tendencies (left). Integralistas parading in Rio, 1937, fascist aesthetic (right). Source: Frente Integralista Brasileira.	109
Figure 35: “I want to be a champion too!” Eduardo, later renamed as “Carlson,” was a Carlos Gracie’s first-born child in his clan of Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s fighters. Source: O Globo Sportivo, 1938.	112
Figure 36: Gillette advertisement in 1941. Jiu-jitsu is related to health, hygiene and masculinity without losing its traditional appeal. Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1941..	116
Figure 37: “Draw between George Gracie and Geo Omori.” The position above serves as a metaphor of the confrontations between the Gracies and the Japanese martial artists. The match resulted in a cultural gridlock. Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1935.	119
Figure 38: Kimura throwing Gracie with a <i>Osoto-gari</i> . Source: Onzuka Brothers, 2011.	123
Figure 39: First two pages, from the left 1. Helio and Kimura wrestling on the ground. 2. Brazil’s Vice-President Café Filho greeting Helio and Kimura. Two pages	

on the right. 1. The vertical sequence shows the tension of Helio’s wife. 2. The sequence shows the final moments of the combat. Kimura crushed Helio before the fatal move: a reverse arm bar (*Ude-garami*). Next, Carlos Gracie threw the towel and saved his brother’s arm. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1951. 124

Figure 40: “Gracie defeated by his pupil” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1955. 126

Figure 41: Carlos Gracie’s book. 129

Figure 42: “Hélio Gracie challenged Ezzard Charles.” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1950. . 130

Figure 43: “Playing with imagination.” Source: O Globo, 1951. 130

Figure 44: “An ordinary Brazilian family.” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1950. 132

Figure 45: In the 1950s, the Gracies shared the pages of “O Cruzeiro” with beauty pageants and iconic figures such as Carmen Miranda. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1949 and 1955. 133

Figure 46: Kato throwing Hélio. Hélio pulling the Gracies guard position. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1952. 136

Figure 47: Contradictory feelings toward Japanese immigrants. Sources: (left) Okamoto Tetsuo, the “flying-fish”, the Japanese-Brazilian swimmer medalist in the Pan-American Games held in Buenos Aires in 1951 and in the Olympics Games held in Helsinki in 1952, a multicultural icon. O Globo Sportivo, 1951.(right) “Os Sete Samurais de Tupã” (The Seven Samurais of Tupã). 137

Figure 48: Coverage shows Hélio Gracie and Kimura, the Nikkei community follow the fight with great interest. Source: São Paulo Shimbun, 1951. 138

Figure 49: Top left: the fight went to the ground. Bottom left: Helio pulled the guard preparing the choke from below. Right: Kato knocked-out.” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1951. 141

Figure 50: Gracie’s Self-Defense System, protection for upper class students against Brazil’s everyday violence. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1953. 146

Figure 51: The Gracies’ Team in the 1950s. Carlson Gracie, (center) the only wearing a jiu-jitsu full gear and Waldemar Santana, the only Afro-Brazilian black belt. Source: MMM Mano a Mano, 2010. 147

Figure 52: The Gracies’ new generation on Copacabana Beach: “Celebrities on the Beach.” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1956. 152

Figure 53: “We must save the housewives,” Carlos Renato’s book. 154

Figure 54: Hélio Gracie versus Waldemas Santana. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1955. 156

Figure 55: Santana victorious against Hélio Gracie. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1955. 156

Figure 56: “The author and the character (David Nasser): Hélio Gracie (on the right) taught me his defensive techniques.” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1955. 161

Figure 57: “Waldemar, coward!” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1955. 164

Figure 58: “Poor Waldemar: Carlson Gracie defeated, before almost 40,000 people, the ‘black colossus’ who dominated Rio’s combat sports.” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1956. 165

Figure 59: “The Celebration of the Three Gracies.” Different racial gradations, but one ideal. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1956. 166

Figure 60: “The Adventures of the champion” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1955. 167

Figure 61: “Tenorio, what a great artist!” The violent politician giving up their guns at the Gracies’ dojo. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1955.	169
Figure 62: Carlos Gracie’s lineage: (left) Robson and Carlson (right). Source: amazonvaletudomma.blogspot.com.	171
Figure 63: “Female spectators enthusiastically watch the fights. The Gracie show is very much appreciated by women.” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1959.	173
Figure 64: “The “Heroes in the Ring”: Televised graphic violence for a selected audience. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1960.	174
Figure 65: “The “Heroes in the Ring, Waldo (Waldemar Santana’s brother) versus Euclides Pereira. Source: Blog Mano a Mano, 2012.	175
Figure 66: The Santana family (left) appearance in a popular TV show in the late 1950s. Source: Revista Tatame, 2004.	177
Figure 67: “The Scottish George Gracie had ever imaged that?” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1956.	177
Figure 68: “The Truth about the Gracies.” Source: Gracie Magazine, 2010.	179
Figure 69: Rickson Gracie (underneath) versus “King Zulu”, 1987. New generation, same challenges. Source: Portal do Vale-Tudo, 2010.	181
Figure 70: The first Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) created by Rorion and won by Royce (above), 1993.	182
Figure 71: The U.S.-Brazil’s dictatorship alliance. Senator Robert F. Kennedy enjoys Copacabana Beach before his meeting with the new military President Castello Branco in Rio. Above Robert F. Kennedy was sitting on the sand while his body-guard rush to stop the photographer. Source: Jornal do Brasil, 1965.	188
Figure 72: Sungata Sanshiro’s movie poster. Source: Wikipedia, 2010.	189
Figure 73: “Army officers learn jiu-jitsu.” In the 1960s, the military replaced Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s practice by Kodokan judo. Source: Última Hora, 1956.	193
Figure 74: “Something has changed in the country.” Source: O Globo, 1965.	194
Figure 75: Brazil’s new order celebrating the first anniversary of the military coup in 1965. On the top, left to right: Air-Marshal Eduardo Gomes (Ministry of Aeronautics), Magalhães Pinto (Minas Gerais state governor and banker), Marshal Costa Silva (first military president), and José Maria Alckmin (civilian vice-president). In the back row, right to left in uniforms: Marshal Odilio Denys (Minister of War) and General Ernesto Geisel (military chief of staff and future president). On the bottom in the front row, the symbol of a waning era: The once media mogul Assis Chateaubriand speechless using a wheelchair and running a media empire in decline. A half-paralyzed “Chateau” wearing a military uniform performed a clumsy salute using the wrong (left) arm. The Minas Gerais State Police (Polícia Militar de Minas Gerais) conferred him the rank of honorary colonel. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1965.	195
Figure 76: The Gracies compound (scale model available in the Gracies Museum in Torrance, California) in their aristocratic mountain resort near Rio de Janeiro. According to information available on the Gracie Academy website: “Located in the mountain resort of Terezópolis, Rio de Janeiro, this estate was the Gracie summer retreat. It had 21 bedrooms and 18 bathrooms. There were 18 uniformed employees	

working at the house, who had amongst themselves 14 children. There were 25 in-house telephones and a switchboard that enabled 6 people talk at the same time. There was an in-house laundry with industrial machines that washed 650 *gis* a week to provide for the academy in Rio. The tall building in the front was a 15,000-gallon water reservoir and a meditation room used by Carlos Gracie. At the center grassy area was the training area for the Gracie family.” Source: Gracie Academy website, 2010..... 198

Figure 77: On the left the cover of “The Judoka.” “Presenting the Brazilian champion of comic books. Who is he? Where he came from? Who was his master?” On the right, the promotional poster of the film: “Don’t be scared! We are shooting scenes of “The Judoka.” Please, help us: Don’t look to the camera, don’t call the police (they know we are here), act naturally and watch the movie! Thank you, the crew” The comic book’s character was Japanese and the movie star was a white Brazilian. Source: Um Blog no Planeta Mongo, 2011 200

Figure 78: Carlson Gracie’s “middle class” team. Source: Blog Mano a Mano, 2011. 203

Figure 79: Rolls (left) and Carlson (right) half-brothers performing martial art cross training. Source: Gracie Magazine, 1999..... 206

Figure 80: *Sankaku-Jime* (triangle choke). This old Japanese technique hallmarks the process of modernization underwent by Brazilian jiu-jitsu in 1970s-1980s. Source: deviantart.com, 2011..... 207

Figure 81: Rolls (right) and Rickson (left) training Russian Sambo under Hélio’s supervision. Source: Gracie Magazine, 1999..... 208

Figure 82: Rolls Gracie (left). Source: Gracie Magazine, 1999. (right) “Ipanema Pier” in the 1970s: counterculture and dictatorship. 208

Figure 83: The Palestinian-Brazilian Wallid Ismail (top) versus the Afro-Brazilian Eugenio Tadeu (bottom): Graphic violence on prime time TV. Source: Fight Magazine, 2011..... 215

Figure 84: “He has his own look. Not menacing but devoid of emotion. The blankness of the supremely confident. Rickson is 29, as muscular as a bodybuilder, with a Marine’s crew cut, the high cheekbones of an Inca Indian and a square jaw. If Rorion is amiably handsome, Rickson is devastatingly handsome. Source: (picture) O Rio de Janeiro, 1986..... 216

Figure 85: Rorion Gracie and his “lethal weapon” disciple. Source: Gracie Academy, 2011..... 219

Figure 86: Fernando Collor performing a Karate (Takudai style) routine with his Japanese master, Tetsuma Higashino. Source: Karateca.net, 2010. 223

Figure 87: Rickson Gracie’s representations in Japan. Source: Pride, 2010. 226

Figure 88: “We are thankful for the privilege of one more day of training.” Brazilian jiu-jitsu in Jordan, Islamic aesthetics. Source: Gracie Magazine, 2009. 229

Figure 89: Brazilian jiu-jitsu in United Kingdom. EFN Sports, 2010. 230

Figure 90: Brazilian jiu-jitsu, China: Cultural Revolution appeal. Haukis.com, 2010. 230

Figure 91: “One world one fight”. From national sport in Abu Dhabi to New Zealand.
Source: Revista Tatame, 2009..... 231
Figure 92: Diasporic return to Japan. Source: bjj-asia.com, 2010..... 231
Figure 93: Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s fever in Israel. Source: Gracie Magazine, 2010. 231

Introduction

In the early 1980s, I found myself an orphan in my martial arts practice. My father shut down his dojo after forty years of activities and I had the option of joining another judo gym or trying the martial art called Brazilian jiu-jitsu. Of course, I was well acquainted with Brazilian jiu-jitsu and the Gracies, but they had their operations in Rio's *Zona Sul* (the "south side" of Rio or areas located along the beach), which made their dojos geographically distant from my middle class neighborhood known as Tijuca, farther from the coast.

In the late 1980s, after my father left the martial art world, my family moved to the *Zona Sul* as a result of our social ascension, and all of a sudden I was close to the Gracies. Like many young men in my generation, I divided my free time between surfing and practicing martial arts. One day, I went to Carlson Gracie's gym located in Copacabana. A relaxed, mature individual whose persona contrasted starkly with his aura as a tough fighter warmly welcomed me. The gym was fully booked and a question puzzled me back then: Why did Brazilian jiu-jitsu only become popular among the middle class in the 1980s? According to my father, the Gracies had been around for decades. Nonetheless, they rarely practiced Brazilian jiu-jitsu outside their upper class circles.

The atmosphere at Carlson Gracie's gym was quite different from that at my father's dojo, where the routine resembled military drills. At the same time, there was no question that every aspect of that peculiar world involved hypermasculinity: from

cockfighting, Carlson's passion, to their students' penchant for street fighting. Despite differences in form, the essence was the same. I later practiced Brazilian jiu-jitsu under Carlson Gracie, and in other dojos in Rio. Although I missed some of the philosophical and pedagogical aspects of Kodokan judo, I fell in love with the ground combat that is the technical core of Brazilian jiu-jitsu. I never returned to Kodokan judo out of respect for my father's martial arts lineage.¹ But I refused to be ranked within the Brazilian jiu-jitsu ranking system, I was, and would remain forever, a Kodokan judo black belt with passion for ground combat.

The Gracies and my family shared similar trajectories. Our families came from immigrant backgrounds, settled in Rio de Janeiro and became involved with martial arts in the twentieth century. My family, against the pattern usually found among Lebanese immigrants in Brazil, brought assets from their Levantine homeland, but around the time of the Great Depression they lost almost everything. The family's financial decline prompted my father, prior to World War II, to seek opportunities in Brazil's southernmost coffee frontier in Paraná State. The booming region became a magnet for all kinds of foreign and Brazilian migrants.

During World War II, my father went to the city of São Paulo where he became part of the first generation of Brazilians to learn Kodokan judo with Japanese immigrants. Students learning judo during the wartime had to immerse themselves in the Japanese culture. This involved adopting Japanese dietary habits, learning the language and as

¹ The practice of martial arts implies affiliation with a particular tradition, style or school. It means that students become part of the master's "lineage" or "lineage disciple." A martial arts lineage includes its own set of techniques, pedagogy and philosophy. Lineages also are vital to establish martial arts' school credibility. See: Bruce Kumar Frantzis, *The Power of Internal Martial Arts and Chi : Combat and Energy Secrets of Ba Gua, Tai Chi, and Hsing-I* (Berkeley, Calif.: Energy Arts, 2007), 115-17.

much as possible living in a Japanese way. In 1948, my father returned to Rio as an experienced black belt and opened his own dojo in the middle class neighborhood of Tijuca, where his family initially settled upon their arrival in Brazil in the early 1900s.

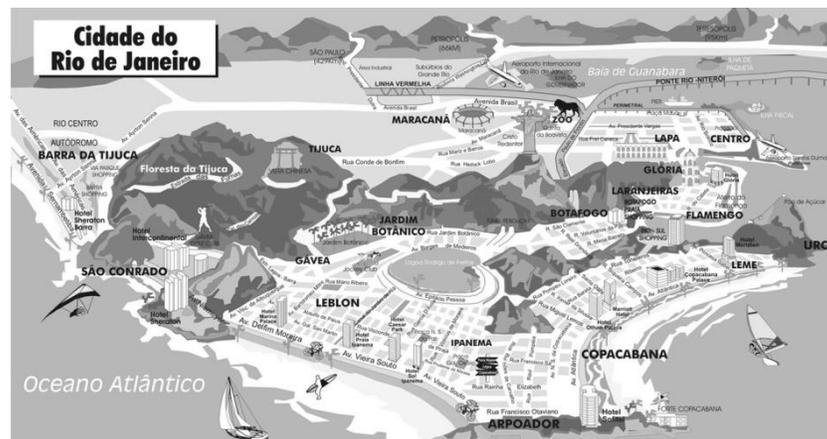


Figure 1: Rio de Janeiro's map. Source: rioservicetur.com.br, 2011.²

In the post-war period, there were few dojos in Rio and the Gracies' was one of them. Interaction among the small number of martial artists was inevitable. Moreover, tournaments with the participation of judo and jiu-jitsu practitioners were common. Rivalries easily became violent inside the dojos and on the streets. For one involved with martial arts, life close to the Gracies could be difficult. Nonetheless, my father and the Gracies developed a distant and cordial relationship based on mutual respect. After all, they ran their dojos in two distinct geographic areas of Rio and aimed at different clienteles. In the 1950s, the Gracies reached the apex of their fame, but their jiu-jitsu

² "Rio Service Tour," accessed June 6, 2011, <http://www.rioservicetur.com.br>.

remained an elitist combat sport, geographically and socially secluded. On the other hand, Kodokan judo was expanding amid the urban middle class.

By the late 1950s, my father, like many Brazilians of Syrian-Lebanese descents enthusiastically embraced ideas embedded in post-colonial pan-Arabism. The local authorities placed him briefly under arrest for giving local underground support to the “Algerian Revolution.” Ironically, however, the Brazilian military soon hired him to teach judo. In the 1960s, the tide turned; the Gracies prestige faded significantly and Kodokan judo practitioners grew increasingly identified with the military regime imposed in 1964. Thereafter, my father pioneered the militarization of judo during this dictatorship by teaching and training troops to fight in counterinsurgency warfare. At this time, he helped to prepare Brazilian units deployed in Santo Domingo during the crisis in 1963, working in collaboration with U.S. Special Forces (Green Berets) stationed in Brazil. The latter invited my father to come to this elite unit headquartered at Fort Bragg, North Carolina to instruct U.S. forces increasingly involved in the Vietnam War. My father, perhaps surprisingly, refused to help the American global crusade against communism. A few years later, I asked him why he turned down the Americans’ offer since I still fondly remembered loving to eat the U.S. military rations (especially the candies) given to me by those “gigantic” Green Berets. He once explained his refusal: “This is not my war. I have no quarrel with the Vietcong.” Kodokan Judo, expanded at every level of Brazil’s military as sport, as a complement to combat training and to help boost esprit-de-corps. Afterwards, towards the late 1960s, my father worked closely with the military

establishment during infamously known “years of lead” which marked the height of the underground war between government forces and left-wing insurgent groups

The nature of my upbringing, therefore, made me familiar with patriarchal rule, hyper-masculine behavior, nationalism and violence. Furthermore, similar to the Gracies, my family proudly cultivated their roots in a country in which immigrants had a privileged status. By sharing similar values and background with the Gracies, I have witnessed, as part of my personal experience, outbursts of public violence, attachment to authoritarianism, veiled racist attitudes and a sense of nostalgia related to a loss of status.

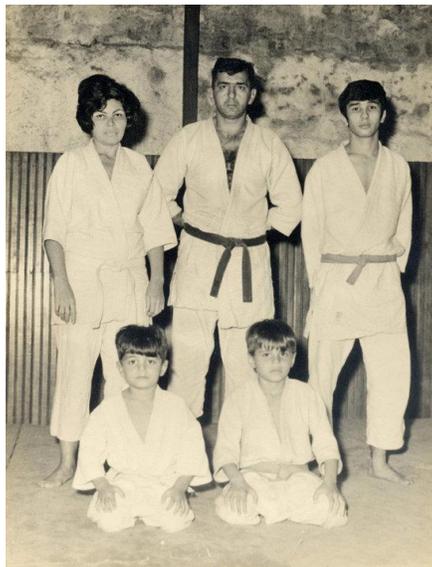


Figure 2: The Cairus family at their dojo in Rio de Janeiro, early 1970s. From the left to the right: Luiza, Omar senior, Omar junior, Osman and the author. Source: Author collection.

The global promotion of Brazilian jiu-jitsu realized by the Gracies since the 1980s is a work in progress. The space given to the Gracies in the international media compensate the lack of statistics about the popularity of the sport. In addition, the

economic impact of Brazilian jiu-jitsu and the corporate business based on “mixed martial arts” that evolved from the concept conceived by the Gracies on a global scale is considerable.³ The anecdote below provides a glimpse of Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s global popularity.⁴

A Brazilian jiu-jitsu showcase

In 2007, the Sovereign Bank Arena in Trenton, New Jersey, held the “Abu Dhabi Combat Club Submission Wrestling Championship” (ADCC). Over the previous nine years the event had become the world’s most important grappling contest. The Abu Dhabi’s Crown Prince Tahnoon Bin Zayed al-Nahyan created and sponsored the event. The main event held on a rotating basis in Abu Dhabi, Brazil, the United States, Europe and qualifying trials draft competitors around the world.

I left Toronto to attend the event with no expectation other than to watch great fights. On the first day of the competition, outside the Sovereign Bank Arena in Trenton, while waiting for the gates to open, I observed an atmosphere rather uncommon in New Jersey. In the crowd, I could identify Americans, Latin Americans and Japanese. In addition to English, Portuguese was a second language, but trendier than English. Those

³ Matthew Miller, "Ultimate Cash Machine: The Fertitta Brothers Built a Violent Fight Club into a Billion-Dollar Sports Empire," *Forbes Magazine*, accessed 10/11/2010, <http://www.forbes.com/>.

⁴ The Biography Channel produced a documentary about Hélio Gracie after his death in 2009. According to the documentary's director Rodrigo Astiz "Hélio Gracie was one of the four most representative faces of Brazil along with Gilberto Gil (one of the founders of Tropicalismo), the scholar and former Brazilian president Fernando Henrique Cardoso, and former tennis champion Gustavo “Guga” Kuerten (a three-time winner of French Open). Marcelo Dunlop, "Helio Gracie, One of 4 Faces of Brazil According to Tv Channel," accessed October 11, 2011, <http://www.graciemag.com/2010/08/helio-gracie-one-of-4-faces-of-brazil-according-to-tv-channel/>.

who did not speak Portuguese used a less glamorous alternative of English mixed with Brazilian jiu-jitsu jargon. Clothes, mannerisms and behavior displayed the cultural blend. An invisible hierarchy was created by the Gracies that placed on top those wearing made-in-Brazil jiu-jitsu outfits preferably purchased at Brazilian jiu-jitsu training camps in Rio de Janeiro.

Inside, however, the impeccable organization follows American standards. The American atmosphere was noticeable by the presence of a U.S. Marines recruiting booth and through the patriotic notes of the “Star Spangled Banner” at the opening ceremony. Despite the American signs, the real stars were Brazilians and the superstars were the Gracie family. The media and fanatic fans followed the Gracies everywhere, and they were very comfortable under the spotlight. I could not help noticing their transformation from Rio de Janeiro locals into cosmopolitan world celebrities. Surrounded by privileges, the Gracies enjoyed their role in the invention and globalization of Brazilian jiu-jitsu. There was an exclusive Gracies’ warm-up area separated from the other fighters. No one doubted their privilege. The contest, for me, was more than a competition among the best fighters on the planet, but a celebration of the growing success of Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s globalization. I also sensed that I was witnessing new aspects of Brazil’s self-image abroad. Brazilians at the event displayed significant self-confidence usually displayed in international soccer competitions and carnival performances. Brazil had its self-image tarnished after the end of the “economic miracle” in the late 1970s, by a failure to combat inequality, persistent economic crisis and booming crime rates. It contributed a great deal to the beginning of Brazilian emigration. Conversely, Brazilian jiu-jitsu seems to be the

most successful Brazilian cultural export to America since Bossa Nova in the 1960s. Coincidentally, both are cultural products of Rio de Janeiro's upper class neighborhoods exported successfully worldwide. I wonder if anyone else recognized that what appeared so natural that weekend was the product of a long historical process.

In my dissertation, I examine the transformation of a modernized school of Japanese martial arts into a Brazilian combat sport throughout the twentieth century. Brazilian jiu-jitsu⁵ is a hybrid combat sport rooted in a martial arts school developed in the Meiji period in Japan and introduced by the military in Brazil as part of a larger project to promote "modernization" after the establishment of the Republican regime. My dissertation is a comprehensive analysis of how a particular segment of Brazil's elite reinvented a Japanese cultural element in its own image during the process of construction of a national identity. I also examine how the contemporary transnational and diasporic inroads taken by this martial art and embedded in hyper-masculine rituals responded to a global demand for violent performances.

The blending of Native, African and European cultural manifestations to form a national identity hallmarks a dominant multicultural discourse during the 1920s. In the following decade, during the heyday of nationalism, the local jiu-jitsu style invented by the Gracies also received the cultural sanction from the authoritarian establishment.

⁵ This dissertation uses the term "Brazilian" jiu-jitsu because the Japanese term "jiu-jitsu" is too generic and therefore does not identify any particular school or style, as for example: Daito-ryu aiki jujutsu, Tenjin shinryo-ryu or Kodokan judo. Yet there are other denominations such as "Gracie" jiu-jitsu or simply "jiu-jitsu" (notably in Brazil). Rorion, the Gracie pioneer in the United States, trademarked the denomination "Gracie jiu-jitsu." He claim that it was a strategy to emphasize the distinction between martial disciplines under the term "jiu-jitsu." On the internet, one finds slightly over 4 million results for "Gracie jiu-jitsu" and almost 6 million for "Brazilian jiu-jitsu." I choose "Brazilian jiu-jitsu" using the school as a proper name (capitalized) followed by the generic name "jiu-jitsu" as a common non-capitalized noun.

My dissertation enters a dialogue with the historiographical trend debating the importance of race in the interpretation of modern Brazil.⁶ Yet my argument suggests that historically constructed hierarchies embedded on Luso-Brazilian mindset are also relevant to analyze core aspects of the national identity in modern Brazil. Within the framework of a social environment permeated by inequality race and class are imbricated categories. This arrangement that evolves over the *longue durée* generates an “aristocratic” culture in which an “elusive whiteness” became a desirable trait among others.⁷ As Stuart B. Schwartz observed, in colonial Brazil the legitimization of a noble status (*fidalgia*) implied dissociation from heretic practices, manual labor and connections with “infected races.”⁸ But some members of Brazilian elite were not free of such associations. It made them “sensitive to the nuances of color and status hierarchies operated in the Portuguese colonial world.”⁹ Furthermore, the system of domination developed in Brazil cloaked in discourses of “racial democracy” engendered a category that Elisa Larkins Nascimento defined as “virtual whiteness” which is a “fulcrum of identity intrinsically intermeshed with issues of gender and patriarchy.”¹⁰

⁶ Thomas E. Skidmore, *Black into White : Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993).; Jerry Dávila, *Diploma of Whiteness : Race and Social Policy in Brazil, 1917-1945*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).; Peter M. Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood : Army, Honor, Race, and Nation in Brazil, 1864-1945*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).; Robert Stam, *Tropical Multiculturalism : A Comparative History of Race in Brazilian Cinema and Culture*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).; Roberto da Matta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes : An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*, (Notre Dame: University of Indiana Press, 1991).

⁷ Catherine Rottenberg, *Performing Americanness : Race, Class, and Gender in Modern African-American and Jewish-American Literature* (Hanover, N.H.: Dartmouth College Press, 2008), 40.

⁸ Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550-1835* (Cambridgeshire: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 274.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Elisa Larkin Nascimento, “Kilombismo, Virtual Whiteness, and the Sorcery of Color,” *Journal of Black Studies* 34, No. 6, (Jul., 2004): 1.

These approaches provided me with the analytical tools to understand the making of Brazilian jiu-jitsu alongside miscegenation and extramarital affairs that occurred within the Gracie family during the twentieth century. This interweaving of tradition and modernity is critical to my argument.

Chapter One describes the introduction of Japanese jiu-jitsu in Rio de Janeiro in the early 1900s and how the Gracies learned it from the Japanese in the Brazilian Amazon during the World War I. The adoption of a Japanese martial arts by the military as a school of physical education followed the emergence of Japan as a global power. The association of Japan with modernity facilitated jiu-jitsu's acceptance by the military. Before long, however, Afro-Brazilian Capoeira and Japanese jiu-jitsu clashed. I analyze this tension at two different moments in time. In 1909, Capoeira emerged as "national" combat sport in Rio de Janeiro supported by intellectuals who sought to relate its practice to the racial category of mulatto to mollify the problems of racism that would have emerged through a candid consideration of Capoeira's lineage as an Afro-Brazilian martial art. In the second moment, which occurred in the Amazon in 1915, jiu-jitsu became a leading martial art through the agency of the Japanese martial artists who opened gymnasiums for the Amazonian elite. A branch of the Gracies, a Scottish cum Rio family with genteel pretensions, joined the Japanese and adopted jiu-jitsu as part of their circus act. Thereafter, the Gracies virtually monopolized the practice of this Japanese martial art in Brazil. Their monopoly over jiu-jitsu became a critical aspect to understand the idiosyncrasies surrounding the creation of a local fighting system.

Chapter Two examines how *déclassé* aristocrats like the Gracies recovered their status in modern Brazil through their martial arts skills. Here, I add to the current historiography an important political affiliation, which is that the Gracies, as members of a traditional Rio de Janeiro's elite, developed a growing symbiosis with Getulio Vargas' authoritarian state after 1930. As pioneers of jiu-jitsu and aristocratic aspirants, the Gracies were part of the security state apparatus against a backdrop of conflicting ideas about nationalism and multiculturalism. This chapter hallmarks the close association of the new regime with the structures it claimed to replace.

Chapter Three focuses on the series of public matches pitting the Gracies and Japanese martial artists against a background of political radicalization that led to the installation of the Estado Novo dictatorship in 1937. In order to compensate the Japanese superior skills in standing combat, the Gracies decided to put emphasis in ground techniques. In addition, the Gracies backed by the authoritarian state and under strong nationalist influence sought to replace Japanese rituals with cultural traits related to the local customs. Here I found helpful Arjun Appadurai's work on the indigenization of British cricket in colonial India. The creation of a local jiu-jitsu encompasses a wide range of changes concerning techniques, philosophy, and rituals in which I employed Arjun Appadurai's binary study of acculturation involving hard and soft forms. According to him, "the former are those that come with a set of links between value, meaning, and embodied practice that are difficult to break and hard to transform."¹¹ The

¹¹ Arjun Appadurai, "Playing with Modernity: The Decolonization of Indian Cricket," in *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 90.

latter, by contrast, “that permits relatively easy separation of embodied performance from meaning and value, and relatively successful transformation at each level.”¹² Appadurai’s model therefore proves to be suitable to analyze the early stages of jiu-jitsu indigenization in Brazil because similarly to what happened to British Cricket in India it had occurred along a binary framework. It involves changing of rituals and meanings (soft forms) and changing of style (hard forms) promoted by the Gracies from the 1930s onward.

Chapter Four analyzes the role of the mass media in creating a modern Brazil in the post-war period, a role that was critical to the fortunes of the Gracies and to the further transformation of Brazilian jiu-jitsu into an elite-oriented combat sport.

In the 1950s, the Gracies moved from being present in just sport sections to the pages of the most popular media vehicles in Brazil including the high-profile magazine *O Cruzeiro*. The association of the Gracies with the populist regime and its developmentist ideologies became complete. As the Gracies’ visibility increased, a transnational rivalry developed pitting them and martial artists from Japan. This occurred in the wake of Japan’s re-emergence as a global player and upon the return of Getulio Vargas. It contributed to the debate in which Brazilians in the 1950s coped with mixed feelings toward immigrant groups that many regarded as inassimilable. In this continuing discussion of race, I highlight the struggle between the Gracies and their Afro-Brazilian pupil, Santana, to shape discourses of “racial democracy” in Brazil. I use the articles written by the Brazilian literati, Nelson Rodrigues, to analyze the pervasiveness of racism

¹² Ibid.

in modern Brazil. While analyzing the process by which the Gracies strengthened their role as national icons through their massive media exposure during the post-war.

Chapter Five has three interwoven sections that describe Brazilian jiu-jitsu's marginalization, expansion into a middle class realm and globalization. In the first, I analyze how the military rulers marginalized the Gracies and their jiu-jitsu. In keeping with recent works on Brazil's dictatorship and the traditional historiography, the 1964 coup d'état is seen to have combined long-sought military ambitions to take power with the external dynamic of the Cold War.¹³ Moving closer to the United States' hemispheric interests meant the adoption of U.S. military standards, including ones prescribing Japanese judo as the martial art of choice in both military establishments.

In the second section, I exam two intertwined processes that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s. The first process deals with the technical improvement of ground combat that made Brazilian jiu-jitsu a hybrid combat sport in its own right. Here I found useful Eduardo Archetti's findings analyzing the emergence of creole versions of foreign codifications in Argentina as a result of a dialectical relationship between globalization and nationalism.¹⁴ Furthermore, Brazilian jiu-jitsu similar to Argentinian football and Polo, symbolizes a manifestation of cultural creativity developed through a dichotomous process involving change and continuity.¹⁵ Yet, unlike Archetti's periodization, I suggest that it took five decades to Brazilian jiu-jitsu to become a hybrid martial art. The 1980s

¹³ See: Thomas E. Skidmore, *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-85*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).; James Naylor Green, *We Cannot Remain Silent : Opposition to the Brazilian Military Dictatorship in the United States*, (Durham: Duke University Press).

¹⁴ Eduardo P. Archetti, *Masculinities: Football, Polo, and the Tango in Argentina*, (Oxford: Berg, 1999), xv-xvii.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 103.

marked the climax of a process of hybridization that started in the 1930s with jiu-jitsu's indigenization. My approach on how Brazilian jiu-jitsu became a hybrid combat sport is grounded in evidence that I found analyzing the Gracies' performances against world-class opponents in Brazil and abroad from the 1980s onwards. At this point, Brazilian jiu-jitsu was no longer considered an exotic version of a Japanese martial art created by an idiosyncratic group of individuals. It achieved afterwards international recognition and only by then, as Archetti observed in Argentina, Brazil starts to export male performers draped in jiu-jitsu gis on a global scale.¹⁶ I provide a detailed explanation of this process in the beginning of the chapter five.

The second process analyzes how Brazilian jiu-jitsu became a middle class martial art practiced against a background of democratization, economic downturn and growth of urban violence in Brazil's main cities.

The last section describes the of Brazilian jiu-jitsu's transnational breakthrough that result in its territorialization in the United States, Japan and beyond. In the 1980s, the Gracies likewise hundred of thousands of other Brazilians emigrate to the United States. The martial arts brought to the United States by the Gracies combined well with the political climate of the Ronald Regan era and the creation of the hyper-masculine icons by the Hollywood film industry. Against this backdrop, the Gracies adapted their performances to new media technologies by creating a confrontation of disciplines in real time and televised by cable TV. Simultaneously, they succeeded in making Brazilian jiu-jitsu the martial art of choice for the U.S. military and security forces to fight new threats

¹⁶ Archetti, *Masculinities: Football, Polo, and the Tango in Argentina*, 15.

posed by terrorism and counterinsurgency warfare. Finally, the practice of Brazilian jiu-jitsu spread from Japan to the Middle East, generating a millionaire industry of violent performances.

I initially planned to combine archival research and oral history to produce the dissertation. However, the nature of the topic made me change my plans. Oral history, particularly regarding the Gracies, turned out to be unfruitful. Due to their status as international celebrities and the clannish rivalries related to powerful economic interests, whenever questioned, they answer by repeating a standard “invented tradition” that can be easily found on the internet. They jealously protected valuable family sources and relics from outsiders. As was the case throughout their trajectories, they only disclose family sources to produce reports that eulogize the Gracies’ past and present. In other words, apart from informal conversations related to my Brazilian jiu-jitsu practice and my personal experience more broadly, my work is exclusively the product of archival research. My sources consist of newspapers, magazines, government and genealogical records held in archives (private and public) in Brazil, United States, Japan and Scotland.

By virtue of the symbiotic relationship developed between the Gracies and Brazilian jiu-jitsu I decided to provide a brief description of the Gracies’ past before they discovered the Japanese martial art.

The Gracie – jiu-jitsu connection

Figure 3: From left to the right: Peter Mac Nichols Gracie, Maria Carolina Gracie, Frederico Gracie, Gastão Gracie, Cesarina Gracie, Carlos Gracie, Oswaldo Gracie, Gastão Gracie Junior, George Gracie and Hélio Gracie carries Carlson Gracie. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1956.²⁰

On July 18 1795, James Gracie, a banker in Dumfries, sent his pony trap to transport Robert Burns to the latter's home. Burns was gravely ill and spent the following two days in delirium before finally passing away on July 21. From the friendship that developed during the Scottish bard's last years, one poem in particular immortalized James Gracie:

Gracie, thou art a man of worth,
O be thou Dean forever!
May he be damn'd to Hell henceforth
Who faults thy weight or measure!²¹

In the early nineteenth century, Scotland began to feel the impact of events abroad and growing pressure from within. Externally, there was the threat of Napoleon; internally, industrialization began to erode old traditions. Rapid urbanization brought disease and poverty and increased pressure on the social fabric.²² The Gracies were involved in financial business around the time of George Gracie's birth. Information from James Gracie's will indicates that he was an accountant in Dumfries and prior to that was involved in banking activities. Many Gracies had connections to trade, banking and finance, although their business fortunes were volatile, which might be the reason that they consistently appeared in court proceedings. Indeed, James Gracie's fortunes appear to have declined. From being a manager of a bank and a prominent citizen in Dumfries, a

²⁰ Nasser, "A Dinastia Gracie," 102-03.

²¹ Robert Burns, *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, (New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1909), 513.

²² T. M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation : A History, 1700-2000*, (New York: Viking, 1999), 225-27.

lowland town with links to the Atlantic world through the tobacco trade, he was bankrupt by the time of his death in 1814.²³

George Gracie was born to James Gracie and Jean Patterson on August 4, 1801 at Carronbridge, Parish of Morton, in the County of Dumfries.²⁴ He was a son of James Gracie's second family, and with his father's declining fortunes predictably looked to the Atlantic world for new opportunities. He settled in Rio de Janeiro during the 1820s following Brazil's independence in 1822. He left behind a modernizing world for a recently independent colony of the fading Portuguese Empire, where slavery was pervasive, and where the Catholic establishment only tolerated Calvinists like himself.²⁵ Despite this difficult transition, he became strategically placed to spearhead the interests of British informal imperialism in Latin America. Later in life, he was to participate actively in the early stages of economic modernization that followed the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade in Brazil in the early 1850s.

The first Brazilian-born Gracies, including Peter Gracie, upheld their Scottish roots. Yet the process of assimilation started with their conversion to Catholicism and their integration into the local elite of businessmen. By late 1800s, the second generation was Catholic and elitist, bankers and middlemen in the coffee and sugar trade. In the wake of the structural crisis that ravaged Rio de Janeiro's agricultural export-based

²³ William McDowall, *History of the Burgh of Dumfries: With Notices of Nithsdale, Annandale, and the Western Border*, (Edinburgh: A. & C. Black, 1867), 835.

²⁴ "Marriage Certificate of James Gracie and Jane (Jean) Patterson (1798)," Old Parochial Register, Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Scotland) Act 1965, s. 47, General Register Office, New Register House, National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh.

²⁵ The Constitution of 1824 in its article number 5 declared Catholicism Brazil's official religion. Other Christian denominations had the right of cult since performing their cults in private. "Constituição Política do Império do Brasil" (March 25 1824).

economy based on slave labor, the Gracies' decadence became more visible. Finding themselves in financial dire straits, they attempted to uphold their status by acting as diplomats in the new republic of 1889. These new enterprises allowed the Gracies to survive severe setbacks, and enabled them to preserve social capital fundamental for their future ventures in the twentieth century.

The trajectories of the Gracies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries demonstrated their attempts to uphold their status in a new political regime. They also display the Gracies' struggle to retain their aristocratic values and social practices during the transition to modernity. They entered a new era in which their tradition was gradually eroding under the effects of modernizing forces. Their economic and social roller coaster ride at the turn of the century explains how they wound up coming across the martial art known as Japanese jiu-jitsu.

Gastão Gracie, born on July 30, 1873, was the twelfth child of Peter Gracie and Mariana Carolina Pinheiro. He was likely named after the Count d'Eu, Gaston d'Orléans, son-in-law of Emperor Pedro II and husband of Princess Isabel.²⁶ It seems reasonable to assume this since his father also was named after the emperor himself and, perhaps more significantly, his maternal grandfather served in Gaston d'Orléans' entourage.²⁷

²⁶ Louis Philippe Marie Ferdinand Gaston d'Orléans (April 28, 1842-August 28, 1921). After the February Revolution of 1848 in France, he and his family lived in exile in England. In 1864 he and his brother came to Brazil to marry the two daughters of Emperor Pedro II.

²⁷ Peter Gracie had business with the Count d'Eu. "Título: Venda de terreno. Outorgante: Conde D'Eu. Outorgado: Pedro Gracie," Livro: 312, Folhas: 67 v. (11/10/1878) Ofício: 3º, Seção de filmes- rolo nº: 010.38-79. Arquivo Nacional do Rio de Janeiro.

Gastão, following the example of his older brothers Alberto and Samuel, went to Germany to study and subsequently joined the diplomatic corps.²⁸ In August 14, 1897, Gastão was approved for a consular position in the Foreign Affairs Ministry (*Itamaraty*). He was examined in German and Spanish, in addition to the English and French tests he had already undertaken. In another document from August 23, 1897 addressed to the Brazilian Plenipotentiary Minister in Berlin, Marcos Antonio de Araujo e Abreu, Gastão Gracie formally requested his diplomatic credentials to assume the post of General-Consul of Brazil to Hamburg.²⁹ Gastão was appointed on August 23 1897, but he never took his consular post in Hamburg.³⁰ Apparently, he lost his the position because of political nepotism, which indicates that the Gracies lacked sufficient influence and would have to adjust themselves to the new order.³¹

At the close of the century, Gastão Gracie left Rio de Janeiro for the Brazilian Amazon. In 1901, he married Cesalina Pessoa in Belém, capital of the state of Pará, four years after he had lost his diplomatic appointment.³² Gasoline Pessoa de Vasconcellos was a member of a clannish, gentry family from northeast Brazil. Her family, as the other thousands of northeastern backlanders expelled from drought and famine, settled in the

²⁸ Alberto became diplomat in 1883 and Samuel became Chile's consul to Rio de Janeiro in 1905. Gastão Gracie was chemist trained in Germany according to information given in Gracie's genealogy. João Simões Filho, "Gastão Gracie," Arquivo Paulo Carneiro da Cunha, Colégio Brasileiro de Genealogia, Rio de Janeiro.

²⁹ "Requisição de 'exequatur,' Gastão Gracie ao Ministro Plenipotenciário do Brasil em Berlim (23/08/1897) Lata 568, maço 1." Arquivo Histórico do Itamaraty, Rio de Janeiro.

³⁰ *Jornal do Brasil*, August 24 1897, n.p.

³¹ Felinto Roriz Vianna de Abreu was the diplomat assigned to replace Gastão Gracie. Brazil. Ministério das Relações Exteriores., Raul Adalberto de Campos, and Manoel Alvaro de Souza Sá Vianna, eds., *Relações Diplomáticas Do Brasil, Contendo Os Nomes Dos Representantes Diplomáticos Dos Brasil No Estrangeiro E Os Dos Representantes Diplomáticos Dos Diversos Países No Rio De Janeiro De 1808 a 1912* (Rio de Janeiro, Typ. do "Jornal do commercio," de Rodrigues & c.,: 1913), 3.

³² João Simões Filho, "Gastão Gracie," Arquivo Paulo Carneiro da Cunha, Colégio Brasileiro de Genealogia, Rio de Janeiro.

Amazon to exploit and profit from the rubber boom.³³ Unlike scores of poor backlanders, Cesalina's family brought resources and social prestige to their new home. Once settled in the Amazon, her family sought marriages with entrepreneurial outsiders. Gastão Gracie, who arrived from the nation's capital, well educated, polyglot, and from a good family background, seemed to be the perfect bachelor.³⁴

Instead of landing in a sleepy backwater port-town in the Brazilian frontier, Gastão discovered a tropical urban center experiencing economic expansion and modernization.³⁵ Euclides da Cunha, a Brazilian intellectual sent to the Amazon on a diplomatic mission to settle border disputes between Brazil and Peru, during the same period, described the Haussmannian boulevards that sprawled throughout the city in the region he called "the land without history".³⁶ Leaving the nation's capital for a provincial center, he opted for the most dynamic region in the country after Brazil's coffee powerhouse, São Paulo.³⁷

Between 1902 and 1917, the young couple had eight children: their first-born, Carlos, was born in 1902 and during their stay in Belém the others followed every three years or so.³⁸ Gracie's previous training in Germany led him to start a business importing

³³ Charles E. Stokes, *The Amazon Bubble : World Rubber Monopoly*, (Fort McKavett, Tex.: n.p., 2000), 19.

³⁴ Cristina Donza Cancela, "Casamento E Relacoes Familiares Na Economia Da Borracha (Belem, 1870-1920)", Ph.D. Dissertation, Universidade de Sao Paulo, 2006, 305-10.

³⁵ By the turn of the century, the population of Belém was around 100,000 inhabitants. The city of São Paulo, for example, receiving an already massive number of immigrants had 260,000 inhabitants.

³⁶ Euclides da Cunha, Ronald W. Sousa, and Lúcia Sá, eds., *The Amazon : Land without History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), xi.

³⁷ Ana Maria Daou, *A Belle Epoque Amazonica*, (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor, 2000), 23.

³⁸ Carlos Gracie was born on September 15 1902 and Hélio Gracie was born on November 1 1912. The other brothers and sisters respectively born in the following order: Oswaldo Gracie (August 29 1903) Gastão Gracie Filho (April 11 1906) Helena Gracie (August 13 1906) George Gracie (1911) Mary Gracie (February 3 1915) and Ilka Gracie (1917). João Simões Filho, Arquivo Paulo Carneiro da Cunha, Colégio Brasileiro de Genealogia, Rio de Janeiro.

dynamite. His skills with explosives made him momentarily famous during the violent political disputes that rocked the city in 1912.³⁹ In that year the political rivalry for control of the state of Pará reached a climax. Gastão Gracie was a member of the *Partido Republicano Democrático* (Democratic Republican Party) created in 1889 as a political meeting point for liberal monarchists after the inauguration of the republic. The party defended federalism, local autonomy, the abolition of political nepotism, religious freedom and the secularization of the cemeteries.⁴⁰ During the violent tug-of-war between local political forces and the federal government, Gastão found another use for his chemistry skills. In May of 1912, the newspaper *A Província do Pará* accused him of plotting to explode the newspaper's offices in exchange for a huge sum of money.⁴¹ The political rival of Gastão's party, the local political boss Antônio Lemos owned the newspaper. In the wake of the political dispute, Gastão's political allies forcibly ejected Antônio Lemos from office.⁴²

In this bloody intra-oligarchic political battle, Gastão's political party was among the winners; for him particularly, the victory meant local press support for his next venture. During World War I, the cosmopolitan would-be diplomat left the dynamite business and entered into the world of Vaudeville, managing wrestlers in his new enterprise called American Circus.

³⁹ Carlos Rocque, *Antônio Lemos E Sua Epoca : História Política Do Pará*, (Belém, PA: Editora Cejup, 1996), 354.

⁴⁰ Ernesto Horácio da Cruz, *História Do Pará*, (Belém, PA: Governo do Estado do Pará, 1973), 551.

⁴¹ Rocque, *Antônio Lemos E Sua Epoca : História Política Do Pará*, 354.

⁴² Barbara Weinstein, *The Amazon Rubber Boom, 1850-1920*, (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1983), 249.

In two generations, the Gracies rose from Scottish immigrants to Brazilian gentry. In the first instance, their fortunes were tied to the fate of Rio de Janeiro's export-oriented economy. The economic decline in the late 1880s forced the Gracies to consider new options to sustain their patrician status. They had to leave a world that combined the violence of slavery with planter and mercantile privilege and adjust themselves to the narrow avenues offered by bureaucracy and new business ventures. The Gracies made the transition because they were educated, well connected and able to uphold socially acceptable standards including the ones for being potential marriage partners in the gentry.

David Nasser's story published in *O Cruzeiro* in 1956 sought to resurrect the Gracies' "grandeur" during a period in which they reached fame and prestige through the practice of Brazilian jiu-jitsu. The piece failed to mention that they were members of an elite who profited from slavery and whose world was seriously challenged by the changes set in motion at the turn of the century. The Gracie's promotion of Japanese jiu-jitsu was one form of engagement with modernization.

Chapter 1 - Modernization and nationalism: the origin of Brazilian jiu-jitsu, 1905-1920

Introduction

This chapter begins by presenting vignettes of two confrontations that pitted practitioners of Japanese jiu-jitsu against those of the Afro-Brazilian martial art known as Capoeira. It introduces debates about the adoption of jiu-jitsu associated with the conflicting relationship between local and foreign cultures in Brazil. The vignettes also reveal contradictory discourses on modernization, race and identity. Later, it describes how the Brazilian elite's perception of Japan as a model of modernization facilitated the introduction of jiu-jitsu in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). The proponents of Japanese jiu-jitsu as a modern method of physical education for the military found a tenacious opponent in Brazilian nationalist who favored Afro-Brazilian Capoeira.

The second section addresses jiu-jitsu's introduction in the Brazilian Amazon during World War I, a transnational and dialectical process of individual paths and historical forces. The encounter of the Japanese martial artist Mayeda Mitsuyo and the Scottish-Brazilian Gracies must be seen in the context of a new arena of struggle between foreign and local cultures in Brazil's periphery.⁴³ Unlike the previous attempts to import jiu-jitsu in Rio de Janeiro, the school brought by Mayeda Mitsuyo to the Amazon, known

⁴³ For Japanese names surnames come first.

as Kodokan judo, combined technical improvements and philosophical modernity while keeping jiu-jitsu's quintessential traditionalistic appeal.

The circumstances surrounding the encounter of Mayeda with the Gracies are critical to understanding the later acculturation of Japanese jiu-jitsu. The former was temporarily alienated from his martial art school in Japan as a result of his participation in professional prizefighting. The economic crisis that hit the Amazon led the would-be diplomat Gastão Gracie to become an impresario of wrestlers and a partner in a local circus. The nature of Gracies' apprenticeship with Mayeda Mitsuyo, who was known in the Amazon by his stage name "Count Koma," contributed significantly to the acculturation of Japanese jiu-jitsu.

Round 1: Japanese jiu-jitsu versus Brazilian Capoeira in Rio de Janeiro's Belle Époque, 1909

On May 1, 1909 at the *Concerto Avenida* (Concert Avenue Theatre) in downtown Rio de Janeiro, an Afro-Brazilian capoeira fighter named Francisco Cyríaco (nicknamed "Old Monkey") and Japanese martial artist Sada Miako were about to fight the match of their lives.⁴⁴ Cyríaco was born 38 years earlier among the sugar cane fields of northern Rio de Janeiro State at a time when slavery still existed in Brazil.⁴⁵ He worked carrying

⁴⁴ Capoeira is an Afro-Brazilian martial art developed over the centuries during the period of slavery in Brazil. It is probably rooted in rites of African war dances notably in what is now the Congo and Angola. It is a highly acrobatic martial art that combines kicks, leg sweeps, head butts, elbow and knee strikes. It was outlawed in the late nineteenth century but reemerged as a combat sport during the twentieth century.

⁴⁵ Cyríaco was born in the town of Campos dos Goytacazes in 1871. In the same year the "Law of Free Womb" ordered the manumission of children born to slave mothers. Therefore, he may or may not have been born a slave. Final abolition only occurred in 1888. "Jiu-Jitsu Contra Capoeira," *O Malho*, 15 May, 1909, 18-19.

sacks of coffee in downtown Rio. In the violent streets of Rio de Janeiro's belle époque, he had earned a reputation as a tough street fighter. His opponent, Sada Miako, had been hired by the Brazilian Navy to teach jiu-jitsu to its elitist officer corps. Cyríaco, however, also had support from the local elite. He was supported by medical school students at the National Academy of Medicine in downtown Rio de Janeiro who, emboldened by their enthusiastic nationalism, urged him to defend what they had started to perceive as a Brazilian combat sport.⁴⁶

Sada Miako also performed public fights, as did other Japanese martial artists while teaching jiu-jitsu in the West. The fight, however, had first to overcome resistance from authorities. The Republican Criminal Code of 1890 outlawed the public practice of Capoeira because monarchists resorted to Capoeira street gangs to intimidate Republicans in the last years of the imperial regime.⁴⁷ Upon insistent requests, authorities bent the law and Cyríaco declared: "I am quite confident in my skills, if I have a shot, I will not disappoint you." He had to wear the traditional jiu-jitsu uniform (*gi*), a measure that suggests an attempt to make the Afro-Brazilian "respectable" and "clean" when representing the national colors. Cyríaco himself later described the episode:

I went up there, saluted the Japanese and began my *ginga*.⁴⁸ I sized him up, faked a slap and applied a leg sweep that had him off balance. But he stood. The crowd yelled: 'Go for it Cyríaco!' I resumed my

⁴⁶ "A Capoeiragem Vencedora Do Jiu-Jitsu," *Careta*, 29 May, 1909, n.p.

⁴⁷ Thomas H. Holloway, "A Healthy Terror: Police Repression of Capoeiras in Nineteenth-Century Rio De Janeiro", *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 69, No. 4 (1989): 671. Also see: Maya Talmon Chvaicer, "The Criminalization of Capoeira in Nineteenth-Century Brazil," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 82, No. 3 (2002): 535.

⁴⁸ "Ginga" is believed to be a word of Bantu origin and one of the basic movements of Capoeira. "It is one of the features that set capoeira apart from all other martial arts. Roughly translated it means swing in English. What makes the *ginga* special is that it puts capoeiristas in constant motion, making them a very frustrating target for an opponent." Nestor Capoeira, *The Little Capoeira Book*, (Berkeley, Calif.: North Atlantic Books, 2003), 62.

ginga leaning my body left and unleashed a *rabo de arraia* (stingray tail's sweep) that made him eat the dust. I saluted the audience, gazed towards the man holding the clock, but the Japanese refused to continue.⁴⁹

Cyríaco cleverly avoided close combat that would favor the Japanese grappling fighting style. Instead, he kept a distance while getting the Japanese off-balance by continuously performing a Capoeira *ginga*. The Japanese then attempted to apply a jiu-jitsu technique called *Morote-Gari* (double-leg takedown), but Cyríaco struck first and applied a circular kick (*rabo-de- arraia*) that hit the Japanese on the head; Sada Miako was knocked down.

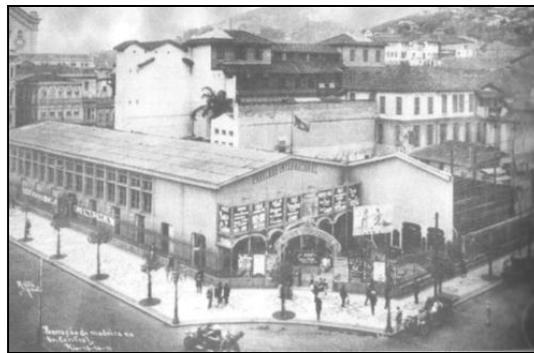


Figure 4: Pavilhao Internacional known as *Concerto Avenida*.⁵⁰ Source: rioquepassou.com.br, 2010.



Figure 5: *Morote-Gari*: The technique attempted by Sada Miako. Source: kodokan.org, 2010.

⁴⁹ "Jiu-Jitsu Contra Capoeira," 18. This and all subsequent translations by the author unless otherwise indicated.

⁵⁰ The *Pavilhão Internacional* built in 1906 in downtown Rio became an entertainment facility known as *Concerto Avenida*.



Figure 6: Rabo-de-arráia (stingray tail's sweep), technique applied by Cyríaco.⁵¹ Source: *Gymnastica Nacional (Capoeiragem) Methodizada e Regrada*, 1928.

The audience burst into cheers, and carried Cyríaco on their shoulders throughout the streets of downtown crying: “Brazil brought Asia to its knees!” Local dailies reported a wave of patriotism in the wake of Cyríaco’s victory. Articles with many pictures highlighted the face-off between “a foreign martial art brought by the Navy, against another, which despite being genuinely Brazilian, remained marginalized.”⁵² The magazine *O Malho* reflected the nationalistic mood: “This was well done! It is the evidence that we do not need to import anything from other countries: we have corn and beans. From abroad we only need potatoes!”⁵³ Just outside the *Concerto-Avenida* Cyríaco enjoyed his recent celebrity re-telling his epic achievement over and over. He only had one complaint: they could have taken a better picture of him to place in the magazine. The magazine *O Malho* agreed to run a new article with a new picture under the headline:

⁵¹ Annibal Burlamaqui, *Gymnastica Nacional (Capoeiragem) Methodizada E Regrada*, (Rio de Janeiro: s.n., 1928),

⁵² "Jiu-Jitsu Contra Capoeira," 19.

⁵³ Ibid.

“Jiu-jitsu against Capoeira: Cyriaco, the hero.”⁵⁴ In addition, after many articles about the fight, the magazine found a way to restore the racial hierarchy turned upside down by Cyriaco’s victory. A cartoon published in the magazine called his triumph “a mulatto’s victory”, ignoring Cyriaco’s blackness.⁵⁵ Transforming Cyriaco into a mulatto instead of referring to him as black was certainly an attempt to make him acceptable to the local elite.⁵⁶



Figure 7: “A capoeiragem vencedora do Jiu-Jitsu.”⁵⁷ Source: Revista Careta, 1909.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid. Mulatto is the offspring of white and black. In Brazil, unlike in the United States, the category “mulatto” encompasses a myriad of color denominations within a more loosely stratified racial categorization found in Brazil. Carl Degler claims that mulattos in Brazil enjoy a favored social standing compared to blacks. Carl N. Degler, *Neither Black nor White : Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States*, (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986), passim.

⁵⁶ Cyriaco died three years after his victory over Sada Myako. *O Estado de São Paulo*, May 19 1912, n.p.

⁵⁷ Cyriaco performing Capoeira moves at Medical School’s patio in Rio de Janeiro. "A Capoeiragem Vencedora Do Jiu-Jitsu."

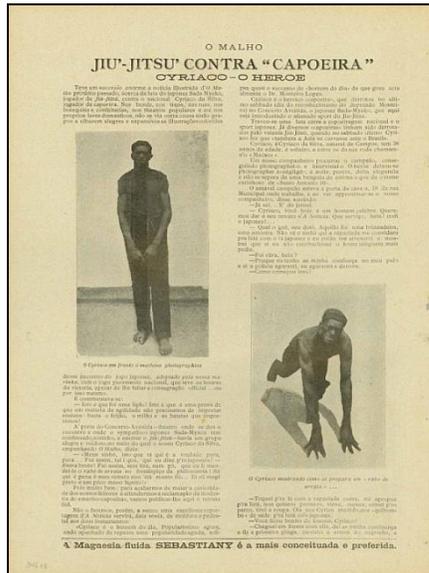


Figure 8: “Jiu-jitsu Contra Capoeira: Cyríaco o heroe.” O Malho, 1909.

Round 2: Kodokan judo versus Capoeira in the Brazilian Amazon, 1915

On October 1915, the newspaper *Folha do Norte* announced the vaudeville attractions recently arrived in Belém, the capital of Pará State in the Brazilian Amazon. The events were scheduled to take place in a local version of the Parisian Moulin Rouge called *Bar Paraense*. Foreign artists were promoted, promising great excitement to entertain the cosmopolitan elite living on the Brazilian frontier during the rubber boom. Among the performances by Italian, French and American artists, a troupe of martial artists stood out. They were Japanese performing jiu-jitsu and defiantly offered 5,000

francs to anyone capable of beating them.⁵⁸ The spectacle was promoted in great style by having the Japanese parading wearing their jiu-jitsu outfits on the Haussmannian boulevards built during the heyday of the rubber boom.

The season was a huge success. The local press was impressed with the Japanese physique and coined the epithet “Nippon Hercules” to describe them.⁵⁹ In keeping with the traditional vaudeville-styled martial art presentations of the time, they reserved part of their spectacle for amateurs to fight the professionals for previously stipulated prize money. Wrestlers, laborers, “tough guys,” and even vagrants were attracted by the possibility of pocketing money in times of economic recession.⁶⁰ Among the candidates, one in particular stirred a great deal of expectation. His nickname was *Pé de Bola* (Ball Foot), and was a local street fighter and capoeirista. He became infamous over the years in the poor periphery of Belém for his roughness. He was also a henchman of Antonio Lemos, a fallen political boss ousted by an enraged mob in 1912. The excitement caused by the impending confrontation between Japanese jujitsu and Afro-Brazilian Capoeira made the public temporarily forget *Pé de Bola*'s bad reputation as a thug of a former local political boss.⁶¹ Press and public patriotically closed ranks behind a man who had

⁵⁸ "Bar Paraense," *Folha do Norte*, October 28 1915, n.p.

⁵⁹ "Desafio," *Folha do Norte*, October 18 1915, n.p. The denomination “Nippon Hercules” was widely employed in the West to describe Japanese martial artists. One of the earliest usages of the epithet I found in the comic and satiric British magazine called *Punch* in 1894. Mark Lemon et al., "Punch," (London: Punch Publications Limited, 1894), 150.

⁶⁰ The rubber-based economy turned the Brazilian Amazon into an international entrepôt connected to great centers in Europe and the United States. Foreign currency circulated freely in cities of Belém and Manaus. Yet one could speculate that since the French currency experienced a strong devaluation in exchange rates after 1915; its use may indicate a strategy devised by the Japanese to minimize eventual setbacks. The prize stipulated was equivalent to five of the most expensive tickets for the spectacle.

⁶¹ Luiz Augusto Pinheiro Leal, *A Política Da Capoeiragem : A História Social Da Capoeira E Do Boi-Bumba No Para Republicano (1888-1906)*, (Salvador, BA: EDUFBA, 2008), 182-84.

once represented old fashioned politics and who was equated “the nation” as opposed to “foreign forces.”

Satake Soishiro, picked to represent the troupe, was not an ordinary Japanese martial artist drifting in the West under dubious credentials. He and another who used the nom de guerre “Count Koma” were skilled martial artists and masters of the cutting-edge style of modern jiu-jitsu known as Kodokan judo. Newspaper headlines shouted: “Today: Capoeira against jiu-jitsu! Everyone to *Bar Paraense!*”⁶² Satake easily defeated *Pé de Bola*, causing profound disappointment among local patriots. The newspaper covering the event sarcastically observed that the local tragic hero never had a chance to use his famous *rabo de arraia* (stingray’s tail sweep). Worse still, “He did not even try a simple *rasteira* (foot sweep), a basic technique used by any kid in the streets.”⁶³

One may be tempted to imagine that among those who had poured in to watch the fight was the owner of a local circus and manager of foreign wrestlers. His name was Gastão Gracie. As we have seen he was the scion of an aristocratic Scottish-Brazilian family from Rio de Janeiro, the son of a former slave owner, but also cosmopolitan, sophisticated and well educated. He, like the Japanese, was attracted by the riches of the rubber boom in the Amazon. If he was there, he would have been pleased to witness the Japanese’s triumph. He had been among those who actively participated in the violent overthrow of *Pé de Bola*’s political patron.

One journalist covering the event who had steadfastly supported Capoeira prior to the fight wrote a public apology. The journalist admitted that he, like most Brazilians of

⁶² "Hoje: Capoeira Contra Jiu-Jitsu! Todos Ao Bar Paraense," *Folha do Norte*, November 7 1915, n.p.

⁶³ "Bar Paraense."

his social rank, naively fell under the spell of this street Capoeira. But he concluded in relief; “Fortunately not all Brazilians believed in it.”⁶⁴

The Japanese’s victory over Capoeira helps to explain why jiu-jitsu gained adepts in the Amazon more easily than during its ephemeral introduction in Rio de Janeiro. Yet, in addition to the symbol of nationalism being defeated by imported trends, another factor made jiu-jitsu’s experience in the Amazon unique - its continuation through a local lineage of martial artists, the Scottish-Brazilian Gracies.

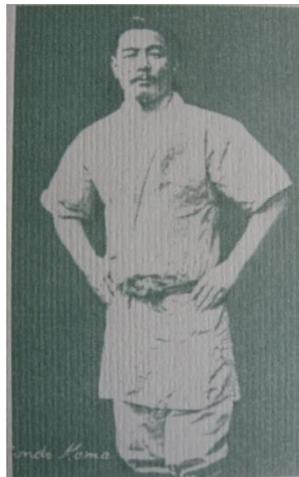


Figure 9: Mayeda Mitsuyo as Kodokan judo black belt. Source: Meiji Bankara Kaijin Den, 1989.

⁶⁴ Ibid.



Figure 10: Mayeda Mitsuyo, the “Count Koma” performing a reverse armlock (*ude-garami*) as a professional wrestler. Source: Meiji Bankara Kaijin Den, 1989.

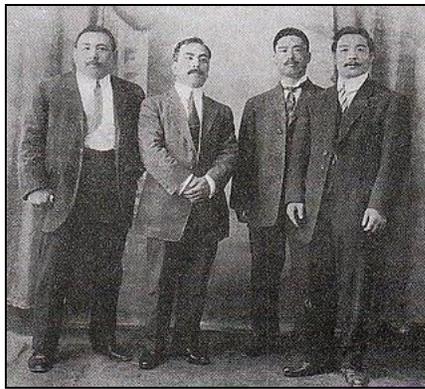


Figure 11: Troupe Koma” touring in Latin America. Left to right: Mayeda Mitsuyo, Satake, Ono and Ito. Source: Meiji Bankara Kaijin Den, 1989.



Figure 12: Japanese jiu-jitsu beats French Savate.⁶⁵ Source: *Le Judo*, 1996.

Turn of the century modernization: Navy and Japanese jiu-jitsu

Brazilian elites began to discuss modernization as early as the mid-nineteenth century, but implementation of measures aimed at modernization accelerated after the proclamation of the republic in 1889. A comprehensive range of policies was envisioned by the Brazilian elite to make the country viable as a “modern” nation. The historian Richard Graham has defined modernization in Brazil as:

A process of overall changing in Brazil, after the 1850s, encompassing economic development, modifications in the social structure, alterations of individual beliefs and attitudes, as well as adoption of more “Western,” European world-view and societal structure.⁶⁶

Immigration to Brazil was encouraged to meet the growing demand for labor after the abolition of slavery. Simultaneously, immigration was also a strategy to reconfigure

⁶⁵ This image represents an example of public fights pitting jiu-jitsu practitioners and local martial artists, jiu-jitsu versus Savate (French national combat sport). The picture shows the jiu-jitsu’s practitioner victory by arm lock (Juji-Gatame). Public fights confronting martial disciplines were common by early twentieth century. Michel Brousse, *Le Judo : Son Histoire, Ses Succès*, (Genève: Liber, 1996), 34-35.

⁶⁶ Richard Graham, *Britain and the Onset of Modernization in Brazil 1850-1914*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), xi.

the ethnic fabric of Brazilian society.⁶⁷ Japan, by late nineteenth century, emerged as a potential source of migrants to help Brazil's export-commodity economy running.⁶⁸ Unlike the previous failed attempt with Chinese immigrants in the 1870s and 1880s, Japan had its image associated to a paradox: as a source of labor to replace slaves and model of modernization.⁶⁹

The new Republican regime established formal diplomatic relations with Japan in 1895, demonstrating a growing interest in the modernization of the Meiji era.⁷⁰ Brazilian diplomats stationed in Japan highlighted the benefits of having in the future Japanese immigrants settling in Brazil. According to Henrique Lisboa, the Japanese had initiative, inventiveness and adaptability that enabled them to perform tasks rapidly with economy and efficiency.⁷¹ By contrast, still according to Lisboa, Chinese indolence and lack of efficiency confirmed their backwardness, making them unfit as immigrants in modern Brazil.⁷²

Cultural aspects of Japanese lifestyle did not escape the gaze of Brazilian diplomats. Manoel de Oliveira Lima, the Brazilian consular representative, produced a

⁶⁷ Jeff Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity : Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil*, (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999), 4.

⁶⁸ Steven Topik and Mario Samper, "The Latin American Coffee Commodity Chain: Brazil and Costa Rica," in *From Silver to Cocaine: Latin American Commodity Chains and the Building of the World Economy, 1500-2000*, ed. Steven Topik, Carlos Marichal, and Zephyr Frank (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006), 122.

⁶⁹ Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity : Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil*, 38. Thomas E. Skidmore, "Racial Ideas and Social Policy in Brazil, 1870-1940," in *The Idea of Race in Latin America*, ed. et al. Aline Helg (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990), 12.

⁷⁰ Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity : Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil*, 38.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² Henrique Lisboa, "Legacao Brasileira Em Tokyo: Relatorio Ao Ministro Das Relacoes Exteriores Dionisio De Castro Cerqueira," 29 dezembro 1897, Emigracao e Comercio do Japao com o Brazil, Arquivo Historico do Itamaraty, Rio de Janeiro.

lengthy traveler's account. Observing a popular theatrical spectacle in Kyoto in 1903, he described "this style of local Capoeira peculiar to Japan known as jujutsu, in which one takes the opponent down by grabbing his legs."⁷³

Diplomats were not the only ones detecting innovations abroad. The Brazilian Navy, in particular, was in a privileged position to observe new trends since its warships were assigned to regular instructional seafaring as early as 1870, and to circumnavigation cruises after 1879 that included visits to Japan.⁷⁴ Furthermore, after the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-1870), the military saw North Atlantic nations as paragons of modernity for Brazil.⁷⁵

After its unexpected victory over the Russians in 1905, Japan consolidated its status as a "modern nation" for Brazilians.⁷⁶ The military intelligentsia, in particular, amazed by Japan's performance on the battlefield enthusiastically embraced the formula of using the practice of Japanese martial arts as a tool to enforce policies embedded in neo-Lamarckianism. Less deterministic than other eugenic currents, it claimed to be possible to promote "racial regeneration" through the implementation of social reforms.⁷⁷ For Émile Durkheim, in order to create a healthy society, "it was imperative that the development of all its functions be regular, harmonious and proportioned."⁷⁸ Thus, the

⁷³ Oliveira Lima, *No Japão : Impressões Da Terra E Da Gente*, (Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Topbooks : NEC do Brasil, 1997), 203. There are accounts of a Japanese martial artist called Takezawa Manji hired to instruct the imperial guard of Brazil's last emperor Pedro II. Koei Ogasowara, *Os Imigrantes Japoneses Precursores - Um Olhar Histórico Sobre O Período Pré-Kasato-Maru*, (Sao Paulo: Museu Historico da Imigracao Japonesa no Brasil, 2008), 6.

⁷⁴ *Historia Naval Brasileira*, vol. 4, (Rio de Janeiro: Servico de Documentacao da Marinha, 2001), 109-12.

⁷⁵ Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood : Army, Honor, Race, and Nation in Brazil, 1864-1945*, 68.

⁷⁶ Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905).

⁷⁷ Nancy Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics : Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 91-92.

⁷⁸ Émile Durkheim, "Suicide et Natalité. Étude de Statistique Morale," *Revue Philosophique* 26 (1888): 447.

military support for physical fitness was part of a larger project aiming to promote public sanitation and public-hygiene measures.

The introduction of Japanese jiu-jitsu in the early 1900s in Brazil reflected the growing interest about Japan in North America and Europe. Turn-of-the-century modernization compelled Western nations to share similar goals, concerns and new models of manliness, as Mathias Röhrig Assunção has argued:

The growing of imperialist rivalries prior to World War I serves to confirm the teachings of Social Darwinism. Since drafted conscripts were now fighting in large-scale wars, strategists underlined the importance of national recruits-and therefore, the entire male population -being well trained. Early attempts to develop national methods of training began in Europe in the early nineteenth century. Ever since gymnastics have been as a means to improve the male fitness of the nations and therefore, its martial capacity.⁷⁹

In 1905, Navy officers, Captain Santos Porto and Lieutenant Adler de Aquino, translated a jiu-jitsu manual written by the American author Harrie Irving Hancock. Hancock was a chemist, journalist and writer who became a turn-of-the century expert on Japanese martial arts. He introduced jiu-jitsu to Western audiences by encouraging its adoption by the military, law enforcement agencies and women and children. His books were advertised in *The New York Times*, the ad said that the “oath-bound secret of ‘samurai,’ is now open to all to learn, even to foreigners.”⁸⁰ Among the many books he wrote on the subject, one was titled “*Japanese Physical Training; the System of Exercise, Diet, and*

⁷⁹ Mathias Röhrig Assunção, *Capoeira : A History of an Afro-Brazilian Martial Art*, (London: Routledge, 2005), 15.

⁸⁰ "Jiu-Jitsu: Three Books on Japanese Physical Training for Men, Women and Children," *The New York Times*, June 18 1904, BR410.

General Mode of Living That Has Made the Mikado People the Healthiest, Strongest, and Happiest Men and Women in the World.”⁸¹

The introduction written by Captain Santos Porto is the most interesting section of the book. There he voiced his concerns for the future of a vast nation shouldered on a “fragile and broken race.”⁸² Like most of the Brazilian intellectuals of the day, Santos Porto equated modernity with temperate climates, good nutrition and practice of sports. By contrast, according to him, Brazil was an antithesis of modernity because the majority of Brazilians was living under unfavorable climatic conditions, suffering from malnutrition and lack of physical activities.⁸³ For the Navy officer, the practice of physical education would help Brazilians overcome their weakness and match with the country’s exuberant nature. Santos Porto, for example, stated that the misuse of Capoeira during the monarchy prevented Capoeira to be adopted in the military. He claimed that there was a time, at least in an imaginary past he envisioned, that masters and slaves practiced Capoeira together:

In colonial times, slaves taught Capoeira to the scions of distinguished families. However, during the monarchy, the use of Capoeira by criminals led to the abandonment of an excellent school of physical education.⁸⁴

⁸¹ The book translated by the Navy officers was essentially a canon of turn-of-the-century Japanese jiu-jitsu published in its Portuguese version without any additional changes. Despite being directed connected to Japan via diplomatic relations, Japanese culture was mostly introduced to Brazil through the United States and Europe.

⁸² J. A. Santos e Aquino Porto, F. Radler, *Educacao Physica Japoneza*, (Rio de Janeiro: Companhia Typografica do Brazil, 1905), n.p.

⁸³ Peter Beattie points out the creation of Swiss-style gun clubs encouraged by the Minister of War, Marshal Hermes da Fonseca, as a way to increase public interest in military service. Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood : Army, Honor, Race, and Nation in Brazil, 1864-1945*, 209.

⁸⁴ Porto, *Educacao Physica Japoneza*.

Santo Porto's reservations about the practice of Capoeira may refer to the formation of violent militias of *capoeiristas* (Capoeira players) supporting the monarchy during its waning days. This contributed to Capoeira's criminalization in the Republican criminal code of 1891.⁸⁵ For Republicans like Santos Porto, this brief political association between Capoeira and the "backward" monarchy made the Afro-Brazilian combat sport inadequate to prepare the young Brazilians to perform "the noble deed of ruling over the nation."⁸⁶

Santos Porto represented a type of a Navy officer, fiercely Republican and nationalist.⁸⁷ The former held a high-profile position within the Republican establishment and actively wrote articles for magazines that expressed cultural vanguards.⁸⁸ Their views regarding physical education were in keeping with the embryonic intellectual movement that resisted complete acceptance of European racist theories. Instead, they followed local intellectuals such as Alberto Torres, who as Thomas Skidmore has observed, avoided "the deterministic cul-de-sac" imported from Europe. Torres sought to explain Brazilian relative backwardness by mixing ideas of environmental determinism derived from neo-

⁸⁵ Brazilian criminal code prescribed punishment in public spaces for practices generically labeled as capoeiragem. Holloway, "A Healthy Terror: Police Repression of Capoeiras in Nineteenth-Century Rio De Janeiro " 671.

⁸⁶ Porto, *Educacao Physica Japoneza*.

⁸⁷ Frank D. McCann, "Origins of the "New Professionalism" of the Brazilian Military," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 21, No. 4 (1979): 510. Santos Porto fought to defend the republic against attempts to restore the monarchy. The Republican regime promoted Santos Porto "for distinguished service" in defense of the Republic." Atanagildo Barata Ribeiro, *Sonho No Carcere. Dramas Da Revolucao De 1893 No Brazil. Poema*, Rio de Janeiro: Casa Mont'alverne, 1895), xxxv,xxxix.

⁸⁸ Santos Porto was chief of the Casa Militar that is a high-profile position held by a military who act as a liaison between the two service chiefs (Army and Navy) and the president.

Lamarckianism and Franz Boas' innovative approach refuting biological theories of white superiority.⁸⁹

Despite his enthusiastic support for modernization, Santos Porto was also a nationalist. He sought to explain Capoeira's troubles as the result of an ephemeral political association with the monarchy. Yet perhaps reflecting his adherence to neo-Lamarckianism, he left open the possibility for the future "regeneration" of the Afro-Brazilian martial arts.

Within the military establishment, initiatives to adopt Capoeira as a method of physical education occurred almost simultaneously to Santos Porto's support for jiu-jitsu. In 1907, for example, the manual *Guia do Capoeira ou Gymnástica Brasileira* (Guide to Capoeira or Brazilian Gymnastics) was published.⁹⁰ Despite claiming to be a high-ranking army officer, the author remained anonymous. His behavior starkly contrasted with that of Santos Porto and Radler de Aquino, who openly advocated the adoption of Japanese jiu-jitsu. This distinct behavior indicated that there were military officers and civilians defending the adoption of Capoeira as a form of physical education, but they did not come forward because of its association with Afro-Brazilian culture.

The political cartoon published by the magazine *O Malho* is emblematic of the association between Capoeira and nationalism. The cartoon used Cyríaco's victory to criticize President Campos Salles. By portraying the latter as the "Japanese president," the author sought to criticize the republican political system established after 1889 in

⁸⁹ Don Mitchell, *Cultural Geography : A Critical Introduction*, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2000), 18-20.; Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood : Army, Honor, Race, and Nation in Brazil, 1864-1945*, 234. Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity : Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil*, 3-4. Dávila, *Diploma of Whiteness : Race and Social Policy in Brazil, 1917-1945*, 28.

⁹⁰ *Guia Do Capoeira Ou Gymnástica Brasileira*, (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Nacional, 1907).

which politicians from the ranks of the traditional landed oligarchies of São Paulo and Minas Gerais rotated the presidency of the country.

President Afonso Penna is depicted as arrogant by trying to influence the choice of his successor. The cartoon compares his political actions to the arrogance of those supporting importation of Japanese jiu-jitsu. Consequently, ordinary Brazilians (Zé Povinho) would defeat the representative of the oligarchy just as Cyríaco defeated Sada Myako.



Figure 13: “Jiu-Jitsu Contra Capoeira.”⁹¹ Source: O Malho, 1909.

Yet the criticism made by the nationalists was not free of racism. In depicting Cyríaco’s victory over the Japanese, the magazine described the former as “a mulatto who stopped

⁹¹ "Jiu-Jitsu Contra 'Capoeira'," *O Malho*, May 8, 1909, 41.

the Japanese insolent behavior” Just below, in an analogy between the fight and politics, the image of the Brazilian people (*o povo*) became white.⁹²

Similar to the political cartoon shown above in the first vignette in the beginning of the chapter lessened Cyriaco’s blackness. The articles published in the Rio de Janeiro press praising his triumph over the Japanese provided a picture of how ideas of race had evolved in Brazil against a background of modernization and nationalism. The piece penned by the intellectual Lima Campos in *Kosmos* magazine in 1904 was revealing: “Mixed- race (*mestiços*) people invented Capoeira. Capoeira was not invented by Blacks.”⁹³ This attempt to celebrate racial miscegenation, voiced through Lima Campos’s piece years prior to the fight, helps to understand why Cyriaco was labeled as mulatto. It also confirmed a strategy to make Capoeira acceptable, as observed by Maya Talmon-Chvaicer: “to become socially acceptable it had to be presented as a national activity, integrating the talents and abilities of the three major races in Brazil.”⁹⁴ By avoiding adherence to European ideas, the Brazilian intelligentsia resorted to what Carl Degler

⁹² On the two squares above: “In the theatre: Square 1: “jiu-jitsu is the Japanese system in which one dominates the other by using chokes, leg and arm locks. Well, this new system invented to hurt people beat boxing and wrestling, but met defeat when it fought Capoeira.”

Dialog: 1. Cyriaco: “come on man...” Sada Myako responded in Japanese. Square 2: “from the stage of the Concerto-Avenida Mr. Miako challenged everybody with his jiu-jitsu. One day, a mullato showed up and accepted the challenge. The latter quickly beat the Japanese with a let sweep (rabo-de-arraia).” Dialog: Cyriaco: “take that!” Myako: “I surrender!”

On the two squares on the bottom (political cartoon). “Meanwhile at Cattete Palace: ‘these ‘Japonneric’ (Japanese things) in our country were demoralized. At Cattete (Palace): we have Penna (Afonso) using jiu-jitsu to oppress John Bull (Ze Povinho)...” Square 2: “obviously John Bull’s patience is running out and will not tolerate the arrogance of the ‘Japanese’ president any longer. Then, the former accepted the challenge by striking the latter with a quengada na synagoga (head-butt). His Excellency will be sent to Hell!” Dialog (Square 1): President Afonso Pena “I decide who will be the next president...” John Bull (Zed Povinho): Bring it on Mr. Know-it-All...”

⁹³ Lima Campos, "A Capoeira," *Kosmos, Revista Artistica, Scientifica e Literaria*, 1906, n.p.

⁹⁴ Maya Talmon-Chvaicer, *The Hidden History of Capoeira : A Collision of Cultures in the Brazilian Battle Dance*, (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2007), 112.

defined as the “mulatto escape hatch.”⁹⁵ They did not subscribe to the “Aryan” ideals professed by the majority of Brazilian intellectuals; instead, they employed strategies rooted in Luso-Brazilian culture, cloaked in modernity, which involved co-opting mulattos to “inhibit the advance of Negroes as a group.”⁹⁶

The attempts by the military to introduce Japanese jiu-jitsu prior to World War I ended in a stalemate. The Japanese martial art failed to produce adepts to perpetuate its continuation through a local lineage of practitioners and Afro-Brazilian Capoeira still had to wait two decades after Cyriaco’s victory to achieve mainstream recognition and legitimacy. The next round was fought in the Amazon during the rubber boom.

Japanese jiu-jitsu in the Amazon: Enter the Gracies

The process of modernization all across the globe in the early 1900s prompted interest in Japanese culture. Growing interest in Japanese jiu-jitsu, as demonstrated by the military in Brazil, was a widespread phenomenon in the Western world.⁹⁷ In addition to the military, police agencies around the world employed Japanese jiu-jitsu techniques to control urban masses and fight growing crime rate.⁹⁸ Yet, after centuries of isolation, the Japanese were driven by emigration and nationalistic expansion.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Degler, *Neither Black nor White : Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States*, 107, 10 passim.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Armed forces and law enforcement agencies in the Western world employed Japanese jiu-jitsu. Elites in the West showed growing interest in the Japanese martial art. Joseph R. Svinth, "Professor Yamashita Goes to Washington " in *Martial Arts in the Modern World*, ed. James A. and Svinth Joseph R. Green, eds. (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003), 47 et passim; Brousse, *Le Judo : Son Histoire, Ses Succès*, 56-57.

⁹⁸ Brazilian naval officers also supported the adoption of jiu-jitsu as means of social control. In 1904, a riot broke out in Rio against mandatory vaccination. The rioters built barricades called “Port Arthur” evoking

Modernization in Japan was a comprehensive process that affected the whole society including the realm of traditional martial arts. The Japanese fighting system sweeping the Western world in the early 1900s had evolved from a system of hundreds of weaponless styles, which branched off from medieval *bujutsu* (collective arts and techniques in battle).¹⁰⁰

The new style was the brainchild of Kano Jigoro, a young bourgeois scholar who by the mid-Meiji period conceived a comprehensive system of physical education for preparing new generations of Japanese citizens.¹⁰¹ The core of his system's body mechanics combined striking techniques with standing and ground grappling movements that were evolved from two schools of traditional jiu-jitsu.¹⁰² In addition, Kano based his system on a *mélange* of concepts combining neo-Confucianism with ideas from John

the example of the Russian port-town surrounding by Japanese forces in the Russo-Japanese War. Japanese forces defeated the original in Russia and forces of modernization defeated the one in Rio. Jeffrey D. Needell, "The Revolta Contra Vacina de 1904: The Revolt against 'Modernization' in Belle-Epoque Rio De Janeiro," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol. 67, No. 2 (1987): 238, 65.

⁹⁹ James A. Green and Joseph R. Svinth, "The Circle and the Octagon: Maeda's Judo and Gracie's Jiu-Jitsu," in *Martial Arts in the Modern World*, ed. James A. Green and Joseph R. Svinth (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003), 63. Akira Iriye, "Japan as Competitor, 1895-1917," in *Mutual Images: Essays in American-Japanese Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 74.

¹⁰⁰ The term jiu-jitsu is commonly translated as "the gentle art" or "the art of softness", but Serge Mol has proposed a more comprehensive definition such as "a method of close combat, either unarmed or employing small weapons that can be used defensively or offensively, to subdue one or more unarmed or armed opponents." Serge Mol, *Classical Fighting Arts of Japan: A Complete Guide to Koryu Ju Jujutsu*, (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2001), 10. *Jujutsu* is the name most commonly used in Japan for this art, but names such as *Yawara*, *Taijitsu*, *Hakuda*, *Kogusoku*, *Torite* and others were at times applied to similar arts." Japan Society, *Transactions and Proceedings of the Japan Society*, (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1892), 5.

¹⁰¹ Kano Jigoro was born on October 28, 1860 at Mikage in the Province of Hyogo to Mareshiba Jirosaku and Kano Sadako. His mother belonged to a traditional clan of sake brewers. His father from a family of Shindo priests, Buddhist masters and Confucian scholars. Brian N. Watson, *The Father of Judo: A Biography of Jigoro Kano*, (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2000), 23. Kano graduated from the Department of Political Science and Finance at Tokyo Imperial University in July 1881. Inoue Shun, "The Invention of the Martial Arts," in *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, ed. Stephen Vlastos (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 164.

¹⁰² He studied traditional schools of jujutsu particularly Tenjin-Shinyo-Ryu and Kito-Ryu blended whereupon in his system, Kano-Ryujujutsu. Mol, *Classical Fighting Arts of Japan: A Complete Guide to Koryu Ju Jujutsu*, 101, 27. Shun, "The Invention of the Martial Arts," 164-65.

Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer. Balancing physical education and ethics made Kano *jujutsu* (jiu-jitsu) unique among other traditional schools of the time.¹⁰³ As a result, he transformed rituals of manliness in decline into sporting practice with a modern pedagogical appeal.¹⁰⁴

Kano named his school Kodokan judo. In doing so, he deliberately sought to distance his hybrid style from the images of backwardness associated to traditional *jujutsu*. His intention was to make clear the difference between the mere actual application (*jutsu*) and the underlying principle (*dō*). Moreover, Kano made the necessary link to tradition choosing the term “judo” used by old schools of *jujutsu* including his martial arts alma mater, the *Kito judo-Ryu*.¹⁰⁵ In changing the suffix *jutsu* to *do*, Kano not only rescued an obscure word rescued from the Tokugawa period but launched his conservative revolution.¹⁰⁶

Thereafter, transformations in Kano’s system reflected the transformations in modern Japan and it moved towards becoming a hegemonic style of martial arts within the Meiji establishment. Since 1882 the Kodokan headquarter in Tokyo spearheaded modernization of the martial arts. The growing prestige of the martial arts led the Japanese government to create a government agency in 1895 called *Dai Nippon*

¹⁰³ Kano created his own hybrid school by selecting techniques and combining atemi-waza (strikes) of the Tenjin Shi’yo School and nage-waza (throws) of the Kito School.

¹⁰⁴ Yoshinobu Hamaguchi, "Innovation in Martial Arts," in *Japan, Sport and Society: Tradition and Change in a Globalizing World* ed. Joseph Maguire and Masayoshi Nakayama (London: Routledge, 2006), 17.

¹⁰⁵ The diploma awarded to Kano in 1883 highlights, Nihonden (Japanese tradition) Kito judo, Kano afterwards adopted the denomination Nihonden Kodokan Judo. Shun, "The Invention of the Martial Arts," 169. Also see: "Histoire Du Judo," *Judo Kodokan Review*, Vol. 12, No. 5 (1962): 51.

¹⁰⁶ Mol, *Classical Fighting Arts of Japan : A Complete Guide to Koryu Ju Jujutsu*, 8-10,49.

Butokukai in Kyoto under the direct control of the Ministry of Education.¹⁰⁷ The imperial establishment intended to “solidify, promote and standardize” the practice of martial arts in Japan and not surprisingly Kano Jigoro himself enjoyed a great deal of prestige and influence within the institution.¹⁰⁸ In the early 1900s, Kodokan judo continued its hegemonic trajectory and expanded overseas. As Sabine Frühstück and Wolfram Manzenreiter affirm:

Kano (Jigoro) was highly successful precisely because he managed to arrange judo along the developmental axis of lifelong improvement and within the structural framework of a modern Western sport. In terms of integration, the new cultural space that Kano had opened found appropriate niches in Japan as well as in the Western world.¹⁰⁹

Niches were created for martial artists leaving Japan in the early twentieth century. Mayeda Mitsuyo was a university student attracted by the expansion of the Kodokan judo. He joined in the Kodokan School in 1897 and became a first degree black belt (*shodan*) on January 8 1899.¹¹⁰ He trained under the instructor-chief, Yokoyama “Devil” Sakujiro, and rose up rapidly to the fourth degree black belt (*yondan*) through the newly established belt ranking created by Kano Jigoro.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ E. J. Harrison, *The Fighting Spirit of Japan : The Esoteric Study of the Martial Arts and Way of Life in Japan*, (Woodstock, N.Y.: Overlook Press, 1982), 30.

¹⁰⁸ The Dai Nihon Butokukai’s meeting held on July 24 1906 at Kyoto to the standardization of Japanese jujutsu katas. The meeting, headed by Kano, gathered eighteen masters of leading jujutsu schools. Thereafter, Kodokan judo became the dominant jiu-jitsu style in Japan. Brousse, *Le Judo : Son Histoire, Ses Succès*, 27.

¹⁰⁹ Sabine Frühstück and Wolfram Manzenreiter, “Neverland Lost: Judo Cultures in Austria, Japan and Everywhere,” in *Globalizing Japan: Ethnography of the Japanese Presence in Asia, Europe, and America*, ed. Harumi Befu and Sylvie Guichard-Anguis (London: Routledge, 2001), 70.

¹¹⁰ Mayeda Mitsuyo was born on November 18 1878 in the Prefecture of Aomori in the northernmost point of Japan’s main island, Honshu. In 1896, he moved to Tokyo to attend the Senmon Gakko School that later became Waseda University.

¹¹¹ Shun, “The Invention of the Martial Arts,” 167. Kodokan promoted Mayeda successively to second degree (*nidan*) on October 3 1899, third degree (*sandan*) on January 13 1901 and fourth degree (*yodan*) on October 23 1904. Taeko Abe (Kodokan Institute, Tokyo, Japan), e-mail message to the author, March 12 2009.

During the “Russo-Japanese War,” Mayeda Mitsuyo and Tomita Tsunejiro, a veteran Kodokan judo master, traveled to America.¹¹² In 1905, after a presentation at West Point Military Academy, they parted ways and soon afterwards, Mayeda Mitsuyo began to wrestle professionally in the United States, Europe and Latin America. In the course of his professional career, he adopted the nom de guerre “Count Koma.”¹¹³

Mayeda’s involvement with professional wrestling may have troubled his relationship with the Kodokan judo school. This may explain why he and other Japanese fighting professionally had their belt promotions slowed down enormously.¹¹⁴ In 1912, in Mexico, Mayeda was promoted by the Kodokan to a fifth degree black belt (*godan*) and it was his last belt promotion for seventeen years as well as the last time that he used the specific denomination “judo” during the 1910s.¹¹⁵

According to Paul McMichael Nurse, in the early days of Kodokan all practitioners were required “to place a seal of blood on an open register and declare five oaths.” In two of them, was stated “I shall not bring dishonor for the dojo” and “first as student, and later as instructor, I will always obey the dojo rules.”¹¹⁶ The case of Tokugoro Ito, a Kodokan black belt involved with Mayeda in professional wrestling is revealing. In the aftermath of the former’s defeat by the American wrestler Ad Santel in

¹¹² Tomita and Mayeda arrived in New York City on December 8 1904 and went to West Point in January 1905. Their presentation was part of a lecture given by the Imperial Japanese Legation on the Russo-Japanese War. "Cadet Down the 'Jap' : Exponent of Jiu-Jitsu Thrown by West Point Athletes," *The New York Times*, February 25 1905, 5.

¹¹³ Michael Watt, "The Lendgatory Story of Conde Koma Mitsuyo Maeda," *Judo Journal*, V. 20, No. 1 (1997): 3-4.

¹¹⁴ Kodokan awarded Mayeda with four degrees (dan) from 1899 until 1904. He waited eight years for his fifth degree (godan) and seventeen for his sixth degree (rokudan). Taeko Abe (Kodokan Institute, Tokyo, Japan), e-mail message to the author, March 12 2009.

¹¹⁵ "Wrestling Boom with Vengeance " *The Mexican Herald*, August 27 1909, 5.

¹¹⁶ Paul McMichael Nurse, "The Beginnings of Kodokan Judo,1882-1938," accessed August 5, 2010, <http://www.fightingarts.com>.

San Francisco in 1916 the Kodokan headquarters issued a response: "The Kodokan replied that it permits mixed bouts with boxers and wrestlers for research purposes, but prohibits such bouts when they are employed for personal monetary gain."¹¹⁷ In addition, Kano Jigoro, the founder of Kodokan dojo declared:

No one is allowed to take part in public entertainment for monetary gain. Teachers certainly receive remuneration for their services, but that is in no way degrading. The professional is held in high regard like the officers of a religious organization or a professor in the educational world. Judo itself is held by us all in a position at the high altar. To reconcile this point of view with the Western idea is difficult.¹¹⁸

Reinforcing these principles of Kodokan judo, in 1909 Kano Jigoro became deeply involved with the Olympic movement. For him and other modern educators of Meiji Japan, sport became synonymous with amateurism.¹¹⁹

Public matches pitting Japanese jiu-jitsu against other martial arts disciplines, like those in Brazil or in the United States, became the rage in Western countries.¹²⁰ Whether out of necessity or not, Mayeda Mitsuyo found a dynamic market for prizefighting bouts and vaudeville-like presentations in which he remained involved for fourteen years. After traveling through the United States and Europe, Mayeda Mitsuyo set off to Latin America and performed in Cuba and Mexico between 1908 and 1912.¹²¹ In both countries, he advertized his martial art in eclectic ways. In Mexico, for example, he performed at

¹¹⁷ Joseph R. Svinth, "On the Defeat of Tokugoro Ito in North America," *The Journal of Alternative Perspectives on the Martial Arts and Sciences*, Sept. (2006), accessed July 7 2009, <http://ejmas.com>.

¹¹⁸ Neil Ohlenkamp, "Jigoro Kano in a 1936 Conversation with Gunji Koizumi," accessed October 2, 2011, <http://www.judoinfo.com>. Thomas A. and Svinth Green, Joseph R., ed. *Martial Arts in the Modern World* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003), 65.

¹¹⁹ Yuko Kusaka, "The Emergence and Development of Japanese School Sport," in *Japan, Sport and Society*, ed. Joseph Maguire and Masayoshi Nakayama (London: Routledge, 2006), 32.

¹²⁰ Brousse, *Le Judo : Son Histoire, Ses Succès*, 33-35.

¹²¹ "The Cubans Are Taking Fancy to Our Jujutsu," *Japan Times*, November 1 1912, n.p.

bullfight arenas in the countryside and in gala presentations for Porfirio Díaz at the Chapultepec Military Academy during the twilight of the Porfiriato.¹²² Mayeda, already using with his stage name “Count Koma”, performed at Theatre Colon in Mexico City leading to what the English-language newspaper *The Mexican Herald* called “the wrestling boom.”¹²³

Along with a troupe of Japanese martial artists, Mayeda Mitsuyo traveled through Central America to South America, arriving in Peru in 1913. There, he found a sizeable Japanese community which had been established since late 1800s. As in Mexico and Cuba, a newspaper representing British and American interests published in English, *The West Coast Leader*, provided an account of Count Koma’s first match in Lima. He fought and defeated his compatriot Akyiama at *Plaza de Acho*, the oldest bullfighting arena outside Spain. The newspaper also disclosed that Count Koma was a graduate of the prestigious Waseda University, a “correspondent of several Japanese newspapers,” a skilled practitioner of football and baseball and fluent in English.¹²⁴

The image of Japan as an emerging power certainly helped arouse the interest of Latin America’s elites in jiu-jitsu.¹²⁵ As Heather Levi has pointed out, there was a close “association of sports with discourses of modernity and rationalization.”¹²⁶ By contrast, Robert Chappell has argued that in some areas of Latin America, the enduring appeal

¹²² "Count Koma Performed at Chapultepec Military Academy," *The Mexican Herald*, August 7 1909, n.p.

¹²³ "Wrestling Boom with Vengeance ". In Mexico, Mayeda fought Americans, Europeans and other Japanese. Hjalmar Lundin, *On the Mat and Off; Memoirs of a Wrestler*, (New York: Albert Bonnier, 1937), 90-91.

¹²⁴ "Jiu-Jitsu: Campeon Del Mondo De Jiu-Jtsu," *The West Coast Leader*, September 11 1913, 6.

¹²⁵ Daniel M. Masterson and Sayaka Funada-Classen, eds., *The Japanese in Latin America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 13.

¹²⁶ Heather Levi, *The World of Lucha Libre : Secrets, Revelations, and Mexican National Identity*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 13-16.

enjoyed by bullfighting was a form of resistance against the introduction of modern northern European sports.¹²⁷ Yet by fighting in blood sport arenas, Japanese martial artists may have provided Latin American audiences with an appealing cultural symbiosis blending traditional and modern violent performances.

In 1914, Mayeda Mitsuyo and his troupe of martial artists arrived in Brazil from across its southern border, coming from Argentina and Uruguay.¹²⁸ The economic and cultural boom made *platense* cities like Buenos Aires and Montevideo mandatory ports of call for artists touring South America. After performing in Brazil's main capitals Mayeda reached the Brazilian Amazon in late 1915.¹²⁹

In 1915, the Japanese troupe arrived in Belém, the capital of Pará State and the largest urban center in the Brazilian Amazon. Cultural life in the metropolis still flourished in the dying days of the belle époque.¹³⁰ Theatres, opera houses and other public spaces in the region sprang up with the rubber boom to entertain the emerging local elite. Belém's newspaper *Folha do Norte* announced the new attractions:

The Japanese troupe directed by the undefeated world champion Count Koma will perform jiu-jitsu, wrestling, boxing and fencing matches. A prize of 5,000 francs will be offered for anyone able to defeat one of the troupe's members Okura, champion of Chile, Shimizi (sic), champion of Peru, Satake, champion of New York and Luku (sic) a former military instructor in Peru. The troupe is currently in the state of Pará on its way to North America. Its performances met with great success in other countries. The troupe will be wearing proper and

¹²⁷ Robert Chappell, "Sport in Latin America from Past to Present: A European Perspective," in *Sport in Latin American Society: Past and Present*, ed. Lamartine Pereira da Costa and J. A. Mangan (London: Routledge, 2002), 167.

¹²⁸ Rildo Eros de Medeiros, e-mail message to the author, December 12 2007.

¹²⁹ "Theatro Variedades," *O Estado de São Paulo*, September 27 1914, 4. "Palco E Circos: Variedades," *O Estado de São Paulo*, October 8 1914, 2.

¹³⁰ Economic crisis hits hard the local economy between the 1910s and the World War I. Weinstein, *The Amazon Rubber Boom, 1850-1920*, 258.

decent attire, and its performance is rigorously family oriented. The troupe will parade on the streets of Belém in their traditional outfits.¹³¹

The *Bar Paraense* Theater was a modern multifunctional space combining stage performances and movies while functioning as a beer hall. Its ice and refrigeration allowed patrons to enjoy imported food and cold beverages, which were highly valued in the tropics. The beer house sold low- alcohol beer that was more suited to the moderate behavior demanded by the lifestyle of the urban upper classes, while urban workers and rubber tappers in the forest used stronger alcoholic spirits.¹³² Theatres were the favorite rendezvous of the local gentry for socializing and living their fantasy of civilization.

The mention of “decent jiu-jitsu attire”, highlighted by the newspaper, indicates that spectacles staged in theatres in the Amazon in 1915 were family-oriented following the moral standards set in the height of the belle époque.¹³³ A local aristocrat has argued that modernization in the Amazon was the “refinement of our customs.”¹³⁴ With regard to the mandatory use of jiu-jitsu *gis*, apart from the issue of morality, it gave authenticity to the “exotic” character of Japanese performances. It is noteworthy that all challengers

¹³¹ "Fitas E Palcos: Bar Paraense," *Folha do Norte*, October 25 1915, n.p.

The newspaper *Folha do Norte* actively promoted cultural life in Belém. It began to circulate in 1896 in opposition to Antonio Lemos, a local political boss deposed during the political crisis in 1912. The newspaper *Folha do Norte*, thereafter, promoted cultural vanguardism and topics associated with modern trends.

¹³² Theatre *Bar Paraense* was built inspired on the French Moulin Rouge. Vicente Salles, *Epocas Do Teatro No Grao-Para, Ou, Apresentacao Do Teatro Da Epoca*, (Belem, Para: Editora UFPA, 1994), 210.

Brandão Filho, a local actor and entrepreneur, leased the theatre that thereafter began to present movies, singers, dancers, and a wide range of performances.

¹³³ Measures to enforce moralization at Bar Paraense started under the direction of the Neapolitan maestro Raffaello Segré in 1908. *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ José Coelho da Gama Abreu, Baron of Marajó (1832-1906).

attracted by the prize money were invariably defeated, making the theatre's owner raise the prize.¹³⁵

The cities in the Brazilian Amazon during the rubber boom sought to follow cultural trends in vogue in the great centers like Paris. Patricia Tilburg described the French music hall in the same period:

The belle époque music hall blended sport and the performing arts in highly physical spectacles that celebrated bodily fitness as an essential accompaniment of the life of the mind and of art. Max Viterbo parodied the pervasive integration of music hall and sport in a one-act play, *Le Sport au Théâtre en 1909*. As the play opens, a theater director practices jujitsu, lifts weights, and discusses the need for sport-related additions to an upcoming romantic play.¹³⁶

Spectacles staged at this tropical “Moulin Rouge” with Japanese martial artists sought to reach cosmopolitan audiences that were looking for “spectacular experiments.”¹³⁷ The Japanese presentations, however, remained costly compared to the price of a movie ticket.¹³⁸ The cost of the most inexpensive ticket (standing room) to watch the Japanese was apparently reasonable compared to the average of a blue-collar worker income in Brazil during this period; but one should take into consideration that local per capita income fell almost five times during the downturn of the rubber-based economy between

¹³⁵ "Sports," *Folha do Norte*, November 1 1915, n.p.

¹³⁶ Patricia A. Tilburg, *Colette's Republic : Work, Gender, and Popular Culture in France, 1870-1914*, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 141.

¹³⁷ Ana M. Lopez, "Train of Shadows.' Early Cinema and Modernity in Latin America," in *Multiculturalism, Postcoloniality, and Transnational Media*, ed. Ella Shohat and Robert Stam (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 3.

¹³⁸ "Bar Paraense," n.p. Prices ranged from 1\$000 to 10\$000 (one thousand réis to ten thousand réis). A factory worker in Rio de Janeiro received 110\$000/month (one hundred ten thousand réis). João Lizardo de Araújo, Teresa Cristina de Novaes Marques e Hildete Pereira de Melo, "Raça E Nacionalidade No Mercado De Trabalho Carioca Na Primeira República: O Caso Da Cervejaria Brahma," *Revista Brasileira de Economia* 57, 3 (2003), accessed August 16 2010, <http://EconPapers.repec.org/>.

1910 and 1920. It certainly made this type of entertainment off-limits for persons in the lower classes.¹³⁹

Concurrent with his stage performances, Mayeda Mitsuyo opened his first jiu-jitsu school at the *Teatro Moderno* in 1915:

We will have lessons in the favorite branch of Japanese sport: jiu-jitsu. Count Koma, currently performing on the stage of Bar Paraense, will extend his stay among us to teach jiu-jitsu. Appropriate attire (*gis*) will be provided for children and adults. Count Koma also wants to teach jiu-jitsu in our private schools. We recommend that youngsters interested in physical fitness sign up for jiu-jitsu lessons taught by the Japanese person at *Teatro Moderno*.¹⁴⁰

Among the scions of the cosmopolitan upper class searching for modern avenues of education and physical prowess was a teenager named Carlos Gracie. He was the eldest son of Gastão Gracie, the owner of a local circus. In an interview given sixty-five years later Carlos remembered his beginning at Count Koma's dojo:

After the Japanese person's performance at *Teatro da Paz*, I went to Count Koma's dojo located at Rua Tamandare (*Teatro Moderno*). I was physically frail which resulted in an inferiority complex, but under the paternal supervision of Count Koma, I learnt the secrets of jiu-jitsu.¹⁴¹

Mayeda Mitsuyo returned to Belem in February of 1916, after a season in Manaus and Carlos Gracie started his jiu-jitsu practice at the dojo set in the facilities of *Teatro Moderno*.

Along with theatres and cinemas created to entertain the emerging bourgeois in the Amazon, circuses filled their tents by staging blood sports-type of spectacles. Cities

¹³⁹ Roberto Santos, *Historia Economica Da Amazonia (1800-1920)*, (Sao Paulo: T.A. Queiroz, 1980), 12-13-14-15.

¹⁴⁰ "Jiu-Jitsu: A Troupe Japoneza," *Folha do Norte*, November 16 1915, n.p. "Boas Novas No Reino Do Sport," *Folha do Norte*, January 18 1916, n.p.

¹⁴¹ Tarlis Batista, "Os Gracie: Uma Dinastia De Lutadores," *Manchete*, August 29, 1981, 70.

in the region like Manaus and Belém still held much of their atmosphere of boomtowns which made violent performances appealing to audiences searching for strong emotions in the Brazil's frontier.¹⁴²

Gastão became a partner in the American Circus and manager of the Italian-Argentine wrestler Alfredo Leconte in 1916. The paths of Mayeda and Gracie crossed because Leconte fought and defeated the Japanese twice. First, in December of 1916, he defeated Uenish Sadakazu in Manaus and few weeks later he defeated Shimizu Kusaku in Belém.¹⁴³ On both occasions, Gracie cleverly manipulated the bouts by changing pre-established rules and by proclaiming winners under suspicious refereeing.¹⁴⁴ In Manaus and Belém, Leconte not only refused to wear *gis*, but also had his body covered with grease and whenever cornered slipped out of the ring. Furthermore, he won twice using an identical strategy, pinning down briefly the Japanese player. The referee without waiting for the "thirty-second hold-down" previously established, declared the Gracie's wrestler a winner.¹⁴⁵

Unlike the family-oriented theatres, circuses like the one owned by Gracie were more flexible concerning fighters' dress code and the rules of fair play. Ignoring moral concerns related to the exposure of half-naked wrestlers' bodies, Gracie prevented the Japanese from having lapels, collars and sleeves to apply their techniques.

¹⁴² E. Bradford Burns, "Manaus, 1910: Portrait of a Boom Town," *Journal of Inter-American Studies*, 7, No. 3 (1965): 409.

¹⁴³ "American Circus," *O Tempo*, January 30 1916, n.p. and "Shimizu Desafia Leconti," *Folha do Norte*, December 21 1916, n.p.

¹⁴⁴ "American Circus."

¹⁴⁵ *Folha do Norte*, December 21 1916, n.p.

The brawl that erupted after both fights suggests a different kind of audience compared to those attending the theatrical performances. According to the local press, the violent outcome was the result of the fight between the promoters and widespread gambling among those in attendance.¹⁴⁶ Because of the disturbances, the police banned wrestling prizefighting in the two capitals of the Amazon.¹⁴⁷

Gracie and Mayeda became acquainted in the aftermath of these encounters. The aristocratic Scottish-Brazilian, quasi-diplomat and the Japanese university-educated martial artist shared mutual business interests in this Brazilian frontier ravaged by the economic crisis.

For the Gracies, individuals like the Capoeira *Pé-de-Bola* who fought the Japanese martial artist were a human metaphor for backwardness. Gastão Gracie's generation was still haunted by the presence of scores of dark-skinned Brazilians liberated from slavery in 1888.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, he had strong reasons for befriending the cosmopolitan "Count Koma" and encouraged his eldest son to learn modern jiu-jitsu with the Japanese.

¹⁴⁶ "Resposta De Shimizu a Leconti," *Folha do Norte*, December 21 1916, n.p.

¹⁴⁷ "Palcos E Fitas," *O Tempo* December 8 1916, n.p.

¹⁴⁸ Celia Maria Marinho de Azevedo, *Onda Negra, Medo Branco : O Negro No Imaginario Das Elites--Seculo Xix*, (Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Paz e Terra, 1987), 219.



Figure 14: Wrestling prizefighting in circus, early 20th century. Source: Le Judo, 1996.

The young Gracie's apprenticeship under Mayeda, and his local senior student Jacyntho Ferro, lasted no more than three years.¹⁴⁹ Carlos' exposure to Mayeda's teachings occurred under a circumstantial combination of factors that determined the nature of his apprenticeship. Mayeda's lack of interest in training students to perpetuate the Kodokan judo school is noteworthy. As for example, he ignored the belt ranking conceived by Kano Jigoro which constituted one of the pedagogical foundations of the Kodokan judo school.¹⁵⁰ He only taught judo techniques to his students with a method that gave little emphasis to philosophical concepts or a pedagogical framework. Therefore, students like Carlos Gracie learned an eclectic program that mixed judo with wrestling. For Carlos particularly, this would make more sense, since the Gracies were in the business of

¹⁴⁹ Jacyntho Ferro was a wrestler and a prototype of the local modern athlete who joined Mayeda's dojo. He became Mayeda's chief instructor in Belém.

¹⁵⁰ Inoue Shun, "Invented Tradition in the Martial Arts," in *The Culture of Japan as Seen through Its Leisure*, ed. Sepp Linhart and Sabine Frühstück (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 85-86. In 1935, long after the Gracies gone, Mayeda pledged his allegiance to the orthodoxy after years of heretic involvement in prizefighting, at least in the eyes of Kodokan. He published a jiu-jitsu manual in Portuguese titled "Jiudo: Uma Arte de Cultura Physica Japoneza" (Jiudo: An Art of Japanese Physical Education) in which he reproduced Kano Jigoro's lectures. In his conclusion, he explained the interchangeable use of denominations such as "judo" and "jiu-jitsu." Mitsuyo Mayeda, *Jiu-Do: Uma Arte De Cultura Physica Japonesa*, (Belem: Livraria Escolar, 1935), 16.

professional wrestling. Moreover, Mayeda, at this time, was deeply involved in prizefighting.

Under these circumstances, by employing the generic label “jiu-jitsu” instead of the specific name of his school “judo”, Mayeda was consistent with his current professional prizefighter status. Lastly, the absence of students who had graduated with the rank of black belt trained under Mayeda in the Amazon is emblematic; it confirms that he did not intend to create local lineages of Kodokan judo practitioners.¹⁵¹ Circumstances surrounding the encounter between Mitsuyo Mayeda and the Gracies had long-term consequences for jiu-jitsu practice in Brazil. Unlike the introduction of Kodokan judo in other regions of the Western world, in Brazil, thereafter, the Gracies near monopolized its practice by keeping the pre-modern denomination “jiu-jitsu.”

Conclusion

The Gracies left the Amazon between 1919 and 1920 and Carlos Gracie stopped training with Mayeda when his family moved to Rio de Janeiro.¹⁵² They returned to Rio de Janeiro after the death of the patriarch, Peter McNichols Gracie; for them, the death of Peter symbolized the end of their nineteenth century grandeur. For Carlos, a teenager trained in a modern combat sport, Japanese jiu-jitsu became a cultural asset during the

¹⁵¹ In 1928, Mayeda Mitsuyo confided to Hajime Otake that he never awarded a black belt in Brazil. Hajime Otake traveled from Japan Yamada Yoshio and settled in Japan in 1928. The latter was Mayeda's colleague from the Kodokan dojo and the three Japanese developed a long friendship in their new home. In another interview given by Otake Hajime, at the age of 96 in Belém, he confirmed Mayeda's declarations. Rildo Eros de Medeiros, e-mail message to the author, January 8 2008.

¹⁵² Carlos Gracie in an interview declared that his family left Belem when he was 17 years old that corresponded to the year 1919. Batista, "Os Gracie: Uma Dinastia De Lutadores," 70. Pedro (Peter) McNichols Gracie, Carlos's grandfather, died on February 13 1921. Colegio Brasileiro de Genealogia, Arquivo Paulo Carneiro da Cunha, Rio de Janeiro, titulo 11 : Gracie.

hard times. However, he also carried another asset equally essential to his social redemption: The Gracies' patrician ethos.

The confrontation of martial arts styles, initiated at the beginning of the century against a background of rising nationalism and modernization, reached a stalemate in the early 1920s. If the process of cultural importation as means to achieve modernization was irreversible, as demonstrated by the introduction of Japanese jiu-jitsu, the same was true for nationalism embodied by Capoeira.

Chapter 2 - Between tradition and modernity: the birth of Brazilian jiu-jitsu, 1921-1934

Introduction

The Gracie family, which had seen some moderate success between 1910 and 1920 in the Amazon, faced economic hardship in the 1920s. The family ultimately regained economic stability and social status by reinventing Japanese jiu-jitsu.

In this chapter, I analyze how the Gracies used their jiu-jitsu skills to meet the challenges posed by their failing social status during the transition from the “Old Republic” to the Getulio Vargas regime. Their trajectory might seem to confirm the identification between the new regime and the emergent middle class suggested by Michael Conniff.¹⁵³ However, the Gracies were not part of the emergent middle sector; rather they fit better into Brian Owensby’s analysis of Brazilian society of the 1930s which identified the category of “déclassé aristocrats:”

They are descendants of traditional families struggling to adjust to the challenges and uncertainties of an increasingly competitive and diversified social order that had eroded the social hierarchy of mid-nineteenth century slave society.¹⁵⁴

Yet the Gracies’ trajectory shows that in modern Brazil white or light-skinned individuals from the ranks of old elite still enjoyed privileges within the new regime. At this point, I will adopt Roberto da Matta’s theoretical framework to explain how the

¹⁵³ See: Michael L. Conniff, *Urban Politics in Brazil: The Rise of Populism, 1925-1945*, (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1981).

¹⁵⁴ Brian Philip Owensby, *Intimate Ironies : Modernity and the Making of Middle-Class Lives in Brazil*, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1999), 45-46.

Gracies, came to be so strongly identified with nationalism, populism and authoritarianism.

The two following vignettes display critical moments in the Gracies' trajectory during this period. The first shows the depths of their social difficulties. The second shows initial steps of their attachment to the new regime and how they have begun to regain status teaching jiu-jitsu in Getulio Vargas's security apparatus.

We are refined people!

In 1926, a desperate landlady filed an eviction lawsuit against a troubled family of tenants wreaking havoc on her property. Court records show, with dramatic overtones, a family facing virtual social collapse. In addition to the debt, the landlady accused them of purposely damaging the house by firing gunshots at the walls and the plumbing system. The head of the family presented a rebuttal and demanded that the landlady reimburse him for renovations made to the house. His allegation proved to be untrue. The extent of destruction and the defendants' response shocked the plaintiff. They defiantly shouted at her: "We are refined people!" (*somos gente de fino trato!*). This statement stressing their genteel background sounded rather odd considering they transformed her property into a "pigpen." Lastly, the property owner had no hope of receiving any compensation. She affirmed that Gastão Gracie, the head of the family, was an incorrigible gambler who had

lost everything, and currently was earning his livelihood by resorting to uncertain and dubious business enterprises.¹⁵⁵

We are authorities!

On April 18, 1933, around 2 p.m. in the afternoon, near “The Naval Club” in the centre of Rio de Janeiro, bus driver Waldemar Nogueira da Silva was violently assaulted by two individuals during an altercation over the fare. The victim later reported:

My aggressors failed to deposit the fare in the deposit box. This sparked an argument between them and me. My aggressors got off the bus and challenged me to come out and fight. Intimidated by their hostility, I stopped complaining about the unpaid fare. They returned to the bus and when passing by ‘The Naval Club’ they suddenly attacked me from behind. I still managed to pull over the bus and tried to stand up when one of them grabbed me and the other kicked and punched me repeatedly in the face. Next, I was violently dragged off the bus when I was saved by the timely intervention of bystanders.¹⁵⁶

According to other witnesses, the victim rapidly left the scene in panic while his aggressors remained outside the bus threatening and intimidating the crowd. They approached the bus company’s supervisor on the scene defiantly shouting at him: “We are authorities!” The bus driver, submitted to close examination at the local police station, exhibited his body covered with marks of violence. He later learned that his aggressors were the famous Gracie brothers, Carlos and Hélio, jiu-jitsu instructors for President Getúlio Vargas’ new and feared *Polícia Especial* (Special Police) with headquarters a few blocks away.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Juízo da 4o Pretoria Cível, 26/08/1926, reu: Gastão Gracie, autor: Francisca Ferreira Teixeira, Maço 97 No. 1933, pp. 80-f to 82-f. Arquivo Nacional do Rio de Janeiro.

¹⁵⁶ Juízo da 5a Pretoria Criminal, 20/05/1933, reus: Carlos Gracie e Helio Gracie, autor: Waldemar Nogueira da Silva, Processo 7013759, 101 paginas. Arquivo Nacional do Rio de Janeiro.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

The Gracies' predicament

In the early 1920s, Gastão Gracie returned to Rio de Janeiro, the cradle of his family's prestigious status. The city of Rio de Janeiro he had left behind at the turn of the century had changed considerably. The population jumped from roughly half-million to over one million in twenty years and the city had undergone radical urban changes. Gracie's first entrepreneurial venture in Rio was at the international exposition organized in 1922 to celebrate the centennial of Brazilian independence. The exposition organized to celebrate the apotheosis of a new Brazil hosted all states of the federation and several foreign countries. The event attracted millions of visitors during an eight-month-long "gigantic potlatch."¹⁵⁸ An article published by the trendy magazine *Fon-Fon* in 1923 showed Gastão Gracie and his patented invention, *Ideal Prado*.¹⁵⁹ His invention was a carousel assembled at the exposition site that simulated a horse race. The article praised Gastão's inventiveness and described him as a prestigious industrialist and philanthropist from Pará State. Gracie told the magazine that he was not seeking monetary profit; his main purpose was to promote the "Independence Bonds" issued by the exposition's organization. The article overly inflated Gracie's credentials and considering his dreadful financial situation, it is hard to believe he had philanthropic intentions. Moreover, he would pay eventual winners betting on his carousel with paper bonds instead of hard cash; this strategy would prevent him from further financial deterioration while allowing him to pose as a well-off philanthropist.

¹⁵⁸ Raymond Corbey, "Ethnographic Showcases, 1870-1930," *Cultural Anthropology*, 8, No. 3 (1993): 339.

¹⁵⁹ "As Diversoes Da Exposicao: O Ideal Prado," *Fon-Fon*, January 13, 1923, n.p.

In addition to his perennial financial instability, Gastão Gracie had other pending personal problems that he had brought back from his time in the Amazon. There, he developed a gambling addiction as mentioned by the angry landlady in the lawsuit filed against him in 1926. In addition, while living in the Amazon, Gastão had kept an entire family in secrecy for years. It was a product of his extramarital relationship with his father's Portuguese maid during Gastão's travels to Rio de Janeiro.¹⁶⁰ His legal wife, Cesalina Pessoa, according to the family sources, was a strong willed woman from a clannish household from northeastern Brazil. Yet, separation was hardly an option in local society during the 1920s, even for the troubled Gracie household.¹⁶¹ In the end, Gastão had to move his second family to São Paulo and thereafter divided his time between his two families.



Figure 15: Gastão Gracie and his gambling carrousel assembled in the Rio's International Exposition.
Source: Fon-Fon, 1923.

¹⁶⁰ Reila Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, (Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2008), 45-46.

¹⁶¹ Susan K. Besse, *Restructuring Patriarchy : The Modernization of Gender Inequality in Brazil, 1914-1940*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 58-59.

Finally, when Carlos Gracie decided to resort to jiu-jitsu to survive, the Gracies had spent most of the 1920s living under dreadful personal circumstances. Nevertheless, as the unfortunate landlady reported, they desperately tried to uphold their patrician ethos crying amidst the ruins of their shattered house their social credo: “We are refined people!”

The Gracies’ social redemption through Japanese jiu-jitsu

By the mid-1920s, Carlos Gracie was working for the Brazilian Traction, Light and Power Company in Rio de Janeiro.¹⁶² The Toronto-based enterprise had been investing in urban transportation and the construction of energy infrastructure in Brazil since the turn of the century. It would be reasonable to assume that Carlos was hired because of business connections between his deceased grandfather and the Canadians. The Canadian company modernized the old mule-drawn tramways in Rio and São Paulo during the early 1900s. Around the same time, the *Comendador* Peter Gracie was actively participating in business enterprises related to modern urban transportation. Both the Gracies and the Canadian CEO, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, had in common their Scottish roots.¹⁶³

Apparently, by chance, Carlos one day came across Donato Pires dos Reis, an old family acquaintance from their time in the Amazon. The latter also had been one of

¹⁶² Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 54.

¹⁶³ Noronha Santos, *Meios De Transporte No Rio De Janeiro : Historia E Legislação*, (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. do Jornal do Commercio, 1934), 334.

Count Koma's students and through political connections was hired by the Minas Gerais state police as a jiu-jitsu instructor. Donato then invited Carlos to be his assistant that he accepted. Carlos Gracie taught jiu-jitsu in Belo Horizonte, capital of Minas Gerais, for two years from 1928 to 1930.¹⁶⁴

After his debut as a jiu-jitsu instructor, Carlos went to São Paulo in 1930 to pursue his career as a professional fighter. There, he found a vibrant urban atmosphere only surpassed in South America by Buenos Aires.¹⁶⁵ The city's population had nearly tripled within twenty years. This dramatic growth was concurrent with industrialization and vibrant cultural movements.

Once in São Paulo, Carlos sought a fight with Geo Omori.¹⁶⁶ However, the latter thought Gracie unqualified since it was unusual for Brazilians to practice jiu-jitsu at a professional level. Carlos had to resort to his connections in the Minas Gerais state police to schedule a qualifying bout against the Swedish instructors hired to teach wrestling to São Paulo's police. Initially considered physically unfit to be a wrestler, Carlos finally had his opportunity to fight and defeat the muscular Swedes using ground combat techniques.¹⁶⁷

Carlos' performances at São Paulo police headquarters produced a short note in the local newspaper that was sufficient to make the Japanese accept the challenge.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁴ "Jiu-Jitsu: Um Interessante Programa De Ju-Jitsu E Lucta Livre," *Correio Paulistano*, January 3 1930, 8.

¹⁶⁵ T. J. Hatton and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *The Age of Mass Migration : Causes and Economic Impact*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 9.

¹⁶⁶ "Jiu-Jitsu: Um Verdadeiro Luctador Brasileiro Enfrentara O Famoso Geo Omori," *Folha da Manhã*, January 2 1930, 8.

¹⁶⁷ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 57.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

The Japanese martial artist Geo Omori was mesmerizing audiences in São Paulo in the late 1920s. In 1929, the Rio de Janeiro newspaper *Diário Carioca* published an article praising Omori's modern manliness and martial art skills, presenting them as elements that could help Brazilians cope with modernity. Modernity compelled men to improve their physical fitness and learn self-defense techniques to face an increasingly violent urban environment.¹⁶⁹



Figure 16: Geo Omori was the first Japanese martial artist to fight the Gracies. Source: *Jornal dos Sports*, 1932.

Omori had previously defeated the local capoeira Argemiro Feitosa and the Spaniard pugilist Jack Marin.¹⁷⁰ The fight with Gracie, however, was not a confrontation of styles, but it became an opportunity for a Brazilian to demonstrate his ability to prevail over the foreigner in the latter's own game.

The match of Gracie versus Omori was held at the “Madison Square” arena under the big top of the Queirolo Circus. Gracie was advertised as the “only Brazilian to spend

¹⁶⁹ "Geo Omori: Um Habil Campeao De Jiu-Jitsu Quer Vir Ao Rio," *Diário Carioca*, December 17 1929, 9.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

a three-year period training under Baron Maeda-Koma (*sic*). He defeated all amateur and professional wrestlers fighting in the Amazon.”¹⁷¹

In January 1930, the newspaper *Folha DA Manhã* said that in the second round Gracie placed an arm bar on Omori, who refused to surrender. Gracie, surprised and confused, waited for the referee’s decision. Upon the referee’s hesitation Carlos loosened the arm-lock allowing Omori to escape. The newspaper, stunned by the latter’s stamina, offered the stereotypical explanation that Omori’s behavior reflected “the secret pact made by Japanese fighters that forbid them to surrender when fighting outside Japan.”¹⁷² In the following round, however, Omori almost had Carlos knocked-out through a violent throw. Gracie’s “moral victory”, as described by a newspaper, clearly upset Omori who asked for a rematch that was promptly accepted.¹⁷³ In the second fight, Omori lost his temper and sought to throw Gracie outside the ring. In the end, according to the newspaper, the Brazilian finished the fight with the advantage.¹⁷⁴ The two matches against Omori in São Paulo certainly boosted Carlos’ confidence.

¹⁷¹ "Jiu-Jitsu: Um Verdadeiro Luctador Brasileiro Enfrentara O Famoso Geo Omori," 8.

¹⁷² "Domingo Havera O Grande Encontro Entre Grace E Omori," *Folha da Manhã*, January 3 1930, 9.

¹⁷³ "Jiu-Jitsu: Ainda O Encontro De Domingo: Teremos Uma Revanche?," *Folha da Manhã*, January 7 1930, 10.

¹⁷⁴ "Omori Foi Completamente Dominado Pelo Luctador Brasileiro," *Folha da Manhã*, January 20 1930, 3.



Figure 17: The Gracies' debut in São Paulo. Source: Folha da Manhã, 1930.

Nationalistic anxieties compelled modernist intellectuals like Monteiro Lobato in the first decades of the 1900s to see sport and immigration as means to promote individual initiative, competition, and progress. Besides, sports, including martial arts, became surrogate for warfare where nations could prove their superiority over the others. For Lobato, the highly competitive multicultural environment forced *paulistas* (as São Paulo residents are known) to excel so they could keep up with immigrants whose situation made them more entrepreneurial.¹⁷⁵ Furthermore, Lobato, as a fierce nationalist, used to analyze football matches between British expatriates and local teams in São Paulo. At first, according to him, these “battles” invariably ended in defeat for the Brazilians. The latter, however, persisted and eventually defeated the inventors of modern football.¹⁷⁶

Unlike the Japanese martial artists, the British footballers were expatriates usually working in business and commerce. Thus, in the early 1900s, Brazilians perceived the

¹⁷⁵ Jorge Artur dos Santos, "Os Intelectuais E as Críticas Às Práticas Esportivas No Brasil (1890 – 1947)", M.A. Thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2000, 46.

¹⁷⁶ José Carlos Sebe Bom Meihy and José Sebastião Witter, *Futebol E Cultura : Coletânea De Estudos*, (São Paulo: Convênio IMESP/DAESP, 1982), 108.

British as paradigms of “modernity,” “progress” and “civility.”¹⁷⁷ However, for the sake of a nationalist discourse voiced by modernist intellectuals like Monteiro Lobato, both, Japanese immigrants and British expatriates were “the other.” Lastly, in the early 1920s, Brazil’s Congress passed the first anti-immigrant laws targeting Japanese immigrants. Toward the end of the decade, nationalist groups began to oppose Japanese immigration through a racist rhetoric that labeled the Japanese as inassimilable.¹⁷⁸

Brazilian nationalism and the intellectuals’ perceptions of identity had evolved since the turn of the century, when the local intelligentsia had fallen under the spell of European racist theories. Throughout the 1920s and toward the 1930s however, the time was ripe to redeem Brazilian *mestizaje*. Against this background, a group of intellectuals based in São Paulo launched the “Anthropophagic Manifesto” in which they rejected the European supremacy and dual concepts of “civilization” and “barbarism.” Rather, modernist intellectuals like Oswald de Andrade employed the metaphor of Brazil’s natives eating Portuguese colonizers to encourage Brazilians to “eat” foreign influences and “regurgitate” them in a genuine national form.¹⁷⁹

Carlos Gracie’s performances in São Paulo metaphorically represented Brazilian “cannibalism” at its best. In terms of the technical aspect of his debut in São Paulo, it became clear that hardly any local could match the Kodokan judo’s technical edge in throws during standing combat. It explained why Omori threw Gracie with ease.

¹⁷⁷ Darien J. Davis, “British Football with a Brazilian Beat: The Early History of a National Pastime (1894-1933),” in *English-Speaking Communities in Latin America*, ed. Oliver Marshall (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000), 261.

¹⁷⁸ Stewart Lone, *The Japanese Community in Brazil, 1908-1940: Between Samurai and Carnival*, (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 63.

¹⁷⁹ Verity Smith, *Encyclopedia of Latin American Literature*, (London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1997), 144.

Moreover, Omori's complaint that by Japanese rules he had won the fight is correct. Rules in Japan had changed to benefit standing combat. The Gracies, though, realized that if they abided by those rules they would invariably be defeated. The matchups pitting Carlos Gracie and Geo Omori in São Paulo marked the birth of a local style of jiu-jitsu with emphasis on ground combat and governed by local rules. This arrangement devised by Carlos Gracie, thereafter, gave the Gracies means to compensate the Japanese martial artist's superior throwing skills.

Profiting from the momentum created by Carlos' performances in São Paulo, the Gracies opened their first martial arts gym in Rio de Janeiro. On September 8, the newspaper *O Globo* published an illustrative note about the opening:

Carioca Academy for Cultivation of Scientific Sport

Donato Pires dos Reis (director) and Sr. Carlos and George Gracie Instructors (instructors) showcased a martial art demonstration before a select audience. Jiu-jitsu is an efficient self-defense system that employs only our natural resources to protect us from criminals that threaten our society. The audience learned why muscular individuals must be more cautious in the future. Law abiding citizens will be able to protect himself without risking his freedom due to his physical inferiority. Jiu-jitsu made the Japanese pygmies giant tamers. Thus, teaching jiu-jitsu is a patriotic deed and the opening of the new gym constitute great news for our youth searching sports in which intelligence is more important than muscular strength. Those with frail bodies may hear our call throughout Brazil.¹⁸⁰

This short version of the official opening of the Gracies' gym is revealing in many ways. The denomination "academy," which later became commonplace in similar establishments in Brazil, indicated that the Gracies claimed to be recipients and benefactors of superior knowledge. As a local newspaper observed a few years later:

¹⁸⁰ "Esta Inaugurada a Academia Carioca Para O Cultivo Do Scientifico Sport " *O Globo*, September 8 1930, 8.

“The Gracies established themselves as jiu-jitsu instructors calling their gym pompously ‘academy.’¹⁸¹ The strategy seemed to be a deliberate attempt to make their new enterprise respectable enough to attract an upper class clientele.



Figure 18: The building of the first Gracie Gym (dojo) established in 1930 surprisingly still standing today surrounding by high rise apartments. Source: author collection, 2010.

The presence of Donato Pires dos Reis as director of the Gracie dojo was rather odd, but Donato was Carlos’ old acquaintance from the Amazon and arrived in Rio claiming to be a black belt holder under Mayeda Mitsuyo. It was a baseless claim, but Carlos might feel insecure, considering the nature of his apprenticeship with Mayeda. Opening a dojo in partnership with Mayeda’s “black belt” could legitimize the entire operation.

The idiosyncrasies stemming from Mayeda’s teachings help to explain the creation of a local jiu-jitsu style. The absence of black belt holders led his students in Brazil to compete over the spoils of his legacy. Within the realm of martial arts, transmission of knowledge through legitimate lineages is critical to determining the

¹⁸¹ "Os Casos Interessantes Do Sport: Por Que Os Irmãos Gracie Não Querem Que George Enfrente Omori De Kimono?," *Diário de Notícias*, March 2 1933, 2.

continuation of any given school. According to the classical concept, a lineage student must master all aspects of the discipline. In addition to technical skills, a lineage student must be a charismatic individual capable of transmitting the entire corpus of his martial arts discipline. Yet, non-lineage students, though they may possess outstanding skills, are capable of transmitting only fragments of the knowledge.¹⁸²

All Mayeda's students in Brazil, including Carlos Gracie, fell in the category of non-lineage students. The absence of lineage students — represented in this case by the absence of black belt holders — became one aspect contributing to the development of a Brazilian style of jiu-jitsu since it was free from dogma established by Kodokan headquarters in Japan.

Kyu Grades (Mudansha – non black belt holders)			
	Rokyu	6th Grade	White Belt
	Gokyu	5th Grade	Yellow Belt
	Yonkyu	4th Grade	Orange Belt
	Sankyu	3rd Grade	Green Belt
	Nikyu	2nd Grade	Blue Belt
	Ikkyu	1st Grade	Brown Belt
Dan Grades (Yudansha – black belt holders)			
	Shodan	1st Grade	Black Belt
	Nidan	2nd Grade	Black Belt
	Sandan	3rd Grade	Black Belt
	Yondan	4th Grade	Black Belt
	Godan	5th Grade	Black Belt
	Rokudan	6th Grade	Black or Red and White Belt
	Shichidan	7th Grade	Black or Red and White Belt
	Hachidan	8th Grade	Black or Red and White Belt
	Kudan	9th Grade	Red or Black Belt
	Judan	10th Grade	Red or Black Belt

Figure 19: Kodokan judo ranking belt. Source: <http://www.judoyukon.ca/>, 2011.¹⁸³

Donato's brief direction of the Gracie dojo suggests that once the Gracies realized he had exaggerated his jiu-jitsu credentials they terminated the partnership.¹⁸⁴ In taking over the entire operation, the Gracies rapidly instilled a strategy to target their social

¹⁸² Frantzis, *The Power of Internal Martial Arts and Chi*, 115.

¹⁸³ "Judo Yukon ", accessed July 10, 2011, <http://www.judoyukon.ca/>.

¹⁸⁴ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 54.

peers. An anecdote repeatedly told by Carlos' youngest brother, Hélio Gracie, to explain how he began to teach jiu-jitsu is quite revealing of this matter. His brother Carlos was once late for a private lesson with Mario Caldeira Brant, the son of the president of the Banco do Brasil. Hélio, then still a teenager, seized the opportunity to demonstrate his ability to teach jiu-jitsu and became an instructor along with his brothers. This episode indicates that the Gracies' financial decline did not sever their social connections within the exclusive circle of politicians and financiers. Mario Caldeira Brant represents the public targeted by the Gracie from the beginning. His father, Augusto Caldeira Brant, was a prominent politician in the state of Minas Gerais who supported the coup d'état in 1930. Afterwards, Getulio Vargas appointed him as a president of the state-owned Banco do Brasil.¹⁸⁵ The Gracies, in turn, had been among the founders of that financial institution and occupied high posts on its board for many years during the 1850s. Finally, quite similar to the Gracies themselves, Caldeira Brant's family was not among the emerging white-collar members of the new regime but a family that had been prominent since the times of colonial Brazil.¹⁸⁶

Twenty-five days after the Gracies' dojo inauguration, a military uprising broke out simultaneously in different points of Brazil. In a few days, the movement became a civilian-military revolt that overthrew the recently re-elected government. Getúlio Vargas, one of the rebellion's leaders from the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul, took over the presidency. While his gaucho troops tied their horses to the obelisk at the center

¹⁸⁵ Katia Gerab Baggio, "Dos Tropicós Ao Prata: Viajantes Brasileiros Pela Argentina Nas Primeiras Décadas Do Século XX," *Historia Revista*, 13, No. 2 (2008): 437.

¹⁸⁶ Raquel Almeida, "O Velho Samurai," *Veja*, October 8 1997, 13.

of Rio de Janeiro, Getulio Vargas installed himself in the presidential palace on October 31, located a few blocks away from the Gracies' modest gym, entrenched in the heart of their old aristocratic neighborhood of Catete. The so-called "old republic," with its traditional oligarchies inaugurated in 1899, was terminated and replaced by new political forces in 1930.

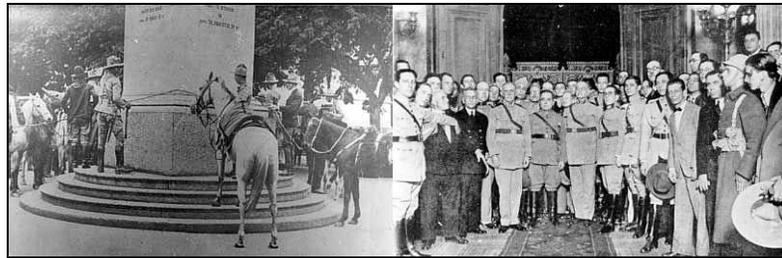


Figure 20: On the left, Gaucho troops tying their horses around the obelisk at Rio's downtown, 1930. On the right, the rise of Getulio Vargas at Palacio do Catete few blocks from the Gracies' gym. Source: CPDOC/Fundação Getulio Vargas.¹⁸⁷

In 1930, Carlos Gracie was seeking opponents to challenge, in order to gain more visibility in Rio de Janeiro. Manoel Rufino dos Santos, a local wrestler who had earned a degree in physical education in the United States, emerged as his next adversary. Rufino taught at the local Y.M.C.A, at an American Protestant school and at upper-middle class clubs.¹⁸⁸ He probably learned to wrestle while living in America and reportedly took Japanese jiu-jitsu lessons with Donato Pires dos Reis after the latter's estrangement from

¹⁸⁷ "Gauchos No Obelisco Na Avenida Rio Branco." Rio de Janeiro, 1930. CPDOC/CDA Oswaldo Aranha, Rio de Janeiro. <http://cpdoc.fgv.br/producao/dossies/AEraVargas1/anos20/Revolucao30>. Accessed May 8 2010.

¹⁸⁸ "Sport," *Diario de Noticias* January 11 1933, 9.

the Gracies.¹⁸⁹ The rivalry heated up through an acrid verbal exchange published in the local dailies promoting the fight. One month before the bout, the *Diário Carioca* newspaper warned the authorities of the consequences of the embittered exchange.¹⁹⁰ The bout took place at the elitist Fluminense Football Club stadium, located near the Gracies' dojo. In the Sunday edition, the *Jornal dos Sports* front page headlined: "Wrestling beats jiu-jitsu! M. R. Santos defeated Carlos Gracie."¹⁹¹ The Gracies adamantly contested the result. What had been intended to mark their debut in Rio turned into an embarrassing setback. Worse still, a saber-rattling flurry of insults published avidly by the newspapers would lead to grave consequences in the near future.

In 1932, the government headed by Getúlio Vargas created the Special Police (*Polícia Especial*) as a branch of the capital's police department and part of comprehensive reform to restructure the state security apparatus.¹⁹² This Fascist-inspired gendarmerie had its *raison d'être* in the ousting of Getúlio Vargas' representative in São Paulo. The *casus belli* was the new regime's failure to comply with São Paulo's oligarchies demands for a constitutional rule.¹⁹³ In 1932, a coalition of landowners and industrialists politically sidelined by the coup d'état in 1930, deposed Varga's interventor (appointed state governor) and declared war on the authoritarian regime. After nearly three months of military engagements, federal armed forces defeated São Paulo' troops made up of state militias and volunteers. In order to avoid a repetition of this event, the

¹⁸⁹ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 90.

¹⁹⁰ "Manoel Rufino Desafia Os Irmaos Gracie," *Jornal dos Sports*, July 4 1931, 3.

¹⁹¹ "Luta Livre Vence Jiu-Jitsu: M.R. Santos Derrota Carlos Gracie," *Jornal dos Sports*, August 23 1931, 2.

¹⁹² The comprehensive reforms were part of a larger project boosting the security apparatus. Getúlio Vargas, *A Nova Política Do Brasil*, (Rio de Janeiro: J. Olympio, 1938), 34-35.

¹⁹³ E. Bradford Burns, *A History of Brazil*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 351-52.

new regime organized storm troop squads fully devoted to Getulio Vargas whose primary mission was to protect the regime.¹⁹⁴ Physical prowess and martial arts skills were the most important requirements to draft new recruits. This unit worked in combination with the political police (*Departamento de Ordem Política e Social –D.O.P.S.*). Throughout their existence, both forces were deadly efficient and infamously identified with the more repressive facet of Vargas’ authoritarian regime.¹⁹⁵



Figure 21: “Sports activities of Special Police.” Source: O Globo Sportivo, 1934.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ The Special Police’s main purpose was to face the threats posed by Communism. Maria da Gloria Bonelli, “Os Delegados de Policia Entre o Profissionalismo e a Politica, 1842-2000” (paper presented at Latin American Association Meeting, Dallas, TX., March 27-29, 2003), 14. The Vargas Regime established the Special Police on January 10 1932 under command of Euzébio de Queiroz Filho, former army sergeant and sportsman. Initially the Special Police had 200 men mostly recruited in gyms, sportive associations and even along the beaches strips of Rio de Janeiro. Olyntho V. Scaramuzzi, *Memórias De Um Ex-Polícia Especial : Obsessão Ao Poder*, (Rio de Janeiro: Revista Continente Editorial, 1981), 13-14.

¹⁹⁵ In 1924, the Brazilian government created the “D.O.P.S.” (Departamento de Ordem Política e Social) Department of Political and Social Order.

¹⁹⁶ *O Globo Sportivo*, December 3 1938, 18.



Figure 22: An Impressive Performance: The Special Police formed by sportsmen parading on the streets of Rio de Janeiro. Source: *Jornal dos Sports*, 1933.¹⁹⁷

The Gracies' connection with the Special Police apparently began at its foundation in 1932. In the early 1930s, the Gracies were teaching jiu-jitsu at their dojo and to members of the Special Police. Carlos Gracie no longer fought in public matches after the confrontation with Manoel Rufino dos Santos. He became coach and mentor of his younger brothers, Oswaldo, Hélio and to a lesser extent George, in the promising prizefighting business.

In 1932, the Gracies had their lives dramatically affected. Their rivalry with wrestler Manoel Rufino dos Santos continued and an inability to set a rematch led to a violent street fight. The day after the incident headlines stated: “Barbaric aggression to Manoel Rufino dos Santos.”¹⁹⁸ The latter filed a complaint charging the three Gracie brothers, Carlos, Hélio and George of violent physical assault. In the hospital, the victim declared that the Gracies had done the same to other rivals. Perhaps Rufino was referring to two previous incidents involving the Gracies and other rivals. The first was their

¹⁹⁷ "Um Espectaculo De Rara Imponencia," *Jornal dos Sports*, July 3 1933, front page.

¹⁹⁸ "Agressao Barbara a Manoel Rufino Dos Santos," *Diário de Notícias*, October 6 1932, 2.

attempt to settle a score with their former associate Donato Pires do Reis. The second was in a street brawl involving the Gracies and the veteran Italian wrestler Joao Baldi.¹⁹⁹

The aggression against Manoel Rufino dos Santos did not fade away like these previous incidents. This time, a file passed through every level of justice, reaching the capital's court of appeal.²⁰⁰ This considerable legal effort may indicate the influence of Manoel Rufino dos Santos' social connections. He taught in schools and clubs frequented by the middle and upper middle class. Newspapers covering the case emphasized that witnesses, the prosecutor and the judge were one way or another affiliated to the victim's social network.²⁰¹ The Gracies' lawyer, nonetheless, argued successfully and the lower level court ruled in favor of the Gracies. Rufino's nouveau riche connections, however, helped him to take the case to the higher Court of Appeals, which ruled against the Gracies.²⁰² The Rio de Janeiro police chief, Captain Filinto Muller, set off to enforce the order to arrest Carlos, Hélio and George Gracie.²⁰³ Fearing a violent outcome during the raid, they decided to follow their lawyer's advice to surrender at the police station.

¹⁹⁹ *Jornal dos Sports*, January 15 1932, 2.

²⁰⁰ In 1930, Getulio Vargas' provisional government reorganized the *Corte de Apelação do Distrito Federal* (Federal Court of Appeal).

²⁰¹ "Agressao a Manoel Rufino," *Diário de Notícias*, May 23 1933, 6.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ "Os Irmaos Gracie Condenados a Dois Anos De Prisao," *Jornal dos Sports*, May 24 1934,



Figure 23: On the left, “The Gracie Brothers Arrested and Sentenced to Two Years in Prison!” On the right: Manoel Rufino dos Santos (picture) assaulted by the Gracies’. Source: *Jornal dos Sports*, 1934.²⁰⁴

The clash of class influence, however, was not over. Even before their actual incarceration, members of Rio de Janeiro’s elite unleashed a movement to free the Gracies that took the form of a petition sent by the Gracies’ lawyer to Getúlio Vargas who acknowledged its importance in his personal journal: “I signed today a pardon releasing the Gracie brothers for whom a campaign mobilizing public opinion had been articulated.”²⁰⁵ In fact, what the head of state euphemistically called “public opinion” was in reality a class mobilization made public through the press owned by the Gracies’ patrons and even by their antagonists. The names of people who signed the petition highlighted how the Gracies were able to garner support from old and new power holders. Old aristocrats, high-ranking military officers, politicians, journalists and even feminists signed the document.²⁰⁶ The mix of surnames from traditional families with

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ The pardon is cited in Getulio Vargas’s diary on June 3 1934. Getulio Vargas and Leda Saraiva Soares, *Diario*, (Rio de Janeiro: Siciliano, 1995), 299.

²⁰⁶ The list includes: Herbert Moses (President of the Brazilian Press Association), Jose Américo (Minister of Aviation), Major Juarez Távora (Minister of Agriculture), Oswaldo Aranha (Minister of Finance),

those of immigrant background or those from the traditional military establishment next to low-ranking revolutionary “lieutenants” is remarkably symbolic.²⁰⁷

The timing in which events occurred also helps understand the complexity of the *zeitgeist*. In the provisional government inaugurated in 1930 the balance of power had tended to enhance the authoritarian executive and weaken the legislature and the judiciary. In June 1934, Getúlio Vargas signed the Gracies’ pardon roughly one month prior his election as president by a Constituent Assembly. Despite its democratic appearances, the new constitutional rule ignored the Congress and subjugated the judiciary. By pardoning the Gracies, the new regime flexed its muscles during a critical political transition and enhanced its prestige helping loyal scions of the old elite.²⁰⁸ A short version of the petition addressed to the chief of the provisional government is reproduced below:

The signatories below on behalf of the public opinion make this appeal on humanitarian grounds, begging Your Excellency to forgive Carlos, Hélio and George found guilty by the II Federal Court of Appeal. The Gracie brothers are young men of high moral standards and family breadwinners. Thus, the condemnation will punish their household. On behalf of their families, I beg forgiveness. Despite their young age, the Gracie brothers through their sports performances became symbols of our nation. Teaching jiu-jitsu and its secrets at their gym and to the members of Special Police made them invaluable citizens. Moreover, they teach law-abiding citizens a weaponless self-defense system that

Admiral Protógenes Guimarães (Minister of the Navy), Salgado Filho (Minister of Labour), Captain João Alberto (former chief of police of Rio de Janeiro and congressman), Captain Carneiro de Mendonça (federal interventor in the state of Ceará), Commander Américo Pimentel (sub-chief of military staff), Minister Ronald de Carvalho (President’s secretary), Baroness of Bonfim, Count and Countess Affonso Celso, Bertha Lutz (Feminist leader, champion of women suffrage and congresswoman) among many others. Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 125.

²⁰⁷ Beattie, *The Tribute of Blood : Army, Honor, Race, and Nation in Brazil, 1864-1945*, 239-46. The “lieutenants” were those junior army officers involved in the military rebellion occurred in 1922 in Rio de Janeiro. They afterwards became a major political force that became instrumental to overthrow the government in 1930 and backing the Getúlio Vargas regime.

²⁰⁸ After 1930, Getúlio Vargas pressed the judges hostile to his regime into compulsory retirement and reduced the number of magistrates. José Adércio Leite Sampaio, *O Conselho Nacional De Justiça E a Independência Do Judiciário*, (Belo Horizonte: Del Rey Editora, 2007), 38.

contributes to reduce crimes committed with firearms. Regardless of actual blame, the charge of physical assault does not harm their reputation. The court sentenced them to 21 months in prison. This punishment will only corrupt their honor and ideals. The Gracies are very successful martial artists. Their imprisonment, thus, will interrupt their careers in which they represent the ultimate expression of moral energy and physical prowess. For these are the reasons I hereby request the pardon of Carlos, George, and Hélio, whose integrity will be under threat in prison. Following the principle of mercy in which kindness replaces severity, we hope Your Excellency will grant the requested pardon.²⁰⁹

The document first draws one's attention to the fact that after only a few years of jiu-jitsu activities, the lawyer described the Gracies as "symbols of our nation." Beyond the rhetorical hyperbole, it reflects the identification between the Gracies and the political establishment. The regime should preserve the Gracies because they are repositories of the secrets of a Japanese martial art, secrets that they share with their social peers and with the regime's praetorians.²¹⁰ Romeiro Netto, the Gracies' attorney, deliberately ignored the law depicting the Gracies' aggression as a routinized ritual of male violence justified on the grounds of honor and sanctioned by a patriarchal culture.²¹¹ This line of argument criticized the court's decision for jeopardizing the integrity of their bodies and their honor. Their attorney also requested protection of their role as family breadwinners since the court's decision deprived their families of critical support, causing financial hardship and dishonor for unprotected children and females. This would definitively

²⁰⁹ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 126.

²¹⁰ The Gracies participated in a gala presentation of the Special Police to Getúlio Vargas a week after their aggression against M.R. dos Santos. "Apresentacao De Gala Na Policia Especial," *Jornal dos Sports*, October 23 1932, front page, 6.

²¹¹ Roberto Da Matta pointed out that according to popular discourse Brazilians relates violence to aggression, conflict, and brutality. Usually such outburst of physical violence evokes images associated with an adult beating a child, a male beating a female and even rape. All informants interviewed by him agree that violence implies the use of physical violence to damage someone else's physical integrity. Roberto da Matta, *Violência Brasileira*, (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1982), 23-24.

undermine their masculine roles. As Barbara Weinstein has pointed out, Getúlio Vargas' regime reinstated male authority weakened by the economic crisis and the advancement of women's rights. One might assume that the threat to their traditional masculine roles struck a respective chord in Getúlio Vargas' frontier gaúcho mindset.²¹²

Despite its modernizing discourses, the state remained attached to a traditional paternalistic model. The latter frequently confronted the former, which had a "life of its own." The state, following the Luso-Brazilian tradition, continued to exercise its ultimate function as a provider of employment and distributor of justice.²¹³ As Roberto da Matta has argued, during outbreaks of populism in Brazil, the networks of personal relations prevail over the legal system.²¹⁴ The case involving the physical assault against the bus driver, displayed in the vignette in the beginning of the chapter, may have contributed to the Gracie's final condemnation. In any event, the authorities were fully aware of their criminal records. Yet the Gracies were not only free but also enjoying unprecedented prestige within the Vargas regime.²¹⁵ Lastly, Rosalina Coelho Lisboa, a Portuguese-born writer, political activist, feminist and diplomat was the driving force behind the operation

²¹² Barbara Weinstein, "Making Workers Masculine: The Reconstruction of Male Worker Identity in Twenty-Century Brazil," in *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*, ed. Karen Hagermann and Josh Toshi Stefan Dudink (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).

Roberto da Matta finds the role of breadwinner or head of the family performed in the private sphere so powerful in Brazil that it constitutes one of the few spaces where elements of class and race are emphasized. Matta, *Violência Brasileira*, 30-31. About machismo among gauchos see Richard W. Slatta, *Gauchos and the Vanishing Frontier*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983),

²¹³ As Richard Graham has put it, the patronage system in Brazil did not end with the fall of the monarchy in 1889. Brazilian society did not progress "unilinearly toward rational, impersonal, and impartial government." Instead, the system of patron and clients remained largely intact since it was not a "stage in Brazil's history." Richard Graham, *Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil*, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1990), 271-72.

²¹⁴ Matta, *Violência Brasileira*, 42.

²¹⁵ The justice condemned the Gracies to pay 50:000\$000 (50 contos de reis) to Manoel Rufino dos Santos. In 1934, this was 1934 equivalent to US\$ 6,000. "As Camaras Criminaes Condenaram Os Irmaos Gracie a Pagar 50 Contos a M.R. Dos Santos," *Jornal dos Sports*, September 15 1934, 4.

to save the Gracies. She was also a fascist sympathizer who enjoyed influence in the highest echelons of the regime.²¹⁶ As a prototype of a modern woman, she practiced jiu-jitsu with the Gracies and passionately embraced the defense of Carlos Gracie.²¹⁷

Teaching jiu-jitsu to the Special Police at this time was essential to the Gracies' reputation. The association helped to protect them against occasional vicissitudes and enhanced their social standard, which was instrumental to jiu-jitsu's early acceptance by the establishment. The Special Police constituted an ideal space for the Gracies to display their skills to authorities. In 1933, for example, two months prior to the incident with the bus driver, the Special Police performed one of its first lavish public appearances. Before a large audience, which included Antunes Maciel, Minister of Justice and Rio de Janeiro Police Chief João Alberto, two hundred physically impressive recruits presented drill routines of physical culture led by their flamboyant commander, Lieutenant Euzébio de Queiroz. In the main martial arts presentation, Carlos and Hélio Gracie showed jiu-jitsu self-defense techniques against knives and kicks.²¹⁸ These performances included violent, free-style matches and choreographic demonstrations for local authorities and foreign dignitaries. They became a routine for the Gracies during that critical period of early authoritarianism.

A confrontation pitting Carlos Gracie's other brother, George, against a muscular wrestler known as *Tico Soledade* held at Special Police headquarters in 1933 offers a good example of how violence became a medium that bonded the Gracies and the Vargas

²¹⁶ Percy Alvin Martin and Manoel Cardozo eds., *Who's Who in Latin America*, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1935), 100-01.

²¹⁷ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 124-25.

²¹⁸ "Demonstracao De Defesa Pessoal Na Policia Especial," *Diário de Notícias*, February 11 1933, 2.

regime. George, nicknamed the “Red Cat,” became the family star after Hélio’s accident, Oswaldo’s technical limitations and Carlos’ retirement. The fight turned into a blood bath in front of an audience constituted of security force authorities. The disproportionate size of the opponents led one newspaper to call it a fight of “Samson against Goliath.”²¹⁹ *Tico Soledade*, with an impressive muscular physique, was expecting an easy victory, but he wound up unconscious in the Special Police infirmary. Matches organized by the Special Police usually had basic rules to keep them under control, according to the press. This time, however, Vargas’ centurions turned it into one of “the most violent wrestling matches ever.”²²⁰ In the beginning, Gracie was severely punished, but recovered and forced his opponent to submit. In fact, *Soledade* surrendered by tapping out, but George tightened his grip, choking him to the point of unconsciousness. The overt brutality, unusual even by Special Police standards, occurred as the Gracies were undergoing their legal ordeal. In addition, George was the only Gracie standing, which may have put him under pressure to make a gala presentation for his patrons, as he apparently did.

²¹⁹ "O Mais Violento 'Match' De Luta Livre Realizado No Brasil," *Jornal dos Sports*, July 8 1933, 9.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*



Figure 24: The Gracies against muscular wrestlers. Source: *Jornal dos Sports*, 1933.²²¹

Conclusion

In the early 1930s, the Gracies began to enjoy the prestige and power through their martial arts performances for the first time since the turn of the century. They emerged from their social economic ordeal closely associated with nationalism. The Gracies pragmatically realized, as did their social peers, that they must adapt to a new and powerful political establishment. Under the state patronage, the Gracies took decisive steps to create a local style of jiu-jitsu, a process that occurred simultaneously with the birth of modern Brazil.

²²¹ Ibid.

Chapter 3 - Nationalism, immigration and identity: the making of Brazilian jiu-jitsu, 1934-1943

Round 1: A “fight of honor,” George Gracie versus Yano Takeo

In 1934, the newspaper *Jornal dos Sports* announced Yano Takeo’s arrival in Rio de Janeiro:

A new phenomenon in our rings: The sympathetic and humble Japanese Takeo Yano came to our office accompanied by Commander Luis Souto, director of the Navy Sports League. This young Japanese man settled in Brazil three years ago and has a record of 200 fights since the beginning of his martial arts career in Japan.²²² In Brazil, he fought a police sergeant weighing 185 pounds (Yano weighs 154 pounds). In the state of Pará (Amazon) he taught jiu-jitsu to the police forces and to the Navy officers as Count Koma’s assistant. Currently, living in Rio de Janeiro, he is teaching classes to 20 Navy cadets. Yano will challenge George Gracie soon.²²³

²²² Takeo Yano was an agricultural technician settled in Amazon by the mid-1930s (Amazonas state) to work in the project to produce jute at Parintins and Itacoatiara. John Hemming, *Change in the Amazon Basin*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), 121.

²²³ "Um Novo Crack Para Os Nossos Rings," *Jornal dos Sports*, October 7 1934, 5.



Figure 25: Yano Takeo. Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1934.

Yano arguably, after Mayeda Mitsuyo, held the best martial arts pedigree in Brazil. The article above hinted at the existence of animosity between the Gracies and jiu-jitsu practitioners in the Navy. The Navy Sports League, founded during World War I, promoted sports and nationalism, and in the 1930s recruited Japanese instructors to teach jiu-jitsu and swimming.²²⁴ Navy officer Luis Souto, also a former Mayeda Mitsuyo student, was not at all sympathetic to the Gracies.²²⁵ Once again, although the local lineages of martial artists originated in the Amazon, they competed fiercely for Mayeda's legacy. This time, however, the Gracies were facing their Japanese rivals with backing from the Brazilian Navy, which pioneered the practice of Japanese jiu-jitsu in the early twentieth century.

²²⁴ The Navy Sports League was founded on November 25 1916.

²²⁵ "Ono E Um Lutador Extraordinario," *Jornal dos Sports*, November 27 1935, 3. Commander Luis Filipe de Filgueira Souto was among the 333 sailors killed in the sinking of the battleship "Bahia" on July 4 1945. The warship sunk by accident during an artillery exercise off Brazil's northeastern coast.

Yano eventually challenged the Gracies to “a fight for honor.”²²⁶ After demarches in which tempers flared, Yano and George Gracie fought a 100-minute bout, dominated by Yano who threw the Brazilian twenty-six times. Despite his ample technical dominance, the match ended in a tie according to the consensually accepted rules. Afterwards, Yano dismissed rumors of deliberately holding back during the fight. Instead, he declared that his failure to win was due to George’s defensive strategy and because the local rules were different than those enforced by Kodokan school in Japan.²²⁷

Round 2: Jiu-jitsu, football and dictatorship, Rio de Janeiro, 1937

The regime, under Getulio Vargas leadership, ruling Brazil since the coup d’état in 1930 became a full-fledged dictatorship in 1937 known as the Estado Novo (New State). It was a period of radicalization of Brazilian nationalism in a quintessentially xenophobic form, born under an alleged foreign threat. Throughout the 1930s, Japanese immigration was often at the center of a national debate dividing the Brazilian elite. Anti-Japanese groups sought to justify their xenophobia claiming that the "yellow peril" were unassimilables and a threat to the idea of a homogenous national identity.²²⁸ Against this background, a rivalry developed between the Gracies in Rio de Janeiro and the Ono brothers in São Paulo.

²²⁶ "Yano Desafia Helio Gracie Para Uma Luta De Honra," *Jornal dos Sports*, December 20 1934, 3.

²²⁷ "George Gracie E Yano Empatam Apos 100 Minutos De Acao," *Ring*, October 5 1935, 3.

²²⁸ R.C.P., "Um Perigo Para a Nacionalidade: A Imigracao Japonesa," *Mensario do Jornal do Commercio*, No. 1, Janeiro (1938), 119-123.

In 1937, George Gracie claimed that his younger brother, Hélio, had previously fought a 2-2 draw with Ono Yasuichi. Now George would have his shot against Ono Naochi.²²⁹ The referees for the bout held in Rio were two Special Police officers, including its commandant, Lieutenant Euzébio de Queiroz.²³⁰ Ono Naochi threw George Gracie harshly several times, tossed him out of the ring and then choked him into submission. This devastating loss before their patrons certainly damaged the Gracies' reputation and demanded a quick and adequate response.²³¹

Shortly after the bout, the promoters rapidly scheduled a rematch to take place at the Brazil Stadium in Rio de Janeiro.²³² Before a packed arena, George finished off Ono Naochi in the sixth round with a decisive arm bar that revenged and restored the Gracies' honor. The next day's newspapers headlined: "Football is no longer the only sport attracting large audiences."²³³ The analogy with football was deliberate, since Mário Filho, owner of the *Jornal dos Sports* and intellectual, enthusiastically promoted a national identity associated with a Brazilian style of football. Heightening the nationalist fervor, the Brazilian-owned movie studio *Cinédia* screen the presentation of "the first jiu-jitsu match ever filmed in Brazil."²³⁴

²²⁹ "Ono Vai Experimentar O Amargor Derrota," *Jornal dos Sports*, September 8 1937, 4.

²³⁰ *Jornal dos Sports*, September 12 1937.

²³¹ *Jornal dos Sports*, September 27 1937.

²³² The Estádio Brasil (Brazil Stadium) located near Rio's downtown at the Feira Internacional de Amostras (Sample International Fair). The arena built in 1935 had 3,600 square feet.

²³³ "George Gracie Venceu No Sexto Round Com Um Armlock: Ja Nao Se Pode Dizer Que O Football E O Unico Esporte Que Atrai O Grande Publico " *Jornal dos Sports*, October 3 1937, 6.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I described how the Gracies used their jiu-jitsu skills to regain status by analyzing their insertion into Getulio Vargas' security apparatus and how they enjoyed protection under the new regime. In this chapter, I analyze how the Gracies launched created a Brazilian jiu-jitsu style against a background of growing nationalism and construction of national identity, notably during the implementation of the Estado Novo dictatorship after 1937.

The Gracies, strongly supported by the regime, ran their jiu-jitsu operations in Rio de Janeiro a few blocks from the presidential palace. By contrast, their rivals settled in the epicenter of Japanese immigration, 400 kilometers away, in São Paulo. The rivalry between the Gracies and the Japanese martial artists reflected the existence of two competing projects for modern Brazil. The Gracies came to represent the nationalist alliance with xenophobic overtones between Rio's old elite and the new power holders hailing from oligarchies established in peripheral Brazil. Conversely, the Japanese martial artists symbolized São Paulo's agro-industrial elite option for immigration and multiculturalism.

In addition, the dynamic of the rivalry between the Gracies and Japanese fighters demonstrated the ambiguities found in the discourses presented above. The Navy, the branch of the military that had pioneered the practice of jiu-jitsu, sponsored some of the

best Japanese martial artists in Brazil during the 1930s. Moreover, the Navy traditionally recruited officers of genteel background, which made their antagonism toward the Gracies an inter-elite dispute within the bureaucratic apparatus created by the new regime.²³⁵

In this chapter, I analyze jiu-jitsu's acculturation using two conceptual frameworks. The first suggests the creation of a Brazilian national identity against the background of growing foreign immigration and under the nationalist influence.²³⁶ During the 1930s, the Gracies found themselves in a quasi- Hobbesian state of war against all challengers. When fighting Brazilian wrestlers, the Gracies were seeking to enhance their status and prestige within the new political establishment. But when fighting the Japanese, they were becoming epitomes of national identity and simultaneously creating a local fighting style.

The Gracies created a local jiu-jitsu culture by refusing to abide by technical, philosophical and cultural aspects of the Japanese matrix. As a result, they laid the foundations of the future hybrid known as Brazilian jiu-jitsu. The transformation of Japanese jiu-jitsu encompassed a wide range of changes concerning techniques, philosophy, and rituals in which I employed Arjun Appadurai's study of the acculturation of British cricket in India. Appadurai found that through a binary transformation involving "hard" and "soft" forms, British cricket underwent a process of indigenization in colonial India:

²³⁵ Peter M. Beattie, "Adolfo Ferreira Caminha: Navy Officer, Ardent Republican, and Naturalist Novelist," in *The Human Tradition in Modern Brazil*, ed. Peter M. Beattie (Willmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2004), 91.

²³⁶ See: Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity : Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil*, passim.

Hard cultural forms are those that come with a set of links between value, meaning, and embodied practice that are difficult to break and hard to transform. Soft cultural forms, by contrast, that permits relatively easy separation of embodied performance from meaning and value, and relatively successful transformation at each level.²³⁷

Concerning the “hard” forms of embodied practice, a brief explanation of technical aspects is necessary. Japanese immigration had direct influence on jiu-jitsu style as reinvented by the Gracies. Since the initial bouts fought in São Paulo in 1930, became clear the Japanese martial artists’ technical superiority in standing techniques (*Nage-Waza*). On the other hand, the growing specialization in standing techniques led the Japanese fighters to gradually neglect ground combat (*Ne-Waza*). The Gracies then filled the technical gap by focusing their jiu-jitsu practice almost exclusively on ground combat. Therefore, while keeping the techniques in their original form, they worked out a ground combat style based on a defensive strategy. Simultaneously, the Gracies sought to transform jiu-jitsu’s “soft” forms by rapidly abolishing Japanese bowing (*rei-ho*), ignoring Kodokan judo’s belt rankings and Japanese rules governing the fights.²³⁸

The Gracies versus the Japanese martial artists: fighting for jiu-jitsu’s supremacy

As James C. Scott affirmed, the new regime sought “to remake society in its own image.”²³⁹ In undertaking this task, the government created agencies to organize, regulate

²³⁷ Appadurai, "Playing with Modernity: The Decolonization of Indian Cricket," 90.

²³⁸ Replacing the Japanese bowing by the Westernized “handshake” seems to be an attempt to introduce horizontal ethics or egalitarian ideas that came along with modernization. See: Matta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes : An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*, 148-49. The Gracies also created a new ranking system in which the highest level was the blue belt.

²³⁹ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State : How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998), 97.

and control sports in general and combat sports in particular. Rio de Janeiro's Municipal Boxing Commission, for example, was organized in 1933 and was responsible for a variety of martial arts. Upon the arrival of the new regime, elements within both the military and the police became obsessed with ideas stemming from neo-Lamarckian eugenics that placed strong emphasis on improvement of living conditions through the practice of sports.²⁴⁰ Thus, police or military officers usually led state agencies governing combat sports.

Simultaneous with measures establishing state control over combat sports, growing Japanese immigration, between 1925 and 1935, brought scores of martial artists to São Paulo. The account of an immigrant named Yanagimori Masaru is particularly noteworthy. In 1936, he was a fifteen-year old martial artist who embarked on the ship bound for Brazil. The "Buenos Aires Maru" was a regular vessel transporting Japanese immigrants, equipped with a twenty-eight mat *dojo* that held a judo tournament during the forty day trip.²⁴¹ Ten percent of the passengers were martial arts practitioners and one-fourth of these were graduated black belts. These figures show a significant number of martial artists arriving to Brazil, since immigrants traveling on the "Buenos Aires Maru" represented ten per cent of the all Japanese arrivals in 1936.²⁴²

²⁴⁰ Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics : Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, 92.

²⁴¹ The *Osaka Shohen Kaisha* Line (O.S.K.) owned the "Buenos Aires Maru" whose itinerary had as "port of calls" Rio de Janeiro and Santos (São Paulo). Björn Larsson, "Maritime Timetable Images," accessed August 12, 2011, <http://www.timetableimages.com/maritime/images/osk.htm>.

The Japanese Army transformed the vessel in hospital ship. The USAAF B-24s sunk her in 1943 off Papua New Guinea's coast. Patrick Clancey, "Hyperwar Project," accessed September 10, 2011, <http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/USN-Chron/USN-Chron-1943.html>.

²⁴² Jhony Arai, *Viajantes Do Sol Nascente*, (São Paulo, Brasil: Editora Garçon, 2003), n.p. Lone, *The Japanese Community in Brazil, 1908-1940 : Between Samurai and Carnival*, 101.

Confrontations between the Gracies in Rio de Janeiro and the Japanese black belts were probably inevitable even when the latter predominantly settled in São Paulo. In the early 1930s, Hélio and George Gracie fought their first bouts against the new Japanese immigrants. Both reached draws in respective fights against Namiki and the old Gracie acquaintance, Geo Omori. Towards the mid 1930s, Japanese immigrants with outstanding martial arts skills landed in Rio de Janeiro, some of them, supported by the Gracies' antagonists in the military. As an example of the growing tension between the Gracies and the Boxing Commission, the former had their licenses to participate in public bouts suspended twice in 1934. On the first occasion, prior to the fight between Hélio and a Japanese named Myako, Carlos Gracie flatly rejected the appointed referee who was replaced by the Gracies' patron, Special Police chief Lieutenant Euzébio de Queiroz. Next, Carlos made an unusual request for the use of sleeveless jiu-jitsu uniforms, apparently seeking to make the application of arm bars by the Japanese more difficult. Lastly, after Hélio's victory over Myako, the Boxing Commission suspended Carlos from participating in combat sports due to his unruly behavior during the bouts and persistent complaints.²⁴³ The other Gracie, George, also had his share of controversy with the commission. In 1934, he once entered the ring but inexplicably refused to fight the Brazilian wrestler Orlando Américo da Silva (nicknamed *Dudu*). Before an astonished audience and members of the Boxing Commission, the police escorted and placed George under custody.²⁴⁴

²⁴³ "Brilhante Victoria De Helio Gracie Sobre Myaki " *Jornal dos Sports*, June 24 1934, 6

²⁴⁴ George, after signing a contract and agreeing to the rules, refused to fight a no-holds-barred fight. "George Gracie Fugiu Ao Combate Com Dudu," *Jornal dos Sports*, November 4 1934, 6.

The Boxing Commission sought to set limits, draft regulations, and create weight divisions and rules, all in order to decrease the level of violence in no-holds-barred bouts. Such measures infuriated the Gracies, whose martial-art marketing sought largely to create the image of “David and Goliath” performances. The creation of weight divisions mitigated the effects of their psychological game. Moreover, the adoption of international wrestling rules deprived them of the violence inherent to fights with barely any rules.²⁴⁵

The jiu-jitsu routine that Carlos Gracie learned from Mayeda Mitsuyo lacked philosophical aspects regarding hierarchy and strict respect for the rules found in the Japanese matrix. As mentioned earlier, they replaced Kodokan judo’s “soft” forms of orthodox by a local version of the sport. A similar situation occurred in the creation of creole style of football (*fútbol criollo*) in Argentina where the British sought to transmit to local footballers their sporting ethics.²⁴⁶ However, the Argentineans reinvented football under their own cultural terms. In fact, Argentinean, Uruguayan and Brazilian football players over time developed their own interpretation of what the British defined as “fair play.” Brazilians responded by resorting to a cultural codification known in Portuguese as *catimba*. This colloquial Afro-Portuguese word *catimba* corresponds to the Spanish term *picardia criolla*, which means “craftiness” or “trickery.” Each refers to dissimulation or astute trickery used to keep an adversary off balance through behavior unexpectedly contrary to the norms.

²⁴⁵ The referees of the Boxing Commission were instructed to apply international wrestling rules by which a contender can only be pinned down on his back. This regulation posed a major setback for the Gracie since they were likely to be pinned down fighting against larger and heavier wrestlers. "Carlos Gracie Suspenso Por 6 Mezes," *Jornal dos Sports*, July 25 1934, front page, 6.

²⁴⁶ Archetti, *Masculinities: Football, Polo, and the Tango in Argentina*, 49.

The Gracies' adamant refusal to abide by Kodokan rules and to resist the ones enforced by the Boxing Commission is key to understand how they survived the early confrontations with Japanese martial artists while creating a local jiu-jitsu style.

It is noteworthy that modern rules enforced both in Japan and in Brazil had nationalistic and even militaristic undertones. Kodokan judo rules, for example, resurrected old warrior codes of Japanese *Bushido* by incorporating the idea of "sudden death," which proclaimed as victorious the one able to apply a clean ("perfect") throw. In Brazil, the military, which was in charge of combat sports, sought to standardize loosely organized rules in order to regulate violence and transform unruly performances into modern sport.

If the Gracies accepted Japanese rules, they would stand no chance of victory against skilled Japanese throwers. Similarly, adopting the new rules that determine victory by points established by the military that controlled the Boxing Commission would turn draws into defeats. This became clear by analyzing fights in which the Japanese martial artists thrown and dominated the Gracies. One should bear in mind that inconclusive draws allowed the Gracies to keep their aura of invincibility intact, which was a valuable asset in times of nationalism.

After the Gracies' fight with Takeo Yano, as described in the beginning of this chapter, other Japanese immigrants based in São Paulo came to Rio determined to purge

the local jiu-jitsu's heresy. Yassuiti, another member of the Ono family supported by the Navy challenged Hélio Gracie.²⁴⁷



Figure 26: “Ono is an outstanding fighter: Captain Luis Souto, Count Koma’s student.” Source: Jornal dos Sports, 1935.

In a bitter exchange of words prior to the fight, Carlos Gracie acknowledged the hostile Navy officer’s past apprenticeship under Mayeda Mitsuyo in the Amazon. Yet training under the same jiu-jitsu master made them rivals rather than friends. Furthermore, in this exchange Commander Souto emphasized that Ono was even better than Yano, and that Hélio Gracie thus stood no chance.²⁴⁸ In response, instead of offering his habitual bellicose remarks, Carlos was somewhat tactful. While acknowledging “Commander Souto’s profound jiu-jitsu knowledge,” Carlos affirmed that “Hélio had no fear and will win.”²⁴⁹ Ono himself decided to provoke the Gracies and declared that Hélio

²⁴⁷ Yassuiti Ono and Naoti Ono arrived in São Paulo in the late 1920s. Fabio Quio Takao, "O Judo No Brasil: Os Primeiros Rivais Da Familia Gracie," *Tatame*, February, 2011, 54.

²⁴⁸ Commander Luis Souto was part of the Navy officer’s cohort trained by Mayeda Mitsuyo and Takeo Yano in Amazon. *Jornal dos Sports*, November 27 1935.

²⁴⁹ "Helio Nao Se Atemoriza," *Jornal dos Sports*, November 28 1935, 3.

would not survive the first round and challenged all the Gracies to fight him in one night.²⁵⁰ The bout ended in a draw, not very differently from George's previous match with Yano. According to the *Jornal dos Sports*, Hélio's strong defensive strategy held off Ono's aggressive actions. Carlos acknowledging the danger posed by Ono sought to disturb the latter and intimidate the referee. For this, the Boxing Commission, once again, suspended him from coaching for six months.²⁵¹

The first round of fights between the Gracies and skilled Japanese martial artists such as Yano and Ono came to a stalemate in that the Gracies managed to survive their first real test against mainstream jiu-jitsu. The political background behind the matches was particularly significant. A political crisis marked by violent clashes broke out on November 23 1935 in some northeastern states and Rio de Janeiro.²⁵² A Communist revolt rocked the fragile constitutional arrangement, and Getulio Vargas used this as an excuse to impose a dictatorship in 1937.²⁵³ Repressing communism was the *baptême du feu* for the Special Police in which the Gracies were instructors. Through this recently created gendarmerie the state unleashed repression in full swing.²⁵⁴

²⁵⁰ "Helio Nao Passara Do 1o Round: Ono Desafia Os 4 Irmaos Gracie," *Jornal dos Sports*, December 3 1935, 5.

²⁵¹ "Nao Se Definiu O Combate Helio X Ono: Defensiva Do Brasileiro Invalidou a Agressividade Do Japones," *Jornal dos Sports*, December 6 1935, front page, 4.

²⁵² The revolt broke out in Natal, capital of Rio Grande do Norte state on November 23 1935 and in Rio de Janeiro on November 27 1935.

²⁵³ Stanley E. Hilton, *Brazil and the Soviet Challenge, 1917-1947*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991), 73.

²⁵⁴ The Special Police was very active during the repression that followed the failed communist insurrection. As for example in the capture and arrest of Luis Carlos Prestes, Olga Benário, Harry (Arthur Ernst Ewert) and Elise Berger who were high-profile individuals involved in the insurrection. According to the memoirs of a former Special Police officer, the German couple, Harry and Elise, were savagely tortured inside the Special Police barracks, but stoically refused to cooperate. Scaramuzzi, *Memórias De Um Ex-Polícia Especial : Obsessão Ao Poder*, 15-22. Olga Benário was deported to Germany and killed in Ravensbrück.

Ono Quer Combater No Rio
UM EXCELENTE MESTRE DE JIU-JITSU



EM nossa gravura, vemos Ono, um excelente mestre de jiu-jitsu, à esquerda e, à direita, o sportman Marcelo Soares Sottilho.
Ono já disputou dezenas de lutas em São Paulo, tendo sido vitorioso em todas. É um autêntico "falso-pretô". Vários japoneses foram rapidamente vencidos por ele, inclusive o nosso conhecido Miyaki.

Figure 27: “Ono wants to fight in Rio: an extraordinary jiu-jitsu master.” Source: *Jornal dos Sports*, 1935.²⁵⁵

Against this background, Hélio and Ono Naochi finally had a showdown.²⁵⁶ Ono slammed Gracie to the ground twenty-seven times and even more surprisingly, the latter avoided ground combat, narrowly escaping defeat. By declaring a draw, the referee ignored the new jiu-jitsu rules recently adopted by the Brazilian Boxing Federation. The new rules aimed to introduce a scoring system of points similar to those used in boxing matches. Under these regulations, Ono was the winner, but the invisible hand of the establishment saved the Gracies. At the end, the event organizers, perhaps trying to

²⁵⁵ "Ono Quer Combater No Rio: Um Excelente Mestre De Jiu-Jitsu," *Jornal dos Sports*, November 27 1935, 3.

²⁵⁶ Massagoichi had to submit to a “qualifying test” to have his bout against Hélio approved by the Boxing Commission. The Commission applied this procedure in case of doubt about the fighter’s credentials. Yano, invited to evaluate Helio’s next opponent, found Massagoichi’s skills insufficient. "Helio Gracie Enfrenta Massagoichi," *Jornal dos Sports*, August 15 1935, 3.

minimize the public embarrassment, awarded Ono with a gold medal by his contribution to the martial arts practice.²⁵⁷

The Ono brothers in São Paulo, however, were not satisfied with their previous bouts against the Gracies. Yasuichi challenged George Gracie and one newspaper headline declared: “Jiu-jitsu Supremacy in Brazil will be decided today! Who will win? The Japanese Ono or the Brazilian Gracie?” After a very close match, the referee disqualified Ono by punch George unlawfully.²⁵⁸ The tension around these matches seemed to take its toll on the Japanese fighter. Finally, Yasuichi’s younger brother, Naochi, came forward and challenged George. After a tough six-round fight, George defeated Naochi by points upon the application of the long-awaited new rules enforced by the referee from the Special Police.²⁵⁹

By the end of 1937, at the launch of the Estado Novo, Yano declared: “only a Japanese martial artist can hold the title of best jiu-jitsu fighter in Brazil.”²⁶⁰

This was a bold statement, issued under a full-fledged dictatorship with xenophobic overtones. Yet Yano had the support from the Brazilian Navy, which may have encouraged him to display his “Japaneseness” in such critical times.

²⁵⁷ The Brazilian Boxing Confederation (Confederação Brasileira de Pugilismo) founded on August 3 1935 merged the federations of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Minas Gerais. This state institution, thereafter, ruled over jiu-jitsu, Boxing, Capoeira, Wrestling, judo among others. Jiu-jitsu’s rules changed on August 20 1935. “The rules of jiu-jitsu’s matches were modified and hereafter will be decided by points, surrender and knockout in order to avoid mistakes made by referees.” “Confederacao Brasileira De Pugilismo,” *Jornal dos Sports*, August 20 1935, 3.

²⁵⁸ “George Gracie Vencedor Por Desclassificacao,” *Jornal dos Sports*, October 17 October 17, front page. “Na Luta Realizada Hontem No Stadio Brasil, Jorge Gracie Venceu Ono Por Desclassificacao,” *Diario Carioca*, October 17 1937, front page.

²⁵⁹ “Gracie Dara Nova Oportunidade a Naoiti Ono,” *Diário Carioca*, November 12 1937, 8. “Nauite Sustentou Os 6 Rounds Mas Perdeu Por Pontos,” *Jornal dos Sports*, November 14 1937, 6.

The referee was the Special Police chief Eusebio de Queiroz.

²⁶⁰ “Yano Esta Certo De Que Derrotara George Gracie: Japones Declara Que So Um Japones Podera Deter a Supremacia Do Jiu-Jitsu ” *Jornal dos Sports*, August 31 1938, 4.

The turning point in the creation of a Brazilian jiu-jitsu style was the fights pitting the Gracies against the Japanese immigrants. After years struggling in the business of combat sports, at the beginning of the Estado Novo the Gracies managed to attract sizable audiences, capture media attention and obtain state support only comparable with football spectacles. In any event, the rivalry between the Gracies and the Japanese raged on when the Estado Novo tightened the grip on every aspect of Brazilian life.²⁶¹

Against a backdrop of a wave of nationalism, George and Yano fought two important bouts in Rio and Belo Horizonte respectively. In the first, George won by finishing Yano with a foot lock confirming the Gracies growing specialization on ground combat. Prior to the second bout, however, the contenders made a peculiar bet in which Yano promised to throw George twenty times during the fight. If he failed, he would pay George, a certain amount of cash, for each failed throw.²⁶² Yano accomplished his goal by throwing George exactly twenty times and won the bout on points.²⁶³ At this stage, the differences in styles are very clear. The Gracies resorted to a defensive ground strategy based on a scissors-like position (*do-o sae*) to compensate the Japanese superiority on throwing techniques. The Gracies developed their jiu-jitsu beyond the model of “soft forms” — purely cultural adaptations — proposed by Arjun Appadurai.

In fact, the emphasis on ground combat was primarily a strategy devised to survive their rivals and not with any deliberate purpose of creating such a “Brazilian” jiu-jitsu style. Even so, the Gracies’ agency was an important factor in the invention of

²⁶¹ Getúlio Vargas’ coup d’état on September 10 1937 made the regime a full-fledge dictatorship.

²⁶² “Yano E George Mais Uma Vez Frente a Frente: Uma Aposta Original Para O Grande Choque De Sabado,” *Jornal dos Sports*, September 22 1938, 2.

²⁶³ “Yano Venceu George Gracie Por Pontos Em Belo Horizonte Derrubando 20 Vezes,” *O Globo Sportivo*, October 4 1938, 6.

“Brazilian” jiu-jitsu. The Gracies devised the Brazilian jiu-jitsu as a defensive style, but they made it offensive through the application of chokes and joint-locks from the bottom position.



Figure 28: *Osae-komi waza* (pin down technique). Kodokan judo rules give the victory to those able to pin down their opponent for thirty seconds. By contrast, the Gracies adopted the rule in which victory only could be achieved by submission (surrender or tapping out). Source: Judo Information, 2011.²⁶⁴



Figure 29: *Nage-Waza* (throwing techniques). According to Kodokan rules, a “perfect” (clear) throw ends the fight according to the concept of “sudden death” (knock-out). Source: Judo Information, 2011.²⁶⁵



Figure 30: The “guard” (*do-osae*) position hallmarked the Brazilian jiu-jitsu by emphasizing ground combat. Source: Beginning Bjj Ecourse, 2011.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁴ Neil Ohlenkamp, "Pinning Techniques," accessed June 22, 2011, <http://judoinfo.com/techdrw.htm>.

²⁶⁵ "Throwing Techniques," accessed June 22, 2011, <http://judoinfo.com/techdraw.htm>.

²⁶⁶ Stephan Kesting, "Beginning Bjj Course," accessed June 23, 2011, <http://www.beginningbjj.com>.

Public performance, Politics and the Gracies' patriarchy

Participation in public performances against the Japanese was essential to the development of the Gracies' "Brazilian" jiu-jitsu. These activities, combined with others undertaken in their *dojo*, helped to consolidate their prestige and created a strong ethos that linked them with local society. Public gatherings displaying beautiful bodies, encouraging the practice of sports and promoting nationalism marked this period. Connections between sports, eugenics, nationalism, and militarism were the norm.²⁶⁷ Yet the transplanting of jiu-jitsu to particular elitist urban spaces and within a larger cultural concept was a specifically Gracie innovation. In 1936, they promoted jiu-jitsu tournaments and staged public demonstrations with the participation of "the best individuals of our society."²⁶⁸ The presentations held on Copacabana Beach were a cultural innovation at a time when urban expansion sprawled along Rio's southern beaches. The construction of the Copacabana Palace Hotel in 1923 had constituted a watershed for this previously peripheral neighborhood. It introduced fashionable forms of seaside recreation imported from contemporary Europe.²⁶⁹ The *Jornal dos Sports* enthusiastically reported in 1936: "Jiu-jitsu on Copacabana Beach: Splendor and Physical Prowess."²⁷⁰ Beach culture was a new aspect of upper-class lifestyle sponsored by the

²⁶⁷ Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics : Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, 162-70.

²⁶⁸ "Torneio De Jiu-Jitsu Reune Os Melhores Individuos De Nossa Sociedade," *Jornal dos Sports*, June 15 1936, 3.

²⁶⁹ Conniff, *Urban Politics in Brazil : The Rise of Populism*, 28-29.

²⁷⁰ "Jiu-Jitsu Em Copacabana: Esplendor E Pujanca Fisica," *Jornal dos Sports*, June 21 1937, front page.

Jornal dos Sports and the beginning of an instrumental relationship linking bodies in swimsuits to ones wrapped in jiu-jitsu *gis*.²⁷¹

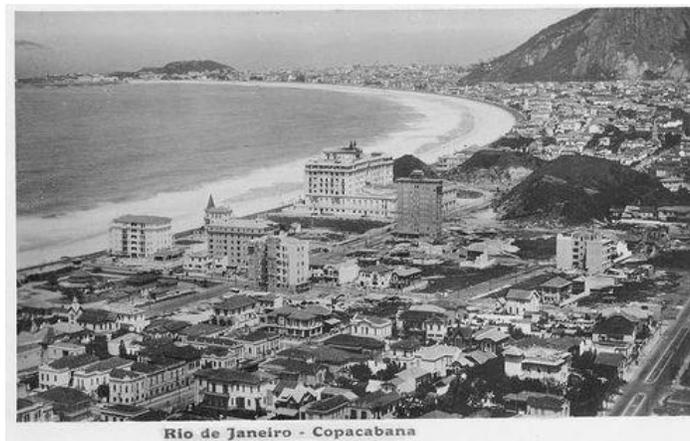


Figure 31: Copacabana 1930s. Source: Flickr, 2007.²⁷²



Figure 32: "Jiu-jitsu and Wrestling Tournament Kick-Off" Copacabana Beach, Rio. Source: *Jornal dos Sports*, 1937.²⁷³

²⁷¹ Roberto Marinho and Mário Filho bought the *Jornal dos Sports*. The former also owned the newspaper *O Globo* which became Brazil's most powerful media empire in the second half of the twentieth century.

²⁷² Andre Costa, "Copacabana Beach," accessed August 30, 2011, http://www.flickr.com/photos/andre_so_rio/1016368923/.

²⁷³ "Jiu-Jitsu Em Copacabana: Esplendor E Pujanca Fisica."



Figure 33: “Sporting Evening at Gracie Academy with the Best Individuals of Our Society” Source: *Jornal dos Sports*, 1936.²⁷⁴

The Gracies along with scores of Brazilians found themselves caught in the middle of a fierce ideological competition in the 1930s. Modernist movements gained momentum in São Paulo during the 1920s and soon split into divergent ideological currents.²⁷⁵ The *Ação Integralista Brasileira* (A.I.B.) became during the 1930s the first mass-based political party organized in Brazil. Moreover, in the 1930s, international political polarization spilled over into the political arena in Brazil as communists and integralistas battled for hearts, minds, and power.²⁷⁶ The Integralist Party rapidly expanded in number and influence, winning over people from a wide array of social backgrounds and with different interpretations of nationalism. Furthermore, the slogan “God, Fatherland, and Family,” the aesthetics of their “green shirts, the performance of

²⁷⁴ "Torneio De Jiu-Jitsu Reune Os Melhores Individuos De Nossa Sociedade."

²⁷⁵ The current led by Plínio Salgado branched off the modernist movement moving from aesthetics to political nationalism. In addition to nationalism, Plínio Salgado brought to his movement traditional Catholicism, refreshed by the ongoing Catholic revivalism in Rio de Janeiro. He later founded Brazil's “Integralist Party.” Leslie Bethell, *Ideas and Ideologies in Twentieth Century Latin America since 1870*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 21-22.

²⁷⁶ In 1922, communists founded the Partido Comunista Brasileiro P.C.B. (Brazilian Communist Party) and in 1932, integralistas founded the *Ação Integralista Brasileira*, A.I.B. (Brazilian Integralist Action).

lavish parades and their idiosyncratic salute: 'Anauê!' would be highly appealing to those seeking social insertion in the new order."²⁷⁷

After helping to crush the “Communist Insurrection” in 1935, and upon the inauguration of the Estado Novo two years later, the integralists saw no hurdles between them and political power. Yet when it came time to divide the political spoils, Getúlio Vargas had his own plans, which did not include the integralists. The latter, frustrated and determined to settle a score with an ungrateful partner, stormed the presidential residence in 1938. The ill-planned and poorly implemented raid concluded as a grotesque episode.²⁷⁸ The fate of the Estado Novo hung in the balance during the five-hour skirmish in which Vargas, his family, a handful of marines and Special Police troopers held off the rebels until lethargic support arrived from security forces.²⁷⁹ Once the *putsch* attempt failed, the regime unleashed its security apparatus to punish the unruly integralists. Repression by political police (D.O.P.S) included raids and apprehension of documents held at political committees throughout the country. In the party office in the then-bucolic Rio de Janeiro neighborhood of Ipanema, the dossier found indicated that the party was a social patchwork. The long list of supporters included descendants of aristocratic families, the nouveau rich, intellectuals, civil servants, blue-collar workers, enlisted men,

²⁷⁷ Lamartine P. da Costa and Plinio Labriola, "Bodies from Brazil: Fascist Aesthetics in South American Setting," in *Shaping the Superman : Fascist Body as Political Icon : Aryan Fascism*, ed. J. A. Mangan (London: Frank Cass, 1999), 174.

²⁷⁸ Robert M. Levine, *Father of the Poor? : Vargas and His Era*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 54.

²⁷⁹ Alzira Vargas do Amaral Peixoto, *Getúlio Vargas, Meu Pai*, (Rio de Janeiro: Editôra Globo, 1960), 193.

and housewives, displaying a remarkable political solidarity.²⁸⁰ On the party membership list, the name “Hélio Gracie” showed up.

Of the three Gracie brothers who became instrumental in creating the Brazilian jiu-jitsu, Carlos, George and Hélio, the latter was the only one who displayed open support for Integralism. In assessing Hélio’s affiliation to radical ideologies one is tempted to affirm that he was simply swept up in a strong political trend, but in some ways his support for this Brazilian version of fascism was predictable. In addition, the party placed a premium on youth, virility and aggressive manliness.²⁸¹ Hélio’s bellicose persona and past transgressions made his affiliation with the “green shirts” unsurprising.

It is unknown whether Hélio suffered any reprisal in the repressive response to the coup attempt. He was likely able to remain untouched, along with the majority of party members. In general, the backlash endured by the integralists was remarkably mild, compared to the repression suffered by the communists in 1935.²⁸² The repressive machine, however, carefully maintained the records of Hélio’s affair with the “green shirts.”

²⁸⁰ “Dossiê das Relações de Votantes nos Diversos Nucleos”, 31 de maio 1937. Fundo: Divisão de Polícia Política e Social, Arquivo Publico do Estado do Rio de Janeiro.

²⁸¹ Sandra McGee Deutsch, *Las Derechas : The Extreme Right in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, 1890-1939*, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1999), 282-83.

²⁸² Levine, *Father of the Poor? : Vargas and His Era*, 54.



Figure 34: Fascism “made in Brazil.” Integralismo became a patchwork of nationalistic tendencies (left). Integralistas parading in Rio, 1937, fascist aesthetic (right). Source: Frente Integralista Brasileira.²⁸³

The local jiu-jitsu invented by the Gracies continued to mold its soft forms on their image, against a backdrop of rapid social changes. A few months after the failed coup, a young woman walked into the Gracie dojo and asked for jiu-jitsu lessons to learn how to deal with her husband’s outbursts of violence. She explained that her husband was usually an “adorable man,” but prone to become physically abusive whenever he lost his temper. Since this rogue behavior was culturally tolerated, and part of the routinized violence faced by many women, the beleaguered housewife decided to resort to jiu-jitsu to combat machismo with the help of the Gracies.²⁸⁴ Carlos Gracie, assuming the role of female protector, not only taught her some jiu-jitsu techniques, but also professorially instructed her: “Do you want to solve your conjugal troubles? Put an arm bar on your husband”. This was the Gracies’ formula for responding to domestic violence.²⁸⁵ Photos portrayed the young housewife being empowered by learning jiu-jitsu. Woman rights

²⁸³ Frente Integralista Brasileira, accessed June 5, 2010, <http://integralismo.org.br/novo/imagens/phpDpksL2.jpg>.

²⁸⁴ Sarah J. Hautzinger, *Violence in the City of Women : Police and Batterers in Bahia, Brazil*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 34-35.

²⁸⁵ “Queres Solucionar as Tuas Questoes Conjugais? Aplique Um Armlock! O Jiu-Jitsu Iguale Os Sexos,” *O Globo Sportivo*, November 1 1938, 5.

made significant advances in the early stages of Getulio Vargas rule. The regime initially promoted women's suffrage and appointed female officials to high-profile positions, as well as introducing other improvements for middle and upper class women. Despite these achievements, the inauguration of the Estado Novo dictatorship in 1937 halted these advances and reinforced male domination.²⁸⁶ In this episode, Carlos gradually revealed his persona as a "cordial" patriarch.²⁸⁷ "Brazilian cordiality" is a phrase coined by historian Sérgio Buarque de Hollanda. It suggests that foreigners portrayed Brazilians, since the colonial period, as overtly sincere, hospitable and generous. Buarque de Hollanda defined "Brazilian cordiality" as a pattern developed in the rural and patriarchal setting. Yet it does not engender social solidarity beyond the individual's immediate circle. This behavior allowed Carlos Gracie to mitigate aspects of traditional behavior without giving up his patriarchal position.

In his trajectory to become the Gracie's patriarch, in 1938 Carlos introduced his first-born son and successor through the newspaper article entitled "I want to be a champion too!" Pictures depicted the five-year-old Eduardo Gracie, representing the second generation of this martial arts clan in the making, wearing a jiu-jitsu *gi* and choreographing moves with Carlos. Later, Carlos claiming to be under spirit possession, changed the child's name to "Carlson."²⁸⁸ The child was the offspring of Carlos' relationship with Carmen, a dark-skinned woman of humble origins. The apparent

²⁸⁶ June Edith Hahner, *Emancipating the Female Sex : The Struggle for Women's Rights in Brazil, 1850-1940*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 177-79.

²⁸⁷ One could trace Carlos Gracie's modern patriarchal position to a traditional pre-modern, benevolent, rural, and oligarchic model, found amidst the discourses of Brazil's founding nationalism. Joao Cezar de Castro Rocha, *O Exilio Do Homem Cordial : Ensaio E Revisoes*, (Rio de Janeiro: Museu da Republica Editora, 2004), 299.

²⁸⁸ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 115.

transgression of unwritten codes that judges a woman like Carmen an “unfit” partner for Carlos considering his family background may underscore other issues. He claimed to follow an esoteric practice that regarded sexual discharge as “waste” except for bearing offspring.²⁸⁹ Carlos allegedly partnered women solely for the sake of procreation. Whether his reasons were the result of his esoteric beliefs or of patriarchal values, in order to enforce his procreation ideas, he tended to engage with poor females from lower social strata in sexual liaisons. In Brazil, the imbrication of race, class and gender explain why Carlos invariably resorted to dark-skinned female partners to carry out his reproductive strategies.²⁹⁰ Thereafter, Carlos would attribute his physical prowess, longevity and numerous progeny to his dietary habits combined with sexual restraint.²⁹¹

²⁸⁹ Ibid. Hugh B. Urban, *Magia Sexualis : Sex, Magic, and Liberation in Modern Western Esotericism*, (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2006), 7.

²⁹⁰ Robert M. Levine and José Carlos Sebe Bom Meihy, *The Life and Death of Carolina Maria De Jesus*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 141.

²⁹¹ According to the family memoirs, Carlos’ mother rejected Carmen because she was mulata. The couple married in civil ceremony after the birth of their first child. For other Carlos’ relationships, thereafter, he alternates three civil marriages and a number of brief liaisons. Carmen died at young age from tuberculosis. Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia* 113.



Figure 35: “I want to be a champion too!” Eduardo, later renamed as “Carlson,” was a Carlos Gracie’s first-born child in his clan of Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s fighters. Source: O Globo Sportivo, 1938.²⁹²

Completing the pillars underpinning Brazilian jiu-jitsu, Carlos Gracie became increasingly involved with esoteric practices and adopted a vegetarian diet through his acquaintance with Oscar Santa Maria Pereira. In the early 1930s, simultaneous to his trajectory in professional jiu-jitsu Carlos met Oscar Santa Maria Pereira who was an employee in the Banco do Brasil, unmarried, and of the humble Spanish background. The latter became Carlos’ student, confirming the enduring corporatist liaisons between the Gracies and that financial institution. Santa Maria, like others in this emergent, white middle class milieu, used his professional occupation to achieve social projection through intellectual achievement and lavish sport activities through organizations such as the Associação Atlética Banco do Brasil (Bank of Brazil’s Athletic Association).²⁹³ He adhered to esoteric religious denominations as a trendy religious alternative to traditional and conservative Catholicism.

²⁹² "Tambem Quero Ser Campeao!," *O Globo Sportivo* November 26 1938, 7.

²⁹³ Owensby, *Intimate Ironies : Modernity and the Making of Middle-Class Lives in Brazil*, 53. Santa Maria founder and first president of the Associação Atlética Banco do Brasil (Athletic Association of the Banco do Brasil) in 1928.

In Brazil, Spiritualism gained momentum along with modernization and became a class-based religious practice, strongly identified with white middle class sectors as a social and racial counter point to the Afro-Brazilian religions identified with the lower social strata.²⁹⁴ Santa Maria was a member of Rosicrucian Order, an esoteric semi-Christian sect.²⁹⁵ This affiliation, however, branched off in different organizations, like the one founded by the German-born Arnold Krumm-Heller, an adventurous physician who fought in the Mexican Revolution, founded an esoteric church there and later traveled throughout South America. In the early 1930s, he opened a branch of the Ancient Rosicrucian Fraternity in Rio de Janeiro of which Santa Maria and Carlos Gracie became affiliates.²⁹⁶ The partnership between Carlos Gracie and Santa Maria thrived over the years with the former gradually rising from the role of disciple to become the latter's jiu-jitsu master and guru.

Lastly, completing the group of practices supporting Brazilian jiu-jitsu, Carlos Gracie adopted and prescribed a vegetarian diet later known as the "Gracie Diet." Although he claimed authorship of the diet, it was the brainchild of Argentinean physician Juan Esteve Dulin who lived and lectured in Rio de Janeiro in the early 1920s. He traveled extensively in search of centenarian individuals to study their habits and

²⁹⁴ Diana DeG Brown, *Umbanda : Religion and Politics in Urban Brazil*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 8-14.

²⁹⁵ James R. Lewis, *Witchcraft Today : An Encyclopedia of Wiccan and Neopagan Traditions*, (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 1999), 110-11.

²⁹⁶ Andrew Dawson, *New Era, New Religions : Religious Transformation in Contemporary Brazil*, (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007), 55.

gather evidence to produce an ideal type of diet.²⁹⁷ As a result, a vegetarian diet became one of the backbones of Brazilian jiu-jitsu.

Toward the 1940s, after passing an entire decade deeply involved with jiu-jitsu, the Gracies developed other interests. Carlos became increasingly involved in a real estate business with his successful associate Oscar de Santa Maria, and decided to move to the northeastern state of Ceará. Santa Maria, meanwhile, rose steadily within the Banco do Brasil, which certainly opened opportunities for their partnership to conduct profitable business operations. Money matters, however, were not Carlos' only concern; he also took seriously his role as a spiritualist guru, surrounded by a small circle of followers. Spiritual guidance ruled over every aspect of his life. Therefore, it is difficult to determine whether he decided to move for practical reasons or had been motivated by spiritual inspiration.²⁹⁸ Whatever the reasons, he settled along with his five children in what becomes the most sensitive region of Brazil during wartime. In 1942, Brazil declared war on the Axis powers. The casus belli was the sinking of Brazilian ships by German U-boats off the coast of northeastern Brazil.²⁹⁹ When the war broke out, Carlos was living in the coastal city of Fortaleza, the capital of Ceará State.

During the war the Estado Novo dictatorship tightened its grip by imposing harsh censorship and controlling mail service and telegraphic communications.³⁰⁰ The steady flow of correspondence between Carlos Gracie and Oscar de Santa Maria raised the suspicion of local authorities in Ceará. Carlos was seen as an outsider exchanging lengthy

²⁹⁷ Juan Esteve Dulin, *Guia De La Salud*, (Buenos Aires: Editorial de Cultura Humana, 1949).

²⁹⁸ "Os Gracie Afirmam Estar Sendo Alvo De Chantagem," *O Globo*, November 1 1963, 17.

²⁹⁹ The northeastern Brazil became a highly prized strategic point for the Allied war effort due its privileged positions vis-à-vis the South Atlantic and West Africa.

³⁰⁰ Robert Justin Goldstein, *Political Censorship*, (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001), 93.

correspondence in cryptographic language.³⁰¹ The political police in Rio de Janeiro had been informed by Ceará state police that Carlos Gracie – a former jiu-jitsu fighter and former member of the integralist militia – was currently living in Fortaleza. The local police reported that Carlos was exchanging letters, sent by an accountant, addressed to a high-ranking employee of the Banco do Brasil. This accountant had connections with Branca Botelho, the wife of the Swedish consul in Rio de Janeiro, and mistress of a certain German citizen named Osborne who was currently being detained for espionage. Such wartime paranoia was not unusual. Hélio’s association with Integralism, the peculiar content of the letters, and an overzealous police officer in a backwater coastal town swarmed by German U-boats, combined to produce a fantastic story.

Among other things, the correspondence dealt with family affairs in which Santa Maria looked after Carlos’ children.³⁰² Other than this, they dealt with spiritual, dietary and business matters about which Carlos advised his small circle of followers. He claimed to receive advice in worldly matters through his shamanic connection with a native Peruvian spirit named Egídio Lasjovino.³⁰³ The nationality of Carlos’ spiritual guide, as well as the adoption of the diet of the Argentinean physician, leads one to speculate about the actual mentorial role of Santa Maria over Carlos. In both cases, the Spanish language may have been instrumental either for understanding Dulin’s diet or in dealing with the Peruvian entity.

³⁰¹ “Correspondencia Carlos Gracie/Oscar Santa Maria”, 1943. Departamento de Ordem Política e Social (D.O.P.S.), Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio de Janeiro.

³⁰² Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 207-08.

³⁰³ “Correspondencia Carlos Gracie/Oscar Santa Maria”, 1943. Departamento de Ordem Política e Social (D.O.P.S.) Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio de Janeiro.

Carlos and Santa Maria were aware that their correspondence was being intercepted, which made Carlos resort to even more suspicious terminology. They had business interests mostly dedicated to real estate using Santa Maria's money and connections.³⁰⁴ Gracie and Santa Maria were ultimately able to convince authorities of their innocence of "Integralist espionage." The latter was summoned by police and declared he was Carlos' jiu-jitsu student, who over time became a close friend and business associate. Both were spiritualists and vegetarians, which would explain the strange content of their messages. Santa Maria also affirmed that Carlos was not a member of the Integralista party. The espionage affair revealed the relationship between the Carlos and Santa Maria in which the latter was instrumental in many developments that would help the initial acculturation of jiu-jitsu.



Figure 36: Gillette advertisement in 1941. Jiu-jitsu is related to health, hygiene and masculinity without losing its traditional appeal. Source: *Jornal dos Sports*, 1941.³⁰⁵

³⁰⁴ Oscar Santa Maria was temporarily appointed Minister of Finance in Eurico Gaspar Dutra's presidency after Getúlio Vargas' overthrow in 1945. This gave Carlos access to even higher levels of state power.

³⁰⁵ "Jiu-Jitsu: Factor De Saude," *Jornal dos Sports*, March 30 1941, 5.

Conclusion

From 1939 onward, the three Gracie brothers, George, Hélio, and Carlos were taking different directions. George, who had a perpetually stormy relationship with his brothers, was the only Gracie who still occasionally performed in public matches. Hélio decided to retire temporarily from jiu-jitsu at a relatively young age to enjoy his social upward mobility. He married a separated nouveau riche woman and became a corporate executive in one of her family holdings.³⁰⁶ Carlos, on the other hand, dedicated himself to build new pillars of Brazilian jiu-jitsu by incorporating esoteric practices, dietary rules and building a clannish structure into its “soft” cultural format.

The period between the Communist Insurrection in 1935 and the outbreak of the Second World War is particularly relevant to the analysis of the making of Brazilian jiu-jitsu. During this period, the Gracies confronted their opponents on two fronts. Within the system, far from finding complete support, they faced opposition among the military and from other disciples of the Japanese Mayeda Mitsuyo. Moreover, the very state they had come to represent became an obstacle to their individualistic strategies. Yet under the thin veneer of modernity spearheaded by the new political regime lay a pervasively paternalistic system in which fallen aristocrats like the Gracies remained favorite sons. In turn, they provide their political patrons with their expertise in violence.

In their reinvention of jiu-jitsu, the Gracies engineered an embryonic bundle of traits, including Carlos’ personification of guru and modern patriarch, to turn a loose set

³⁰⁶ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 184.

of jiu-jitsu techniques vaguely associated with a Japanese martial arts school into a comprehensive local martial art system.

Resilience symbolized by a defensive ground combat became the hallmark of the Gracies' Brazilian jiu-jitsu style, forged in confrontations against foreign opponents with technical superiority especially in standing combat. They would lie under their skilled adversaries, whom they held between their legs. The similar process denominated elsewhere as "self-colonization," which refers to a deliberate submission to a foreign cultural flow, had been withstood by the Gracies strong defense.³⁰⁷ Yet the fighting system they created was not only a defensive or passive style developed to resist the Japanese technical edge. It evolved into a style designed to defeat their opponents from the guard position. The Gracies, thereafter, advertised their jiu-jitsu by warning those unfamiliar with their style that those underneath could be winning.

In time of profound changes in which Getulio Vargas seized the power and imposed a dictatorship, the Gracies established their martial art firmly at the heart of the new order. Finally, in the 1940s, a long interregnum began for the Gracies and Getúlio Vargas. Nevertheless, both would be back for a new round against their rivals in the post-war period.

³⁰⁷ According to Sabine Frühstrück and Wolfram Manzenreiter, "self-colonization here refers to processes of cultural flow in which submission is accepted and even deliberately sought." This phenomenon is related to the hegemonic stream of Japanese judo occurred in Austria. Sabine Frühstück and Wolfram Manzenreiter, "Neverland Lost: Judo Cultures in Austria, Japan and Everywhere," 8-13.



Figure 37: “Draw between George Gracie and Geo Omori.” The position above serves as a metaphor of the confrontations between the Gracies and the Japanese martial artists. The match resulted in a cultural gridlock. Source: *Jornal dos Sports*, 1935.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁸ "O Empate Entre George Gracie E Geo Omori," *Jornal dos Sports*, September 9 1935, 3.

Chapter 4 - Brazilian jiu-jitsu in the mainstream: media, ethnicity and populism, 1951-1960

Introduction

The early 1950s marked the return of Getúlio Vargas to power after his deposition by a military coup in 1945. This time, he returned to rule the country by popular vote. Unlike the 1930s when Getúlio Vargas managed to keep hold to power through Machiavellian political maneuvers, in the post-war he faced a quite distinct scenario. In 1954, he found himself in the middle of a bitter campaign to place oil exploration under state control, engulfed in political scandals occurring around him and threaten by the military. Under tremendous pressure, Vargas shot himself and the nation mourned the loss of its leader. But if Vargas was dead, populism was not, for in the second half of the decade a new wave of enthusiasm followed the inauguration of Juscelino Kubischek as president. Industrialization, nationalism and cultural innovation were hallmarks of this period. The emergence of the music genre “Bossa Nova” and the construction of a high-modernist federal capital, Brasília, could emblematically represent Juscelino Kubischek’s years.

In the early 1950s, the Gracies also were back after a decade away from jiu-jitsu activities. Driven by an unprecedented public exposure they reached an iconic status through their massive presence in newspapers, magazines, radio, television and even in comic books. Simultaneously, they reinforced the process of jiu-jitsu’s gentrification by

opening a new dojo and developing a style for their selected clientele. In addition, in the 1950s, the Gracies gave the final touches to the construction of a clannish structure along lineages headed by Carlos and Hélio Gracie.³⁰⁹ These two, thereafter, epitomized the image of the Gracie patriarchs.

The 1950s was a decade of high-profile public confrontations for the Gracies. First, they faced their eternal rivals: the Japanese martial artists. In three bouts against three Kodokan judo black belts, they experienced victory and defeat. Regardless of the fights' outcome, these battles became the opportunity to promote their return to the martial arts business. Fighting Japanese martial artists in the early stages of Kodokan judo post-war globalization sanctioned Brazilian jiu-jitsu's status as local style of combat sport. Furthermore, confronting foreigners athletes in the aftermath of Brazil's worst-ever defeat in sports made the Gracies national icons. In 1950, prior to the first confrontation between Hélio Gracie and the Japanese martial artists, the Uruguayan national team defeated Brazil in the final game of the FIFA World Cup. Gracie fought the Japanese judo black belts in the same stadium built to celebrate the apotheosis of Brazilian football that ironically ended up with a traumatic humiliation before the Uruguayans. In another round of public fights, however, the Gracies found themselves in the middle of an intense debate about racism. From the rivalry that arose between them and an Afro-Brazilian student, the Gracies found themselves at the center of a debate in the Rio de Janeiro press about Brazil's "racial democracy." Finally, the Gracies through their media exposure find

³⁰⁹ From 1950s onward George Gracie's martial arts practice became rather erratic. Despite his crucial role in the confrontations with Japanese fighters in the 1930s, his relevance for Brazilian jiu-jitsu thereafter has faded.

themselves transformed into agents of post-war modernization. This became more relevant at a time in which the mass media began to play an active role in the consolidation of a national identity.³¹⁰

This chapter opens with two vignettes that present the most important confrontations between the Gracies and their rivals in the 1950s. The first describes one of the three fights against the Japanese and the second displays the first of many duels with an Afro-Brazilian pupil.

Round 1: Hélio Gracie's "moral victory," Rio de Janeiro, 1951

This would be Hélio Gracie's last fight. The audience occupied one-third of the gigantic Maracanã stadium built to host the World Cup of 1950. The rain finally stopped and the audience grew impatient waiting for the showdown. Thousands had their eyes fixed on the green mats assembled where Gracie would face the Japanese described as "the muscular and skilled giant Kimura."³¹¹ People in the crowd risked predictions amidst the roar of the crowd. An official of the local pugilistic association spoke: "Hélio will finish this Japanese fellow in no time."³¹² Other experts warned: "Perhaps Gracie will manage to survive the first round by using his strong defensive game."³¹³ The crowd, however, ignoring the real threat represented by Kimura, underestimated the Japanese champion. For them, Kimura would have the same fate as his companion Kato: He could not resist Hélio Gracie's vicious hands. The mercury rose when Kimura Masahiko

³¹⁰ Michael G. Elasmr, *The Impact of International Television : A Paradigm Shift*, (Mahwah: L. Erlbaum Associates, 2003), 92.

³¹¹ Ubiratan de Lemos, "Helio Caiu De Pe," *O Cruzeiro*, November 10 1951, 40.

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Ibid.

approached the arena. Unlike his companion Kato in the previous fight he seemed very confident and comfortable posing for the cameras. Hélio Gracie, on the other hand, was impassive. The fight started following a pattern of dozens of other bouts pitting the Gracies against the Japanese since 1930. Kimura viciously slammed Hélio Gracie on the ground by applying his near-perfect throwing technique of choice: *Osoto-gari*. Kimura expected to had Gracie knocked out with his violent throws, but the soft mat purposely assembled by organizers minimized the risk of concussions. Hélio Gracie confided in later interviews that he used to have nightmares about Kimura's throws.



Figure 38: Kimura throwing Gracie with a *Osoto-gari*. Source: Onzuka Brothers, 2011.³¹⁴

The first and second rounds were similar to the past confrontations in which Hélio Gracie sought to reverse the tide through ground combat. This time, however, the All-Japan champion was an outstanding athlete equally skilled in standing and ground techniques. In the third round, Kimura overcame Hélio Gracie's defensive ground game,

³¹⁴ Onzuka Brothers, "The Gracie Family Pictorial," accessed May 22 2011, <http://www.onzuka.com/mainframe.html>.

or as a local judoist put it: “It was like a cat playing with a mouse.”³¹⁵ Kimura mounted Gracie and unleashed a reverse arm bar called *Ude-garami*. There was no hope, but Gracie refused to surrender before an audience formed by his compatriots. Hélio had his arm dangerously twisted close to the breaking point. Carlos Gracie, watching the drama from his corner threw the towel signaling surrender and saving his brother’s arm. The influential magazine *O Cruzeiro* concluded its report on the fight: “If the Brazilian was just a bit stronger, Kimura could not have twisted his arm and Gracie would remain undefeated. Gracie’s technique is perfect, but powerless facing the muscles of the Japanese giant.”³¹⁶ That night, in the Maracanã stadium, Goliath defeated David.



Figure 39: First two pages, from the left 1. Helio and Kimura wrestling on the ground. 2. Brazil’s Vice-President Café Filho greeting Helio and Kimura. Two pages on the right. 1. The vertical sequence shows the tension of Helio’s wife. 2. The sequence shows the final moments of the combat. Kimura crushed Helio before the fatal move: a reverse arm bar (*Ude-garami*). Next, Carlos Gracie threw the towel and saved his brother’s arm. Source: *O Cruzeiro*, 1951.³¹⁷

³¹⁵ "Parecia Um Gato Maltratando Um Camudongo," *Última Hora*, October 24 1951, 7.

³¹⁶ Lemos, "Helio Caiu De Pe."

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Round 2:

Y.M.C.A Gymnasium, Rio de Janeiro, 1955 - "The black man with a black soul"

It would be impossible to ignore the racial factor in the fight between Hélio Gracie and Waldemar Santana. One must see, before and above all, the drama of color: Whites versus blacks and vice versa. I know there will be people there wondering: 'There is no racism in Brazil!' Surely there is. Upon only mentioning it, one irritates, exasperates and causes commotion in all parties. However, the fact of the matter is this: the fight held at Y.M.C.A. was another chapter of a longstanding war pitting blacks and whites in Brazil. The two opponents met each other in the arena to solve their mysterious incompatibilities, and the result was nothing but tragic. Nothing is more stupid for me than combat sports. I find inhuman and immoral one man to hit the other man's face. No, my friends, the sportive practice cannot justify the humiliation of one man by another man. The fight, in fact, underscored other reasons. Only this could explain and justify the battle on the grounds of logic and ethics. Before yesterday, neither Santana was himself nor was Gracie just Hélio. It was a war of extermination between whites and blacks. Santana stepped in the ring displaying his powerful physique. Well, the black fighter approached the arena and next to me, one fat, blonde-haired person and reddish individual shouted: 'Nigger bozale!' [bozale or boçal refers to newly arrived Africans enslaved in Brazil]. After this, the fight lost any technical and sportive purpose for me and gained a new meaning. Waldemar Santana came to personify all Afro-Brazilians. He reminded me of the nineteenth-century Afro-Brazilian abolitionist José do Patrocínio. The latter was extremely shy whenever speaking in public. His friends aware of this got mixed with the crowd and shouted derogatory slurs: 'Shut up nigger! Etc, etc.' Patrocínio then fired back upon: 'God gave me Otelo's blood to make me jealous of my country!' The crowd mesmerized broke out in an enthusiastic applause. Santana - like Patrocínio - was shy, humble almost defeated beforehand. But let's be honest; we are all racists. Unlike the whites in America, we do not lynch our blacks, but we humiliated them on a daily basis. Humiliation permeates every aspect of the relationship between Whites and Blacks in Brazil. The noblest and brilliant Afro-Brazilian easily transforms into a 'nigger boy' whenever we get upset for any reason. We claim to live in a country free of racism, but it is only a cynical statement made to hide our profound racism. Just prior to the fight, Santana was once again humiliated and insulted. He rose and fought, invoked by an anti-sportive, nevertheless, necessary confrontation. The sweet reward came afterwards. The young fighter's victory symbolically avenged centuries of humiliation suffered by Afro-Brazilians. The fatal strike that liquidated Gracie was fired not by Santana, but came in the form of a miraculous Capoeira foot kick delivered by San Benedetto il Moro.³¹⁸

³¹⁸ "O Preto Que Tinha a Alma Preta," *Última Hora*, May 26 1955, 2.



Figure 40: “Gracie defeated by his pupil” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1955.³¹⁹

The Gracies’ return: Challenging African-Americans pugilists but fighting Japanese martial artists

In 1948, Carlos Gracie published a book entitled *Introdução ao Jiu-Jitsu* (Introduction to Jiu-jitsu). The cover pictured Carlos and Hélio performing a passing guard position. Carlos on the top tried to break through Hélio’s defense on the bottom. The position emblematically represented the Gracies’ definitive option for ground combat.

Carlos Gracie dedicated the book to his “remarkable student and unconditional friend” Oscar Santa Maria. According to him, Santa Maria reached the highest level of

³¹⁹ Ubiratan Lemos, "Gracie Derrotado Pelo Aluno," *O Cruzeiro*, June 4, 1955, 98-99.

knowledge of jiu-jitsu “inspired by his dedication to the Gracie brothers.”³²⁰ Furthermore, Carlos Gracie, mysteriously and without elaborate further details, thanked Santa Maria for having created an “efficient technique” that once was employed to defeat an opponent “without transgressing the rules of fair-play.”³²¹

Henrique Pongetti, an intellectual, promoter of popular culture who flirted with authoritarianism wrote the book’s foreword. Among many occupations, he headed the cinema division of Getúlio Vargas’ feared censorship agency called *Departamento de Informação e Propaganda* (D.I.P: Department of Information and Propaganda).³²² His foreword praised the Gracies for their role creating a local jiu-jitsu style:

They defeated capoeiras, wrestlers and pugilists that intimidated their opponents by displaying their muscular naked bodies. Most importantly, the Gracies defeated the Japanese born in the cradle of this diabolic martial art with skills to neutralize aggressions without hurting the attacker.³²³

Pongetti was a high-profile bureaucrat animated by Fascist principles of aesthetics and eugenics. He worked in the propaganda machine promoting public mass gatherings celebrating cleanliness, strength and discipline.³²⁴ The Gracies had been involved in public demonstrations during the 1930s fighting “half-naked” capoeiras, wrestlers and the “diabolical” Japanese. From the perspective of an intellectual serving the nationalist and xenophobic Estado Novo, the Gracies created a “Brazilian” jiu-jitsu through their skills and “decent” aesthetic.³²⁵

³²⁰ Carlos Gracie, *Introducao Ao Jiu-Jitsu*, (Rio de Janeiro: Pongett, 1948), 1.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² Bryan McCann, *Hello, Hello Brazil : Popular Music in the Making of Modern Brazil*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 122.

³²³ Gracie, *Introducao Ao Jiu-Jitsu*, 7.

³²⁴ Labriola, "Bodies from Brazil: Fascist Aesthetics in South American Setting," 167.

³²⁵ Gracie, *Introducao Ao Jiu-Jitsu*, 7-9.

Pongetti described Carlos Gracie as a contemplative blue-eyed strategist who watched the fights from the height of an “ivory apse.” He also appreciated Carlos Gracie’s stoic lifestyle prescribing abstinence of alcohol, tobacco, and enforcing strict dietary rules. Hélio, on the other hand, he praised, adapted jiu-jitsu to the needs of his upper class clientele.

The foreword penned by Pongetti was oddly entitled “while you are wearing your *gi*”, but there was no sign of jiu-jitsu in the entire book.³²⁶ The text overly simplistic only summarized Carlos’ and Santa Maria’s interpretations of eugenics, spiritualism and naturalism. It is noteworthy that later, in 1963, Santa Maria Santa Maria charged Carlos on grounds of plagiarism. Carlos, in his defense, said that he dictated the entire book to Santa Maria during shamanic trance, but admitted that Santa Maria took up the task due to his poor writing skills.³²⁷

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ "Os Gracie Afirmam Estar Sendo Alvo De Chantagem," 12.

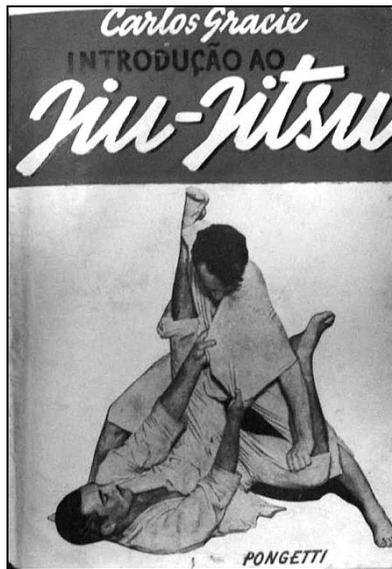


Figure 41: Carlos Gracie's book.³²⁸

In 1950, the Gracies were back in the news, challenging Afro-American pugilists who were enjoying great popularity in Brazil during the post-war period. They made the headlines defying Ezzard Charles, the “Cincinnati Cobra” and Joe Louis, the “Brown Bomber.” The former hardly ever took notice of the Gracies, but the latter had been in 1951 in Brazil and learned about the Gracies’ challenge without paying much attention.³²⁹ In any event, Louis cut short his stay in Brazil and returned to the United States.³³⁰

³²⁸ *Introducao Ao Jiu-Jitsu*.

³²⁹ "Helio Gracie Desafia Ezzard Charles," *O Cruzeiro*, January 14, 1950, 43.

³³⁰ "Louis Returns from Brazil," *The New York Times*, May 21 1950, s3.

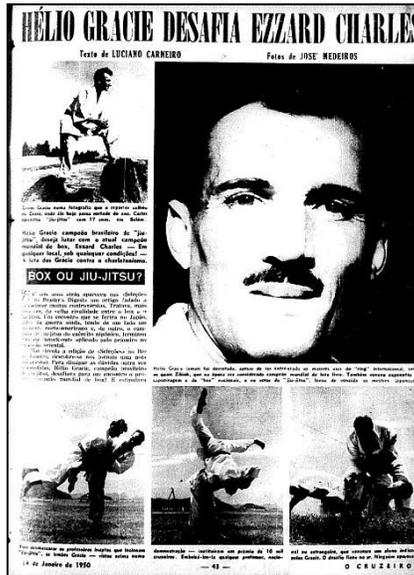


Figure 42: “Hélio Gracie challenged Ezzard Charles.” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1950.³³¹



Figure 43: “Playing with imagination.” Source: O Globo, 1951.³³²

³³¹ "Helio Gracie Desafia Ezzard Charles," 44.

³³² Comic strip picturing two different outcomes for a hypothetical fight between Hélio Gracie and Joe Louis. On the left strip, Joe Louis wins by “demolishing” Helio Gracie with two powerful punches. On the right strip, Helio Gracie wins throwing Louis on the ground that inexplicably refused to get up. Helio Gracie used his “secret move” taking Louis shorts off. Here is a good example of picardia criolla or catimba. Outsmarting the opponent is more important than dominating them, according to established norms. "A Luta Helio Gracie X Joe Louis: Brincadeiras Da Imaginacao," *O Globo Sportivo*, 1951, 27.

The same coverage included images of Carlos and Hélio performing a sequence of acrobatic moves at Rio de Janeiro's scenic outdoors. The pictures also portrayed Carlos' offspring as a "great example of a typical Brazilian family."³³³ In fact, since the 1930s, Carlos began a procreation policy with multiple partners, based on old patriarchal traditions cloaked in guises of modern spiritualism. The household arrangement developed by Carlos Gracie disclosed a patrilineal kinship in which fighting tradition pass down only through the clan male members. This typology also included an avuncular partnership in which a childless Hélio and his wife raised half of Carlos' progeny. Indeed, both Hélio and Carlos function as fathers to the children.

The arrangement challenged the Catholic canons of morality based on monogamy. Regardless of the level of religious commitment among Brazilians, the Catholic Church still watched closely threats to Christian morality and sanctity of marriage among other social behaviors.³³⁴ Carlos defied these rules. By the 1950s, he had fathered thirteen children from various relationships including the ones with housemaids. He entered the 1950s lavishly advertising his image of a Luso-Brazilian colonial patriarch who had unlimited sexual access to women living in the household, including servants, who were transformed into concubines.³³⁵

³³³ "Helio Gracie Desafia Ezzard Charles," 44-46.

³³⁴ Dain Edward Borges, *The Family in Bahia, Brazil, 1870-1945*, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1992), 278-79.

³³⁵ Gilberto Freyre, *Casa-Grande & Senzala : Formacao Da Familia Brasileira Sob O Regime Da Economia Patriarcal*, (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria J. Olympio, 1980), passim.



Figure 44: “An ordinary Brazilian family.” Source: *O Cruzeiro*, 1950.³³⁶

The article was the first of many in a massive coverage provided by the weekly magazine *O Cruzeiro* promoting the Gracies during the 1950s. The magazine became the most successful vehicle in the media conglomerate created by Francisco de Assis Chateaubriand. The latter was originally a middle class Northeastern backlander who rose through the social ranks to become the owner of the most powerful media network in Brazil between 1945 and 1964. The magazine *O Cruzeiro* introduced to Brazil the modern concept of photojournalism, inspired by its foreign counterparts such as *Time-Life* and the French *Paris Match*. Jean Manzon, a French photographer who worked for Getulio Vargas’ agency responsible for censorship (D.I.P) transformed the magazine into a media phenomenon in the 1950s. *O Cruzeiro’s* circulation reached its peak in the mid-1954 with 720,000 copies. A former magazine’s executive estimated that 4 million

³³⁶ "Helio Gracie Desafia Ezzard Charles," 46.

Brazilians read the magazine every week, which represented 8 per cent of the country's population in the early 1950s.³³⁷ The topics approached by the magazine at its circulation peak, related to popular culture stands out. The intense coverage provided for Hollywood films and beauty pageants, for example, reflected the business interests between Assis Chateaubriand and U.S. movie industry.³³⁸



Figure 45: In the 1950s, the Gracies shared the pages of “O Cruzeiro” with beauty pageants and iconic figures such as Carmen Miranda. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1949 and 1955.

The editorial lines followed by the magazine reflected the owner's point of view. Chateaubriand dubbed, as “Chatô” was a nationalist and a supporter of the Brazilian version of José Vasconcellos' *raza cosmica*. He enthusiastically promoted native culture embracing “mestizo pride” while leaving Afro-Brazilians outside the racial equation.³³⁹ Chatô's nationalism, however, espoused without constraint the “civilizing power of the international capital” or “reeducation through capitalism”, as the solution for Brazil's

³³⁷ Marlise Regina Meyrer, "Representações Do Desenvolvimento Nas Fotorreportagens Da Revista O Cruzeiro (1955-1957) ", PhD Dissertation, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, 2007, 32.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Fernando Morais, *Chato, O Rei Do Brasil*, (Sao Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1994), 358.

endemic “backwardness.”³⁴⁰ Furthermore, he used his media conglomerate to stage his crusade against communism and became a local representative of American interests during the early stages of the Cold War.³⁴¹ During this time, the magazine had become the flagship of the media empire of Assis Chateaubriand, who in turn had invested himself in the role of flag bearer of a post-war modernizing discourse.³⁴² This transformation coincided with the Gracies’ maximum exposure on the pages of the magazine.

In 1951, a troupe of Japanese of martial artists was touring in Brazil brought by the newspaper *São Paulo Shimbun*, published for Japanese immigrants. The troupe had three Kodokan judo black belts, Kimura Masahiko, Kato Yukio and Yamaguchi Yoshio who agreed to participate in prizefighting due to the economic hardships of Japan’s postwar years.³⁴³

A newspaper affiliated to Chateaubriand’s network seized the moment to promote the challenge between the Gracies and the Japanese martial artists. The promoters picked Kato Yukio, a fifth-dan black belt, to fight Hélio Gracie at Maracanã stadium in Rio de Janeiro on September 6 1951.³⁴⁴ The timing could hardly be better for the Gracies. The date was one day prior the “Independence Day” in Brazil and Getúlio Vargas was back to power inaugurating an era of populism, nationalism and development. Furthermore,

³⁴⁰ Meyrer, "Representações Do Desenvolvimento Nas Fotorreportagens Da Revista O Cruzeiro (1955-1957) " 88.

³⁴¹ Jacques Alkalai Wainberg, *Imperio De Palavras*, (Porto Alegre: EDIPUCRS, 2003), 118.

³⁴² Meyrer, "Representações Do Desenvolvimento Nas Fotorreportagens Da Revista O Cruzeiro (1955-1957) " 26-31.

³⁴³ Neil Ohlenkamp, "My Judo by Masahiko Kimura (Part 2)," accessed September 11, 2010, <http://judoinfo.com/kimura2.htm>.

³⁴⁴ Jose Amadio, "Minhas Lutas Com Kimura," *O Cruzeiro*, May 17, 1952, 66.

Hélio Gracie rose to avenge “the mother of all defeats” as Nelson Rodrigues called the Brazilian failure before the Uruguayan team in the same stadium on July 16 1951.³⁴⁵

The newspaper *Jornal dos Sports* announced the upcoming fight between a “True Japanese black belt against the pure art of our countryman.” Seats to watch the spectacle sold at low prices aimed to attract a wider audience.³⁴⁶ The Gracies, as usual, flatly rejected the Japanese rules prescribing victory by clean throws or pinning down the opponent for thirty seconds. For the Gracies the fight would only end upon one contender’s surrender. Hélio Gracie later described the fight:

Whenever I face dangerous opponents like Kato I step up on the mat as a bullfighter fighting for honor. Fighting Kato was the highlight of my career. Besides, my jiu-jitsu was quite different from his. Mine, I learned with my brother Carlos, who trained under the world champion Count Koma thirty years ago. Kato, on the other hand, was Japanese, who had as training partners the world champion and vice champion respectively. I went to the arena to represent my country. I would rather die than surrender. However, an inner voice told me that defeat would have to wait for a little longer. However, after a few seconds of the fight, I had suffered the most spectacular throw of my jiu-jitsu career.³⁴⁷

Before a packed audience usually gathered to watch soccer games, the bout repeated the pattern of 1930s disputes pitting the Gracies and the Japanese. The three round-fights confirmed the Japanese overwhelming technical edge on standing combat. Kato repeatedly threw Hélio on the ground; images showed the latter awkwardly being flipped by the former. On the ground, however, Hélio pulled out the Gracie’s traditional guard

³⁴⁵ Geneton Moraes Neto, *Dossie 50 : Os Onze Jogadores Revelam Os Segredos Da Maior Tragedia Do Futebol Brasileiro*, (Rio de Janeiro: Objetiva, 2000), 39.

³⁴⁶ " Um Verdadeiro Faixa Preta Japonês Contra a Pura Arte De Nosso Patrício," *Jornal dos Sports*, September 5 1951, 3. The cheapest seat cost Cr\$ 15 and a blue collar salary in Rio de Janeiro was Cr\$ 100.

³⁴⁷ Amadio, "Minhas Lutas Com Kimura," 66.

bringing the combat to a stalemate. The *Jornal dos Sports* headlined after the fight: “Kato on the brink of defeat! Bout ended in a tie and Hélio Gracie fought with a broken rib.”³⁴⁸

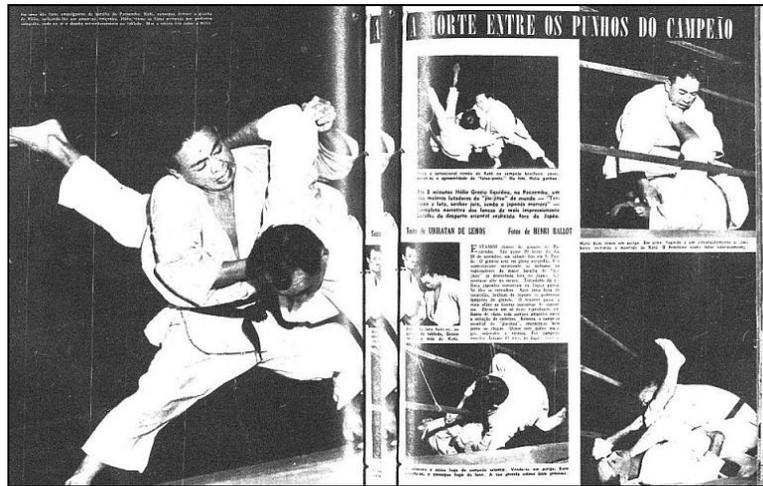


Figure 46: Kato throwing Hélio. Hélio pulling the Gracies guard position. Source: *O Cruzeiro*, 1952.³⁴⁹

The draw inevitably led to a rematch in São Paulo. This time the Gracies fought in the most Japanese city outside Japan. The official census seven years after the fight counted 50,000 Brazilians of Japanese descent living in the city of São Paulo alone and 255,520 in the São Paulo state.³⁵⁰ In addition, the Nikkei community was still living in a tense atmosphere due the actions of the ultra-nationalist secret organization known as *Shindo Renmei* (Way of the Subjects of the Emperor’s League). They refused to accept Japan’s defeat in the war and defended what Jeffrey Lesser defined as a “Japanized” space in Brazil was expressed in staunch support for Japanese culture, religion and

³⁴⁸ "Kato Esteve a Beira Do Reves! ," *Jornal dos Sports*, September 7 1951, front page, 6.

³⁴⁹ Ubiratan de Lemos, "A Morte Entre Os Punhos Do Campeao," *O Cruzeiro*, 1952, 60.

³⁵⁰ Daniel M. Masterson and Sayaka Funada-Classen, *The Japanese in Latin America*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 184.

values. The members of *Shindo Renmei* were violent and their terrorist actions resulted in deaths of Japanese-Brazilians and even Brazilians citizens. It made Brazilians nurture mixed feelings toward Japanese immigrants at this time.³⁵¹

Reflecting this conflict of diasporic identities, Ono, a Japanese-Brazilian martial artist who fought the Gracies in the 1930s, dropped the gauntlet, challenging Hélio Gracie and Kato. Ono was apparently trying to defuse the atmosphere of ethnical polarity around the event. Hélio, however, insisted in the nationalistic nature of the bout saying that he accepted the fight to defend the national honor.³⁵²

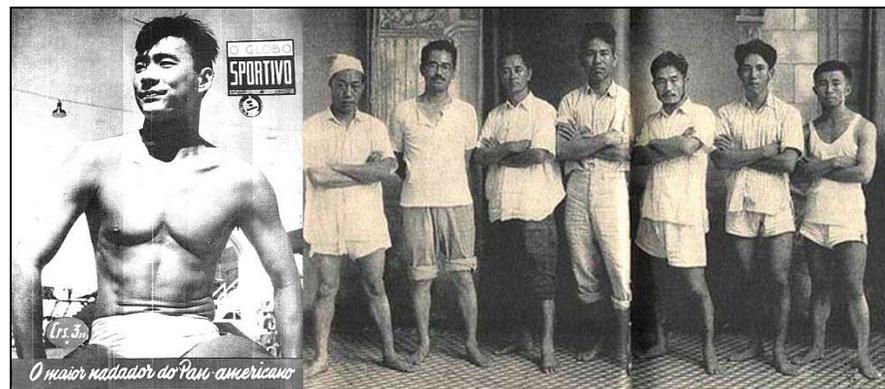


Figure 47: Contradictory feelings toward Japanese immigrants. Sources: (left) Okamoto Tetsuo, the “flying-fish”, the Japanese-Brazilian swimmer medalist in the Pan-American Games held in Buenos Aires in 1951 and in the Olympics Games held in Helsinki in 1952, a multicultural icon. *O Globo Sportivo*, 1951.³⁵³ (right) “Os Sete Samurais de Tupã” (The Seven Samurais of Tupã).³⁵⁴

³⁵¹ Jeff Lesser, *A Discontented Diaspora : Japanese Brazilians and the Meanings of Ethnic Militancy, 1960-1980*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 8-9.

³⁵² "Helio Declara Que So Voltou a Lutar Devido Ao Carater Especial Da Luta," *Jornal dos Sports*, September 8 1951, 5.

³⁵³ "O Maior Nadador Do Pan-Americano," *O Globo Sportivo*, July 30 1951, front page.

³⁵⁴ Fernando Morais, *Coracoes Sujos : A Historia Da Shindo Renmei*, (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2000), cover.

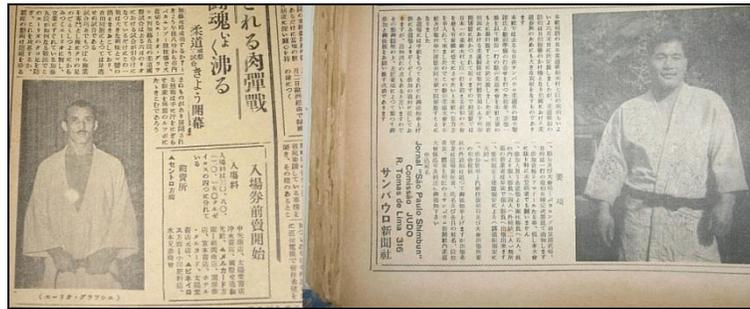


Figure 48: Coverage shows Hélio Gracie and Kimura, the Nikkei community follow the fight with great interest. Source: São Paulo Shimbun, 1951.³⁵⁵

The journalist Nikkei Jayme Kaneko from the *São Paulo Shimbun* declared that Kato wanted another fight with no time limit. In the article “Death at the hands of a champion” written by Ubiratan de Lemos and with photographs of the French reporter Henri Ballot the magazine *O Cruzeiro* described the match-up held at Pacaembu stadium, a soccer arena:

Pacaembu stadium, September 29, 1951 at 8:00 pm. It was a cold evening in São Paulo. The stadium was dark due to a power outage catching by surprise thousands of spectators attending to the greatest jiu-jitsu battle fought outside Japan. There were a large number of Japanese immigrants in the audience conversing in their own language, and Brazilians could not understand a word they said. After half an hour, the power was back on. I gazed through the Japanese faces, and they all looked alike to me. Kimura, the jiu-jitsu’s world champion, was close to the ring. He weighted almost 220 pounds of muscles and technique. Kimura was the Japanese champion for fifteen years only losing his title because he fought professionally. Nevertheless, he is still the best of “Rising Sun” jiu-jitsu. He wore a white shirt with rolled-up sleeves showing off his powerful curved forearms. He was strong like a gorilla. Next to the ring, Carlos Gracie and hundreds of Hélio’s fans who traveled from Rio de Janeiro to watch the fight. Journalists from Rio and São Paulo’s radios announced the names of the preliminary cards before the main event of the evening.³⁵⁶

³⁵⁵ *São Paulo Shimbun*, October 23 1951, 3-4.

³⁵⁶ Lemos, "A Morte Entre Os Punhos Do Campeao," 61.

The description of Japanese otherness was complete in the journalist's words through their "unintelligible" language and collective physical appearance.³⁵⁷ Kimura also drew his share of attention from the journalist with his impressive figure arousing a mixture of admiration and loathing. The rematch recorded on film narrated by a Japanese voice confirmed the frenetic atmosphere in the stadium. The fight began with Kato throwing Hélio Gracie against the ropes and trying to have the latter pinned down without success. Once resumed on the standing position, Kato threw Hélio again on the ropes. Gracie then pulled out a full guard blocking Kato between his legs. Next, they tried to choke (*Jujime*) each other. But the Japanese black belt was caught in Gracie's trap since after years of defensive grounding fighting, the leverage favored Hélio who was using his guard to have a better grip on Kato's lapel. The audience held their breath and for few moments, it was impossible to determine the winner. All of the sudden, Kato collapsed due the interruption of blood flow to the brain via the compression of the carotid artery while blocking of airway. The crowd broke into enthusiastic frenzy and a phlegmatic Hélio Gracie left the ring, escorted by Special Police troopers.³⁵⁸

On the day after the match, the popular newspaper *Última Hora* headlined in the front page: "Sensational performance of a Brazilian fighter before a huge crowd attending to the Pacaembu stadium."³⁵⁹ The journalist and jiu-jitsu practitioner Carlos Renato wrote

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ *Helio Gracie vs Kato*, YouTube video, 4:18, posted by userek, October 20, 2006, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMAu0A-vQm8>.

³⁵⁹ "Sensacional Feito Do Lutador Brasileiro Ante Um Publico Entusiasmado E Numeroso No Pacaembu " *Jornal dos Sports*, 1951, front page.

that Hélio Gracie finished off Kato in the first round with an “irresistible choke.”³⁶⁰ Photographs of an unconscious Kato knocked-out on the mat circulated through several newspapers and magazines. After Kato, there were still two Japanese fighters standing, Yamaguchi and Kimura. The latter in his memories described the events after Kato’s defeat:

After this bout, the popularity of our pro wrestling show declined rapidly. The Japanese immigrants whom we encountered on the street murmured, "They must be phonies, losing in such a pathetic manner." Hélio issued another challenge, this time to Yamaguchi. The owner of *São Paulo Shimbun* begged: "Mr. Yamaguchi, please kill Hélio." However, Yamaguchi seemed reluctant, and asked: "Let me think for one night." I knew that Yamaguchi was superior to Helio fighting under the Japanese rule. However, fighting according to the rules established by the Gracies, if Hélio got Yamaguchi pinned on the ground, all he has to do is to stay calm and be cautious until the time runs out. Hélio could fight to a draw in this way. I then said to Yamaguchi: "Do not bother to come up with a plan to make Hélio submit. I will accept the challenge."³⁶¹

The pressure was on Japanese side now, the Nikkei community took Kato’s defeat as a collective humiliation, and Yamaguchi, despite his weight advantage, was hesitant to fight Hélio under the local rules. Kimura Masahiko, however, was among the best Kodokan judo black belts of modern Japan. Apart of being an outstanding practitioner in either standing or on the ground, he was an extremely strong athlete. He outweighed Hélio by almost twenty kilos and Hélio himself declared that he did not expect victory.³⁶²

³⁶⁰ "O Campeao Brasileiro Liquidou O Japones No 1o Round Com Um Estrangulamento Inapelavel," *Ultima Hora*, October 1 1951, front page.

³⁶¹ Ohlenkamp, "My Judo by Masahiko Kimura (Part 2)."

³⁶² "Disposto Helio Gracie a Despedir-Se Do Ring Com Uma Grande Exhibicao Contra O Campeao Kimura," *Jornal dos Sports*, October 18 1951, 8.



Figure 49: Top left: the fight went to the ground. Bottom left: Helio pulled the guard preparing the choke from below. Right: Kato knocked-out.”³⁶³ Source: O Cruzeiro, 1951.

The stakes were high for the challenge held at Maracanãzinho arena in Rio de Janeiro. The *Jornal dos Sports* promoted the contenders by labeling Kimura as the “most perfect fighter in the world” and Hélio as the “Brazilian champion who introduced self-defense in Brazil.”³⁶⁴ The newspaper also emphasized the long time relationship between the Gracie brothers and the local elite by highlighting their clientele formed by “diplomats, politicians, doctors and lawyers.”³⁶⁵

The bout received a great deal of coverage from magazines and newspapers. A short piece of the original footage is available on the website “YouTube,” narrated by Helio’s eldest son, Rorion.³⁶⁶ The two versions of the original footage available on the “YouTube” cut off the exact moment in which Hélio had his arm broken by Kimura. Kimura described the final moments of the fight:

³⁶³ Lemos, “A Morte Entre Os Punhos Do Campeao,” 61-62.

³⁶⁴ “Jiu-Jitsu Sensacional! Afinal O Duelo Helio Gracie-Kimura Esta Noite No Estadio Municipal ” *Jornal dos Sports*, October 23 1951, front page.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ *Masahiko Kimura vs Helio Gracie*, YouTube video, 1:16, posted by userek, February 27, 2006, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DH1eNsMNW24>.

I thought he would surrender immediately. However, Hélio would not tap the mat. I had no choice but to keep on twisting his arm. Silence fell upon the stadium. His arm was coming close to the breaking point. Finally, I heard a snap of a clean broken bone. Hélio still refused to surrender. His left arm was already powerless. Under this rule, I had no choice but to twist the arm again. There was plenty of time left. I twisted the left arm again and I heard another cracking sound. Hélio still did not tap. When I tried to twist the arm once more, someone threw a white towel. I won by KO. I had my hand raised high. My compatriots invaded the ring and raised me on their shoulders. Hélio was in great pain having his left arm dangling inert.³⁶⁷

Kimura affirmed that Hélio's arm was broken while others claimed that Carlos in a dramatic display of "fraternal love" saved his brother's arm.³⁶⁸ In any event, refusing to surrender by tapping out became a hallmark of the Gracies' performances. Carlos Gracie may have learned this code of masculine honor (*Bushido*) from the Japanese Geo Omori in the 1930s and the Gracies nurtured it ever since, in a mentality that bonded their bodies, violence, pain and honor.³⁶⁹ To have their bones broken or to have themselves choked into unconsciousness when facing superior opponents became a badge of honor.

In the aftermath of Hélio versus Kimura's fight, the magazine *O Cruzeiro*, published a long article about the Kodokan judo in Japan. According to the magazine, Kimura lost his title due to his professional prizefighting career and Kato was not even close to be the "world vice-champion" as stated by the same magazine.³⁷⁰ The article also stressed the differences between the two styles retelling the saga and globalization of modern judo. In an interview with Kotani Sumiyuki, Kodokan's international representative, he confirmed that moral principles established by Kano Jigoro in the early

³⁶⁷ Ohlenkamp, "My Judo by Masahiko Kimura (Part 2)."

³⁶⁸ "Carlos Gracie Salvou O Braco Do Irmao : Flagrante Emocional De Amor Fraternal," *Última Hora*, October 24 1951, front page.

³⁶⁹ Robert A. Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 43.

³⁷⁰ Luciano Carneiro, "A Verdade Sobre Kimura," *O Cruzeiro*, December 4 1954, 106.

twentieth century remained rock solid. Kimura received a disciplinary sanction from Kodokan leaders for his participation in professional wrestling outside Japan. Interestingly, “Count Koma,” the Gracie’s mentor, received similar treatment for fighting professionally decades earlier. The Kodokan representative also emphasized that any Japanese martial artists in the future performing in Brazil would fight the Gracies only in amateur events.³⁷¹

Amid the polemics that surrounded the fights between the Gracies and the Japanese martial artists, one aspect is noteworthy, Kodokan judo rose from the ashes after World War II to become a hegemonic style of jiu-jitsu worldwide. In France, for example, Kodokan black belts encountered opposition from practitioners of pre-war jiu-jitsu schools. There, as occurred in Brazil, local styles developed putting emphasis on ground combat and preserving the pre-Meiji denomination “jiu-jitsu.” These styles lasted through the 1950s, but they gradually vanished.³⁷² In São Paulo, the Gracies’ pre-war rivals, the Ono brothers, also kept the name “jiu-jitsu” and sought to balance the practice of standing and ground combat that contradicted the trend imposed by Kodokan judo. They only joined to Kodokan mainstream style in the 1960s through the symbolic adoption of the name “judo.”³⁷³ In both cases, Japanese immigrants, in France and São Paulo, responded in similar ways to the Kodokan hegemonic persuasion. By contrast, the Gracies, driven by their desire to regain status and backed by a wave of nationalism, put up fierce resistance to assimilation by Kodokan judo. Thereafter, in Brazil, “jiu-jitsu” and

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Brousse, *Le Judo : Son Histoire, Ses Succès*, 78-79.

³⁷³ Takao, "O Judo No Brasil: Os Primeiros Rivais Da Familia Gracie."

“judo” definitively parted ways. The Gracies preserved and strengthened the Brazilian jiu-jitsu within their social milieu whereas the Kodokan judo, disseminated by Japanese immigrants, became truly a middle class martial art practice.

The final gentrification of jiu-jitsu’s space and style

On November 27 of 1951, the Rio de Janeiro’s newspaper *A Noite* published two headlines on the front page.³⁷⁴ The first was about a woman who killed her husband after discovering his love affair. Iolanda Vieira Bustamante da Silva had her photograph stamped on the front page and the sensationalist paper called it the “The Copacabana Tragedy.” A few inches below, in capital letters Carlos Gracie advised “Submit your man with an arm bar! It is better to have him knocked out than lying dead in the morgue. The Gracie brothers will open a dojo to teach jiu-jitsu for women.”³⁷⁵ Further, in the same article, the Gracies advertised their new dojo. The old Gracies’ gym in the neighborhood of Botafogo, became too small to accommodate their gentry clientele, comprised “of men who could afford to spend hours of their time learning jiu-jitsu.”³⁷⁶

Whatever the impact of their advertisement, the Gracies seized the moment in the aftermath of the battles against the Japanese black belts and opened a modern and luxurious facility in the heart of Rio de Janeiro’s financial district. Showing a remarkable attachment to their aristocratic past, they established their jiu-jitsu’s operation in the very streets where the Gracies had their business headquarters in the nineteenth century. In

³⁷⁴ "De Uma Chave No Seu Homem!," *A Noite*, November 27 1951, front page.

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

1952, reinforcing their obsession for teaching jiu-jitsu to the elite, they inaugurated a dojo targeting a selected clientele working in the surrounding area.³⁷⁷

The two-floor dojo built in a commercial high rising became a magnet for financiers, government officials, lawyers and scions of the local elite. Hélio Gracie declared to the magazine *O Cruzeiro* that the dojo cost six million cruzeiros (US\$ 300,000) making the enterprise a massive investment.³⁷⁸

The jiu-jitsu style taught by the Gracies and the method they employed shed light to the creation of a gentrified combat sport. The Gracie pedagogical system consisted of a seminar-style lesson given by Hélio. In the seminars, the assistants, under Hélio's supervision, performed techniques later taught to students. Students distributed in five rings practiced techniques assisted by one instructor. Instructors had a busy schedule teaching forty-five minute long lessons with breaks of five minutes. There were no chances to make up for missed classes. The enrollment totaled six-hundred students and there was a one-year waiting list for those who hoped to be new students. For one lesson per week a month, students paid the equivalent of US\$ 50, for two lessons, US\$100, and for three lessons US\$ 136. Considering that the minimum wage in 1952 was US\$31 a month, prices were extremely high. Hélio Gracie closely supervised the operation and enforced draconian rules to maximize efficiency.³⁷⁹ The Gracies' dojo definitely became an upper class modern space.

³⁷⁷ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 283.

³⁷⁸ This sum of money corresponds to US\$2.5 million today.

³⁷⁹ Marcelo Andreazza e Fabio Quio Takao, September 30, 2010 (8:00 a.m.), interview with Armando Wriedt, "Mestre Armando Wriedt - Uma Vida Dedicada Ao Jiu-Jitsu," *MMA Mano a Mano*, September 20, 2010, <http://gustavonoblat.blog.terra.com.br/2010/09/20/mestre-armando-wriedt-uma-vida-dedicada-ao-jiu-jitsu-relembrar-e-viver/>.

The program's technical core aimed to prepare the Gracies clientele to deal with "real" situations in everyday life. Contemporaneous with the inauguration of the Gracies' dojo, the magazine *O Cruzeiro* published the entire program of their self-defense system. From May of 1952 until February of 1953, Hélio and the young Carlson Gracie featured thirty-eight lessons of self-defense choreographing techniques to neutralize hypothetical everyday situations in which the attacker employed a wide range of weapons or objects.



Figure 50: Gracie's Self-Defense System, protection for upper class students against Brazil's everyday violence. Source: *O Cruzeiro*, 1953.³⁸⁰

³⁸⁰ Jose Amadio, "Curso De Defesa Pessoal Por Helio Gracie (Aula 28)," *O Cruzeiro*, December 6, 1953, 96-97.



Figure 51: The Gracies' Team in the 1950s. Carlson Gracie, (center) the only wearing a jiu-jitsu full gear and Waldemar Santana, the only Afro-Brazilian black belt. Source: MMM Mano a Mano, 2010.³⁸¹

The Gracies also employed short films advertising their program and showing the social applicability of self-defense to Brazil's reality. In the early 1950s, they produced a 16 mm footage entitled "Jiu-jitsu is more than this" (*Jiu-jitsu não é só isso não*) at the Gracies' dojo and on Copacabana Beach. Scenes include images of Hélio Gracie refereeing a jiu-jitsu match before a well-dressed male audience with few women strategically placed in the front row. The narrator tells a simplified version about the origin of jiu-jitsu with elements of the Gracies' invented tradition. Next, a mature Carlos Gracie shows off his flexibility and technique against a muscular student. Lastly, in the grand finale, there is a scene described as "the therapeutic effects of jiu-jitsu." There, Robson Gracie, then a frail teenager, has his girlfriend "stolen" on the beach by a much bigger antagonist featured by the Gracies' French student George Mehdi. The narrator then observes: "It's sad not to be strong enough. Unfortunately, the girl has gone.

³⁸¹ Marcelo Andreazza e Fabio Quio Takao, September 30, 2010 (8:00 a.m.), interview with Armando Wriedt, "Mestre Armando Wriedt - Uma Vida Dedicada Ao Jiu-Jitsu," *MMA Mano a Mano*, September 20, 2010, <http://gustavonoblat.blog.terra.com.br/2010/09/20/mestre-armando-wriedt-uma-vida-dedicada-ao-jiu-jitsu-relembrar-e-viver/>.

However, our friend had a great idea: he will learn jiu-jitsu, the self-defense system through which the weak defeat the strong. Sure enough there is hope!” Robson then rushes into the Gracies’ dojo to take jiu-jitsu lessons. Back on the beach, the narrator went on: “a few months later here is what happened.” Robson Gracie defeated his muscular rival using jiu-jitsu techniques and recovered his girlfriend. The narrator concluded: “Cases like this happen by the thousands. With the confidence and peace of mind acquired through the practice of jiu-jitsu, nobody has an inferiority complex.”³⁸²

The commercial footage produced by the Gracies shows the gym, a sophisticated space, carefully designed to host a selected clientele. Next, through the emphasis on their self-defense program, the Gracies marketed their martial art exploiting the Brazilian elite fears of the lawless realm of Rio’s streets.³⁸³ Lastly, the vignette at the end of the video is a parody but also disclose the patriarchal belief that male honor rests on the ability to gain access and control of women. Women in the video had no agency whatsoever. The Gracies used them to associate their business operation with innovation and modernity.³⁸⁴ After all, they have been advertising themselves in public as “benevolent” patriarchs and supporters of women’s empowerment since the late 1930s. Yet at the end of the video, they reinforced the image of women being passive objects of dispute between two aggressive males.

³⁸² *Academia Gracie de Jiu-Jitsu 1950s*, YouTube video, 7:45, uploaded by Valente Brothers TV, October 7 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIIRUA7MSPQ>.

³⁸³ Matta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes : An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*, passim.

³⁸⁴ Besse, *Restructuring Patriarchy : The Modernization of Gender Inequality in Brazil, 1914-1940*, 200.

The creation of Hélio Gracie's patriarchy

Following his older brother's example and orientation, in the early 1950s Hélio Gracie was determined to create his own lineage. The Gracies, as national celebrities, had every aspect of their lives transformed in news. Through this exposure, Hélio introduced his first-born son Rorion.³⁸⁵ The child, however, was not an offspring of Hélio and his wife. Rorion was the product of a peculiar arrangement engineered by Carlos Gracie, who instructed Hélio to impregnate the maid of the Gracies' household named Rosinha. This arrangement, according to Carlos, was justified since Hélio's wife, Margarida, had borne no children until that point.³⁸⁶ Carlos conducted the entire operation by convincing Rosinha to accept it and renounce any right over the child. He launched a well-planned operation to shield any suspicion that include Margarida's false pregnancy and a complex arrangement in the maternity hospital where the two women checked-in and only one left carrying a baby in her arms. Margarida, afterwards legally and publicly assumed the motherhood.³⁸⁷

Hélio repeated the strategy with his other two children, Relson and Rickson. He finally had his own lineage and the children only had knowledge the existence of their biological mother much later on. The domestic arrangement lasted for quite some time since the hierarchy at home remained unchanged. Hélio's wife ran the house and raised the children, while the maid-mother remained in her quarters.³⁸⁸ The entire affair reminds us what Sandra Graham Lauderdale observed about sexual liaisons between masters and

³⁸⁵ Jose Amadio, "Helio Gracie Nao Lutara Mais?," *O Cruzeiro*, March 29, 1952, 52-55.

³⁸⁶ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 257.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

slaves in the nineteenth century. She has argued that: “they were easily tolerated as long as notoriety did not impair the ability of masters to command respect, or property was not transferred into unsuitable hands.”³⁸⁹

Carlos always used his spiritualist religious beliefs to justify his procreation practices with multiple partners. Hélio, however, despite following his older brother’s ideas about jiu-jitsu and dietary habits, remained indifferent to Carlos’ esoteric practices. Unlike his brother, Hélio justified his behavior on his patriarchal mindset. He declared later in an interview:

I like women, but I do not love them. There is a difference. Love is a manifestation of weakness and I am not weak. I have sex only for the sake of procreation. I never had a sexual relationship with any women without making it clear that my only goal was to produce offspring.³⁹⁰

Later, Hélio’s wife, Margarida, gave birth to her own offspring. This apparently did not alter the relationship between siblings and the subject remained a family taboo until recently, when a family memoir written in the wake of intra-clannish disputes made it public. Apparently, Hélio’s patriarchal figure remained intact and any public criticism from his offspring toward their father’s behavior is unheard. Perhaps Rorion’s declarations to Playboy magazine in the 1980s shed some light on the status of women in the Gracie realm:

In the Gracie family, men are peacocks. Women are along for the ride...Women became feminists because men’s weakness. Every woman wants her man to treat her like a woman or he loses his position of strength with her. Women are natural born mothers. Having kids is the only thing a woman can do that a man cannot. Most Gracie men do not believe in birth control. We believe sex is something holy, for the procreation of the species. If my wife (Suzanne) does not want to get

³⁸⁹ Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street : The Domestic World of Servants and Masters in Nineteenth-Century Rio De Janeiro*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 105.

³⁹⁰ Paulo Lima, "Devil Inside," *Trip*, November 1997, accessed May 20, 2010, <http://revistatrip.uol.com.br/revista/58>.

pregnant, we do not have sex. Before I got married, I told her she was only my vehicle for having as many sons as possible. I want to have sons to keep the Gracie legend alive. I want to raise as many jiu-jitsu champions as I can. I told Suzanne that it is possible that I will start another family, like my father, if I find a woman with good karma. However, that would be hard. The only thing more difficult to find than a good woman is a good man.³⁹¹

Rorion, as the first product of his uncle's plan synthesized the Gracie mores passed down through the male members of the family. Rorion said he did not mind the arrangement at all, and demonstrated total adherence to his father's patriarchal discourse and a desire to reproduce his family behavior.

Carla Bassenazi has argued that despite the overall modernization experienced by Brazilian society in the 1950s, upper-class women were encouraged to remain in the domestic sphere to perform their traditional roles.³⁹² According to this discourse, women are born to be housewives and mothers. Hélio Gracie's behavior toward women and family issues demonstrated the maintenance of patriarchal values in the post-war period. Despite his wife Margarida's upper class background, he was able to enforce his role as patriarch and break social conventions by having children out of wedlock through veiled practices of concubinage.³⁹³

³⁹¹ Pat Jordan, "Bad," *Playboy*, September 1986, accessed June 2010, <http://stickgrappler.tripod.com/bjj/bad.html>.

³⁹² In the late 1940s females composed 14 percent of the economically active population making marriage the major way to leave their parent's homes. Michael L. Conniff and Frank D. McCann, eds., *Modern Brazil : Elites and Masses in Historical Perspective* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 276.

³⁹³ Carla Bassanezi, "Mulheres Dos Anos Dourados," in *Historia Das Mulheres No Brasil*, ed. Mary del Priore (Sao Paulo: Contexto, 1997), 33-34,608.



Figure 52: The Gracies' new generation on Copacabana Beach: "Celebrities on the Beach." Source: *O Cruzeiro*, 1956.³⁹⁴

The racial showdown: Hélio Gracie versus Waldemar Santana

The Gracie dojo in downtown Rio was a truly elitist space; Afro-Brazilians were unwelcome as students. Waldemar Santana was an exception. He migrated from the most Africanized region of Brazil, Bahia State, to Rio de Janeiro in the early 1950s. Like scores of Brazilians living in peripheral areas, he sought better opportunities in large urban centers upon the return of Getúlio Vargas.³⁹⁵ Santana, originally a marble-cutter, started his martial arts apprenticeship in Salvador and soon became a skilled fighter performing prizefighting in Northeastern Brazil. Once in the federal capital, Santana watched the matches between Hélio Gracie and the Japanese judo black belts in 1951. Afterwards, the Gracies hired him to work in their dojo in downtown. Santana seized the opportunity to learn jiu-jitsu with the Gracies. His talent made him progress rapidly through the ranks and he became member of the selected group of the Gracies' best

³⁹⁴ Luis Edgard de Andrade, "Celebidades Na Praia," *O Cruzeiro*, March 10, 1956, 75.

³⁹⁵ John J. Johnson, *Political Change in Latin America: The Emergence of the Middle Sectors*, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1958), 177.

martial artists. Carlson Gracie, later acknowledged Santana meteoric progress: “He was quick and strong as a bull and met the standards of the best fighters in the dojo.”³⁹⁶

Santana, who was badly in need for money agreed to participate in a prizefighting event. Hélio promptly vetoed the fight on moral grounds because, according to him, the event promoted match fixing and it would damage the Gracies’ reputation. Santana, however, went on fighting and won without getting involved in any match fixing arrangement. For Hélio, nevertheless, Santana’s insubordination was not acceptable, and he expelled the latter from the Gracies’ premises amid a flurry of racial slurs.³⁹⁷

Before long, Santana found support among the ranks of the Gracies’ antagonists. One in particular, stands out: Carlos Renato a journalist and former Gracie liaison in the media. He worked for the sensationalist, popular Rio newspaper *Última Hora*, and had a previous personal disagreement with the Gracies. Carlos Renato nurtured intellectual ambitions; his colleagues included prominent literati such as Nelson Rodrigues. Perhaps under the influence of the latter, Carlos Renato wrote books titled “We must save the housewives” or “The faithful husband: What a tedious man!” Carlos Renato staunchly defended the sacredness of domestic sphere, while encouraging men’s predatory sexual behavior in the realm of the street.³⁹⁸ Voices of individuals with intellectual claims like Carlos Renato argued that men and women would find a happier conjugal life through an arrangement that enforced a total separation of spheres.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁶ Jose Mauricio Costa, "Waldemar Santana: O Leopardo Negro," *Tatame* 84, March (2004), accessed April 2 2010, <http://www.tatame.com.br/dasantigas/upload/43/arquivo.pdf>.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁸ Carlos Renato, *E Preciso Salvar a Mulher Casada*, (Rio de Janeiro: Gemini, 1969). Carlos Renato, *O Marido Fiel, Esse Chato*, (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Eldorado, 1969).

³⁹⁹ Bassanezi, "Mulheres Dos Anos Dourados," 624-26.



Figure 53: “We must save the housewives,” Carlos Renato’s book.⁴⁰⁰

The journalist and other members of the local elite, put Santana on a collision course with his former patrons. The *casus belli* was the letter published on the newspaper *Correio da Manhã* in which Waldemar Santana challenged Hélio for a no barred holds fight. Hélio Gracie accepted the challenge to fight Santana in the Y.M.C.A’s headquarters in Rio. The magazine *O Cruzeiro* provided the full coverage:

Scenes of Roman Coliseum at Y.C.M.A: three hours and thirty minutes of fight

Hélio Gracie adjusts his black belt and bounces against the ropes. He is 42 years old, his experience and confidence explain his relaxed attitude. Before him, displaying animal-like stamina, the young Waldemar Santana, outfitted in a gi that hallmarks the system created by the Gracies. Hélio attacked his student determined to give him a lesson. He fired a kick against Santana, who dodged out of the way and threw himself on top of Hélio. On the ground, Hélio was underneath and Santana on top. The latter pulled up his guard trying to flip Santana to no avail. Santana, demonstrating his Afro-Brazilian strength, did not move. Santana hammered down on Hélio landing a flurry of head butts.

⁴⁰⁰ Carlos Renato, *E Preciso Salvar a Mulher Casada*, (Rio de Janeiro: Gemini, 1969).

Hélio trying to protect himself from the attack, had his choke applied from the guard position neutralized, the. The fight developed by Santana pounding Hélio with strikes unleashed from the top position. For a long time, the bout became monotonous, but all of a sudden Santana started a wild attack against Hélio who remained standing only supported by his honor. Santana then lifted Hélio into the air and slammed him to the ground. Due to the violent impact, Hélio could not pull his guard and Santana fired a violent kick to his face. Hélio remained motionless on the ground and Santana realized that the fight was over. Santana defeated Hélio using techniques he learned in the Gracies' dojo; hence, the Gracies technique wins.⁴⁰¹

The coverage strongly biased in favor of Hélio Gracie, portrayed Santana as a beast-like persona and ungrateful disciple. By contrast, the journalist depicted Hélio as an honored martyred hero. It evoked images of the “savage” black man and the “civilized” white man. The article concluded that Santana defeated Hélio using the Gracies technique. This affirmation is hardly true, since the former knocked out the latter with a kick. Besides being a Brazilian jiu-jitsu black belt Santana was a skilled boxer and Capoeira fighter.

⁴⁰¹ "Gracie Derrotado Pelo Aluno: Cenas Do Coliseu Romano Durante Tres Horas E Meia De Luta Na Acm," *O Cruzeiro*, June 4, 1955, 96-97.

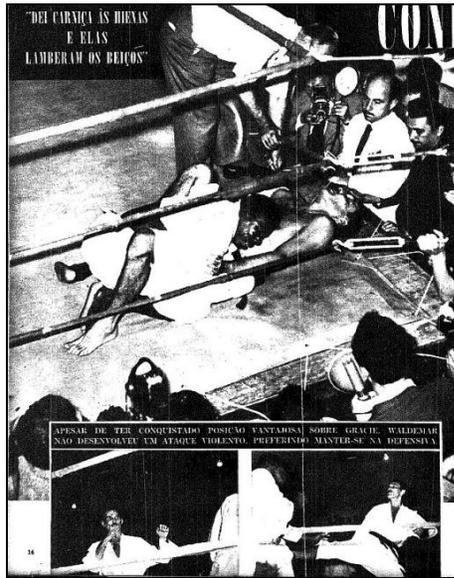


Figure 54: Hélio Gracie versus Waldemas Santana. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1955.⁴⁰²



Figure 55: Santana victorious against Hélio Gracie. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1955.⁴⁰³

The coverage provided by the newspaper *Última Hora* provided a quite different picture. Carlos Renato called Santana the “Black Leopard.” The headlines highlighted

⁴⁰² Ubiratan Lemos, "Gracie Derrotado Pelo Aluno," *ibid.*

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*

“the deadly showdown lasted, almost four hours and a second kick would make Santana a murderer”. The newspaper further criticized Carlos Gracie’s behavior where prior to the fight he had grabbed the microphone and tried to intimidate Santana by calling him a “coward and arrogant.” Yet, according to the article, Carlos’ speech backfired, and Santana loomed large in the fight. The coverage finished with Hélio declaring: “I fought to defend my honor” and Santana venting at the end: “My honor was washed-off by Hélio Gracie’s blood, sweat and tears.”⁴⁰⁴ However, the article written by another journalist of the *Última Hora* cornered the Gracies for the first time in years. In the article “The black man with a black soul”, Nelson Rodrigues harshly criticized the Gracies and ignited accusations of racism. He put the Gracies in the middle of an inconvenient discussion about race.

As Brazilians tend to assume that they are exempt from racial discrimination, discussions on racism are usually perceived as a social taboo.⁴⁰⁵ During the 1930s, the authoritarian establishment adopted Gilberto Freyre’s concept of “racial democracy” as a semi-official ideology. By incorporating this discourse into its agenda the xenophobic state created by Getúlio Vargas sought to enforce unity and homogeneity as core values of national identity. Nevertheless, the early 1950s became a watershed in the deconstruction of the myth of a Brazilian colorblind nation. In 1950, an international team of researchers sponsored by UNESCO conducted fieldwork in Brazil and found blatant inequalities between whites and blacks. Furthermore, coinciding with UNESCO’s

⁴⁰⁴ "Meu Odio Foi Lavado Pelo Sangue Pelo Suor E Pelas Lagrimas De Helio Gracie," *Ultima Hora*, May 26 1955, 6.

⁴⁰⁵ Ricardo Franklin Ferreira, "O Brasileiro, O Racismo Silencioso E a Emancipacao Do Afro-Descendente," *Psicologia & Sociedade*, 14, No. (1): jan./jun. (2002): 70-71.

findings the African-American dancer Katherine Dunham touring in Brazil had his admission rejected in a hotel in São Paulo. The incident sparked considerable debate and has contributed to the passing of the first Brazilian anti-discrimination bill, the Afonso Arinos Law.⁴⁰⁶ Despite this incident and the first concrete indications of racial inequality, the large majority of Brazilians still believed that Brazil was a “raceless” society. Perhaps the statement made by Correia Leite, an intellectual and anti-racist activist, summarize the real status of Afro-Brazilians in the post-war: “Brazil still is an immense slave quarter, with few blacks in the Big House.”⁴⁰⁷

In witnessing the violent Santana-Gracie confrontation and capturing its drama, Nelson Rodrigues stepped into the minefield of racism completely ignored by other journalists. His text full of irony contextualized Santana’s ordeal within the framework of Brazilian’s peculiar forms of racism. Rodrigues accurately pointed out that the fight was not a sportive dispute because he was aware of the fact that the affair was not just an ordinary master-disciple altercation. The atmosphere at Y.M.C.A.’s gymnasium only confirmed the racial aspect of the fight. Roberto da Matta observed that instead of codes of law establishing outwardly racism like in the United States, in Brazil there is the enforcement of inequality through an invisible hierarchy. Santana’s behavior challenges the hierarchy because he fought without Hélio’s permission. Furthermore, after being humiliated he dared to challenge his former patron that definitely turned the racial hierarchy upside down.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁶ George Reid Andrews, "Brazilian Racial Democracy, 1900-90: An American Counterpoint," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 31, No. 3 (Jul., 1996): 489-90.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Matta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes : An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*, 153.

In an attempt to defuse the racial imbroglio, the Gracies and their powerful allies in the press launched a campaign to tarnish Santana's reputation. A few weeks later, in an interview given to the magazine *O Cruzeiro*, Hélio Gracie sought to explain the fight and his defeat. He admitted that he miscalculated the threat posed by Santana, but justified his decision on grounds of honor. Hélio described Santana as "the Gracies' sparring partner and a clean black who dropped by our dojo a couple of times." His racist subconscious betrayed him. Whites in Brazil used the epithet "clean" to describe blacks who behave according to white standards. This discourse dates back to colonial Brazil when blacks grouped with other "infectious" or "impure races."⁴⁰⁹

The Gracies' allies in the media continued to defend Hélio against the accusations of racism. The journalist David Nasser came to help him:

There is no racism in Brazil. We like blacks and we love our mulatas; blacks sit at our table. Brazilians demolished the myth of racial inferiority. I am a white Arab-Brazilian without prejudice against my black compatriots. Come on Waldemar! Take your mask off! This is only about sport, and you are not displaying good sportsmanship. There are many Afro-Brazilians out there playing football with decency and honor. You pretend to be a jiu-jitsu practitioner Waldemar, but this is an honored sport. Your behavior damaged the reputation of a thousand-year's tradition by using dirty tricks that you learned playing Capoeira. You have acted like a scoundrel. Who are you Waldemar? What is your fighter background? In sport, you are an accident. You were humble and honored performing janitorial duties in the Gracies' dojo. But because you were strong and brave you became the Gracies' punching bag.⁴¹⁰

David Nasser was one of the most polemic journalists in the magazine *O Cruzeiro* and he was often involved in bitter political exchanges that at the end increased the magazine's circulation. Nasser was of Lebanese descent and like others from the first generation

⁴⁰⁹ Maria Luiza Tucci Carneiro, *O Racismo Na Historia Do Brasil : Mito E Realidade*, (Sao Paulo, SP: Editora Atica, 1994), 11.

⁴¹⁰ David Nasser, "Nao Lute, Helio," *O Cruzeiro*, December 24, 1955, 65-66.

of immigrants sought to accommodate his hyphenated identity vis-à-vis a xenophobic nationalism. He did so by incorporating local forms of racism and in seeking to legitimize his not so obvious “whiteness.”⁴¹¹ Jeffrey Lesser has argued that by the 1950s hyphenated Brazilians established themselves in the middle and upper classes.⁴¹² Nasser was exactly a type of impoverished immigrant who experienced upward mobility and flirted with power. At this point, he already had in his biography other polemical issues on race. Nasser composed a very popular samba song in 1942 entitled *Negra do Cabelo Duro* (Little Black Girl with Stiff Hair) that becomes a symbol of racial discrimination disguised in mockery.⁴¹³ On another occasion, in 1945, Nasser published an article teaching Brazilians to distinguish between Chinese and Japanese. According to him, one could identify the Japanese by their “repulsive aspect, myopia and insignificant nature.”⁴¹⁴ For Nasser an Afro-Brazilian Capoeira player like Santana could not attain jiu-jitsu’s high moral standards. Consequently, he became a jiu-jitsu practitioner by accident only achieving this status due to his physical prowess and capacity to endure punishment.

⁴¹¹ Oswaldo M. S. Truzzi, "The Right Place at the Right Time: Syrians and Lebanese in Brazil and the United States, a Comparative Approach," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 16, No. 2 (1997).

⁴¹² Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity: Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil*, 168.

⁴¹³ Larry Crook and Randal Johnson, *Black Brazil: Culture, Identity, and Social Mobilization*, (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center, 1999), 269-71.

⁴¹⁴ Matinas Suzuki, "Rompendo O Silencio," accessed March 18, 2009, <http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/fsp/mais/fs2004200804.htm>.



Figure 56: “The author and the character (David Nasser): Hélio Gracie (on the right) taught me his defensive techniques.” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1955.⁴¹⁵

The defeat of Hélio Gracie continued to raise passionate reactions in the press. Once again, Nelson Rodrigues penned another article, this time partially redeeming the Gracies:

The Accomplices of Waldemar

In the beginning, I did not realize the far-reaching implications of the Gracie-Santana’s fight. It became obvious to me when I witnessed a wave of euphoria after Hélio Gracie’s defeat. I had the impression that there were Gracies enemies everywhere. Huge celebrations with firecrackers and champagne flowing followed Waldemar’s victory. Suddenly, scores of benefactors emerged with presents for him. Santana was penniless before the fight. Why everyone wants to show gratitude? Because his victory made our dream come true. We all felt uncomfortable by living close to the invincible Gracies. One may argue that is not our business a fight between two professionals. It is not true. We get annoyed with the Gracies’ courage. We have no courage. Who could behold the Gracies’ greatness without envy? They are like stars always shining. It was an insult. Waldemar Santana was not alone. He had support from scores of people who sought to destroy the Gracies’ invincibility. I said before that the fight had racial overtones. Now, I would like to add that it was the revenge of ordinary people like us and the celebration of a champion’s downfall. That is why there are so many people giving radios, TV sets and other house appliances to

⁴¹⁵ Nasser, "Nao Lute, Helio."

Santana. After his victory, there was a collective joy. Yes, even for those husbands who ever raise their voices against their wives. We are all accomplices of Waldemar Santana.⁴¹⁶

Rodrigues' sharp gaze realized that, despite the blatant racism permeating the whole affair, the Gracies' enemies manipulated Santana. The paradox observed by Nelson Rodrigues is that the Gracies found themselves under collective attack because "super-persons or part of the patrimony as national figures associated with personal morality, mysticism, courage, fortitude, and aristocracy."⁴¹⁷ Rodrigues soon realized that Santana's social redemption was the result of an ephemeral inter-elite conflict of interest. In the end, the very system that oppressed people like Santana was using him to hurt the Gracies.⁴¹⁸ Furthermore, one may argue, that despite Nelson Rodrigues's inclination for baffling the public he was a passionate nationalist who decided to preserve the Gracies' iconic aura in a country badly in need of heroes after the dramatic suicide of Getúlio Vargas just one year earlier.

The Gracies also had the support of other high-profile journalists such as Adalgisa Nery and Eloy Dutra. The former was a feminist, journalist, intellectual and politician closely associated with Getúlio Vargas populism.⁴¹⁹ The latter, was a journalist and politician equally affiliated with Vargas. Both carried out the populist ideal of the fallen leader and were in ideological opposition to the media conglomerate of Assis Chateaubriand. Yet, as in the other crisis endured by the Gracies, even antagonistic sectors of the establishment closed ranks around them. Apart of elite solidarity, it was

⁴¹⁶ "Os Cumplices De Waldemar," *Ultima Hora*, June 8 1955, 2.

⁴¹⁷ Matta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes : An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*, 183-84.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁹ See: Isabela Candeloro Campoi, "Adalgisa Nery E as Questões Políticas De Seu Tempo (1905-1980)", PhD Dissertation, Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2008.

undeniable that the Gracies were national symbols created during Getúlio Vargas' era. They were the ones stepping forward and sacrificing their bodies like in the episode with Kimura. Although endorsing with reservation the Gracies' behavior, Nelson Rodrigues and others rallied to save the living symbols of an era.

Waldemar Santana, by contrast, enjoyed his greatest hour in style with money, presents and touring throughout the country.⁴²⁰ Following Hélio's defeat, the Gracies drafted Carlson, Carlos' first born, to carry out their revenge. In October of 1955, six months after the Hélio's defeat, Carlson and Santana faced each other before 30,000 people at the *Maracanãzinho* Gymnasium in Rio de Janeiro. This time, however, it had to be a jiu-jitsu match instead of a no holds barred fight following the public outcry against the excessive violence in the previous fight. The bout ended in draw after five rounds in which Carlson's technique neutralized by Santana's physical prowess.⁴²¹ The magazine *O Cruzeiro*, however, saw the fight under a different perspective putting in the headline: "Waldemar, coward!"⁴²²

⁴²⁰ "A Cinderela Negra," *Última Hora*, June 1 1955, 3. Santana, according to the newspaper earned around 200,000 Cruzeiros or the equivalent to US\$10,000.

⁴²¹ Costa, "Waldemar Santana: O Leopardo Negro".

⁴²² Ubiratan de Lemos, "Waldemar, Covarde!," *O Cruzeiro*, October 22, 1955, 134-37.

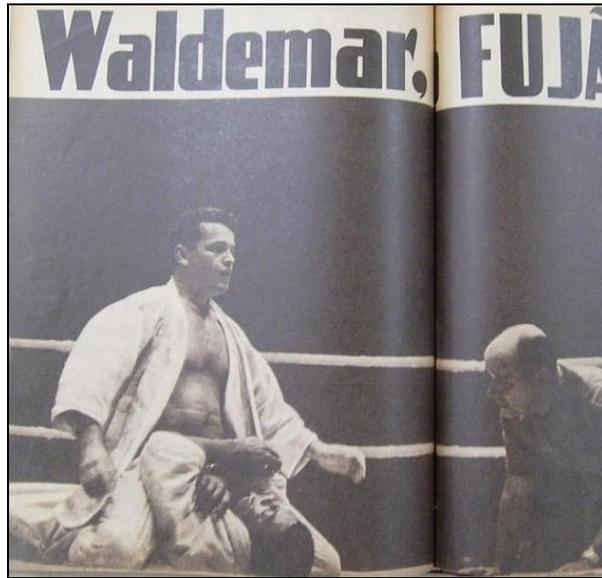


Figure 57: "Waldemar, coward!" Source: *O Cruzeiro*, 1955.⁴²³

In a second fight between Carlson and Waldemar, in July of 1956, the Gracies finally had their revenge before almost 40,000 spectators including the mayor of Rio de Janeiro and the chief of police. Carlson Gracie and Santana fought an intense four-round no-holds-barred bout won by the former through a technical knockout. The journalist Carlos Renato, Santana's manager, threw in the towel recognizing Carlson's dominance. The magazine *O Cruzeiro* in a frenzy headlined, "Poor Waldemar", describing in a five-page coverage the Gracies' sweet victory.⁴²⁴

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ Ubiratan Lemos, "Coitado Do Waldemar," *O Cruzeiro*, August 4, 1956, 140-145.

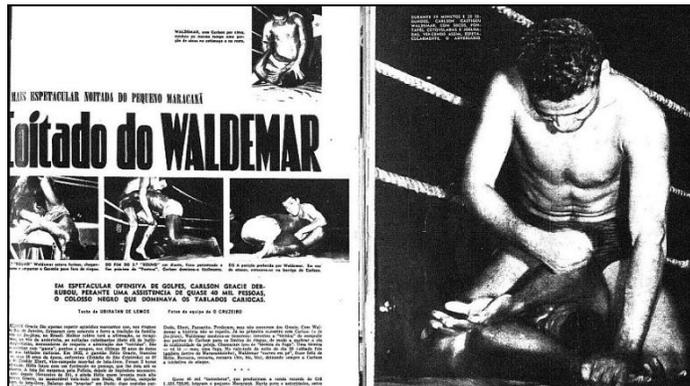


Figure 58: “Poor Waldemar: Carlson Gracie defeated, before almost 40,000 people, the ‘black colossus’ who dominated Rio’s combat sports.” Source: O Cruzeiro, 1956.⁴²⁵

The Gracies’ victory was total since they lifted the ban of no-hold-barred fights and had a packed audience that included high-profile authorities. The triumph came at the beginning of the Juscelino Kubishek’s term. This period marked by the continuation of the populism combined with developmentist and cultural endeavors. Kubishek, dubbed as “Bossa Nova’s president” alluding to the innovative Brazilian musical genre at this time, pushed the country to a new level of industrialization and cultural modernization perhaps best symbolized by the construction of the new capital Brasilia. Following a period of uncertainty and blues caused by Getúlio Vargas’ suicide, the nation entered into a period of modernity and optimism.

Unlike Santana’s victory over Hélio, the Gracies’ revenge did not raise racial polemics. Yet race was also present in Carlson’s victory. The journalist Ubiratan de Lemos described Santana using derogatory terms like “gorilla,” “coward” and “ingrate.” Conversely, he depicted Carlson as a “big boy,” fearless prior to the fight and chivalrous after his victory. Lemos described Carlson as behaving with higher moral standards that

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

were only attainable by whites or those who enjoy proximity to whiteness in Brazil. Through Lemos description, one may imply that Carlson was not fighting Santana, but he was punishing him. Ironically, Lemos' racist remarks overlooked the fact that Carlson was actually a mulatto. In the Brazilian labyrinth of racial gradations, there is nothing obvious. According to Abdias Nascimento, an Afro-Brazilian intellectual, politician and pioneer of black movements, Brazilians disguised their racism under forms of "paternalism, cordiality, benevolence and good will, as if it stood for miscegenation, acculturation, assimilation."⁴²⁶ The *O Cruzeiro's* coverage demeaning Santana and praising Carlson represent Carl Degler's "mulatto escape hatch" as its best.⁴²⁷ After all, Ubiratan Lemos could also describe Carlson's triumph as a mulatto fighter taking revenge on the black enemy of his white uncle.



Figure 59: "The Celebration of the Three Gracies." Different racial gradations, but one ideal. Source: *O Cruzeiro*, 1956.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁶ Edison Carneiro, *80 Anos De Abolicao*, (Rio de Janeiro: Cadernos Brasileiros, 1968), 10-11, 14.

⁴²⁷ Degler, *Neither Black nor White : Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States*, passim.

⁴²⁸ Ubiratan Lemos, "Coitado Do Waldemar," *O Cruzeiro*, August 4, 1956, 145.

The “larger-than-life” Gracies: radio, television and comics

By the mid-1950s, the large space occupied by the Gracies in newspapers and magazines expanded toward other media. In 1955, Hélio broadcast his show “The Champion” on the Radio Tupi station in Rio de Janeiro. He was a character in the adventures embodying the virtues of “justice, loyalty and defense of the weak.”⁴²⁹



Figure 60: “The Adventures of the champion” Source: *O Cruzeiro*, 1955.

Articles in the magazine *O Cruzeiro* multiplied displaying the iconic Gracies in the most idiosyncratic situations. They interacted with politicians, beauty pageants and performed examples of a glamorized life style idealized by Brazilian upper classes. As Claire Badaracco has argued, “mass media modes affect how people think the identity of their social groups and the quality of the culture in terms of aesthetics and spiritual

⁴²⁹ Italo Viola, "As Aventuras De 'O Campeão'," *O Cruzeiro*, September 3, 1955, 60-61.

vitality.”⁴³⁰ The magazine *O Cruzeiro*, the principal medium the Gracies, constituted an ideal space consonant with modernity.⁴³¹

The magazine showed the Gracies teaching jiu-jitsu lessons to high-profile populist politicians such as Tenório Cavalcanti, among others. The latter was a northeastern type of charismatic macho who resorted to violent methods of politics in the impoverished and violent outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. The six-page article in *O Cruzeiro* headlined “Tenório, what a great artist!” It covered Tenório’s signing up at the Gracies’ dojo. The following dialogue ensued between him and Hélio Gracie:

H.G.: It is an honor to have you in my dojo. T.C.: I have heard so much about the Gracies that I came to see it for myself. H.G.: Did you come to fight with me? T.C.: No Gracie! I have a special concern about my physical integrity. Listen man! I came to sign up for jiu-jitsu lessons. I will do my best to complete your “self-defense” program and see if your jiu-jitsu is the real deal. If you convince me, I will give up my Smith & Wesson. H.G.: I accept the challenge Tenório. Learning jiu-jitsu will make you calm and self-confident to use your fists instead of your big guns. Listen, I have here in my dojo violent students who have changed completely after learning jiu-jitsu. I am confident in the victory of jiu-jitsu over your weapons. T.C.: So, let us do it!⁴³²

The pictures showed the entire pantomime beginning with “gunslinger-congressman who carries machine guns” handed over his two Smith & Wesson revolvers practicing jiu-jitsu under Hélio’s supervision. The journalist described the scene showing Hélio and Tenório face to face as men who are “brave, energetic and very much alike”.⁴³³

It is unknown if Tenório had ever an opportunity to put in practice his jiu-jitsu’s lessons. However, he continued his violent trajectory draped in a black cloak and

⁴³⁰ Claire Badaracco, *Quoting God : How Media Shape Ideas About Religion and Culture*, (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2005), 3.

⁴³¹ Joseph A. Page, *The Brazilians*, (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1995), 159-60.

⁴³² Ubiratan de Lemos, "Jiu-Jitsu Vs Revolveres: Que Grande Artista E Tenorio," *O Cruzeiro*, June 6 1955, 132-38.

⁴³³ *Ibid.*

carrying a German machine gun dubbed as “Lurdinha.” In 1965, the military regime stripped him of his political rights.⁴³⁴



Figure 61: “Tenorio, what a great artist!” The violent politician giving up their guns at the Gracies’ dojo. Source: *O Cruzeiro*, 1955.⁴³⁵

Populist politicians were not the only ones for whom the magazine *O Cruzeiro*, prescribed the Gracies as models of manly virtues. Copacabana in the 1950s became an iconic upper class neighborhood. James N. Green has pointed out:

Nossa Senhora de Copacabana Avenue, which cut through the long narrow neighborhood set between green-covered granite mountains and white-sanded beach, boasted new cinemas and fancy boutiques. Middle class homosexuals or those who aspired to that lifestyle sought out Copacabana because it offered a privileged space for entertainment, cruising and socializing. The fascination with Copacabana was widespread.⁴³⁶

Among Copacabana’s dwellers, there were a group of Capoeira white practitioners training under the direction of Agenor Moreira Sampaio, a white martial arts instructor nicknamed *Sinhozinho de Ipanema* (“the little master of Ipanema”). The style was the

⁴³⁴ Janice E. Perlman, *The Myth of Marginality : Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio De Janeiro*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 50.

⁴³⁵ Lemos, "Jiu-Jitsu Vs Revolvers: Que Grande Artista E Tenorio."

⁴³⁶ James Naylor Green, *Beyond Carnival : Male Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century Brazil*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 150-51.

brainchild of a white Navy officer, Annibal Burlamaqui, nicknamed *Zuma* who in 1928 wrote a manual that became an effort to transform Capoeira to a school of physical education and a combat sport.⁴³⁷ *Sinhozinho*, who was also a Special Police's instructor in the 1930s, taught his upper class clientele a violent version of Capoeira. Burlamaqui's style eliminated musical instruments and songs and only kept Capoeira's techniques. In doing so, he deliberately sought to de-Africanize Capoeira making it a palatable embodied practice to white Brazilians. He branded his style "Brazilian Fighting System" (Luta Brasileira) and it became along with Brazilian jiu-jitsu part of the martial arts curriculum of the Special Police in the 1930s.

The magazine *O Cruzeiro* described Copacabana as "the citadel of tough guys." The article continued: "There is no need to go to Rio's impoverished areas to find violent capoeiras. Right there on the most beautiful beach in the world, one finds Capoeira practitioners."⁴³⁸ In 1953, the government promoted fund-raising to help northeastern backlanders fleeing from regions ravaged by severe drought. The Gracies seized the moment and challenged Copacabana's capoeiras to fight in a prizefighting tournament to raise money for the victims of drought. They had the support of Brazil's press association (A.B.I.) to organize an event at the Portuguese community sports stadium. The Gracies picked Carlos' sons, Carlson and Robson, plus a rookie student to fight respectively, the muscular capoeira "Cirandinha", a wrestler nicknamed "Tatuzinho" and another white

⁴³⁷ Burlamaqui, *Gymnastica Nacional (Capoeiragem) Methodizada E Reagrada*.

⁴³⁸ Ubiratan Lemos, "Espetaculo De Brutalidade, Coragem E Sangue Frio," *O Cruzeiro*, April 4, 1953, 23-30, 116.

capoeira named Rudolf Hermann. The card described in an eight-page article as a “Life-and-death violent bloodshed: the twilight of Capoeira and the dawn of Jiu-Jitsu.”⁴³⁹

The spectacle intended to be a charitable enterprise became a brutal brawl fought on a bare cement courtyard surrounded by Special Police troopers who hardly contained the public’s wild frenzy. The *O Cruzeiro* celebrated: “Besides the blood of winners and losers all over the place the spectacle raised 86,000 cruzeiros.” The magazine called it “The Pacification of Copacabana.”⁴⁴⁰



Figure 62: Carlos Gracie’s lineage: (left) Robson and Carlson (right). Source: amazonvaletudomma.blogspot.com.⁴⁴¹

The Gracies’ insertion in the mass media reached its peak in the late 1950s. They had a television show called “Heroes in the Ring,” which essentially presented Gracie

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁴¹ “Amazonvaletudomma,” accessed July 13, 2011, <http://amazonvaletudomma.blogspot.com/>.

performances in a TV format. A new television channel Continental TV inaugurated in 1959 in Rio de Janeiro aired the Gracies' show live on Monday evenings.⁴⁴²

Contrary to their "lucha libre's" wrestling counterparts that also aired choreographic fights displaying limited violence, the Gracie ones had no boundaries. The show soon became a success, despite met with harsh criticism. The journalist Evandro Carlos de Andrade wrote an article titled "Lessons in Masculinity":

Hélio Gracie is not qualified to host the show. First, his poor language skills make the Portuguese his first victim. Next, he loses his temper whenever his fighters are in disadvantage. Finally, Mr. Gracie insults and makes threats to his critics. He challenges journalists to step into the ring that he defined as a "place for men only" and "to learn lessons about masculinity."⁴⁴³

The magazine *O Cruzeiro* came to rescue the Gracies and the journalist Ubiratan Lemos wrote an article praising the show and lashing out its critics:

The "Heroes in the Ring" Won The First Round:
The Gracies' show is a success despite criticism from those with effeminate tendencies. It carries the Gracies' "trademark" of spontaneity.⁴⁴⁴

Lemos added that Carlos Gracie, "the unquestionable father of about twenty children," created the TV show⁴⁴⁵ Next, the article justified the Gracies' violence:

Viewers have the opportunity to watch scenes of bravery in times of "philosophical cowardice." The Gracies, who already "nationalized" jiu-jitsu, practice a masculine martial arts that demands courage and high moral standards. This eliminates "fixed fights", trickery and dishonesty, ravaging in some places. It is a show created for strong-minded people. The bloodshed exaggerates the real damage. Yet journalists with effeminate tendencies or those preaching morality

⁴⁴² The politician and entrepreneur Rubens Berardo Carneiro da Cunha owned "TV Continental Network". He came from a wealthy family of landowners in the state of Alagoas (Northeast Brazil).

⁴⁴³ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 375.

⁴⁴⁴ Ubiratan Lemos, "Heróis Do Ringue Vencem O 'Round'," *O Cruzeiro*, February 9 1959, 30-33.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

overlooked other important issues to criticize the Gracies' reality show. Both, fighters and spectators can exercise their choice and surrender; the former by "tapping out" the latter by switching the channel. Fortunately, those journalists who would dress up in women's clothes are facing criticism from their colleagues. The authorities representing the National Sports Council will not capitulate. It will be a shame and the ultimate de-masculinization of this violent sport.⁴⁴⁶



Figure 63: "Female spectators enthusiastically watch the fights. The Gracie show is very much appreciated by women." Source: O Cruzeiro, 1959.⁴⁴⁷

The article argues that the show was popular among woman and the magazine displayed images of an enthusiastic female audience watching the fights. The controversy around the show ended six months after its beginning. One of the Gracies' protégé broke his opponent's arm producing an exposed fracture broadcasted in prime time. From the perspective of the sponsors, the Gracies' violence has gone too far.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.



Figure 64: “The “Heroes in the Ring””: Televised graphic violence for a selected audience. Source: O Cruzeiro, 1960.⁴⁴⁹

At the end of the 1950s, the number of television sets in the country jumped from 250,000 in the mid-1950s to 1.8 million 1960.⁴⁵⁰ The TV Continental aired The Gracies’ show during the transition between productions designed for a small upper-class audience to the ones aiming at larger middle class viewers.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁰ Jon S. Vincent, *Culture and Customs of Brazil*, (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2003), 107. Rio de Janeiro’s population in 1960 was 3, 307.163 inhabitants.

⁴⁵¹ Joseph Dean Straubhaar, "Mass Communications and the Elites," in *Modern Brazil: Elites and Masses in Historical Perspective*, ed. Michael L. Connif and Frank D. McCann (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 238.

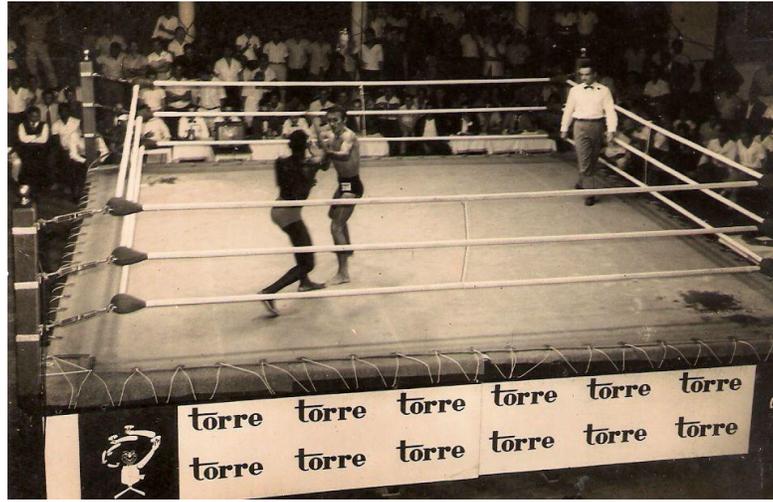


Figure 65: “The “Heroes in the Ring, Waldo (Waldemar Santana’s brother) versus Euclides Pereira. Source: Blog Mano a Mano, 2012.⁴⁵²

The television was also the arena for one more round fought between the Gracies and Waldemar Santana. In 1957, in the aftermath of Carlson’s victory over Santana, Hélio declared that Santana was not qualified to be a martial arts champion. Perhaps trying to avoid further polemics involving racism, Hélio concluded his remarks by saying that “Santana cannot be a true champion because he did not have family” (*ele não pode ser considerado campeão porque não tem família*).⁴⁵³ In the absence of institutionalized racism in Brazil, racial discrimination occurs in subtle and intricate ways. In the other words, Gracie affirmed that Santana like other Afro-Brazilians are sexually promiscuous

⁴⁵² “MMA Mano a Mano,” accessed September 20, 2010, <http://gustavonoblat.blog.terra.com.br>.

⁴⁵³ Nasser, “A Dinastia Gracie.”

and unable to establish stable family ties. Whites in Brazil resort to this type of remark to reinforce racist stereotypes rooted in Afro-Brazilians' slavery past.⁴⁵⁴

The images of a licentious and oppressive environment that was inherent in a slave society in which generations of Afro-Brazilians had to live certainly contrasted with the glorious past of the Gracies lavishly illustrated by a long coverage provided by *O Cruzeiro* called "The Gracie Dynasty." There, an enthusiastic David Nasser disclosed a well-researched six-page article eulogizing the Gracies' aristocratic past without paying too much attention to Carlos Gracie's unstable family. Nasser went far back to the Gracies' roots in Scotland and throughout their gentrification in Brazil during the nineteenth century. The pages of *O Cruzeiro* paraded bankers, nobles and diplomats with their respective pictures. Headlining one of the pages Hélio stated: "My dear Nasser, this is for those of you who criticize the Gracie's arrogance. We have reasons to be proud. I hope your pen will answer this question that we have responded to until now with our jiu-jitsu." The Gracies, according Nasser, "stand out as an honorable exception in a corrupted country like Brazil."⁴⁵⁵

Hélio's declaration about Santana's family or lack of it came a year after the article. For Hélio, the Gracies's pedigree rather than their martial arts skills explained their achievements. Therefore, the Santana family cannot rival the Gracies. The Santana family drafted Valdo, Waldemar's young brother, and the Gracies picked Robson, Carlson's young brother. In 1959, Waldo Santana fought a fifteen-minute bout against

⁴⁵⁴ George Reid Andrews, *Blacks & Whites in Sao Paulo, Brazil, 1888-1988*, (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 170.

⁴⁵⁵ Nasser, "A Dinastia Gracie."

Robson in a television studio. Despite Waldo's overwhelming superiority, the match ended in a draw. It delivered another blow to the Gracie's pride. Waldemar Santana had a family after all.⁴⁵⁶



Figure 66: The Santana family (left) appearance in a popular TV show in the late 1950s. Source: Revista Tatame, 2004.⁴⁵⁷



Figure 67: "The Scottish George Gracie had ever imaged that?" Source: O Cruzeiro, 1956.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁶ Costa, "Waldemar Santana: O Leopardo Negro".

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Nasser, "A Dinastia Gracie."

By the end of the decade, the Gracies occupied every niche of media available including the ones as characters of a comic book.⁴⁵⁹ After World War II, American comics dominated the market in Brazil. By the 1950s, fueled by nationalism the production of local comics came into being. The artist who drew the story about the Gracies, Jose Geraldo Barreto, was part of a group of artists who founded the publishing house to encourage national production in response to a massive importation of U.S. comics. In 1958, comics entitled the “The truth about the Gracies: The real history” (*A verdade sobre os Gracies: Drama da vida real*) displayed Hélio Gracie on the cover. It told the story of Carlos Gracie since his childhood in the Amazon until his transformation into a jiu-jitsu martial artist. The comics mixed present and past, alternating Carlos’ interviews with scenes of the most important events in his jiu-jitsu trajectory.⁴⁶⁰

The Gracies during the Juscelino Kubishek’s years reached the status of larger-than-life individuals by embodying nationalist comic icons.⁴⁶¹ During the 1950s, mass media transformed the Gracies in icons of the emergent middle class. At the dawn of the new decade, Juscelino Kubishek, pledged to make the country grow fifty years in five. In 1960, the construction of the futuristic Brasilia in the central highlands emblematically represents the concretization of a long-cherished colonial utopia during the post-war

⁴⁵⁹ Ivan Lima Gomes, "Passado Quadro a Quadro: A Revista Em Quadrinhos Pererê (1960-1964) E Seu Olhar Sobre a História," *História, imagem e narrativas* 9, October (2009), accessed February 14 2011, <http://www.historiaimagem.com.br/edicao9outubro2009/04-perere.pdf>.

⁴⁶⁰ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 371-72.

⁴⁶¹ José Geraldo Barreto, journalist, writer and comic book designer founded in the early 1960s the Cooperativa e Editora de Trabalho (CETPA) in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul state with support of the leftist populist politician Leonel Brizola. Gomes, "Passado Quadro a Quadro: A Revista Em Quadrinhos Pererê (1960-1964) E Seu Olhar Sobre a História".

modernization.⁴⁶² There, traditional values lived side by side with modern ones. Hélio Gracie, echoing the optimism of “JK’s Era,” celebrated the symbiosis between tradition and modernity voicing his aristocratic credo on the pages of *O Cruzeiro*: “We cannot help from being proud of our past and our martial arts achievements. We are legends, and legends cannot be destroyed.”⁴⁶³

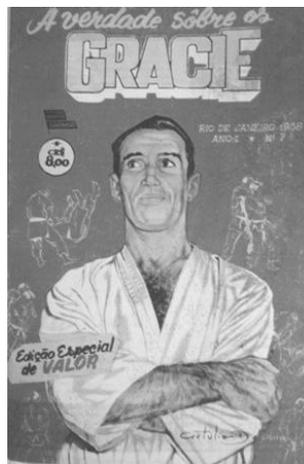


Figure 68: “The Truth about the Gracies.” Source: Gracie Magazine, 2010.⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁶² Styliane Phillippou, "Utopian Modernism in the Land of the Future: Brasilia, the 'Capital of Hope'," in *Nowhere Somewhere : Writing, Space and the Construction of Utopia*, ed. José Eduardo Reis and Jorge Bastos da Silva (Porto: Editora da Universidade do Porto, 2006), 183.

⁴⁶³ Nasser, "A Dinastia Gracie."

⁴⁶⁴ Marcelo Dunlop, "Helio Gracie, One of 4 Faces of Brazil According to Tv Channel," *Gracie Magazine*, August (2010), accessed July 19 2010, <http://www.graciemag.com/2010/08/helio-gracie-one-of-4-faces-of-brazil-according-to-tv-channel/>.

Chapter 5 - Authoritarianism, democratization and globalization: hybrid Brazilian jiu-jitsu, 1963-1993

Introduction

Round 1: A hybrid martial art in a futuristic city: Brasilia, 1981

Perhaps more than any other of his kin, Rickson Gracie represented the level of specialization reached by Brazilian jiu-jitsu in the 1980s. This became clear by comparing the outcome of two encounters between two generations of practitioners of Brazilian jiu-jitsu and Kodokan judo. The first was a match in which Hélio Gracie fought the Japanese four-time winner of the All-Japan Judo Championship, Kimura Masahiko. In this bout, in 1951, the latter defeated Hélio by submission on the ground. Despite the fact that the former outweighed the latter, the Japanese's technical edge in standing and ground combat was overwhelming. A generation later, in 1981, the abilities in ground combat had tipped in favor of Brazilian jiu-jitsu. Rickson went to Brazil's capital city, Brasilia, for his initiation as a no holds barred fighter against a muscularly built Afro-Brazilian street fighter nicknamed "King Zulu." As part of his preparation for the fight, he spared with two world –class champions at a local Dojo. In his first free training (*randori*), Rickson began with *Tachi- Waza* (standing combat) and the judoists'

superiority, as expected, was evident. Next, he sparred on the ground with one of the best judoists of the day and pinned him repeatedly with ease. Rickson then proposed to his first opponent a new training session on the ground, in which he would fight with only one arm. The Kodokan judo black belt politely declined the offer. There was no question that Brazilian jiu-jitsu was no longer a mere indigenous version of its Japanese matrix.⁴⁶⁵

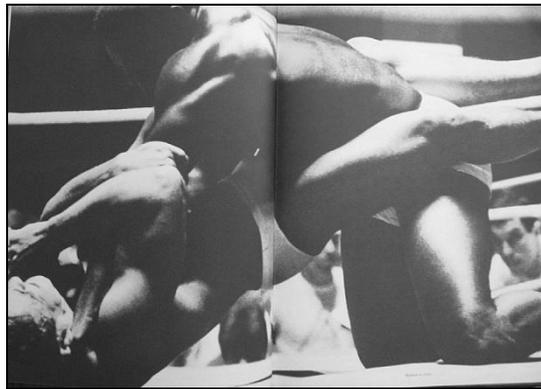


Figure 69: Rickson Gracie (underneath) versus “King Zulu”, 1987. New generation, same challenges. Source: Portal do Vale-Tudo, 2010.

Round 2 -The global breakthrough: Mac Nichols Arena, Denver, Colorado, 1993

In late 1993 in Denver, Colorado, a martial arts event created by Brazilian martial artist Rorion Gracie gathered fighters from different styles before 7,800 spectators and 80,000 homes on pay-per-view TV. The competition ended with the surprising and indisputable victory of Rorion’s youngest brother, Royce Gracie, a Brazilian jiu-jitsu

⁴⁶⁵ João Gilberto de Souza, personal communication, Toronto, March 31, 2010. Joao Gilberto de Souza is a Brazilian diplomat and also a Kodokan judo rokudan (sixth degree black belt). He was the first judoka to spar with Rickson and later declined the latter’s unusual offer.

black belt. Although he entered the tournament as an underdog, Royce not only won this inaugural event, but also dominated the three following contests organized in the same format. During the first three Ultimate Fighting Championship events, Royce embodied the Gracies' performance at its best. His combination of ground combat skills, bold attitude and ordinary physique won over the American audience. The Gracie's performance shook the martial arts world and the consequences of that night in Denver went far beyond the most optimistic expectations.⁴⁶⁶ In the wake of the First Ultimate Fighting Championship's remarkable success, the martial art known as Brazilian jiu-jitsu spread throughout the United States and became a global phenomenon. It began to be practiced in Latin America, Africa, Europe, Middle East, China and fought its diasporic trajectory back to Japan, where Brazilian black belts now teach the Japanese the hybrid version of what was once their own martial art.



Figure 70: The first Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) created by Rorion and won by Royce (above), 1993.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁶ Denys Darzi, personal communication, Rio de Janeiro, June 18, 2008. Darzi is a 5th degree Brazilian jiu-jitsu black belt, reporting Hélio Gracie remarks at Valente Gracie Academy, North Miami, in 2004.

⁴⁶⁷ "Most Influential Mma Fighters," accessed January 12, 2012, <http://www.google.ca/imgres?imgurl=http://bestofmma.ca/blog/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/roycegracie>.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first analyzes the marginalization of the Gracies and their Brazilian jiu-jitsu after the military coup in 1964. This occurred under a combination of factors affecting the Gracies because of their attachment to the previous populist rule. Global events also had a strong influence on the Gracies' ordeal after the military coup. In the Tokyo summer Olympic Games of 1964, judo finally became an Olympic sport. This crowned the post-war efforts of the Kodokan School to make judo the only recognized style of jiu-jitsu and consolidated the Japanese martial art as a global trend.⁴⁶⁸ In Brazil, despite decades of Japanese immigration, the popularization of judo occurred through the United States' growing influence in the Brazilian military in the early 1960s.⁴⁶⁹ The American military adopted judo as its martial art of choice after the Second World War and their Brazilian counterparts after 1964 followed suit, reflecting the approximation between the two countries during the Cold War.⁴⁷⁰ Therefore, Brazilian jiu-jitsu's marginalization after the coup was a considerable break with the position of the previous populist regimes. The authoritarian rule closer to the United States and ideologically driven by military nationalism had Brazilian jiu-jitsu replaced by Kodokan judo.

In the second section, I analyze the transformation of Brazilian jiu-jitsu in a hybrid combat sport and its dissemination among middle class practitioners in Brazil, as well as its globalization via immigration to the United States. To analyze Brazilian jiu-

⁴⁶⁸ Shun, "The Invention of the Martial Arts," 173.

⁴⁶⁹ Jan Knippers Black, *United States Penetration of Brazil*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), 257-58.

⁴⁷⁰ Thomas A. Green, *Martial Arts of the World : An Encyclopedia*, (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2001), 449.

jiu-jitsu's hybridization, I followed Eduardo Archetti approach that I described in the dissertation's introduction.

The creation of a local jiu-jitsu style started as early as the 1930s as I described in chapter three. However, the transformation of Brazilian jiu-jitsu into a full-fledged hybrid martial art occurred only in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This process was twofold. The new Gracies generation carried it out by incorporating techniques borrowed from other martial art disciplines and by developing a higher degree of specialization in ground combat. Simultaneously, Brazilian jiu-jitsu's popularization amid middle class youths led to technical improvements because of competitions among the growing number of dojos throughout the country. In the post-fight interview given by the Japanese wrestler Kimura Koichiro in Tokyo in 1995 after his defeat by Rickson Gracie illustrates the originality of Brazilian jiu-jitsu: " Now, I understand the enormous depth of 'Gracie' jiu-jitsu. It is not simply a blend of wrestling and judo. Their jiu-jitsu is really a new martial arts discipline that I want to understand as much as I can."⁴⁷¹

In the 1980s, the Brazilian jiu-jitsu became a medium by which a peripheral nation exported male practitioners to the United States and throughout the world.⁴⁷² In the United States, the Gracies established a modern arena to display their martial arts skills called the "Ultimate Fighting Championship," which was largely inspired by their violent performances in Brazil. This created another hybrid martial art style known as a "mixed martial arts" by combining several other disciplines with Brazilian jiu-jitsu as its

⁴⁷¹ *Choke*, directed by Robert R. Goodman (2000; USA: Manga Entertainment, 1999), DVD.

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*

backbone. Moreover, the televised cable show conceived of by Rorion Gracie and his American associates became a billion-dollar global combat sports business.

Conspiracies and failed globalization

In late 1963, three Gracie students made an early attempt to introduce Brazilian jiu-jitsu in the United States with support from the Hollywood film industry's representative in Brazil, the American embassy and U.S. intelligence operatives. The newspaper *O Globo* headlined the article "Brazilian jiu-jitsu's success in the U.S."⁴⁷³ Flávio Behring, João Alberto Barreto and George Barrene toured in Washington D.C. and New York, performing jiu-jitsu demonstrations and screening a film about jiu-jitsu in Brazil. They showcased a demonstration at the exclusive New York Athletic Club before a selected audience including its president Charles Lamb, the European judo champion and a New York Police Department Instructor, Walter Burnett.⁴⁷⁴ Afterwards, they headed to the Naval Academy in Annapolis where one of the Brazilians defeated an American wrestling champion. Barreto told the journalist that Harry Stone, the CEO of the Motion Pictures Export Association of America in Brazil, enthusiastically supported their trip after watching the footage of Brazilian jiu-jitsu. Stone introduced the Brazilians to the U.S. Defense Attaché Colonel Vernon Walters, who put them in contact with the F.B.I.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷³ "Exito Do Jiu-Jitsu Brasileiro Nos Eua," *O Globo*, November 7 1963, 3.

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁵ Flávio Behring, personal communication, Sao Paulo, July 10 2009. Behring is a "Grand Master" red belt under Helio Gracie.

The Americans who supported the Gracies' protégés in their exploratory tour in the United States were both long-time expatriates living and working with Brazilians. Harry Stone served during the World War II in Italy along with Brazilian troops with whom he learnt Portuguese. Later, he became an American movie industry representative in Brazil. In the early 1960s, he often had clashes with Brazilian movie makers who were defending Brazil's local film industry. It was a time of the nationalistic avant-garde experiences with the Cinema Novo (New Cinema) in Brazil. Glauber Rocha, then a rising star of this movement, criticized Harry Stone by calling him "cultural terrorist" or the one who "bribes local critics serving Scotch whisky" and "manipulating Brazil's movie industry."⁴⁷⁶ Vernon Walters too, through his Portuguese skills, served as liaison between Brazilian troops and the U.S. Fifth Army in the Italian front during the World War II. There, he befriended junior army officers who were later in charge of the upcoming events in Brazil. Walters, at this time, was involved in conspiracies with his former acquaintances in the Brazilian military in an effort to overthrow the democratic regime.⁴⁷⁷

Fall of populism and twilight of Brazilian jiu-jitsu

In 1965, as part of the celebrations of Rio de Janeiro's fourth centenary, two events marked the city's cultural life: in September, the International Film Festival and in October, the Judo World Championship. Both held for the first time in Brazil, roughly a year after the military deposed President Joao Goulart in March of 1964. A "mild"

⁴⁷⁶ Glauber Rocha, *Revolucão Do Cinema Novo*, (Rio de Janeiro: Alhambra, 1981), 230, 474.

⁴⁷⁷ Green, *We Cannot Remain Silent : Opposition to the Brazilian Military Dictatorship in the United States*, 36.

military government ruled the country ever since which led the French bombshell Brigitte Bardot enjoying the deserted beaches off Rio de Janeiro to declare: "I loved revolution in Brazil, there were no gunshots."⁴⁷⁸ Brigitte Bardot was right: for the time being, it was a bloodless coup.

The populist tendency initiated by Getúlio Vargas in the 1930s was badly hurt, but not dead yet. The Guanabara state governor, Carlos Lacerda was a populist leader who supported the coup temporarily spared from political persecution by the military. Ex-communist militant turned into fierce anti-communist, scion of a landowning family and skillful orator, Lacerda sought to make an exemplary administration aiming at the presidency in 1965's elections. Lacerda anticommunist hysteria found timely and enthusiastic support from Lyndon B. Johnson's administration. The growing concern about the spread of communism explains the funding of local politicians like Lacerda through the Alliance for Progress's deep pockets.⁴⁷⁹ This program created by John F. Kennedy in 1961 aimed to promote social and economic development in Latin America in the wake of the Cuban Revolution.

⁴⁷⁸ "Brigitte: 'Adorei Revolucao No Brasil; Nao Tem Tiro,'" *Ultima Hora*, April 4 1964, front page.

⁴⁷⁹ Black, *United States Penetration of Brazil*, 68.



Figure 71: The U.S.-Brazil's dictatorship alliance. Senator Robert F. Kennedy enjoys Copacabana Beach before his meeting with the new military President Castello Branco in Rio. Above Robert F. Kennedy was sitting on the sand while his body-guard rush to stop the photographer. Source: *Jornal do Brasil*, 1965.⁴⁸⁰

The military also expected to profit from the publicity of the International Film Festival. The *The New York Times* highlighted that film producing was booming in Brazil in the aftermath of the military coup. Harry Stone, the representative of Hollywood film industry declared his high hopes that Brazil could attract foreign movie production. The new president, Marshal Castello Branco himself escorting the Italian diva Claudia Cardinale opened the festival. Lastly, the article announced the participation of the film "Sugata Sanshiro II" representing Japan in the festival.⁴⁸¹

The film was the sequel of Akira Kurosawa's epic movie "Sugata Sanshiro" produced in Japan during the World War II. The sequel made in 1965, co-produced by Kurosawa and fictionalized the life of the judo master Saigo Shiro in the primeval period of Kano Jigoro's modern jiu-jitsu dueling with its traditional styles. The novelist Tomita

⁴⁸⁰ "O Senador Robert Kennedy Horas Depois De Chegar Ao Rio," *Jornal do Brasil*, November 25 1965, 7.

⁴⁸¹ "Foreign Film Production Booming in Brazil," *The New York Times*, September 25 1965, SUA7_1.

Tsuneo wrote original the saga based on his father's life as the first Kano Jigoro's black belt.⁴⁸² The Japanese arrived sporting their traditional clothes to watch a fully booked gala evening. Mifune Toshiro, the Japanese actor in the central role, received four standing ovations during the movie session.⁴⁸³ The film awarded a "Silver Kite" by the festival jury, attracted sizeable audiences, received positive reviews and appealed especially to the young military officers.⁴⁸⁴ The success of "Sungata Sanshiro" in the Rio de Janeiro's Film Festival marked the beginning of Kodokan judo's popularity in Brazil.



Figure 72: Sungata Sanshiro's movie poster. Source: Wikipedia, 2010.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁸² Tomita Tsunejiro was the first judo master trained by Kano Jigoro. Coincidentally, he was the senior martial artist who took the young black belt, Mayeda Mitsuyo, with him to the United States in 1904.

⁴⁸³ "Sungata Sanshiro Deu Prossseguimento Ao Festival E Foi Muito Aplaudido," *O Globo*, September 17 1965, 6.

⁴⁸⁴ "Franca E Inglaterra Conquistam a 'Gaivota De Ouro' Do Fif," *O Globo*, September 29 1965, 6.

⁴⁸⁵ Wikipedia contributors, "Sugata Sanshiro " Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, accessed July 11, 2010, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanshiro_Sugata.

In 1965, the recently imposed military dictatorship hosted a number of important international events. Once again, the Marshal Castello Branco inaugurated in 1965 the world judo championship held in Rio in which one hundred and forty athletes from forty-three countries attended.⁴⁸⁶ During the competition, the *Jornal do Brasil* briefly interviewed Hélio Gracie asking his opinion about the future matchup between the Dutch world champion Anton Geesink and the Japanese Inokuma Isao. Gracie declared his preference for the latter. The article placed on the bottom of the page, surrounded by news about judo and a column on football, starkly contrasted with the Gracies' past omnipresence in the newspapers.⁴⁸⁷

Kodokan judo had increasingly grown in popularity among Brazilians since the 1950s while Brazilian jiu-jitsu remained secluded in its social and geographical encroachments. Kodokan judo, by contrast, expanded toward the middle class in clubs and dojos throughout the country. The military also supported strongly the adoption of judo as martial art of choice. The process started in the previous decade through participation in international contests to reach its peak in the 1960s. In the military, the growing alignment with the United States played an important role in support for judo. In 1964, the article entitled "How the Army will practice judo" published in a Brazil's army periodical pointed out:

A few months ago, we prepared the Brazilian book of regulations that used as one of the models, its American counterpart. The judo organization in the United States carried out by the US Air Force whose ranks realized the importance of judo for the military based on the tragic events in the World War II. The American military keeps a strong and high-level interchange with Kodokan Institute in Japan. As a

⁴⁸⁶ "Inicia-Se O Mundial De Judo," *O Globo*, October 14 1965, front page.

⁴⁸⁷ "Para Helio Gracie, Geesink Perderia Do Japonês Inokuma," *Jornal do Brasil* October 16 1965, 18.

result, the U.S. judo improved the judo practice and currently Americans enjoy great international prestige. We then asked to each other: "Why not do the same in Brazil?" Judo in Brazil has been widely practiced for ten years now. Nonetheless, we have few great athletes in the military. Exception to the rule is the paratroopers Regiment Santos Dumont where judo is already included in the training. Close combat is the last phase of warfare, how can we trust in troops not prepared for the final showdown with the enemy? This is particularly relevant when fighting to neutralize or eliminate guerrillas. Presently, we lack of troops prepared for this task. Therefore, I recommend the introduction of judo in all levels in the army starting with its inclusion in the curriculum on all military schools.⁴⁸⁸

The article, written by Colonel Vicente da Rocha, then a junior army officer instrumental in the project to adopt Kodokan judo, is revealing. It demonstrated that the hemispheric alliance Brazil-United States was decisive in the implementing of judo in the Brazilian military. Moreover, the article paved the way for use of a military version of judo to train counter-insurgency units for the upcoming showdown between armed forces and guerrilla movements in the years to come.

Another Army officer and a prominent actor in the process of adoption of judo by the army, declared:

In regard to teaching of self-defense in the military, the Army School of Physical Education has previously adopted the Brazilian jiu-jitsu. However, after 1964, judo became our martial arts of choice. The judo practice allows the military to compete in local and international tournaments.⁴⁸⁹

Lieutenant-Colonel Pacheco was an elite judo practitioner, infantry paratrooper and intelligence operative (S.N.I.) who worked in the task force to introduce judo at all levels

⁴⁸⁸ Vicente Leitao da Rocha, " Revista da Escola de Educacao Fisica do Exercicio, "Como O Exercicio Podera Praticar O Judo," *Revista da Escola de Educacao Fisica do Exercicio*, 94, No. 2o Semestre (1964): n.p.

⁴⁸⁹ Manoel Ramos Pacheco, personal communication, Rio de Janeiro, June 29 2008. Lieutenant-Colonel Pacheco was a judo black belt graduated in my father's dojo.

of the Brazilian military. His statement confirmed the option for judo in the beginning of the military rule. The “Army School of Physical Education” located in Rio de Janeiro pioneered the practice of physical education in Brazil since its foundation in 1919. As other military institutions in Brazil, it suffered a considerable expansion of role and influence during the authoritarian Getulio Vargas regime when the military has established firm control over sports in general and combat sports, in particular. After 1964, the military sphere of influence grew beyond the limits of the army barracks. The “Army School of Physical Education” through its direct or indirect support sought to promote Kodokan judo. Commanding officers holding the rank of colonel run the school and among its attributions includes research and pedagogical support for sports practice in the army and cooperation with civilians under authorized permission from the upper echelon.⁴⁹⁰ The aforementioned army officers, Rocha and Pacheco, stationed in the school of physical education had an instrumental role in the decision making to promote the expansion of Kodokan judo in the Armed Forces. This occurred rather by virtue of their privileged position in a strategic institution than to their actual ranking within the army hierarchy. Nonetheless, the possibility to enhance the prestige of the military regime internationally, particularly after judo received official Olympic status in 1964 in Tokyo, may have been part of the replacement of Brazilian jiu-jitsu by Kodokan judo.⁴⁹¹

⁴⁹⁰ Escola de Educação Física do Exército, accessed September 20 2012, <http://www.esefex.ensino.eb.br/>.

⁴⁹¹ Ian Buruma, *Inventing Japan, 1853-1964*, (New York: Modern Library, 2003), 5.



Figure 73: “Army officers learn jiu-jitsu.” In the 1960s, the military replaced Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s practice by Kodokan judo. Source: Última Hora, 1956.⁴⁹²

The Brazilian jiu-jitsu had its fate tied to the Gracies. Any trouble they had as public figures certainly affected their martial art prestige. Two critical events occurred in 1963, and 1965, respectively may help to explain the deterioration of Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s status in the eyes of the new regime. The first took place in 1963 when a bitter legal dispute between the Gracies and Oscar de Santa Maria became public. For several weeks, Rio de Janeiro’s newspapers published the exchange of the embarrassing accusations between the two parties. Santa Maria’s charges included extortion, fraud, plagiarism, adultery and charlatanism.

The scandal gave the Gracies inconvenient publicity at a difficult time of transition and conservative backlash. Unlike in the 1950s when the media celebrated them as examples of modern Brazilian family and “machines of procreation,” in 1963, they had their reputation tarnished by allegations of sexual promiscuity.⁴⁹³ The change

⁴⁹² "Oficiais Do Exercicio Aprendem 'Jiu-Jitsu'," *Ultima Hora*, March 22 1955, 4-5.

⁴⁹³ "Os Gracie Afirmam Estar Sendo Alvo De Chantagem," 12. "As Cartas De Carlos Gracie Sao Eloquente Confissao Do Crime," *O Globo*, November 4 1963, 2. "O Advogado Dos Gracie Ainda Nao Formou Ideia Acerca Das Acusacoes," *O Globo*, November 6 1963, 2. "Carlos Gracie Garante Que Ouvia Espiritos E Acusa Oscar De Santa Maria," *O Globo*, December 3 1963, 17.

became clear when Roberto Marinho, the owner of the newspaper *O Globo* and once a staunch Brazilian jiu-jitsu promoter sided with Santa Maria.⁴⁹⁴

Conservative press barons like Roberto Marinho were among the driving forces behind the coup d'état.⁴⁹⁵ The newspaper *O Globo* enthusiastically supported the military takeover and displayed a one-page manifest paid for by powerful commercial interests in Rio de Janeiro. It declared: "Something has changed in this country: Instead of agitation... hard work. Instead of subversion...discipline. Decency replaced corruption."⁴⁹⁶



Figure 74: "Something has changed in the country." Source: *O Globo*, 1965.⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹⁴ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, 393.

⁴⁹⁵ Page, *The Brazilians*, 155-63.

⁴⁹⁶ "Alguma Coisa Mudou Neste Pais," *O Globo* March 24 1965, 19.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*



Figure 75: Brazil's new order celebrating the first anniversary of the military coup in 1965. On the top, left to right: Air-Marshal Eduardo Gomes (Ministry of Aeronautics), Magalhães Pinto (Minas Gerais state governor and banker), Marshal Costa Silva (first military president), and José Maria Alckmin (civilian vice-president). In the back row, right to left in uniforms: Marshal Odilio Denys (Minister of War) and General Ernesto Geisel (military chief of staff and future president). On the bottom in the front row, the symbol of a waning era: The once media mogul Assis Chateaubriand speechless using a wheelchair and running a media empire in decline. A half-paralyzed "Chateau" wearing a military uniform performed a clumsy salute using the wrong (left) arm. The Minas Gerais State Police (Polícia Militar de Minas Gerais) conferred him the rank of honorary colonel. Source: *O Cruzeiro*, 1965.⁴⁹⁸

The Gracies could no longer count on the strong support of Assis Chateaubriand's media empire which had been falling apart in the 1960s. Furthermore, in 1964, the security apparatus accused Carlos Gracie's sons, Carlson and Robson of being instrumental in helping the leftist politician Leonel Brizola to escape to Uruguay. In a classified document produced originally in the southern Rio Grande do Sul State by the local authorities Carlson had his name mentioned:

⁴⁹⁸ "Desfile De 31 De Marco De 1965 Em Belo Horizonte," *O Cruzeiro*, April 8, 1965, 60.

Subversive activities

Carlson Gracie, Hélio Gracie's nephew, a famous judo (sic) practitioner in the Guanabara state is very close to Leonel Brizola. After the latter fled to Uruguay, Carlson took care of Brizola's car. On December 16 1964, Carlson accompanied by an individual named Moacir, traveled to Porto Alegre to meet with Leonel Brizola's courier.⁴⁹⁹

The report followed the intelligence protocol that distributed the classified file to other agencies. The file labeled as "classified, urgent and trustworthy" also circulated through the recently created National Service of Information (S.N.I.). The classified document reported:

Moacir Blaile Ferraz participated in the public speech delivered by Leonel Brizola in the city of Belo Horizonte. He is associated with Carlson and Robson Gracie. Moacir traveled from Rio to Montevideo carrying two bags with documents and one revolver. He was probably transporting important documents since he is Leonel Brizola's bodyguard. Moacir usually goes to Copacabana Beach and to Teresópolis during the weekends with the Gracies. Orders: Identify Moacir's contacts in Rio de Janeiro and issue a search warrant for them.⁵⁰⁰

Leonel Brizola's tour to the city of Belo Horizonte on February 16, 1964 met local resistance from the conservative women affiliated to the CAMDE (*Campanha da Mulher pela Democracia*). The group was among others right-wing women's movements staging mass street protests against the Jango Goulart administration prior the military coup.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁹ Ministerio da Guerra, Gabinete do Ministro, 2ª Divisao – SSI D2, 15 de Fevereiro 1965, Informe no 73/65, Assunto: "Atividades Subversivas," Origem: Informe 21-SSP, 20/01/1965, da Secao Rio Grande do Sul, Classificacao: Secreto, Difusao: I Exercicio e Aeronautica, Arquivo Publico do Estado do Rio de Janeiro.

⁵⁰⁰ Ministerio da Guerra, I Exercicio, 1ª Regiao Militar, EMR – 2ª Secao, Rio de Janeiro, 12 de Maio 1965, assunto: Moacyr Braile Ferraz, origem: informante, classificacao: D.O.P.S., "Pedido de Busca," Arquivo Publico do Estado do Rio de Janeiro.

⁵⁰¹ Sonia E. Alvarez, *Engendering Democracy in Brazil : Women's Movements in Transition Politics* , (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990), 6.

They stormed the auditorium where Leonel Brizola was ready to deliver a speech, holding their Catholic rosaries. Despite the protection of marines, Brizola left directly for the airport.

The agents following the movements of the Gracies and their students like Moacir Ferraz knew their routine well. They frequented a particular section of Copacabana Beach and in the weekends headed up to the upper-class mountain resort in Teresópolis near to Rio where they kept a large estate since the 1950s. Carlson's participation in politics was apparently incidental. It had no further consequences other than being suspicious to conspire against the military regime. Robson was, however, deeply involved with Brizola's group. The security forces had him arrested and tortured and Robson only left the prison through Hélio Gracie's connections with the military regime.⁵⁰²

⁵⁰² Robson Gracie, personal communication, Rio de Janeiro, July 17 2008. He is a 9th degree red belt and currently president of Federação de Jiu-Jitsu do Rio de Janeiro (Rio de Janeiro Jiu-Jitsu Federation).



Figure 76: The Gracies compound (scale model available in the Gracies Museum in Torrance, California) in their aristocratic mountain resort near Rio de Janeiro. According to information available on the Gracie Academy website: “Located in the mountain resort of Terezópolis, Rio de Janeiro, this estate was the Gracie summer retreat. It had 21 bedrooms and 18 bathrooms. There were 18 uniformed employees working at the house, who had amongst themselves 14 children. There were 25 in-house telephones and a switchboard that enabled 6 people talk at the same time. There was an in-house laundry with industrial machines that washed 650 *gis* a week to provide for the academy in Rio. The tall building in the front was a 15,000-gallon water reservoir and a meditation room used by Carlos Gracie. At the center grassy area was the training area for the Gracie family.”⁵⁰³ Source: Gracie Academy website, 2010.

The military coup was undeniably a watershed for the Gracies that had direct consequences on Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s marginalization, considering its prestige within the previous political establishment. Regarding pedagogical aspects, Kodokan judo’s philosophy emphasizes collective over individual interests within a quasi-militaristic framework. It helps to explain the army’s option.⁵⁰⁴ Further, it opened up avenues to prestige and exchange through international tournaments. By contrast, Brazilian jiu-jitsu was a martial art strongly attached to a small group of upper-class practitioners encroached in upscale neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro. It was hardly a match for the

⁵⁰³ Brajitsu, "Gracie Jiu Jitsu Academy " accessed May 20, 2010, 2010, http://www.gracieacademy.com/gracie_museum.asp.

⁵⁰⁴ Joseph A. Maguire and Masayoshi Nakayama, eds. *Japan, Sport and Society: Tradition and Change in a Globalizing World* (London: Routledge, 2006), 15.

middle-class Kodokan judo. Besides, the Brazilian army recruited their officers from the middle classes, and advancement had not been dependent of social connections and money. Thus, the Gracies' lavish lifestyle and social pretensions were not appealing for austere army officers.

Lastly, it is symptomatic that the Gracies and Brazilian jiu-jitsu's presence in the media vanished in the 1960s and 1970s. Kodokan judo in the 1960s dominated the spaces reserved for martial arts. Only in the 1970s karate started enjoying popularity among martial arts aficionados in Brazil.⁵⁰⁵

In the late 1950s, the Gracies inspired local artists to create characters with nationalist appeal to counterbalance the U.S. comic book industry of comics. In 1969, the Brasil-America comic books (EBAL) owned by the Jewish-Russian immigrant Adolfo Aizen, launched the character "O Judoka" (The judo player).⁵⁰⁶ Floriano Hermeto recreated in Brazil the character based on the "Judo-Master" published by the American Charlton Comics. The comic book published from 1969 to 1973 became a movie in 1972. The parody starred by the male beauty pageant Pedro Aguinagua and by the soap-opera actress Elizângela, met relative success since it was distributed by Brazil's most important movie studio at the time. The main actor's performance was a fiasco, since he had no experience in martial arts and his only credential was the title of "the most beautiful man in Brazil."⁵⁰⁷ The success met by the character "O Judoka" coincided with transformation of the military regime in a full swing dictatorship with its own version of

⁵⁰⁵ Survey conducted from 1963 to late 1970s in the two Rio's newspapers, "O Globo" and "Jornal do Brasil" confirmed this assertive. The Gracies and their Brazilian jiu-jitsu have vanished from media and they are replaced respectively by judo and karate.

⁵⁰⁶ John A. Lent, *Cartooning in Latin America*, (Cresskill: Hampton Press, 2005), 7.

⁵⁰⁷ Francisco Uchoa, "O Judoka," accessed May 11, 2010, <http://planetamongo.worldpress.com/>

the “years of lead.”⁵⁰⁸ The cartoon represents the popularity and prestige achieved by Kodokan judo in Brazil through the influence of the United States.



Figure 77: On the left the cover of “The Judoka.” “Presenting the Brazilian champion of comic books. Who is he? Where he came from? Who was his master?” On the right, the promotional poster of the film: “Don’t be scared! We are shooting scenes of “The Judoka.” Please, help us: Don’t look to the camera, don’t call the police (they know we are here), act naturally and watch the movie! Thank you, the crew” The comic book’s character was Japanese and the movie star was a white Brazilian. Source: Um Blog no Planeta Mongo, 2011⁵⁰⁹

The social breakthrough: Middle class Brazilian jiu-jitsu and hybridization

In the early 1970s, the military rule reached a dialectical point of transition. It turned into a repressive regime enforcing censorship, exercising harsh repression against its opponents through the implementation of authoritarian political decrees.⁵¹⁰ Yet the

⁵⁰⁸ Alexandre Valença Alves Barbosa, "Histórias Em Quadrinhos Sobre a História Do Brasil Na Década De 50", M.A. Thesis, Universidade de Sao Paulo, 2006, 190.

⁵⁰⁹ Francisco Uchoa, "O Judoka," accessed May 11, 2010, <http://planetamongo.wordpress.com/category-quadrinhos/ebal/o-judoka/>

⁵¹⁰ In 1968, upon the imposition of the “Institutional Act no 5” Brazil became a full-fledge authoritarian regime.

regime had considerable support thanks to feats such winning the FIFA Soccer World Cup in Mexico in 1970, and the accomplishments of the “economic miracle.”⁵¹¹

Following Hélio Gracie’s retirement from public fights in 1955, Carlson became the most important member of the clan in activity teaching jiu-jitsu in the Gracie’s dojo in downtown and fighting his family’s adversaries in prizefighting performances.⁵¹² In the early 1970s, Carlson Gracie, opened his first dojo in the neighborhood of Copacabana and thereafter he had his own independent operation

Carlson was in many ways the antithesis of his uncle Hélio, which reflected on his jiu-jitsu teaching philosophy and consequently, in what type of clientele he targeted. Furthermore, unlike his father Carlos, Carlson had no patriarchal ambitions concerning the expansion of the clan. Despite his ideological involvement with the populist left in the 1960s, he was not a political militant. Carlson was once an outstanding professional fighter, but over the time, he became a colorful individual who cultivated traits based on the beach culture of the typical Copacabana resident of his generation. This neighborhood in the 1960s-1970s became a truly eclectic space thanks to the boom of urbanization and sprawling of high-rise buildings. Its residents hailed from all social classes within a hierarchy based on how close apartments were from the beach strip.⁵¹³ Regardless of the existence of a social and spatial hierarchy, the inhabitants of Copacabana shared a strong

⁵¹¹ Riordan Roett, *Brazil : Politics in a Patrimonial Society*, (Westport: Praeger, 1999), 12.

⁵¹² Marcelo Alonso, "Carlson Gracie: A História do Homem Que Popularizou o Jiu-Jitsu no Brasil," *Tatame*, 2006, 20.

⁵¹³ Richard G. Parker, *Beneath the Equator : Cultures of Desire, Male Homosexuality, and Emerging Gay Communities in Brazil*, (New York: Routledge, 1999), 141. Green, *Beyond Carnival : Male Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century Brazil*, 153-54.

ethos of beach culture. Carlson recruited his students from the sizable middle class of Copacabana beach goers.

The relaxed atmosphere and reasonable prices contrasted starkly with the rigidity and high prices of the Gracies' dojo in downtown.⁵¹⁴ Conversely, Carlson's classes were relatively free of ritualistic drills, despite the harshness of the training routine. Carlson engineered a system based on his peculiar personality and winning charisma. Although cockfighting was declared illegal in 1961, he remained a cockfighting aficionado his entire life. Carlson sought inspiration to create a fighting system from his experience in Rio de Janeiro's underground cockfighting arenas. He revered potential Brazilian jiu-jitsu champions for their aggression and their capacity to endure limitless punishment without surrendering - like a pure-breed fighting gamecock. Carlson jiu-jitsu's "deep play" program equated humans to roosters through the extended metaphor of cockfighting.⁵¹⁵

Despite his nearly anarchic method, Carlson was a skilled fighter who increased his chances of producing champions by making Brazilian jiu-jitsu affordable to middle class students. Finally, he was a highly competitive individual who sought every opportunity to beat his rivals, particularly his uncle Hélio Gracie.

As a result of his peculiar coaching, Carlson's students had the upper hand whenever competing against his uncle's pupils; but they simultaneously developed a competitive dojo subculture that often ended in outbursts of public violence.

⁵¹⁴ Prices were equivalent to US\$40-50 per month for unlimited training.

⁵¹⁵ John Holmes McDowell, *Poetry and Violence : The Ballad Tradition of Mexico's Costa Chica*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 49. See: Clifford Geertz, "'Deep Play' Notes on the Balinese Cock Fight" " in *The Interpretation of Cultures : Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1975).



Figure 78: Carlson Gracie's "middle class" team. Source: Blog Mano a Mano, 2011.⁵¹⁶

Against a background of democratization and in the aftermath of the economic downturn, Carlson's dojo became the Mecca of jiu-jitsu practice in Rio de Janeiro.⁵¹⁷ In the 1970s, however, the Gracies remained sidetracked by the media mainstream. Only in 1973, after six years asking for the military's blessing, did the Gracies inaugurate their Brazilian jiu-jitsu association. The military since the 1930s directed sport associations in all levels. During that time, the Gracies through their strong identification with the regime were constantly at odds with state officials. Authoritarianism had changed, however, and at the height of repression during President Garrastazu Medici's term, the grateful Gracies pledged allegiance to the president of the National Council of Sports directed by the Air Force Brigadier Jerônimo Bastos. The latter, during the ceremony informally disclosed his Amazonian background that he shared in common with Carlos and Hélio. At the end of the ceremony, the brigadier acknowledged the importance of preserving the Gracies as national symbols. The article concluded by regretting that

⁵¹⁶ Fabio Quio Takao, "Desconstruindo O Lendário Carlson Gracie," accessed February 11, 2011, <http://gustavonoblat.blog.terra.com.br/2010/12/21/desconstruindo-o-lendario-carlson-gracie/>.

⁵¹⁷ Marcelo Alonso, "Carlson Gracie: A Historia Do Homen Que Popularizou O Jiu-Jitsu No Brasil," *Tatame*, 2006, 20-21.

“despite being introduced in 1916, the Brazilian jiu-jitsu had been recently deprecated in favor of judo and karate”.⁵¹⁸

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu’s relative isolation also took a toll on its technical development. The creation of a local jiu-jitsu style occurred throughout the 1930s-1940s-1950s was also a product of a combative exchange between it and other martial arts styles, notably the Kodokan judo. From the 1960s onward, the social seclusion of Brazilian jiu-jitsu within its upper class quarters kept it in relative isolation severed previous technical interactions. Another of Carlos Gracie’s son, Rolls, decisively contributed to the process whereby the Brazilian style became a full fledged hybrid martial art. Rolls Gracie was Carlson’s half brother and a product of a very short relationship between Carlos and Claudia, an Italian flight attendant.⁵¹⁹ Carlos, after experiencing a great deal of social mobility through the practice of jiu-jitsu and his business connections with Oscar Santa Maria no longer resorted to dark-skinned women of humble background to enforce his procreative purposes. From 1950s onward, overlapping with the period in which the Gracies’s attained greater public recognition and financial stability, Carlos married Layr, a white woman hailing from a nouveau riche family with whom Carlos had six children. Rolls Gracie thus was the only child Carlos conceived out of the wedlock after he met Layr.⁵²⁰

A generation junior to his half-brother Carlson, Rolls’ embodied the atmosphere of the young bourgeois’s life style residing along the beach strip of Rio de Janeiro in the

⁵¹⁸ "Jiu-Jitsu Obtem Federacao Apos Seis Anos De Luta," *Jornal do Brasil*, June 13 1973, 26.

⁵¹⁹ Luca Atalla, "Rolls, a Lenda Da Familia Gracie," *Gracie Magazine*, 1999, 30.

⁵²⁰ Gracie, *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*, passim.

1970s. In this enclave, contemporaneous with the period of repression and censorship, intellectuals, artists and surf practitioners experienced an unusual degree of freedom.⁵²¹ After the period of radicalization in the late 1960s, intellectuals and activists involved in the resistance to the military rule renounced direct confrontation, generating a counter cultural movement called *desbunde*.⁵²² They opted for a countercultural lifestyle that often affronted conservative sectors. This movement shared space next to a pier built on the sandy beach of Ipanema with a booming upper class beach culture. Rolls was the pioneer in the cultural symbiosis, bonding Brazilian jiu-jitsu and surf. He was a blue-eyed and athletic individual with a carefree life style, bouncing back and forth between beaches and dojos.

⁵²¹ Fernanda Danelon, "Ipanema: Território Livre, *Trip*, April 13, 2009, accessed March 24, 2010, http://revistatrip.uol.com.br/print.php?cont_id=28112.

⁵²² Marcos Napolitano, *Cultura Brasileira: Utopia E Massificação (1950 - 1980)*, (Sao Paulo: Contexto, 2001), 81-83.

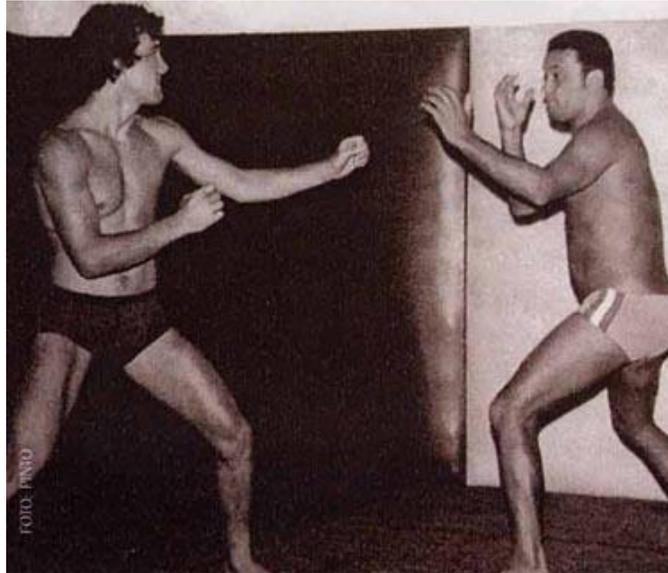


Figure 79: Rolls (left) and Carlson (right) half-brothers performing martial art cross training. Source: Gracie Magazine, 1999.⁵²³

Rolls shared with Carlson the dojo located in Copacabana and had started a comprehensive research of other martial arts disciplines. It led him to incorporate new techniques into the core of Brazilian jiu-jitsu. One of the most emblematic moves that Rolls borrowed from Kodokan judo was the ground technique called *Sankaku-Jime* (triangle choke).⁵²⁴ Rolls adopted a classical technique from the canon of jiu-jitsu fallen into disuse due the modern rules of judo tournaments. This technique perfected over the time combined with Brazilian jiu-jitsu's emphasis on grounding game hallmarked the process of jiu-jitsu's hybridization.

⁵²³ Atalla, "Rolls, a Lenda Da Familia Gracie," 35.

⁵²⁴ Kyuzo Mifune, *Canon of Judo: Principle and Technique*, (Tokyo: Seibundo-Shinkosha, 1960), 154.

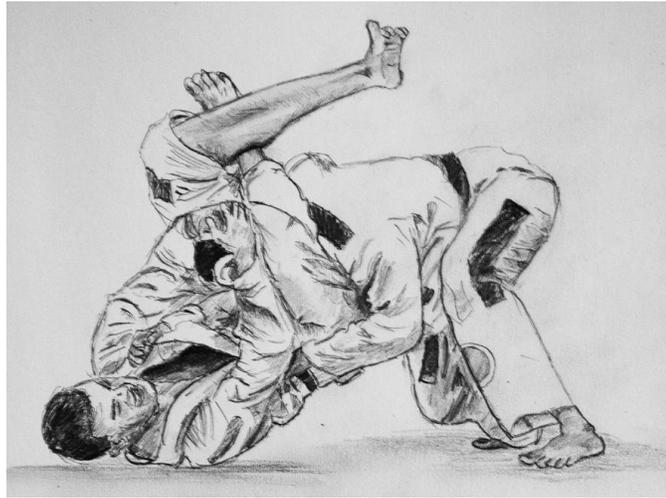


Figure 80: *Sankaku-Jime* (triangle choke). This old Japanese technique hallmarks the process of modernization underwent by Brazilian jiu-jitsu in 1970s-1980s. Source: deviantart.com, 2011.⁵²⁵

Rolls also mastered other martial arts, such as Olympic wrestling and Russian Sambo. The latter is a martial arts system created in the 1930s that evolved from Japanese jiu-jitsu. The Soviet establishment encouraged Sambo practice in order to provide the new “homo sovieticus” with a distinctive combat sport.⁵²⁶ Rolls participated successfully in Sambo tournaments held in California during the 1970s, envisioning the United States as a potential market for the Brazilian jiu-jitsu.

⁵²⁵ Strutsi, "Triangle Choke," accessed October 13, 2011, <http://strutsi.deviantart.com/art/Triangle-choke-153973408>.

⁵²⁶ Green, *Martial Arts of the World : An Encyclopedia*, 507.

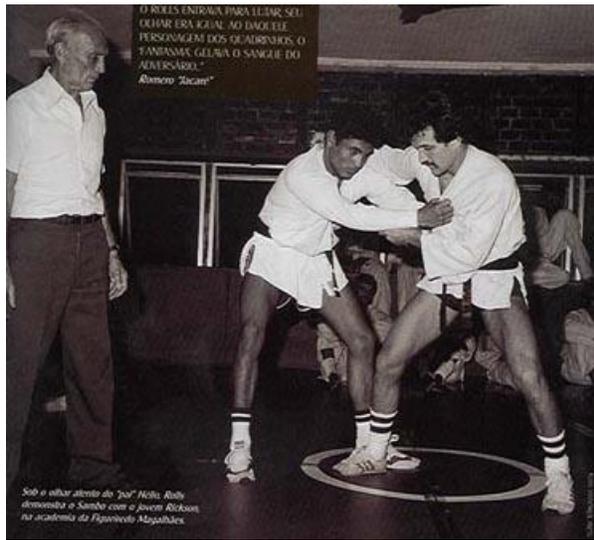


Figure 81: Rolls (right) and Rickson (left) training Russian Sambo under Hélio's supervision. Source: Gracie Magazine, 1999.⁵²⁷

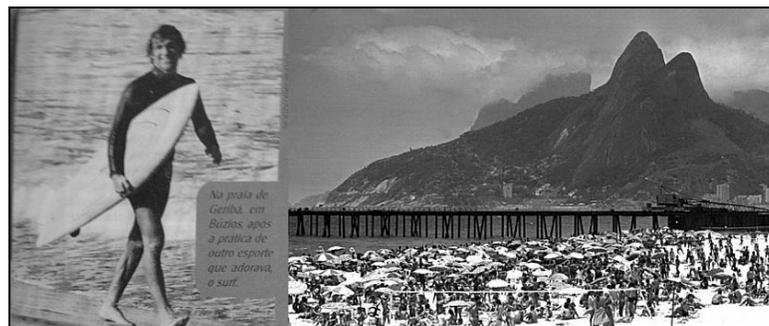


Figure 82: Rolls Gracie (left). Source: Gracie Magazine, 1999.⁵²⁸ (right) "Ipanema Pier" in the 1970s: counterculture and dictatorship.

In the 1980s, the military power was fading and former politicians returned from exile after the passing of the bill of amnesty in 1979. Among those, Leonel Brizola, the

⁵²⁷ Atalla, "Rolls, a Lenda Da Família Gracie," 35.

⁵²⁸ Ibid.

aforementioned leftist populist leader won the election to become governor of Rio de Janeiro in 1982. Brizola had been the reason for Carlson and Robson Gracie's troubles with the military regime. Nonetheless, he was back ruling the second most important state of the Brazilian federation. For the Gracies, it meant not only in symbolic terms, but also in concrete ones, the end of their isolation during the military rule. Following his inauguration Brizola appointed Robson Gracie head of a state agency related to sports. After the quiet revolution initiated by Carlson and Rolls in the 1970s, Brazilian jiu-jitsu underwent an unprecedented process of popularization in the 1980s.

Populist rule in Rio de Janeiro had to cope with long-term structural problems such as endemic social inequality and urban violence. In the 1980s, the military retreated to the army barracks and dismantled their repressive apparatus. As urban violence spiraled, the upper classes sought refuge behind walled condominiums that stretched along Rio's shoreline. These new urban spaces, as Richard Parker has observed, were "modeled on that of the United States, and especially on an image of American life in Southern California."⁵²⁹ Similar to traditional areas of the Rio's Zona Sul, the new upper class neighborhoods such as the one called Barra da Tijuca adopted Brazilian jiu-jitsu as a martial art of choice. Following the demographic expansion, the number of Brazilian jiu-jitsu dojos mushroomed into these bourgeois safe havens. The dissemination of Brazilian jiu-jitsu among middle class practitioners became associated with the trendy lifestyle of the new Gracie generation. The appealing Brazilian jiu-jitsu's way of life in the 1980's combined naturalist dietary habits, beach culture and martial practice without

⁵²⁹ Parker, *Beneath the Equator : Cultures of Desire, Male Homosexuality, and Emerging Gay Communities in Brazil*, 141.

the rigidness of Asian disciplines and provided the practitioners with a great instrument to enhance their masculine performances in the public sphere.⁵³⁰

In the 1980s and the 1990s, Brazilian jiu-jitsu was also directly associated with upper class hooliganism. The media both celebrated and desecrated the booming martial art. The Gracies undeniably played an ambiguous role in this process. Although, while condemning violence through a standardized public discourse, they often were caught out by their acts and statements. Hélio Gracie, then one of the heads of the clan, defined for example homosexuality as a manifestation of “weakness and a disease.” He said, however, “he could not condemn anybody for being weak or for their defects.” Further, Hélio stated that “love is a manifestation of weakness and that he finds the ordinary man fragile as a child.”⁵³¹ Or Hélio’s remarks on violence:

I am fully conscious of my capacity of being violent. I am the worst person I have ever seen. I put myself in the criminal’s shoes and I know that I could do better than he could. Therefore, I know I am bad news; I am a wolf in sheep’s clothes.⁵³²

Homophobic remarks did not divide the Gracies. Robson and Carlson, despite their progressive political views, openly or veiled, shared their uncle’s opinion on issues of manhood.⁵³³

The widespread violence involving Brazilian jiu-jitsu practitioners overlapped with an overall increase of criminality in Rio and other Brazilian urban centers in the

⁵³⁰ Varda Burstyn, *The Rites of Men : Manhood, Politics, and the Culture of Sport*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 209.

⁵³¹ Paulo Lima, “Devil Inside,” *Trip*, November 1997, accessed May 20, 2010, <http://revistatrip.uol.com.br>.

⁵³² Almeida, “O Velho Samurai,” 13.

⁵³³ Renato Fagundes, “Os Gracie: A Família Vale-Tudo,” *Marie Claire*, Novembro 2000, accessed July 18, 2010, http://marieclaire.globo.com/edic/ed116/rep_gracie.htm.

wake of the economic crisis that followed the “economic miracle” of the 1970s. Reflecting the consequences of long-established patterns of inequality, in the 1980s, new walled neighborhoods in Rio were built as a consequence of the militarization of urban spaces.⁵³⁴ This obsession with security and social seclusion deepened socio-spatial divisions in Brazilian cities. As Teresa Caldeira observed, “there is a law for mortal people, but not for Alphaville residents.”⁵³⁵ This was true for São Paulo and for the generation of upper-middle class Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s practitioners raised in the socially secluded enclaves of Rio de Janeiro.

The case of Roger Gracie perhaps illustrates the influence of Hélio Gracie’s discourse on the new Gracies’ generation. The following story is based on an article published by the women’s magazine *Marie Claire* in November of 2000 and by the major newspapers in Rio and São Paulo. Roger, Carlos’ grandchild through the maternal line, became Brazilian jiu-jitsu world champion in the tournament held in Rio in 2000. Three days later, he along with two other martial artists, he attacked a group of transvestites in Copacabana with paintball guns and baseball bats. Physical assault and other forms of violence against homosexuals along the beach perpetrated by Brazilian jiu-jitsu practitioners were common, but this time the police arrested the aggressors on the spot. The aggressors released on bail left the police station joking about the whole affair. Roger’s mother learned about her son’s wrongdoing through the TV news and she said

⁵³⁴ Teresa Pires do Rio Caldeira, *City of Walls : Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 62, 78, 253.

⁵³⁵ Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums*, (London: Verso, 2006), 118.

she encouraged Roger to meet with the victims and apologize. He refused to do so. In addition, he never returned to the police station or appeared in court.

Instead, his mother went alone to the police station to apologize and reach a settlement with the victims. Later she complained to the magazine: “the Brazilian jiu-jitsu environment became excessively macho and a place where practitioners cultivated questionable values.”⁵³⁶ Curiously, Reila’s behavior echoed the same values that she sought to criticize. After all, the environment surrounding Brazilian jiu-jitsu was no different from the past, since the Gracies expressed their sexist bias in crude terms in several occasions.

Reila’s attitude seems to confirm the existence of a hierarchy deeply rooted in social inequality, since she used her influence to conciliate the authorities and the victims on behalf of her son. This episode corroborates the ideas of João Fragoso and Manolo Florentino, who have argued that social inequalities papered over in this period on the understanding that economic growth in the previous decades would eventually create a more egalitarian society. In the wake of economic stagnation in the 1980s and a subsequent spiral of violence, this social pact collapsed and the Brazilian elite responded by explicitly reinforcing a hierarchy based on social-economic inequality.⁵³⁷

⁵³⁶ Renato Fagundes, “Os Gracie: A Família Vale-Tudo,” *Marie Claire*, Novembro 2000, accessed July 18, 2010, http://marieclaire.globo.com/edic/ed116/rep_gracie.htm.

⁵³⁷ João Luís Ribeiro Fragoso e Manolo Florentino, *O Arcaísmo Como Projeto : Mercado Atlântico, Sociedade Agrária E Elite Mercantil Em Uma Economia Colonial Tardia : Rio De Janeiro, C.1790-C.1840*, (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2001), 237.

In another interview, Roger's mother expressed her sentiments the following way: "My son is not a delinquent. It was only a faux pas."⁵³⁸ As Roberto Da Matta has observed, "delinquency" applied only to people without power or status in a patriarchal order in Brazil.⁵³⁹ Roger's mother remarks exposed the complex drama of a fractured society. The elites could transgress the law but they were never delinquents, a perspective that protected them but delivered outstanding levels of violence against minorities.⁵⁴⁰

Acts of random violence involving Brazilian jiu-jitsu practitioners multiplied throughout the 1980s and 1990s. They became so persistent that at some point the martial art became associated with an endemic subculture of violence. One of the most emblematic episodes of this endemic process of violence was the turf war fought between Brazilian jiu-jitsu practitioners and wrestlers in the late 1980s in the streets of Rio de Janeiro. Confrontations pitting these rival gangs of martial artists became commonplace and a brawl fought on a crowded beach was the acme of previous duels in similar fashion.

The video shows Rickson Gracie, after a short verbal exchange, slapping his opponent in the face and unleashing a savage attack which ended up where the tide breaks. The crowd watches the scene closely, but without interfering since most of them

⁵³⁸ "Pais De Lutadores De Jiu-Jitsu Pedem Desculpas Aos Tres Travestis Agredidos," *Folha de São Paulo*, August 5 2000, C8.

⁵³⁹ Robert M. Levine, "How Brazil Works," in *The Brazil Reader : History, Culture, Politics*, ed. Robert M. Levine and John J. Crocitti (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 406.

⁵⁴⁰ Luis Mott, "Estratégias Para a Promoção Dos Direitos Humanos Dos Homossexuais No Brasil," *Centro de Midia Independente Brasil*, February 2002, accessed May 8 2011, <http://brasil.indymidia.org/pt/blue/2002/02/18020.shtml>.

knew that was a Gracie affair.⁵⁴¹ Rickson, together with his cousin Rolls, divided his time between surfing and jiu-jitsu. Rickson emerged as the clannish champion in the 1980s and his hyper masculine image and performance was instrumental in popularizing Brazilian jiu-jitsu. The several violent confrontations and acts of hooliganism made the headlines and provoked brief debates on the Gracie's subculture or about measures to prevent such outbursts of violence. Finally, in 1991 sponsored by the largest media conglomerate of the day, Globo Organizations (*Organizações Globo*), scheduled three bouts pitting wrestlers and Brazilian jiu-jitsu practitioners in a suburban middle class country club. The spectacle broadcasted on national television and had as special guests the Rio de Janeiro Mayor Marcello Alencar and local celebrities. Upon his arrival at the club, the mayor witnessing the event's lack of organization exclaimed: "What a mess!" The *Jornal do Brasil*, in an article entitled "Jiu-Jitsu Defeats Wrestling: night of brawling at Grajaú Country Club" described the event:

Muscular and well-dressed youth arrived in fancy cars. Parents with children had a hard time navigating through the crowd to buy tickets. Spectators grew agitated by the presence of soap-opera actors and other celebrities. The bloodshed finally began. In the first fight, Wallid Ismail, a Brazilian jiu-jitsu practitioner defeated the wrestler Eugenio Tadeu. In all bouts that evening, the referees and fighters totally ignored the rules pre-established by Rio's jiu-jitsu federation.⁵⁴²

The fights became unruly brawls, sometimes involving the spectators, in which Brazilian jiu-jitsu's middle class hooligans had the upper hand, inside and outside the ring.

⁵⁴¹ "Rickson vs Hugo Duarte," YouTube video, 8:58, posted by "hugofgarciach1," September 5 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AEUC39Dum20>.

⁵⁴² "Jiu-Jitsu Derrota Luta Livre: Noite De Pancadaria No Grajau Faz Lembrar O Velho Circo Romano," *Jornal do Brasil*, September 2 1991 14. "Wallid vs Eugenio Tadeu parte 1," YouTube video, 7:23, uploaded by "augustqm5," March 21 2007, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8MMCpmtAng>.

Afterwards, acknowledging the public fiasco, the television network decided to suspend sponsorship of prizefighting. In any event, after twenty-seven years, the Gracies and Brazilian jiu-jitsu were back in the limelight.



Figure 83: The Palestinian-Brazilian Wallid Ismail (top) versus the Afro-Brazilian Eugenio Tadeu (bottom): Graphic violence on prime time TV. Source: Fight Magazine, 2011.⁵⁴³

Immigration and globalization: exporting violence “made in Brazil”

In the mid-1980s, U.S. fashion photographer, writer and filmmaker Bruce Weber went to Rio de Janeiro to photograph the sensuality of Brazilian bodies. Weber soon came across Rickson Gracie and his clan. As a result, the Gracies dominated Weber’s book, in which the author offered a graphic depiction of local sexuality and eroticism. They generously opened their family archives showing their long-time status as upper class icons since the 1930s. The snapshots captured intimate family gatherings, bodies

⁵⁴³ Kelly Crigger, "Back to Brazil: The UFC Returns to Its Roots," accessed September 7, 2011, <http://mag.fightmagazine.com/back-to-brazil-2104/>.

covered with blood after wild matches, and even rare moments of the Gracies' women practicing jiu-jitsu considering their low-profile status within their clannish hierarchy.

Bruce Weber's discovery of the Gracies coincided with Brazilian jiu-jitsu great visibility and an explosion of a cultural trend associated with beach lifestyle. In addition, the 1980s was the first time a significant number of Brazilians left the country to settle abroad. Throughout the twentieth century Brazil had been a destination for millions of immigrants from Europe, Japan and Middle East. Nevertheless, in the 1980s, after a decade of persistent economic recession and political delusion, "optimism was in short supply in Brazil."⁵⁴⁴

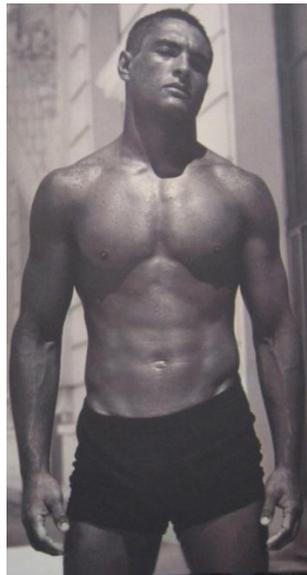


Figure 84: "He has his own look. Not menacing but devoid of emotion. The blankness of the supremely confident. Rickson is 29, as muscular as a bodybuilder, with a Marine's crew cut, the high cheekbones of an Inca Indian and a square jaw. If Rorion is amiably handsome, Rickson is devastatingly handsome."⁵⁴⁵
Source: (picture) *O Rio de Janeiro*, 1986.⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴⁴ "Optimism Is in Short Supply in Brazil," *Financial Times*, 1996, 6.

⁵⁴⁵ Bruce Weber, *O Rio De Janeiro : A Photographic Journal*, (New York: Knopf, 1986), 50.

⁵⁴⁶

The Gracies like scores of Brazilians sought to fulfill their dreams in the United States. Rorion, Hélio's eldest son, moved to California in 1979 determined to spread the Gracie's word. Nurturing a strong beach culture ethos, bringing with him a new martial arts system and his family penchant for performance, Rorion settled in Southern California looking to recreate an American version of Rio de Janeiro.

By publishing in his book *O Rio de Janeiro* in the United States in 1986 Bruce Weber captured the attention of *Playboy Magazine*. This gave Rorion the avidly sought breakthrough in the 1980s. Furthermore, by the late 1980s, Rorion and his brothers had already earned a "tough" reputation in Southern California through their growing number of students at his garage-dojos and by defeating local fighters in bloody no-holds-barred performances fought behind closed doors.⁵⁴⁷ In 1989, Rorion gave a lengthy interview to Pat Jordan. The article affirmed in its opening remarks:

The toughest man in the United States holds no official titles and has had only one fight in years. He lives with his pregnant wife and four children, three small sons and a baby daughter, in a modest ranch house on a tidy little street of similar homes in Torrance, California. He is 37, tall and skinny at 6'2", 165 pounds, and he does not look very tough. He looks more like Tom Selleck than like Mr. T. He is dark and handsome like Selleck, with wavy black hair, a trim mustache and a charming, self-deprecating smile.⁵⁴⁸

In the 1980s, the iconic magazine once identified with the sexual revolution during the 1960s, came under attack from conservative forces after the inauguration of Ronald Reagan. Moreover, even within liberal circles, the magazine came to represent an anachronism vis-à-vis the sexual liberation in the 1980s. In the 1980s, the magazine's

⁵⁴⁷ Clyde Gentry, *No Holds Barred: Ultimate Fighting and the Martial Arts Revolution*, (Lytham: Milo Books, 2002), 37.

⁵⁴⁸ Jordan, "Bad."

sales dropped sharply, but under new management by the mid-1980s, the magazine breathed new life into the brand.⁵⁴⁹ The article advertised Rorion as an ordinary individual and a family man, however, the use of TV stars of the day to draw parallels is noteworthy. Rorion, over the years, managed to penetrate in Hollywood and get closer to macho movie stars like Chuck Norris. His most accomplished performance was choreographing fight scenes for Mel Gibson in the first movie of the series “Lethal Weapon” in 1986.⁵⁵⁰ Rorion further declared that he came to the United States because he thought that there he would find a “fertile land to grow the practice of Brazilian jiu-jitsu.”⁵⁵¹ He justified it on the grounds that in “America, men are bigger and stronger than Brazilians; therefore, they could become a superior race of jiu-jitsu warriors.”⁵⁵² Besides, he maintained that “Americans are tired of their image as feminist wimps.”⁵⁵³ The popularity of action movie stars, some of them already associated with the Gracies, proved this. The Gracies, Rorion concluded, embodied the real version of this type of macho warrior. “The only difference is that the Gracies do not need bazookas and guns.”⁵⁵⁴ As Susan Jefford had suggested, the Regan’s administration was able to promote its macho projects through the pervasive support of the American film industry.⁵⁵⁵ The political climate in the United States seemed to favor Rorion’s archetype of “tough guy” portrayed in the interview. Moreover, his business association with movie stars like

⁵⁴⁹ Susan Gunelius, *Building Brand Value the Playboy Way*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 102.

⁵⁵⁰ Gentry, *No Holds Barred : Ultimate Fighting and the Martial Arts Revolution*, 36.

⁵⁵¹ Jordan, "Bad."

⁵⁵² Ibid.

⁵⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁵ Susan Jeffords, *Hard Bodies : Hollywood Masculinity in the Reagan Era*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1994), 3.

Chuck Norris made Brazilian jiu-jitsu appealing for Americans promoting masculine and martial behavior undermined during Jimmy Carter's administration. According to Suzan Jeffords, "Jimmy Carter's attention to Rosalynn Carter's advice on political matters and with his apparent indecisiveness on foreign policy issues led some openly to characterize him as a feminine president."⁵⁵⁶

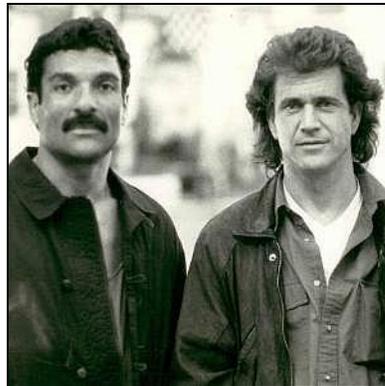


Figure 85: Rorion Gracie and his "lethal weapon" disciple. Source: Gracie Academy, 2011.⁵⁵⁷

Another event in 1991 was also critical to understand the process by which Rorion Gracie promoted Brazilian jiu-jitsu in the United States. The savage beating of the African-American Rodney King by officers of the Los Angeles Police Department and the subsequent riot created an unexpected niche for the Gracies. In the aftermath of the crisis that followed this event, the Los Angeles police called on martial arts specialists, including Rorion Gracie, to help them devise and improve their strategies of law enforcement.⁵⁵⁸ Unlike others systems of modern martial arts originated in ancient

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁷ Brajitsu, "Gracie Jiu Jitsu Academy "

⁵⁵⁸ Gentry, *No Holds Barred : Ultimate Fighting and the Martial Arts Revolution*, 63

warfare and later transformed into sport, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, Rorion argued, was forged in twentieth-century violence of the Rio de Janeiro streets. The reason for the Gracies' advantage over other specialists in violence contracted by the Los Angeles Police Department was because they claimed to possess a system tested over time in conditions similar to those found in the streets of Los Angeles.⁵⁵⁹

After sudden publicity in the widely circulated *Playboy Magazine*, Rorion met Art Davies, a Brooklyn-born entrepreneur based in southern California. In 1991, they produced together a two-video series entitled "Gracie in Action."⁵⁶⁰ The videos presented the Gracie's saga of violence by chronologically organizing bloody matches and street fights in Brazil, until recent challenges in the United States. Rorion described them thoroughly, explaining to U.S. viewers his version of the tradition as invented by the Gracies. He didactically outlined the principles of Brazilian jiu-jitsu while graphic footage showed the Gracies in action in the arenas, beaches and streets of Rio de Janeiro.⁵⁶¹

Art Davies realized the market potential for this exotic combat sport supported by the Gracie's family aura. At this point, the Gracies had created a mix of street fighting with a primitive form of blood-sport performance by challenging martial artists from other disciplines. The Gracies offered prize money to attract challengers who - unaware of the Gracie fighting system - were invariably defeated. In partnership with Art Davies,

⁵⁵⁹ Jordan, "Bad."

⁵⁶⁰ *Gracie jiu-jitsu in Action*, produced by Rorion Gracie (Torrance, CA: Brajitsu Inc., 1991), DVD.

⁵⁶¹ Goodman, *Choke*.

Rorion conceived the format for the “Ultimate Fighting Championship.”⁵⁶² Within the ring, martial artists affiliated to different styles would confront each other until one emerged victorious. The idea coincided with the desire of U.S. media entrepreneurs to find new avenues for shows in a pay-per-view format.⁵⁶³ In this context, the Gracies profited from their association with violent physical performances. Following their experience in such spectacles, Rorion drafted his youngest half-brother Royce to represent the family in the first UFC. He certainly expected to create a “David & Goliath” type of confrontation. Royce was also more manageable than his strong-willed older brother Rickson. In any event, muscular individuals had always been prey for the Gracies when they wanted to prove the superiority of their technique over brute force. The strategy paid off, and the Gracie underdog mesmerized American audiences.⁵⁶⁴ The first edition of the UFC broadcast on pay-per-view sent shockwaves throughout the United States. For decades, East Asian martial arts have shaped American conceptions of martial arts, but the Brazilian combat sport was essentially a grappling style fought on the ground and unlike its East Asian counterparts, did not resort to plastic acrobatic moves. The Gracies had revolutionized the martial arts by proving that the one underneath could in fact win a fight. Nothing could be more emblematic than the fact that these Latin American immigrants had the ability to defeat their physically larger American hosts and their highly skilled East Asian rivals. In the following two editions of the UFC,

⁵⁶² John Milius, screenwriter, director and producer, designed the octagonal-shaped arena. The “Ultimate Fighting Championship” hereafter referred to by the acronym UFC.

⁵⁶³ Gentry, *No Holds Barred : Ultimate Fighting and the Martial Arts Revolution*, 40.

⁵⁶⁴ Royce Gracie was not an accomplished practitioner before arriving in the United States. Gentry, *No Holds Barred : Ultimate Fighting and the Martial Arts Revolution*, 44.

Royce repeated his performance by defeating mighty rivals from various martial arts affiliations.⁵⁶⁵

In 1995, after disagreements with his associates, Rorion sold his share in the UFC, ending his business association with the show. The UFC format faced mounting pressure in the United States to change its rules and growing political opposition. Several states banned the event. The Republican senator John McCain labeled the UFC as “human cockfighting” and started a crusade against the show.⁵⁶⁶ For the Gracies, the UFC was only an instrument to promote their martial art system.⁵⁶⁷ At this point, the other members of the Gracie family left Brazil to settle in Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s new frontier. In the early 1990s, Brazilian immigration in general had been increasing as a result of the persistent economic crisis and political disappointment. For the first time since the military coup in 1964, Brazilians elected a president through popular vote. Fernando Collor de Mello, inaugurated in 1990, promised to fight old-fashioned politics, combat corruption and open the country’s economy to global markets. He took advantage of his young, handsome and athletic figure to embody change and modernization.⁵⁶⁸ Only two years later, however, the Brazilian Congress impeached him in the wake of scandals and corruption. This negative situation in Brazil contrasted sharply with the increasing visibility of Brazilian jiu-jitsu practitioners in the United States. A nearly constant

⁵⁶⁵ Royce won the three first versions of the Ultimate Fighting Championship held respectively in Denver (CO) and Charlotte (NC).

⁵⁶⁶ David Plotz, "Fight Clubbed," Slate accessed May 12, 2010, http://www.slate.com/articles/briefing/articles/1999/11/fight_clubbed.html.

⁵⁶⁷ Gentry, *No Holds Barred : Ultimate Fighting and the Martial Arts Revolution*, 90.

⁵⁶⁸ Fernando Collor de Mello was a karate black belt.

cultural and demographic flow from Brazil to the United States included a peculiar diaspora of martial artists.



Figure 86: Fernando Collor performing a Karate (Takudai style) routine with his Japanese master, Tetsuma Higashino. Source: Karateca.net, 2010.⁵⁶⁹

One of the most important aspects in Brazilian jiu-jitsu's territorialization in the United States was its attachment to U.S. police and military forces. Brazilian jiu-jitsu proved very effective as an instrument to protect police officers and restrain violent suspects. Chris Le Blanc, a law enforcement officer and instructor, has argued based on statistics disclosed by the L.A.P.D. that a great percentage of violent altercations between police and suspects end up on the ground. This made Brazilian jiu-jitsu, among other martial arts, a powerful weapon for law enforcement agents.⁵⁷⁰ Before long, the Gracies also ventured into the vast complex of the U.S. military and national security agencies. Global events around the world were drawing U.S. forces to engage in low-level conflicts

⁵⁶⁹ "Karateca.Net: Nosso Dojo Virtual Sandan," accessed June 1, 2010, <http://www.karateca.net/>.

⁵⁷⁰ Chris Leblanc, "Going to the Ground: Lessons from Law Enforcement," *Journal of Non-Lethal Combatives*, January (2007), accessed April 13 2009, <http://ejmas.com/>.

against counter-insurgency movements and later into the war on terror. The Gracies, along with other Brazilian practitioners, instructed the Rangers, Marines and other elite units, and even delivered seminars for troops in Iraq.⁵⁷¹ The U.S. military was not only using martial arts as a form of combat. In 1994, after the early repercussions of the UFC, the U.S. Rangers adopted Brazilian jiu-jitsu to “teach self-confidence.” Most importantly, however, Brazilian jiu-jitsu could “instill confidence and a warrior spirit in the minds of new recruits.”⁵⁷² The Gracies were able to introduce their martial art and link their ethos to U.S. nationalism as they did in Brazil. Regardless of the differences between Brazil and the United States, it is undeniable that they successfully promoted Brazilian jiu-jitsu using similar strategies in both countries.

To Japan and beyond

The Gracies at first closed ranks against their opponents in the United States and concentrated efforts to spread their martial art gospel. Before long, however, inter-clan rivalries proved to be irreconcilable. In the United States, Rorion emerged as a new family patriarch, which led to accentuated sibling rivalries. He sidelined his younger brother Rickson, arguably the best fighter in the family, in the UFC affair. The latter then turned to Japan to find his own niche in a growing market for prizefighting in that country. The arrival or return of Brazilian jiu-jitsu to its cultural matrix after almost a century was strongly symbolic. It was not the only Japanese diasporic trend from Brazil

⁵⁷¹ "U.S. Army General Summons the Gracies" accessed March 22, 2009, <http://www.gracieacademy.com>.

⁵⁷² Green, *Martial Arts of the World : An Encyclopedia*, 55.

returning to its homeland. Japanese-Brazilians, the *dekasegi*, were coming to Japan to work almost a hundred years after the arrival of their forefathers in Brazil. The Gracies, by contrast, were not ordinary immigrants and came to Japan to prove the superiority of their hybrid martial art. Rickson fought and defeated three opponents in a single night in the "Japan Open" in 1994. After this triumph, the *Black Belt Magazine* called Rickson ironically "the other Gracie." This certainly reflects the triumph of his younger and less talented brother in America. Afterwards, however, Rickson won over Japanese audiences.⁵⁷³

The documentary titled *Choke* shows Rickson's participation in the 1995 edition of The Japan Open. Scenes of the Gracies' everyday life showed viewers their idiosyncratic lifestyle in which all family members learn since childhood to live up to their family iconic status. Toward the end, the footage display Rickson defeating his rivals in Japan with juxtaposed images showing the tense dialogues in the Gracies' dress-room. The Japanese wrestler Kimura Koichiro, in a post-fight interview for the documentary, gave an emotional account of his fighting experience with Rickson Gracie:

I am glad I had a chance to fight him. I do not mean to cry, but he is a fighter I really want to meet. I feel lucky even to have had a chance. I had hoped to win the first fight in order to be able to fight Rickson. That confidence that Gracie has because he is a champion gives him such superiority (sic). Now, I understand the enormous depth of Gracie jiu-jitsu. It is not simply a blend of wrestling and judo. His jiu-jitsu is really a new discipline that I want to understand as much as I can. Therefore, I will study Gracie jiu-jitsu. Please, leave me alone now.⁵⁷⁴

The Gracies brought to Japan a hybrid martial art rooted in Meiji modernization. For Japanese living in the late twentieth century, immigration is only an echo of a remote

⁵⁷³ Arne F. Soldwedel, "Other Gracie Victorious at Tourney in Japan," *Black Belt*, 1994, 77.

⁵⁷⁴ . Goodman, *Choke*.

past. The Gracies in Japan, contrary to their long resistance to certain aspects of Japanese tradition, behaved accordingly. Rickson deliberately showcased a Japanese version of the Gracies performance by bowing to opponents and audience.⁵⁷⁵ His performances successfully appealed to the Japanese sense of nostalgia for their immigrant culture and heritage.⁵⁷⁶ Finally, hardly anything could match the symbolism of the revival of the medieval term “jiu-jitsu” by the Gracies. The term had faded after the Meiji under the hegemonic sweep of the modern style judo and returned to Japan with the exotic epithet “Brazilian.”



Figure 87: Rickson Gracie’s representations in Japan. Source: Pride, 2010.⁵⁷⁷

Contemporaneous to the Gracies’ achievements in the United States and Japan, the Brazilian hybrid spread on a truly planetary scale. Its globalization took Brazilian jiu-jitsu practitioners beyond predictable destinations in Europe and Latin America. An example of the scope of this globalization is Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s popularity in the Arab

⁵⁷⁵ Bowing was one of the first aspects of Japanese to be eradicated in the Brazilian jiu-jitsu in the 1930s.

⁵⁷⁶ Carol Gluck, "The Invention of Edo," in *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, ed. Stephen Vlastos (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 282.

⁵⁷⁷ "The History of MMA," accessed October 23, 2011, <http://www.mmapast.wordpress.com>.

Emirates. In the early 1990s, Sheikh Tahnoon Bin Zayed al-Nahyan, a high profile member of the royal family from Abu Dhabi, began to practice Brazilian jiu-jitsu. Like many other crowned heads from the Middle East, his rites of passage included studies in the United States. There, he learned about the improvised garage-dojos in San Diego after the first UFC and anonymously enrolled in one. As a result, he passionately introduced and promoted the Brazilian martial arts in his country and beyond. Under his patronage, Brazilian jiu-jitsu reached the status of a national sport, which became mandatory in school curriculums and members of the ruling family actively participated in the martial arts organization and tournaments. A steady flow of Brazilian martial artists came to Abu Dhabi to teach and instruct the Emirate's Special Forces. A Brazilian magazine specialized in martial arts called it the "petro-jitsu revolution."⁵⁷⁸

The transformation of Brazilian jiu-jitsu into a global, professionally structured and business-oriented enterprise, contrasted strongly with its poorly organized system in Brazil. Thus a Brazilian jiu-jitsu's organizational apparatus, highly professional and efficient, gave birth to transnational entities mainly based in Rio de Janeiro and California with branches established around the world. Since 2007, the World Brazilian jiu-jitsu championship usually held in Rio de Janeiro has moved to Long Beach, California. As a result, the Gracies and other Brazilians became truly transnational entrepreneurs.⁵⁷⁹ In addition, the Gracies' combat sports industry that evolved from the Ultimate Fighting Championship in 1993 has become a global outlet for violence "made

⁵⁷⁸ Eduardo Ferreira, "A Revolucao Do Petro-Jitsu," *Tatame*, June 2009, 30-42

⁵⁷⁹ Carlos Gracie Junior presides the "Brazilian jiu-jitsu Federation" headquartered in Rio de Janeiro. <http://www.cbjj.com.br/home.htm>

in Brazil.” The show conceived by Art Davies and Rorion Grace in 1993 evolved into a multibillion dollar Las Vegas-based enterprise in which the Gracies are still influential.⁵⁸⁰ Other versions, based on this model emerged in the U.S., Europe, Japan and Brazil.

The spread of Brazilian jiu-jitsu in the United States and later throughout the world is an opportunity to reflect upon a complex phenomenon involving cultural expansion, the creation of ethnoscaapes and globalization. Arjun Appadurai has commented on transnational movements of martial arts:

The transnational movements of martial arts particularly through Asia, as mediated by the Hollywood and Hong Kong film industries is a rich illustration of the ways long-standing martial arts traditions, reformulated to meet the fantasies of contemporary (sometimes lumpen) youth populations, create new cultures of masculinity and violence, which are in turn the fuel for increased violence in national and international politics.⁵⁸¹

The globalization of Brazilian jiu-jitsu was mostly a transnational movement that occurred due to the agency of the Gracies. In the United States, Japan, and elsewhere coincided with Brazilian immigration. In both cases, however, they became a repository of a cultural commodity in demand, which placed them in a special position comparable to other high-status migrant workers.⁵⁸² In addition, unlike its Asian counterparts, Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s breakthrough in the United States was not a product of film industry

⁵⁸⁰ Miller, "Ultimate Cash Machine: The Fertitta Brothers Built a Violent Fight Club into a Billion-Dollar Sports Empire". The Sicilian-American brothers Frank and Lorenzo Fertitta own the UFC that is today worth US \$1 billion. In 2010, the Abu Dhabi’s government owned Flash Entertainment has bought a ten per cent stake in the UFC. Josh Gross, "UFC's Abu Dhabi Connections Extend to Gracie Family," accessed August 20, 2010, http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2010/writers/josh_gross/01/15/notes/index.html.

⁵⁸¹ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large : Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 40-41.

⁵⁸² Brazilian jiu-jitsu practitioners with good credentials obtain their working visa under the category of extraordinary abilities. "O-1 Work Visa," accessed July 12, 2010, <http://www.usimmigrationsupport.org>.

marketing. To the contrary, its popularity created an entirely new niche explored by American filmmakers.⁵⁸³ On the other hand, similar to the model proposed by Appadurai, Brazilian jiu-jitsu met a specific demand for masculinity and violence in the 1980s in the United States and a demand for nostalgia in Japan in the 1990s.

The Gracies, whom at first acted as cultural interlopers in a society marked by inequality, managed to blend in other nationalist projects and moved into the global limelight as transnational agents.



Figure 88: “We are thankful for the privilege of one more day of training.” Brazilian jiu-jitsu in Jordan, Islamic aesthetics. Source: Gracie Magazine, 2009.⁵⁸⁴

⁵⁸³ I listed 41 “mixed martial” movies produced between 2003 and 2011.

⁵⁸⁴ “Agradecemos O Privilégio De Mais Um Dia De Treino,” *Gracie Magazine*, November 2009, 23-24.



Figure 89: Brazilian jiu-jitsu in United Kingdom. EFN Sports, 2010.⁵⁸⁵



Figure 90: Brazilian jiu-jitsu, China: Cultural Revolution appeal. Haukis.com, 2010.⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸⁵ "Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Competition ", accessed August 19, 2010, <http://www.bjj.eu.com/>.

⁵⁸⁶ "Shanghai Bjj," accessed August 23, 2010, http://haukis.com/2011_Shanghai_bjj.htm.



Figure 91: “One world one fight”. From national sport in Abu Dhabi to New Zealand. Source: Revista Tatame, 2009.587



Figure 92: Diasporic return to Japan. Source: bjj-asia.com, 2010.⁵⁸⁸



Figure 93: Brazilian jiu-jitsu’s fever in Israel. Source: Gracie Magazine, 2010.⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸⁷ “One World, One Fight.” *Tatame*, May 2010, 66-67.

⁵⁸⁸ “Bjj Japan,” accessed August 24, 2010, <http://www.bjj-asia.com/>.

⁵⁸⁹ Carlos Eduardo Ozorio, “Jiu-Jitsu Vira Febre Em Israel,” *Gracie Magazine*, accessed August 29, 2010, <http://www.graciemag.com/pt/2010/08/%e2%80%9c-globo%e2%80%9d-destaca-jiu-jitsu-em-israel-com-royce-e-de-la-riva/>.

Conclusion

Bringing Japanese jiu-jitsu to Brazil in the early 1900s was part of a comprehensive set of innovations introduced by the Brazilian elite to promote modernization in the early 1900s. The use of Japanese jiu-jitsu in the military soon provoked reactions among groups of the local intelligentsia committed to Brazilian nationalism still in its embryonic stages. As a result, confrontations between Capoeira practitioners and Japanese jiu-jitsu martial artists emblematically represented the beginning of a larger debate involving nationalism, race and identity.

Around the time of World War I, a group of individuals belonging to a branch of a family of aristocrats living in the Brazilian frontier picked up the gauntlet of modernization. The Gracies, whose existing world collapsed under pressure of forces associated with modernization, embraced the practice of Japanese jiu-jitsu. Thereafter their relationship with this martial art became an example of how the Brazilian elite coped with modernization. The Gracies kept the innovation out of the reach of ordinary Brazilians and shared its benefits with their peers. They only shared their martial arts knowledge outside their elitist circles to instruct agents of repression of an authoritarian state in the making.

Analyzing the inroads made by Japanese jiu-jitsu in Brazil attests to a particular mix of gentrification and jiu-jitsu. The introduction of jiu-jitsu to educate emergent urban middle sectors together with the beginning of Japanese immigration would lead this martial art to become a Nikkei combat sport. The Gracies, however, diverted jiu-jitsu

entirely from its intended purpose by launching two processes. First, they aimed to teach jiu-jitsu exclusively for their upper class peers instead of helping to expand its practice among middle class Brazilians. Second, by fighting Japanese martial artists arriving in the wake of immigration forced them to devise a local jiu-jitsu style. In both processes, the Gracies enjoyed support from the state and from their social peers. The transformation of jiu-jitsu in an elitist practice during a populist rule, whose support rested largely on middle-sectors, is essentially a contradiction. Yet the support for the Gracies indicates that despite the new regime discourses of innovation, change and redefinition of national identity, a past firmly grounded on inequality remained at the core of a modern Brazilianess. Furthermore, the Gracies felt empowered to reform Japanese jiu-jitsu in line with new establishment's xenophobic discourses. If the period of Getúlio Vargas is crucial to understanding modern Brazil, it was also the time in which the Gracies laid the foundation of their hybrid combat sport.

In the postwar period of democratization, the Gracies' jiu-jitsu performances and life style challenged discourses of modernization by further gentrifying the practice of jiu-jitsu, by creating a clan of martial artists based on concubinage, and by enforcing customary practices of racism. Paradoxically, the Gracies' idiosyncratic behavior paralleled their elevation to the status of national celebrities, driven by intense media promotion. In a decade marked by developmentalism and discourses severing ties with the past, the Gracies voiced openly their aristocratic credo, attributing their achievements to their genteel pedigree. However, in the mid-1950s they came under attack for overstepping the boundaries of Brazilian cordial racism during a martial arts showdown.

Nevertheless, toward the end of the 1950s, the Gracies and their Brazilian jiu-jitsu reached the peak of their prestige.

Upon the imposition of a military rule in 1964, Brazilian jiu-jitsu was momentarily sidelined. Unlike past authoritarianism identified with oligarchies and working classes, the military in 1964 became a political representative of the middle class. This exposed the Gracies to a social backlash on account of their lavish lifestyle, their attachment to the past populism and their idiosyncratic social practices, in particular their concubinage and extended families. This backlash occurred at a time when the effects of Cold War redefined hemispheric strategies, with the result that the practice of Brazilian jiu-jitsu was replaced by the globalized Japanese judo.

During the process of democratization in the 1980s, Brazilian jiu-jitsu reached the status of a hybrid combat sport as a result of decades of technical specialization and of attracting scores of middle class practitioners. Initially, during a time of economic crisis, urban violence and political disillusion, Brazilian jiu-jitsu's philosophical underpinnings, embedded on long-term inequality, generated a wave of middle class hooliganism. At a time when Brazilian jiu-jitsu became identified with middle class violence, the Gracies emigrated to the United States. There, in the late 1980s, they found a timely demand for masculine performances and new ways of combating urban violence. Against this backdrop, the Gracies promoted and won over American audiences, paving the way for Brazilian jiu-jitsu's globalization.

The ability of the Gracies to navigate the shoals of politics and sustain support from the elite underscores their close association with Brazilian mores. They were

modern “aristocratic” warriors in a century of uncertain political and social change. As Robert Penn Warren has argued about the study of heroes: “If the hero is the embodiment of our ideals...then to analyze him is likely to mean an analysis of ourselves. By a man’s hero you shall know him... To create a hero is, indeed, to create a self.”⁵⁹⁰ Hélio Gracie in the 1950s declared: “We are legends and legends cannot be destroyed.” In the same vein, Ambassador Samuel Souza Leão Gracie, who belonged to a branch of the family that made a smoother transition into modernity, acknowledged his nephews’ achievements through their martial arts performances.⁵⁹¹ Souza Leão Gracie publicly recognized that by creating a Brazilian style of Japanese jiu-jitsu, his nephews became the most successful branch of their aristocratic clan.⁵⁹²

The Gracies’ could have had their martial arts trajectory abbreviated: starting in the Getúlio Vargas regime of the 1930s; growing with the populism of the 1950s; surviving the military rule of the 1960s and expanding during the democratization of the 1980s in Brazil and beyond. Despite their public outbursts of violence, their bending of social rules, their open racism, and their cultural incompatibility with the austere military dictatorship of the 1960s, the Gracies have been always able to return to the limelight.

Gilberto Freyre and Roberto da Matta, among other scholars, have analyzed the formation of a racially mixed society highly marked by aristocratic ethos, personalism and authoritarianism.⁵⁹³ My work builds on their insights. It suggests that Japanese jiu-

⁵⁹⁰ Jonathan S. Cullick, *Making History : The Biographical Narratives of Robert Penn Warren*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 20.

⁵⁹¹ Samuel de Souza Leão Gracie held a number of high-profile diplomatic appointments in Washington D.C., London and later became Minister of Foreign Affairs in Brazil.

⁵⁹² Nasser, "A Dinastia Gracie."

⁵⁹³ See Freyre, *Casa-Grande & Senzala*. Matta, *O Que Faz O Brasil, Brasil?*

jitsu, as promoted by a clan of white and “virtual white,” unconventional aristocrats, embodied ideals deeply rooted in the Brazilian identity. The Japanese martial art, reinvented by the Gracies and transformed into a hybrid combat sport, was the powerful signifier of these cultural values.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Archives and institutions

National Archives of Scotland
Kodokan Archives -Tokyo
National Archives and Records and Administration - College Park
The Rotschild Archive - London
The British Library
Arquivo Nacional do Rio de Janeiro
Arquivo da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro
Colégio Brasileiro de Genealogia - Rio de Janeiro
Arquivo Histórico do Itamaraty - Rio de Janeiro
Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro
Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio de Janeiro
Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro - Rio de Janeiro
Arquivo da Associação Comercial do Rio de Janeiro
British and Commonwealth Society Archives - Rio de Janeiro
Museu Histórico da Imigração Japonesa no Brasil - São Paulo

Personal Communications

Denys Darzi
Flávio Behring
João Gilberto de Souza
Manoel Pacheco
Rildo Eros de Medeiros
Robson Gracie

Newspapers

The Times (London)
The New York Times (NY)
Japan Times (Tokyo)
O Tempo (Manaus)
Folha do Norte (Belém)
A Província do Pará (Belém)
Folha de São Paulo
O Estado de São Paulo

Correio Paulistano (São Paulo)
Folha da Manhã (São Paulo)
Correio da Manhã (Rio de Janeiro)
O Globo (Rio de Janeiro)
Diário Carioca (Rio de Janeiro)
Diário de Notícias (Rio de Janeiro)
Jornal dos Sports (Rio de Janeiro)
O Globo Sportivo (Rio de Janeiro)
Ultima Hora (Rio de Janeiro)
The Mexican Herald (Mexico City)
The West Coast Leader (Lima)

Magazines

O Cruzeiro
Careta
O Malho
Punch
Kosmos
Manchete
Fon-Fon
Veja
Revista Tatame
Revista Trip
Playboy Magazine
Black Belt
Gracie Magazine
Marie Claire
Slate Magazine
Sports Illustrated
Forbes Magazine

Audio visual

YouTube. *Desafio Jiu Jitsu X Luta Livre*. Rio de Janeiro, 1991.
———. *Hélio Gracie Versus Kato*. Rio de Janeiro, 1951.
———. *Jiu-Jitsu Não É Só Isso Não*. Rio de Janeiro, 1950s.
———. *Jiu-Jitsu: Hélio Gracie Versus Kimura*. Rio de Janeiro, 1951.
———. *Rickson Gracie Versus Hugo Duarte*. Rio de Janeiro, 2008.
Goodman, Robert Raphael. "Choke." 98 min. USA, 1999.
The Biography Channel "Helio Gracie", 2010.

Secondary Sources

Published Sources

Alvarez, Sonia E. *Engendering Democracy in Brazil: Women's Movements in Transition Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Andrews, George Reid. *Blacks & Whites in São Paulo, Brazil, 1888-1988*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991.

_____, "Brazilian Racial Democracy, 1900-90: An American Counterpoint," *Journal of Contemporary History*, 31, No. 3 (Jul., 1996): 489-490.

Antunes, Fatima, Rego, Jose L., Rodrigues, Mario e Rodrigues, Nelson. *Com Brasileiro, Não Há Quem Possa!: Futebol E Identidade Nacional Em JoséLins Do Rego, Mário Filho E Nelson Rodrigues*. São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 2004.

Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

_____. "Playing with Modernity: The Decolonization of Indian Cricket." In *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Edited by Arjun Appadurai, 89-113. Minneapolis University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

Arai, Jhony. *Viajantes Do Sol Nascente*. São Paulo, Brasil: Editora Garçonni, 2003.

Archetti, Eduardo P. *Masculinities: Football, Polo, and the Tango in Argentina*. Oxford: Berg, 1999.

Arenas, Fernando. *Utopias of Otherness: Nationhood and Subjectivity in Portugal and Brazil*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

Assunção, Matthias Röhrig. *Capoeira: A History of an Afro-Brazilian Martial Art*. London: Routledge, 2005.

Azevedo, Celia Maria Marinho de. *Onda Negra, Medo Branco : O Negro No Imaginario Das Elites--Seculo XIX*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1987.

Badaracco, Claire. *Quoting God: How Media Shape Ideas About Religion and Culture*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005.

Baggio, Katia Gerab. "Dos Tropicós Ao Prata: Viajantes Brasileiros Pela Argentina

Nas Primeiras Decadas Do Seculo XX." *Historia Revista*, 13, No. 2 (2008): 425-445.

Bannon, Ian and Correia, Maria. *The Other Half of Gender: Men's Issues in Development*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2006.

Barbosa, Alexandre. "Histórias Em Quadrinhos Sobre a História Do Brasil Na Década De 50 ", M.A. Thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2006.

Bassanezi, Carla. "Mulheres Dos Anos Dourados." In *Historia Das Mulheres No Brasil*. Edited by Mary del Priore, 607-639. São Paulo: Contexto, 1997.

Beattie, Peter M. *The Tribute of Blood: Army, Honor, Race, and Nation in Brazil, 1864-1945*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2001.

———. *The Human Tradition in Modern Brazil*. Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2004.

Besse, Susan K. *Restructuring Patriarchy: The Modernization of Gender Inequality in Brazil, 1914-1940*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.

Bethell, Leslie. *Ideas and Ideologies in Twentieth Century Latin America since 1870*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Black, Jan Knippers. *United States Penetration of Brazil*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977.

Bonelli, Maria da Gloria. "Os Delegados De Policia Entre O Profissionalismo E a Politica No Brasil,1842-2000." In *Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association*. Dallas, Texas, 2003.

Borges, Dain Edward. *The Family in Bahia, Brazil, 1870-1945*, (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1992), 278-79.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *In Other Words: Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1990.

Bouroncle, Alberto. "Ritual, Violence and Social Order: An Approach to Spanish Bullfighting. " In *Meanings of Violence: A Cross Cultural Perspective*. Edited by J. Abbink and Goran Aijmer, 55-75. Oxford: Berg, 2000.

Braudy, Leo. *From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003.

- Brazil. Ministério das Relações Exteriores., Raul Adalberto de Campos, and Manoel Alvaro de Souza Sá Vianna. *Relações Diplomáticas Do Brasil, Contendo Os Nomes Dos Representantes Diplomáticos Dos Brasil No Estrangeiro E Os Dos Representantes Diplomáticos Dos Diversos Paizes No Rio De Janeiro De 1808 a 1912*. Rio de Janeiro, Typ. do "Jornal do commercio," de Rodrigues & c., 1913.
- Breckenridge, Carol Appadurai. *Consuming Modernity: Public Culture in a South Asian World*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.
- Brousse, Michel. *Le Judo : Son Histoire, Ses Succès*. Genève: Liber, 1996.
- Brown, Diana DeG. *Umbanda: Religion and Politics in Urban Brazil*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.
- Burlamaqui, Annibal. *Gymnastica Nacional (Capoeiragem) Methodizada E Regrada*. Rio de Janeiro: s.n., 1928.
- Burns, E. Bradford. "Manaus, 1910: Portrait of a Boom Town." *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 7, no. 3 (1965): 400-421.
- Burns, Robert. *The Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*. New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1909.
- Burstyn, Varda. *The Rites of Men: Manhood, Politics, and the Culture of Sport*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.
- Buruma, Ian. *Inventing Japan, 1853-1964*. New York: The Modern Library, 2003.
- Caldas, Waldenyr. *O Pontapé Inicial : Memória Do Futebol Brasileiro (1894-1933)*. São Paulo: Instituição Brasileira de Difusão Cultural, 1990.
- Caldeira, Teresa Pires do Rio. *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation, and Citizenship in São Paulo*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- Campoi, Isabela Candeloro. "Adalgisa Nery E as Questões Políticas De Seu Tempo (1905-1980)." Ph.D. Dissertation, Universidade Federal Fluminense 2008.
- Cancela, Cristina Donza. "Casamento E Relacoes Familiares Na Economia Da Borracha (Belém, 1870-1920)." Ph.D. Dissertation, Universidade de São Paulo, 2006.
- Cancelli, Elizabeth. *A Cultura Do Crime E Da Lei, 1889-1930*. Brasília: Edições Humanidades, 2001.

- Capoeira, Nestor. *The Little Capoeira Book*. Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2003.
- Carneiro, Edison. *80 Anos De Abolição*. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Cadernos Brasileiros, 1968.
- Carneiro, Maria Luiza Tucci. *O Racismo Na Historia Do Brasil : Mito E Realidade*. São Paulo: Editora Atica, 1994.
- Castro, Ruy. *Bossa Nova: The Story of the Brazilian Music That Seduced the World*. Chicago: A Cappella, 2000.
- Cecchetto, Fatima Regina. *Violencia e Estilos de Masculinidade*. Rio de Janeiro: FGV Editora, 2004.
- Chappell, Robert. "Sport in Latin America from Past to Present: A European Perspective." In *Sport in Latin American Society: Past and Present*. Edited by Lamartine Pereira da Costa and J. A. Mangan, 159-180. London: Routledge, 2002.
- Chvaicer, Maya Talmon. "The Criminalization of Capoeira in Nineteenth-Century Brazil." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 82, no. 3 (2002): 525-547.
- Conniff, Michael L. *Urban Politics in Brazil: The Rise of Populism, 1925-1945*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1981.
- . and McCann, Frank D. eds. *Modern Brazil : Elites and Masses in Historical Perspective*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991.
- Conrad, Robert Edgar. *The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery, 1850-1888*. Malabar: Krieger Pub. Co., 1993.
- Corbey, Raymond. "Ethnographic Showcases, 1870-1930." *Cultural Anthropology* 8, no. 3 (1993): 338-69.
- Costa, Lamartine P. and Labriola, Plinio. "Bodies from Brazil: Fascist Aesthetics in South American Setting." In *Shaping the Superman : Fascist Body as Political Icon : Aryan Fascism*. Edited by J. A. Mangan, 163-180. (London: Frank Cass, 1999).
- Costa, Mauricio. "Os Gramados Do Catete: Futebol E Politica Na Era Vargas (1930-1945)." In *Memória Social Dos Esportes : Futebol E Política : A Construção De Uma Identidade Nacional*. Edited by Francisco Carlos Teixeira Silva, 107-186. Rio de Janeiro: Mauad, 2006.

- Crook, Larry, Randal Johnson, and UCLA Latin American Center. *Black Brazil: Culture, Identity, and Social Mobilization*. Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1999.
- Cruz, Ernesto Horacio da. *História Do Pará*. Belém: Universidade do Pará, 1963.
- Cullick, Jonathan S. *Making History: The Biographical Narratives of Robert Penn Warren*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000.
- Cunha, Euclides da, Sousa, Ronaldo and Sa, Lucia. *The Amazon: Land without History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Curtin, Philip D. *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Daou, Ana Maria. *A Belle Epoque Amazonica*. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor, 2000.
- Dávila, Jerry. *Diploma of Whiteness : Race and Social Policy in Brazil, 1917-1945*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).
- Davis, Darien J. "British Football with a Brazilian Beat: The Early History of a National Pastime (1894-1933)." In *English-Speaking Communities in Latin America*. Edited by Oliver Marshall, 261-284. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.
- Davis, Mike. *Planet of Slums*. London: Verso, 2006.
- Dawson, Andrew. *New Era, New Religions: Religious Transformation in Contemporary Brazil*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007.
- Degler, Carl N. *Neither Black nor White: Slavery and Race Relations in Brazil and the United States*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986.
- Dennison, Stephanie and Shaw, Lisa. *Popular Cinema in Brazil, 1930-2001*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004.
- Deutsch, Sandra McGee. *Las Derechas: The Extreme Right in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, 1890-1939*. Palo Alto.: Stanford University Press, 1999.
- Devine, T. M. *The Scottish Nation: A History, 1700-2000*. New York: Viking, 1999.
- Dulin, Juan Esteven. *Guia De La Salud*. Buenos Aires: Editorial de Cultura Humana, 1949.

Dulles, John W. F. *Vargas of Brazil: A Political Biography*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967.

———. *President Castello Branco, Brazilian Reformer*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1980.

Durkheim, Émile. "Suicide et Natalité. Étude de Statistique Morale," *Revue Philosophique* 26 (1888): 447-463.

Elasmar, Michael G. *The Impact of International Television: A Paradigm Shift*. Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates, 2003.

Ferreira, Ricardo Franklin. "O Brasileiro, O Racismo Silencioso E a Emancipacao Do Afro-Descendente." *Psicologia & Sociedade* 14, no.1 (2002): 69-86.

Fragoso, João Luís R. e Florentino, Manolo. *O Arcaísmo Como Projeto : Mercado Atlântico, Sociedade Agrária E Elite Mercantil Em Uma Economia Colonial Tardia: Rio de Janeiro, C.1790-C.1840*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2001.

Frantzis, Bruce Kumar. *The Power of Internal Martial Arts and Chi: Combat and Energy Secrets of Ba Gua, Tai Chi, and Hsing-I*. Berkeley, Calif.: Energy Arts, 2007.

Freyre, Gilberto. *Casa-Grande & Senzala : Formação Da Família Brasileira Sob O Regime Da Economia Patriarcal*. 20a. ed. Rio de Janeiro Brasília: Livraria J. Olympio, 1980.

———. *Inglese No Brasil : Aspectos Da Influência Britânica Sobre a Vida, a Paisagem E a Cultura Do Brasil*. Gilbertiana. Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Topbooks UniverCidade Editora, 2000.

Gentry, Clyde. *No Holds Barred: Ultimate Fighting and the Martial Arts Revolution*. Lytham: Milo Books, 2002.

Germino, Dante L. *The Italian Fascist Party in Power; a Study in Totalitarian Rule*. New York: H. Fertig, 1971.

Gluck, Carol. "The Invention of Edo." In *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*. Edited by Stephen Vlastos, 262-284. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Goldstein, Robert Justin. *Political Censorship*. Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001.

- Gomes, Ivan Lima. "Passado Quadro a Quadro: A Revista Em Quadrinhos Pererê (1960-1964) E a História." *História, Imagem e Narrativas*, 9, Outubro (2009).
- Gracie, Carlos. *Introdução Ao Jiu-Jitsu* Rio de Janeiro: Pongetti, 1948.
- Gracie, Reila. *Carlos Gracie: O Criador De Uma Dinastia*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2008.
- Graham, Richard. *Britain and the Onset of Modernization in Brazil 1850-1914*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1968.
- . *Patronage and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Brazil*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1990.
- Green, James A. and Svinth, Joseph R.. "The Circle and the Octagon: Maeda's Judo and Gracie's Jiu-Jitsu." In *Martial Arts in the Modern World*. Edited by James A. Green and Joseph R. Svinth, 61-70. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003.
- Green, James Naylor. *Beyond Carnival: Male Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century Brazil*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.
- . *We Cannot Remain Silent: Opposition to the Brazilian Military Dictatorship in the United States*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Green, Thomas A. and Svinth, Joseph R. eds. *Martial Arts of the World: An Encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2001.
- Guia Do Capoeira Ou Gymnástica Brasileira*. Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Nacional, 1907.
- Gunelius, Susan. *Building Brand Value the Playboy Way*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Hahner, June Edith. *Emancipating the Female Sex: The Struggle for Women's Rights in Brazil, 1850-1940*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1990.
- Hamaguchi, Yoshinobu. "Innovation in Martial Arts." In *Japan, Sport and Society: Tradition and Change in a Globalizing World*. Edited by Joseph Maguire and Masayoshi Nakayama, 7-18. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Harrison, E. J. *The Fighting Spirit of Japan: The Esoteric Study of the Martial Arts and Way of Life in Japan*. Woodstock: Overlook Press, 1982.
- Hatton, T. J. and Williamson, Jeffrey G. *The Age of Mass Migration: Causes and*

Economic Impact. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Hautzinger, Sarah J. *Violence in the City of Women : Police and Batterers in Bahia, Brazil*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

Hemming, John and Royal Geographical Society (Great Britain). *Change in the Amazon Basin*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985.

Hess, David. "The Many Rooms of Spiritism in Brazil." *Luso-Brazilian Review* 24, no. 2 (1987): 15-34.

Hilton, Stanley E. *Brazil and the Soviet Challenge, 1917-1947*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991.

Historia Naval Brasileira. Vol. 4, Rio de Janeiro: Servico de Documentacao da Marinha, 2001.

Holloway, Thomas H. "'A Healthy Terror': Police Repression of Capoeiras in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro ". *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 69, no. 4 (1989): 637-676.

Human Rights Watch (Organization), and Women's Rights Project (Human Rights Watch). *Criminal Injustice: Violence against Women in Brazil*. New York: Human Rights Watch, 1991.

Akira, Iriye. "Japan as Competitor, 1895-1917." In *Mutual Images: Essays in American-Japanese Relations*. Edited by Iriye Akira, 73-99. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975.

Japan Society. *Transactions and Proceedings of the Japan Society*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1892.

Jeffords, Susan. *Hard Bodies: Hollywood Masculinity in the Reagan Era*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1994.

Johnson, John J. *Political Change in Latin America: The Emergence of the Middle Sectors*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1965.

Kano, Jigoro. *Mind over Muscle: Writings from the Founder of Judo*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2005.

Kodokan, Institute. "Histoire Du Judo." *Judo Kodokan Review* XII, no. 5 (Nov. 1962): 1-160.

Kusaka, Yuko. "The Emergence and Development of Japanese School Sport ". In *Japan, Sport and Society*. Edited by Joseph Maguire and Masayoshi Nakayama, 19-34. London: Routledge, 2006.

Costa, Lamartine P. and Labriola, Plinio. "Bodies from Brazil: Fascist Aesthetics in South American Setting." In *Shaping the Superman : Fascist Body as Political Icon : Aryan Fascism*. Edited by J. A. Mangan, 163-180. London: Frank Cass, 1999.

Lauderdale Graham, Sandra. *House and Street: The Domestic World of Servants and Masters in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Leal, Luiz Augusto Pinheiro. *A Politica Da Capoeiragem : A Historia Social Da Capoeira E Do Boi-Bumba No Para Republicano (1888-1906)*. Salvador: EDUFBA, 2008.

Leblanc, Chris. "Going to the Ground: Lessons from Law Enforcement." *Journal of Non-Lethal Combatives* no. January (2007).

Lent, John A. *Cartooning in Latin America*. Cresskill: Hampton Press, 2005.

Lesser, Jeff . *Negotiating National Identity: Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999.

———. *Searching for Home Abroad: Japanese Brazilians and Transnationalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.

———. *A Discontented Diaspora: Japanese Brazilians and the Meanings of Ethnic Militancy, 1960-1980*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.

Levi, Heather. *The World of Lucha Libre : Secrets, Revelations, and Mexican National Identity*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

Levine, Robert M. and Meihy, José Carlos Sebe Bom. *The Life and Death of Carolina Maria De Jesus*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995.

———. *Father of the Poor? : Vargas and His Era*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

———. "How Brazil Works." In *The Brazil Reader : History, Culture, Politics*. Edited by. Robert M. Levine and John J. Crocitti, 408-410. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999.

- Lewis, James R. *Witchcraft Today: An Encyclopedia of Wiccan and Neopagan Traditions*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 1999.
- Lima, Oliveira. *No Japão : Impressões Da Terra E Da Gente*. Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Topbooks : NEC do Brasil, 1997.
- Lone, Stewart. *The Japanese Community in Brazil, 1908-1940: Between Samurai and Carnival*. New York: Palgrave, 2001.
- Lopez, Ana M. "Train of Shadows." Early Cinema and Modernity in Latin America." In *Multiculturalism, Postcoloniality, and Transnational Media*. Edited by Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, 99-128. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003.
- Lundin, Hjalmar. *On the Mat-and Off; Memoirs of a Wrestler*. New York: Albert Bonnier publishing house, 1937.
- McDowall, William. *History of the Burgh of Dumfries : With Notices of Nithsdale, Annandale, and the Western Border*. Edinburgh: A. & C. Black, 1867.
- Maguire, Joseph A. and Masayoshi Nakayama. *Japan, Sport and Society: Tradition and Change in a Globalizing World*. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Malley-Morrison, Kathleen. *International Perspectives on Family Violence and Abuse: A Cognitive Ecological Approach*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004.
- Mario, Filho. *O Negro No Futebol Brasileiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Civilizacao Brasileira, 1964.
- Martin, Percy and Alvin Cardozo, Manoel, eds. *Who's Who in Latin America*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1935.
- Masterson, Daniel M. and Sayaka Funada-Classen. *The Japanese in Latin America*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004.
- Matta, Roberto da. *Carnavais, Malandros E Heróis : Para Uma Sociologia Do Dilema Brasileiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar Editores, 1979.
- . *Violência Brasileira*. São Paulo-Brasil: Brasiliense, 1982.
- . *O Que Faz O Brasil, Brasil? 2a. edicao ed*. Rio de Janeiro: Rocco, 1986.

———. *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes: An Interpretation of the Brazilian Dilemma*. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991.

Mayeda, Mitsuyo. *Jiu-Do: Uma Arte De Cultura Physica Japonesa*. Belem: Livraria Escolar, 1935.

McCann, Bryan. *Hello, Hello Brazil: Popular Music in the Making of Modern Brazil*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

McCann, Frank D. "The Military." In *Modern Brazil*. Edited by Michael L. Conniff and Frank D. McCann, 47-82. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989.

———. "Origins of the "New Professionalism" of the Brazilian Military." *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 21, no. 4 (1979): 505-22.

McDowell, John Holmes. *Poetry and Violence: The Ballad Tradition of Mexico's Costa Chica*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000.

Meihy, José Carlos Sebe Bom, and José Sebastião Witter. *Futebol E Cultura : Coletânea De Estudos*. São Paulo: Convênio IMESP/DAESP, 1982.

Melo, Hildete Pereira de, João Lizardo de Araújo e Teresa Cristina de Novaes Marques. "Raça E Nacionalidade No Mercado De Trabalho Carioca Na Primeira República: O Caso Da Cervejaria Brahma." *Revista Brasileira de Economia* 57, (2003): 535-69.

Mensario Do Jornal Do Commercio. Rio de Janeiro, Brasil: O Jornal, 1938.

Meyrer, Marlise Regina. "Representações Do Desenvolvimento Nas Fotorreportagens Da Revista O Cruzeiro (1955-1957)," PhD Dissertation, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, 2007.

Mifune, Kyuzo. *Canon of Judo: Principle and Technique*. Tokyo: Seibundo-Shinkosha, 1960.

Mitchell, Don. *Cultural Geography: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000.

Mol, Serge. *Classical Fighting Arts of Japan: A Complete Guide to Koryu Ju Jujutsu*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2001.

Moraes Neto, Geneton. *Dossiê 50 : Os Onze Jogadores Revelam Os Segredos Da Maior Tragédia Do Futebol Brasileiro*. Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Objetiva, 2000.

- Morais, Fernando. *Chato, O Rei Do Brasil*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1994.
- . *Coracoes Sujos : A Historia Da Shindo Renme*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2000.
- Nascimento, Elisa Larkin. "Kilombismo, Virtual Whiteness, and the Sorcery of Color," *Journal of Black Studies* 34, No. 6, (Jul., 2004): 861-880.
- Napolitano, Marcos. *Cultura Brasileira : Utopia E Massificao (1950-1980) : Cultura De Massa E Cultura De Elite, Movimentos De Vanguarda, Arte E Poltica*. São Paulo: Contexto, 2001.
- Needell, Jeffrey D. "The Revolta Contra Vacina of 1904: The Revolt Against "Modernization" in Belle-Epoque Rio De Janeiro." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 67, no. 2 (1987): 233-69.
- Nye, Robert A. *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France*. Studies in the History of Sexuality. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- Ogasowara, Koei. *Os Imigrantes Japoneses Precursores - Um Olhar Histórico Sobre O Período Pré-Kasato-Maru*, Sao Paulo: Museu Historico da Imigracao Japonesa no Brasil, 2008.
- Owensby, Brian Philip. *Intimate Ironies: Modernity and the Making of Middle Class Lives in Brazil*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1999.
- Page, Joseph A. *The Brazilians*. Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1995.
- Burke, Peter and Pallares-Burke, Maria Lúcia G., eds. *Gilberto Freyre: Social Theory in the Tropics*. Oxfordshire: Peter Lang Ltd., 2008.
- Parker, Richard G. *Beneath the Equator: Cultures of Desire, Male Homosexuality, and Emerging Gay Communities in Brazil*. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Peixoto, Alzira Vargas do Amaral. *Getúlio Vargas, Meu Pai*. Rio de Janeiro: Editôra Globo, 1960.
- Perlman, Janice E. *The Myth of Marginality: Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de Janeiro*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.
- Phillippou, Styliane. "Utopian Modernism in the Land of the Future: Brasilia, the Capital of Hope." In *Nowhere Somewhere : Writing, Space and the Construction of Utopia*.

Edited by José Eduardo Reis and Jorge Bastos da Silva, 181-200. Porto: Editora da Universidade do Porto, 2006.

Porto, J. A. Santos e Aquino, F. Radler. *Educacao Physica Japoneza*. Rio de Janeiro: Companhia Typografica do Brazil, 1905.

Del Priore, M. (2011). *Histórias íntimas : sexualidade e erotismo na história do Brasil*. São Paulo, SP, Planeta.

Renato, Carlos. *E Preciso Salvar a Mulher Casada*. Rio de Janeiro: Gemini, 1969.

———. *O Marido Fiel, Esse Chato*. Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Eldorado, 1969.

Ribeiro, Atanagildo Barata. *Sonho No Carcere. Dramas Da Revolucao De 1893 No Brazil. Poema*. Rio de Janeiro: Casa Mont'alverne, 1895.

Rocha, Glauber. *Revolucao Do Cinema Novo*. São Paulo, SP: Cosac & Naify, 2004.

Rocha, Joao Cezar de Castro. *O Exilio Do Homem Cordial : Ensaio E Revisoes*. Rio de Janeiro: Museu da Republica Editora, 2004.

Rocha, Vicente Leitao da. "Como O Exercito Podera Praticar O Judo." *Revista da Escola de Educacao Fisica do Exercito* 94, no. 2o Semestre (1964).

Rocque, Carlos. *Antônio Lemos E Sua Época : História Política Do Pará*. Belém: Editora Cejup, 1996.

Roett, Riordan. *Brazil : Politics in a Patrimonial Society*. Westport: Praeger, 1999.

Rottenberg, Catherine. *Performing Americanness: Race, Class, and Gender in Modern African-American and Jewish-American Literature*. Hanover: Dartmouth College Press, 2008.

Frühstück, Sabine and Manzenreiter, Wolfram. "Neverland Lost: Judo Cultures in Austria, Japan and Everywhere." In *Globalizing Japan: Ethnography of the Japanese Presence in Asia, Europe, and America*. Edited by Harumi Befu and Sylvie Guichard-Anguis, 69-93. London: Routledge, 2001.

Salles, Vicente. *Epocas Do Teatro No Grão-Pará, Ou, Apresentação Do Teatro De Época*. Belém: Editora Universitária UFPA, 1994.

Sampaio, José Adércio Leite. *O Conselho Nacional De Justiça E a Independência Do Judiciário*. Belo Horizonte: Del Rey Editora, 2007.

Santos, Jorge Artur dos. "Os Intelectuais E as Críticas Às Práticas Esportivas No Brasil (1890 – 1947)." M.A. Thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2000.

Santos, Noronha. *Meios De Transporte No Rio De Janeiro : Historia E Legislação*. Rio de Janeiro: Typ. do Jornal do Commercio, 1934.

Santos, Roberto. *Historia Economica Da Amazonia (1800-1920)*. São Paulo: T.A. Queiroz, 1980.

Scaramuzzi, Olyntho V. *Memórias De Um Ex-Polícia Especial : Obsessão Ao Poder*. Rio de Janeiro: Revista Continente Editorial, 1981.

Scheina, Robert L. *Latin America's Wars*. Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, Inc., 2003.

Scott, James C. *Seeing Like a State : How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven.: Yale University Press, 1998.

Shun, Inoue. "Invented Tradition in the Martial Arts." In *The Culture of Japan as Seen through Its Leisure*. Edited by Sepp Linhart and Sabine Frühstück, 83-93. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998.

———. "The Invention of the Martial Arts." In *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*. Edited by Stephen Vlastos, 163-173. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Skidmore, Thomas E. *The Politics of Military Rule in Brazil, 1964-85*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.

———. "Racial Ideas and Social Policy in Brazil, 1870-1940." In *The Idea of Race in Latin America, 1870-1940*. Edited by Aline Helg, Richard Graham, Alan Knight and Thomas E. Skidmore, 7-36. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990.

———. *Black into White : Race and Nationality in Brazilian Thought*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1993.

Slatta, Richard W. *Gaúchos and the Vanishing Frontier*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983.

Smith, Verity. *Encyclopedia of Latin American Literature*. London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1997.

- Stam , Robert. *Tropical Multiculturalism : A Comparative History of Race in Brazilian Cinema and Culture*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997.
- Stepan, Nancy. *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991.
- Stokes, Charles E. *The Amazon Bubble: World Rubber Monopoly*. Fort McKavett: C.E. Stokes, Jr., 2000.
- Straubhaar, Joseph Dean. "Mass Communications and the Elites." In *Modern Brazil: Elites and Masses in Historical Perspective*. Edited by Michael L. Connif and Frank D. McCann. 225-245. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991.
- Svinth, Joseph R. "On the Defeat of Tokugoro Ito in North America." *The Journal of Alternative Perspectives on the Martial Arts and Sciences*, Jan. (2006).
- . "Professor Yamashita Goes to Washington ." In *Martial Arts in the Modern World*. Edited by James A. and Svinth Joseph R. Green, 47-59. Westport: Praeger, 2003.
- Schwartz, Stuart B. *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550-1835*. Cambridgeshire: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Talmon-Chvaicer, Maya. *The Hidden History of Capoeira: A Collision of Cultures in the Brazilian Battle Dance*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007.
- Tilburg, Patricia A. *Colette's Republic: Work, Gender, and Popular Culture in France, 1870-1914*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2009.
- Topik, Steven and Samper, Mario. "The Latin American Coffee Commodity Chain: Brazil and Costa Rica." In *From Silver to Cocaine: Latin American Commodity Chains and the Building of the World Economy, 1500-2000*. Edited by Steven Topik, Carlos Marichal and Zephyr Frank, 118-146. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.
- Truzzi, Oswaldo M. S. "The Right Place at the Right Time: Syrians and Lebanese in Brazil and the United States, a Comparative Approach." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 16, no. 2 (1997): 3-34.
- Urban, Hugh B. *Magia Sexualis : Sex, Magic, and Liberation in Modern Western Esotericism*. Berkeley.: University of California Press, 2006.
- Vargas, Getúlio. *A Nova Política Do Brasil*. Coleção Documentos Brasileiros. Rio de Janeiro: J. Olympio, 1938.

Vargas, Getúlio e Soares, Leda Saraiva. *Diario*. São Paulo Rio de Janeiro: Siciliano ; Fundacao Getúlio Vargas, Editora, 1995.

Vincent, Jon S. *Culture and Customs of Brazil*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2003.

Wainberg, Jacques Alkalai. *Imperio De Palavras*. Porto Alegre: EDIPUCRS, 2003.

Watson, Brian N. *The Father of Judo: A Biography of Jigoro Kano*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2000.

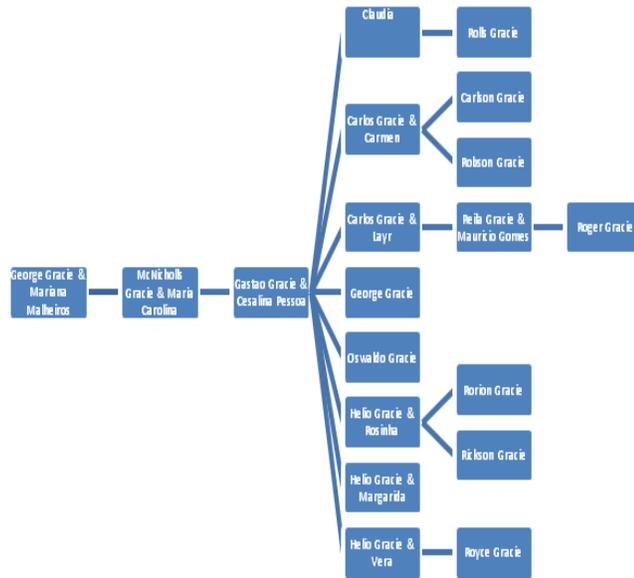
Weber, Bruce. *O Rio de Janeiro : A Photographic Journal*. New York: Knopf, 1986.

Weinstein, Barbara. *The Amazon Rubber Boom, 1850-1920*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1983.

———. "Making Workers Masculine: The Reconstruction of Male Worker Identity in the Twenty-Century Brazil." In *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History*. Edited by Karen Hagermann and Josh Tosh Stefan Dudink, 276-294. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004.

Appendix

The Gracie Family Tree⁵⁹⁴



⁵⁹⁴ The Gracie tree family displayed above is a smaller version of the full genealogical file held at Colégio Brasileiro de Genealogia (Brazilian Genealogical Archive) in Rio de Janeiro. For this dissertation purposes, I only included names mentioned along the work. Fausto, *A Concise History of Brazil*.