

## JU-JITSU AS A METHOD OF PSYCHO-PHYSICAL TRAINING IN THE CONTEMPORARY AGE

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### **Abstract**

*The present work is intended to be a proposal regarding the approaching of pshycho-physical training in the our contemporary times, resorting to the fascinating world of martial arts.*

*With its roots from the darkness of the Japanese history, Ju-jitsu as a martial art influenced the way of living and training of the famous samurai, the ones who are remembered in the history of succeeding generations as a symbol of honour and loyalty, respecting a concept which, nowadays, is quite obsolete: giri*

*Although, throughout the centuries they were guided by an unwritten code, the legendary bushi developped - among other things, a remarcable art - Ju-jitsu, which throughout the centuries proved to be the source for many sports and modern fight disciplines. It is already notorious the beneficial influence of the martial arts on the pshycho-physical system on the individual who tackles them.*

**Keywords:** *Ju-jitsu; martial arts; fight sports; pshycho-physical training*

### **Historical preamble**

“The fight” as a social phenomenon has entered in the existential sphere once the existence of the first life forms. Whether it was about the fight as a means of survival in the nature or as a confrontation with its own fellows, one can speak about “fight” as a way of going through this dimension.

Naturally, the fight as a martial phenomenon, brought the apparition of strategies concerned about its efficiency, whether it was about the fight between two or more people or about a fight between two or more armies. This way, worldwide, there have appeared a lot of systems of fight, differentiated on the temperament and the level of culture, as well as the level of civilization of the people on a certain geographic area.

This phenomenon received the name of *Martial Arts*. *What are they, the martial arts? Why „martial arts” and not systems of fight, battle techniques, etc?*

*Martial arts are complex driving systems of manifesting the psycho-physical-technical abilities, approached in order to improve the quality of the psycho-physical system or to acquire the martial abilities.*

We say „martial arts” and not in some other way, as the way of execution of the drive acts and/or the specific techniques of some styles, it is manifested according the some well-defined patterns, having as main resultant, most of the times, the making of some drive actions, harmonious and effective both in the context of the the fight itself as well as from the viewpoint of the beneficial action on the psycho-physical health state.

It can be stated that, at the origin of the martial arts there is an archetype: the one of fight and creation. In the way of thinking of the archaic human being, the fight of the contrary principles is perceived first of all in the natural environment, especially in the alternance of the seasons, the one of abundance and drought and of course, the one of life and death.

The subsequent evolution of humanity discovers at the social level the same confrontation of principles which brought

inevitably the progress and ascendent movement.

The continuous migration of humanity with a view to conquer, seize and own new territories or impose some ideas / principles, lead to the spread of different fight forms, depending on lots of parametres, which, in time, managed to get crystalized in STYLES of fight. Therefore, fight existed from old times, starting from the need to survive and afterwards, the one of supremacy over the fellows, turning out to be known during the modern age as SPORTS.

The sportive phenomenon has generated methods and movement exercises done with craft and suppleness, which is able to cross the brutal force, highlighting the sportive movement and creating at the same time a new trend of practicing it — including the one of the martial arts, from the perspective of the modern life.

### **Japanese ju-jitsu: original and borrowed features**

The great majority of the budhist sources recorded the fact that in the mythical Japan it was practiced a form of fight 1000 years B.C. as a ritual, named *Sumo*. In those times, Sumo was held, apart from the cases when it was not about a religious ceremony, in a primitive and barbaric form of fight, and it was not rarely when the winner of the fight was also the single survivor.

The specialists in the field authorize this discipline as being the ancestor of Ju-Jitsu.

Nevertheless, starting even with Sumo, the Japanese ingenuity became obvious, setting as a form of art an entire series of fight disciplines such as: *Ba-Jutsu* (the art of horseriding), *Ken-Jutsu* (the art of the sword), *Kyu-Jutsu* (the art of drawing a bow), *Naginata-Jutsu* (the fight with Naginata — the spear made out of a stick which had at one of its ends an attached sword), *Bo-jutsu* (the fight with the stick), *Zori* (the fight with the pike), *Ka-jutsu* (the art of using the fight), *JU-JITSU*, *antiquated JU-JUTSU* (the art of suppleness), *Karate* (the art of bare hands) etc.

These arts became visible out of a style which at the beginning covered them all: Ju-Jitsu (or TAI-JUTSU — „the art of handling the body). Nevertheless, altogether with the evolution of the bushi

(fighters) class on the history ladder, a significant part of these disciplines have divided, thus appearing new and modern disciplines, such as: Judo (the way of suppleness), Aikido (the way of harmony), Karate (the art of bare hands) — with the multitude of styles: *Shotokan*, *Kyokushinkai*, *Goju-ryu*, *Wado - ryu*, *Shorin - ryu*, *Kendo* (the way of the sword, the fight/fencing with bamboo swords), *Iaido* (the art of taking the sword out of the scabbard), *Kyudo* (the way of the bow) etc.

The paternity of Japan over JU-JITSU is undisputed, considering only the arguments presented above.

The concept of „JU-JITSU”-„*art of suppleness*”, comes from „*JU-supple*” and „*JUTSU-art*”.

Ever since the Kamakura (1185-1333) time period there were (according to some authors they were created during those times) a series of fight techniques elaborated by bushi (warriors) which were used in the case of the bare hands light against the armed opponent.

Nevertheless, Ju-Jitsu had been used before that period (end of the time period Heian: 794-1185) by the legendary warriors NINJA, which, due to their pragmatism, they became aware of the its extraordinary effectiveness, using it, most of the times, in not exactly noble purposes.

These techniques have been considered the beginning of Ju-Jitsu art, being created out of the old Kumi-uchi techniques (or Yawara), especially described in „*Konjaku Monogatari*” ( a budhist work which dates back in the 13th century). They represented the base of Ju-Jitsu ramnification in numerous Ryu (schools) such as: *Wa Jutsu*, *Yuiga*, *Teiho-son*, *Miso-Ehokusin*, *Isei-Jitoku* etc.

During Ashikaga or Muromachi (1338-1573) time period there have been developped two trends: one by the non-martial Sumo and another one by the martial arts such as: fencing, pike fight, drawing a bow, etc.

The first man to systematize a form of hand to hand fighting based on Ju-Jitsu principles was *Hisamori Takeuchi*, who created a technique named *Torite* and *Kashimawari* (the art of grabbing the opponent). Later, *Eishin Inugani* developped a new technique

by combining the hand to hand fighting using the sword. This technique has been named *Kenden-Kumiichi*, being then changed into *Kumiichi* and later into *Yoroi-Kumiichi* (hand to hand armed fight).

At the beginning of the time period Tokugawa (1600-1867), *Hichiromen Fukuno* created a new technique named *Yawara-Ryoshinto* which comprised what nowadays could be regarded as the *principles of Ju* (the principle of climbing down or non-resistance).

Around the same time period, *Jushin Seiguchi* founded a school which insisted a lot on *Ukemi* art (specific falling). These two schools systematised the content of their techniques, creating the adequate frame for Ju-Jitsu as an independent unarmed fight form.

Also, at the same time (around 1600) it is supposed to have arrived in Japan the *Chin-Gen-Pin* or *Chen-Yuan-Bin* priest, who would have brought and taught a series of procedures based on roll-outs and volts, drifts and crafty movements of throwing down on the ground, articulated techniques as well as hit techniques.

Regarding the *Chen-Yuan-Bin* or *Chen-Yoan-Pin* „phenomenon”, he was one of the numerous warrior Shaolin monks who came from Japan, initially as master in ceramics for *Daimyo-ul* (the great noble) feud Owari. As he trained *ronini* (samurai without master) in the fight without weapons, residing in blows in the vital points and articular techniques, he was noticed by the instructor of the clan of samurai from Owari and taught them what later would be known as *JU-JITSU*.

Master Jigoro Kano (the father of JUDO) has accredited him with it.

In the modern age, the old Ju-Jitsu keeps on surviving both through the disciplines adapted by the modern masters to the requirements of the modern life, Judo respectively — created by professor Jigoro Kano and Aikido, created O Sensei Morihei Ueshiba, but also through a series of schools in the field which managed to resist despite the time. In this way we can mention: *Takeda-Ryu*, *Wa-Jutsu*, *Ju-Tai-Jutsu* (within Ninjutsu Bujinkan), *Goshinjutsu* (Ju-jitsu for defence), *Kendo* („the way of the sword“) etc.

### The structure of Ju-Jitsu and its implications

It has appeared with a view to approaching the „total fight”, in which no element of a possible confrontation has been omitted: the stand or ground fight, the fight with or without weapons, the fight at a short distance, on a bumpy ground or in the water or limited area etc, Ju-Jitsu was always filled up with new and diverse techniques, as fruit of the generations of trainees and/or masters preoccupied by this phenomenon.

This way, even in the contemporary times, Ju-Jitsu has a complex structure, even a complicated one for the outsiders.

In reality, the structure of Ju-Jitsu illustrated below, respects both the practical side but also the methodical-pedagogical one, it provides a complete image over the possible positive transformations of the trainee, both through the martial perspective but also ethical and psycho-physical one.

In a brief approach, Ju-Jitsu has the following groups and sub-groups:

- *REGISHANO/REI-SHIKI* (Etiquette, ceremonial);
- *SHINTAI/TAI-SABAKI* – movements and swivelling, turn-overs, roll-outs;
- *UKEMI-WAZA* — techniques of falling;
- *ATEMI-WAZA* — hitting techniques;
- *Atemi-WAN-waza* — hitting techniques with the arms;
- *Atemi-GERI-waza* — hitting techniques with the feet;
- *Atemi-TAI-waza* — hitting techniques with the body;
- *NAGE-WAZA* — techniques of protrusion;
- *KATA-TE-waza* — techniques of protrusion with the help of the shoulder and /or the arms;
- *ASHI-waza* — techniques of protrusion with the help of the shoulder;
- *GOSHI-waza* — techniques of protrusion with the help of the hip;
- *SUTEMI-waza* — techniques of protrusion through sacrifice;
- *MA-sutemi-waza* — with front sacrifice;
- *YOKO-sutemi-waza* — with lateral sacrifice;

- *KATAME-WAZA* — techniques of immobilization/fixing;
- *NE-WAZA* – the art of the fight on the ground;
- *DOROBO-KANSETSU-WAZA* — techniques of forced transportation or *RENKO HO* – techniques of arrest;
  - *HOJO JUTSU (Torinawa)* – techniques of folding;
  - *KUMI-WAZA* – techniques of transportation;
- *SHIME-WAZA* — techniques of strangling;
- *KANSETSU-WAZA* — techniques of articulation;
  - *Ude-Kansetsu-Waza* – articular techniques over the arms;
  - *Ashi-Kansetsu-Waza* – articular techniques over the legs;
  - *Sebone-Kansetsu-Waza/Sekitsui Hishigi* — articular techniques over the spine.
- *KIAI-JUTSU* — the art of fight shouting;
- *KOBUDO* — techniques with the weapons;
- *KYUSHO* — the study of the vital points;
- *KUATSU* — methods of reanimation;

### **The influence of the technical groups of Ju-Jitsu over the psycho-physical system**

As it has been already highlighted above, Ju-Jitsu appeared as a necessity in assuring the survival in an era when the martial spirit was omnipresent. Even in those troubled times, the perseverent practice endowed the individual with skills, psycho-physical force and moral-volitive qualities beyond the common limit.

Although practicing out art is done in a hollistic way, meaning that the technical groups are harmoniously blended during the specific trainings, due to the didactic principles, we shall emphasize the main positive influences over *ju-jitsu-ka* which do on a regular basis at least three constant trainings a week.

*Regishano/Rei-shiki* – the ceremony; *Shintai* – the movements and *Tai-sabaki* – swivelling

*One cannot shake hands with somebody as long as one keeps their fist tight*”, used to say it Mother Teresa in the last century, one of the personalities of the Christian modern world, who preached the virtues of Christianity.

Japan, isolated and challenged by the hardships of nature, which formed a tough but gentle character of its inhabitants, always valued the worship towards the spirits of the nature, any existing being and even the respect for the opponent from the martial arts world. This way, the idea of *respect*, acquires special valences in the world of martial arts. From worshipping *the dojo* to worshipping *the Sensei*, the weapons for fighting or the opponent, everything has to comply with certain canons rigorously respected.

Nobody can do martial arts / Ju-jitsu, unless they respect the etiquette rules which impose courtesy, decency, behaviour, mutual support, etc.

All these lead to modesty, compassion, altruistic spirit, generosity. If one can accept these requirements, they can do martial arts, otherwise, it is certainly impossible. One may do whatever other sports but not martial arts for sure!

*The movements and swivellings* in martial arts are in a significantly other way than in the ordinary life. The constant control over the body, adopting a firm position, but supple / flexible adapted by the psychology of fight — or a particular daily situation etc, shall render in time emotional stability, confidence, dignity.

Keeping the backbone in an upright position — the central axis of the human body, confers health, flexibility, lust for life, desire for recognition and/or going beyond their own limits.

#### **Ukemi-waza — technique of falling**

„It is not shameful to fall, as it is important **how** one falls and stand up”, we often tell our disciples. *Life is full of ups and downs, it is not a straight route!* The psychology of the fight also implies techniques of self-imposed falling or triggered off by the opponent, which is therefore the reason why we recommend any likely practitant to understand the importance of the falling techniques, aspect which we approach in one of our works ever since 2005. Skipping any other unnecessary comments, we shall quote from the above mentioned work regarding the importance of this group in the evolutionary-educational process of *ju-jitsu-ka*:

- ☑ develops unconditional reflexes necessary to any trainee;
- ☑ there are the best self-protection methods in case of any situation of falling
- ☑ assures the natural passing from the standing fight to the ground fight or coming back within a short time after falling, in a situation of counter attack which is effective in the standing fight;
- ☑ they belong (it is a must) to an authentic budoka (trainee in the martial arts);
- ☑ contributes to educating the spatial-temporal equilibrium;
- ☑ have direct influence on the psychic (considering “*the school of courage*”);
- ☑ they can be or they are used in the case of executing some projection techniques through sacrifice, in order to avoid some situations and dangerous attacks as a ‘launching platform’ in executing some techniques;
- ☑ have beneficial influence on the back (as methods for massage and heating), when they are done with slow speed on a surface which is relatively soft;
- ☑ are simple and effective methods of checking the skills specific to *budoka*;
- ☑ have influence and can be applied in many life situations etc.

#### **Atemi-waza — hitting techniques**

Since the intrauterine phase, the foetus announces their presence through random hittings, letting know about the wish to evade to a world which will challenge them from all viewpoints. The hitting techniques in the martial arts, whether simple or complex, demands the muscular system and the psychic, thus contributing to their grinding.

A good hitting technique is not the one which destroys the opponent but the one contributing to the diminishing and/or eliminating the ancestral drives of an individual.

Considering all mentioned above, we shall focus on:

- the hitting technique consolidates the muscular system, with all which it covers: muscles, ligaments, bone levers;

- contributes to the consolidation of the equilibrium;
- strengthen the psychi system and the moral-volitive qualities;
- constitutes likely launching platforms for suppressing the negative energies through the training using a bag or other accessories of hitting;
- constitutes effective ways of educating the posture etc.

### **Abandonment techniques**

We shall refer in this chapter, out of space reasons, to the main groups which lead — most of the times , to the end of a fight: whether through providing the maximum score — in the sport competition, whether through getting the opponent in a non-reacting situation or a situation of unlikeliness of combat/giving up due to the effects of these techniques. We refer to the techniques of projecting, articular techniques or strangling techniques. Any of these, beyond the sportive or self-defence characteristic and possibly less destructive than a hitting technique, can represent as many ways as possible for educating / training a psycho-physical and moral system of superior quality over the casual days.

Our highlights consider the the following:

- executing a projection technique implies: a certain level of the driving qualities (speed under different forms: execution, reaction, movement, force, skill, etc.), coordinative qualities (segmentary coordination, spatial-temporal orientation, the sense of rhythm /opportunity, etc.); moral-volitive qualities;
- executing a certain articular and/or strangling technique, beside the elements highlighted above, also implies being aware at a satisfactory level, of the anatomy of the human body, minimal notions of physiology, a special moral condition — in order to limit the destructive aspects which can be very serious, control in limiting the effects of the technics, etc.

Concerning the other technical groups which I mentioned in the subchapter „the structure of ju-jitsu”, we shall keep in mind that each of them represent as many modalities through which one can contribute to the progress of the individual on the human society ladder/

From approaching the breathing exercises to being familiar with the first help notions (*Kuatsu*) or working with the weapons (Kobudo), everything can be used as a method for *psycho-physical training in the contemporary era*, an era which we have at hand so much information which, quite often, confuses us, this way hiding from us the way which fits us best on the evolution scale.

### **Some conclusions**

We are living in a world which is assaulted by the IT era. We want lots of things and we are in a hurry.

We want to get better in various domains, but quite often we end exhausted by the variety of the obligations which we have to fulfil or of the activities which we tackle.

By its complexity and variety, *JU-JITSU* can be a ‚breather‘ for discharging worries, a method of calming, calming and reorientation of the energies which assault our being.

The complexity and variety of style gives one the possibility — if you approach it sincerely and correctly, with a view to re-assess the valences of the life in this dimension.

When we say ‚sincerely and correctly‘, we refer to the feeling in one’s depth of their being the effect of the specific techniques, not only to execute them on the partners of study.

This way, one can have the possibility to feel the virtues of the troubles of the life: whether they are triggered off physically — by certain trials, whether they are challenged at a subtle level by the negative energies we could not make progresses without.

Practicing Ju-jitsu sincerely and altruistically, one can have the possibility to reconfirm what the Japanese people have stated for centuries: „*Ju-jitsu is a long way – michi, which we one have to follow here, on Earth, in order to reach the ENLIGHTMENT!*”

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