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Джиу-джитсу и аскетизм: духовный подход, основанный на традиции действия

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Аннотация: джиу-джитсу, связанное с традиционными областями боевых искусств и спорта, наделено двойной духовной природой. Цель настоящей работы состояла в том, чтобы исследовать аскетический потенциал джиу-джитсу и его возможные связи со священным. Методом, использованным для этого исследования, был обзор литературы. Академия джиу-джитсу-это своего рода сакральное пространство, поскольку ее структура происходит от храмов и религиозных монастырей. Продвижение пояса - это ритуал перехода с одного уровня понимания искусства и состояния спортивной подготовленности на другой. Коридор порки ремня-это традиционный ритуал инициации, который подготавливает практикующего к вступлению в фазу нового пояса. Священное время можно найти как в этих ритуалах, так и в самом спортивном представлении. Как образы-движения, техники насыщены созерцаемыми символами в различных сферах жизни. Джиу-джитсу - это путь аскетизма и катарсиса. Учитывая символизм, обеспечиваемый его двойной духовной природой, встречи джиу-джитсу можно определить как модальность священной войны. Академия джиу-джитсу не похожа на обычный спортзал, куда ходят только для того, чтобы потренироваться. Можно проверить, что джиу-джитсу наделено трансцендентным измерением, из которого можно подняться в сверхчувственные реальности через символический опыт, обеспечиваемый боем. Было обнаружено, что аскетический потенциал джиу-джитсу, ставший возможным благодаря духовному опыту, может достигать различных уровней в зависимости от степени подготовленности и мастерства практикующего.
Ключевые слова: джиу-джитсу, боевые искусства, спорт, аскетизм, сакральное

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Jiu Jitsu and asceticism: a spiritual approach grounded on the tradition of action

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Abstract: Connected to the traditional domains of martial arts and sport, Jiu Jitsu is endowed with a dual spiritual nature. The present work had for objective to investigate the ascetic potential of Jiu Jitsu and its possible connections with the sacred. The method used for this study was the literature review. The Jiu Jitsu Academy is a kind of sacred space, since its structure descends from the temples and religious monasteries. Belt promotions are rite of passage from one plane of understanding of the art and state of athletic preparedness to another. The belt whipping corridor is the traditional initiation ritual that prepares the practitioner to enter the new belt's phase. The sacred time can be found in both these rituals as well as in the athletic performance itself. As images-motion, the techniques are saturated with contemplable symbols in different spheres of life. Jiu Jitsu constitutes a way of asceticism and catharsis. Given the symbolism provided by its dual spiritual nature, Jiu Jitsu encounters can be identified as a modality of holy war. The Jiu Jitsu Academy is unlike an ordinary gym where one goes only in order to work out. It can be verified that Jiu Jitsu is endowed with a transcendent dimension from which it is possible to ascend into super-sensible realities through the symbolical experience provided by the combat. It has been found that the ascetic potential of Jiu Jitsu made possible by the spiritual experience can reach different levels according to the practitioner's degree of readiness and proficiency.

Keywords: Jiu Jitsu, martial arts, sport, asceticism, sacred

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INTRODUCTION

As Jiu Jitsu has been resulted from the influx of many martial arts, nowadays it comprises both a self-defence art and a sport modality [1,2][4]. Since it operates in a sporting atmosphere with an emphasis on its martial roots, it can also be understood as a martial sport [3,4,5]. Despite the desacralization process that has been verified in sports domain in post-modernity, sport is a religious ritualistic phenomenon that provides the practitioner with the possibility of ascending to super-sensible realities through symbolic experience, as well as of purifying oneself through its mechanisms of active catharsis [6,7,8,9]. Likewise, Jiu Jitsu is connected to the martial tradition, which, in its turn, is connected to the initiatic tradition [1,10,11,12]. Therefore, this work will investigate the ascetic potential of Jiu Jitsu and its possible connections with the sacred, considering its incidence in both traditional domains of sport and martial arts.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is characterized as qualitative. The method used for this study was the literature review. A search was made through the databases of Google, Scielo, and Research Gate. The bibliographic survey consists of articles from electronic journals, digital and printed works, interviews and dissertations related to the subject under consideration. To carry out this procedure, the following keywords was entered. Jiu Jitsu, martial arts, sport, asceticism, sacred. At first, the spiritual nature of Jiu Jitsu was investigated. Then, the possible presence of sacred time and space as well as the possible rites present in Jiu Jitsu in the light of traditional teachings and the eliadean approach on the sacred were researched. Finally, the ascetic potential of Jiu Jitsu was investigated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sacred time and space in jiu jitsu

The Jiu Jitsu Academy is a kind of a sacred space, since its structure descends from the religious temples and monasteries [12], besides being separated from the profane space, that is, in a place where the sacred time of ontological nature can be recovered, since it's the time of "being" of a cyclical nature, albeit sometimes it can be manifested in chronological way, whose linear characteristics go beyond the ordinary temporal duration of profane time as it can be verified bellow [6,13].

From an eliadean approach, the profane time could mainly be found in the control mechanisms of training volume, speed measurements and as a component of time-motion control protocol, since it tends to result in an ordinary temporal duration devoid of any kind of spiritual experience for the martial athletes [13,14,15]. The sacred time, in its turn, is manifested through the belt promotion ceremonies, which usually occur according to a cyclical time and operate as a rite of passage from one plane of understanding of the art and state of athletic preparedness to another [13,16]. However, its occurrence depends on the belt of the practitioner, as from the black belt on, the time of belt and degrees promotions tend to change, according to general system of graduation of International Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Federation [17]. The belt whipping corridor - or just corredor in Portuguese - is the traditional initiation ritual that prepares the practitioner to enter the new belt's phase. Once the corridor is formed by the students positioned on each side of mat, the promoted Jiu Jitsu practitioner goes through the corridor while his comrades whip him with their own belts [18,19]. According to Evola [6] (p. 62) "initiation in its highest form is an intensively real operation to changing the ontological status of the individual and grafting onto him certain forces of the world of being". Initiation rituals correspond to cosmogony, by which the initiate comes to be

[1] According to Gracie [2], the martial arts and combat sports known as Judo, Wrestling and Sambo were integrated into Jiu Jitsu by Master Rolls Gracie. Indeed, the current Jiu Jitsu, that has been building by many schools around the world, is a recovery of the traditional one that was divided into many branches by budo doctrine, notably by the end of Edo period when Japan started losing its true identity.

qualified [11,20].

Thus, in each promotion the practitioner is initiated into the mysteries corresponding to the technical competencies of the belt achieved, which is verified in both the increasing difficulty in competitions and the ascetic potential it tends to imply [10,12,21]. Once ascending in the hierarchy, some techniques become gradually allowed to the practitioner. For instance, toe hold, knee bar, calf slicer, biceps slicer are martial techniques restricted to brown belts and black belts only, according to the rule book of International Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Federation [21]. On the one hand, the way white and black belts practitioners escape a stranglehold can lead to the same result in terms of technical effectiveness, that is, in terms of having performed successful defensive actions despite differing in the mastery resulting from the level of their skills. On the other hand, beyond the motor gesture, it is possible to identify a variability in using such ascetic potential made possible by this symbolic experience, understood as the ability to carry this experience to other life situations in face of adverse events that one has to deal with [22,23][5]. In this regard, according to Gracie [24] "... a grip in the kimono or a choke has an extrasensory power...". Given the existence of a symbolic dimension found in sports technical gestures, such as that above-mentioned escape from stranglehold, techniques constitute images-motion in this sense, since they are saturated with contemplable symbols in different spheres of existence [22,24].

Although the time of athletic performance reveals itself as a linear time, considering its chronological characteristics, it is consecrated by the symbolic dimension of sports combat itself, thus differing from the profane duration [6,13]. According to Eliade [25] (p. 33) "anything that is not directly consecrated by a hierophany becomes sacred thanks to its participation in some symbol". In this regard, becoming a Jiu Jitsu champion can correspond to a cosmogonic process, given that a new factual situation is brought into existence with a new ontological status achieved from a kind of inner combat [6,20].

Moreover, sport is constituted by a radically religious impulse toward the sacred [6,7,9]. In this sense, in each match, the athlete connects to his own eschatology, exhausting himself through the effort in order to achieve not only new physiological adaptations, but also to change his own ontological status. This, in turn, implies a spiritual death for all limits of his past athletic form of existence, which can be manifested through his new personnel record achieved [7,13,20]. From an initiatic perspective, the sports combat itself can be understood as the descent into hell, i.e., into the own ascetic's labyrinth, whereas the new athletic form achieved as his new spiritual birth [6,9,11].

Jiu jitsu as a way of ascesis and catharsis

For Gracie [24] "Jiu Jitsu is a spiritual art". Therefore, despite the opposition established by some modern masters between sport and martial arts [10,26], both dimensions, that constitute essentially religious ways, are found in Jiu Jitsu [1,7,9,12]. Studies evidence the cathartic and sanctifying potential of sport [7]. Catharsis, or purification, extends from the moral and ritual field to the intellectual one, in order to achieve higher knowledge [23]. In light of this, given the inherent ritualistic character of combat sports and martial arts, Jiu Jitsu consists a transcendental way to get purified [7,9,24]. In Tsunetomo's words [27] (p. 11) "purity is something that cannot be attained except by piling effort under effort".

Nevertheless, for some modern masters, the combative atmosphere of sports cannot express the true spirit of budo. The martial arts practitioner shouldn't have for purpose to win sports tournaments in which brute force prevails and victory at any cost tends to be the main objective. Instead of this, the martial artist should seek the harmonization of individual ki with universal ki [26] . However, such comprehension results from a superficial and partial view of sport. In this regard, Evola [6] identifies that the symbolism of victory found in sport is endowed with a twofold aspect, since the triumph over the external opponent depends previously on the triumph over oneself.

Given its martial nature, Jiu Jitsu

[2] Evola [23] had already pointed out such possibility of taking some situations as symbols of austerity.

techniques are composed of a visible face, known in Japanese as *omote*, and a hidden face, known as *ura*. These martial techniques more often called as *jutsu* or *jitsu* are considered a vehicle for achieving the spiritual discernment [28,29,30]. For Scupoli [31] the spiritual discernment is achieved through the training of the will and intelligence of the ascetic through the practice of prayer itself. However, in addition to such contemplative way, it is possible to identify another modality of inner combat that is directly linked to the domains of the tradition of action, to which combat sports, in their turn, are deeply connected [6,32]. According to Gracie [33] "men are born to be warriors". Therefore, with the confrontation of an external adversary, understood as the little war, one arrives at the great war that, in turn, is of an internal order, in which the symbolisms of the sacrificial act and heroic drunkenness are found from the competitive victory [6]. For Severino [12] (p. 17) "...in these mystical wars, it's not about winning or being defeated by the simple glory or detriment that it can mean". To defeat the adversary, it is first needed to defeat oneself, which consequently leads to the ontological transfiguration of the fighter. However, what is really pursued is not consummated with the mere victory over the opponent himself, but with the triumphal peace, that is, with the victory over oneself [34]. In short, the peace through war [6,32].

CONCLUSION

This study presented as main limitation the scarcity of previous studies on Jiu Jitsu from spiritual approaches. However, by identifying the converging points between the traditional teachings and some analytical precepts of the science of religion, it was possible to identify the presence of the sacred in Jiu Jitsu as well as its ascetic potential. Whether as a self-defence art or a martial sport, Jiu Jitsu is an essentially spiritual practice that enables access to the deepest domains of the sacred, as its atmosphere is saturated with sacrality. The Jiu Jitsu Academy is unlike an ordinary gym where one goes only in order to work out, but it constitutes a kind of sacred space, since its structure descends from the religious temples and monasteries where practices of spiritual nature are still carried out; besides it is separated from the profane space. It has been verified that sacred time can occur on the ceremonial rites of belt promotion that can be repeated and recovered cyclically, depending on the practionner's belt. The sacred time can also be identified in the performance itself, manifested in a linear and eschatological way from which it is possible to engage in a modality of holy war. It's been also verified that Jiu Jitsu is endowed with a transcendent dimension from which it is possible to ascend into super-sensible realities through the symbolical experience provided by the combat. Finally, the ascetic potential of Jiu Jitsu made possible by such spiritual experience can reach different levels according to the practitioner's degree of readiness and proficiency.

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