

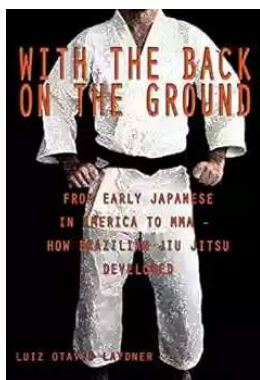
# From The Early Japanese In America To MMA: How Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Developed



When it comes to martial arts, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ) has gained immense popularity in recent years, particularly in the world of mixed martial arts (MMA). This highly effective martial art has a fascinating history that dates back to the early days of Japanese presence in America and has evolved significantly to become a cornerstone of modern combat sports. In this article, we will explore the origins and development of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, and how it played a pivotal role in the rise of MMA.

## **The Japanese Influence**

The roots of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu can be traced back to Japan, with its foundation in ancient martial arts such as Judo and Jujutsu. In the late 19th century, Japanese immigrants began migrating to Brazil, bringing with them their traditional fighting techniques. One of these immigrants, Mitsuyo Maeda, played a vital role in spreading and developing Jiu Jitsu in Brazil.



## **With the Back on the Ground: From the Early Japanese in America to MMA – How Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Developed** by Kay Carroll(Kindle Edition)

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Mitsuyo Maeda, also known as Count Koma, was a skilled practitioner of Jiu Jitsu and a direct student of the legendary Judo founder, Jigoro Kano. In 1914, Maeda arrived in Brazil and started showcasing his martial arts skills by participating in challenge matches, often against larger, stronger opponents. His techniques, which emphasized leverage and control, proved to be highly effective in real-life combat scenarios.

## Gracie Family and the Rise of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu

Carlos Gracie, a Brazilian student of Maeda, became deeply fascinated by Jiu Jitsu and soon began training with him. Carlos, along with his brothers Helio, Oswaldo, and Gastao, started refining Jiu Jitsu and adapting it to suit their smaller frames. They focused on leverage, proper positioning, and technique rather than relying solely on physical strength.



The Gracie family became prominent figures in the development and promotion of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. They established the first Jiu Jitsu academy in Brazil and began challenging fighters from different martial arts disciplines to demonstrate the effectiveness of BJJ. Through these challenges, they showcased the dominance of their martial art and its ability to overcome opponents regardless of their size or strength. This led to the establishment of BJJ as a separate martial art, distinct from Judo and traditional Jiu Jitsu.

## **The Evolution of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and Its Impact on MMA**

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu continued to evolve in Brazil as the Gracie family developed new techniques and training methodologies. Helio Gracie, in particular, made significant contributions by emphasizing efficiency and adaptability over brute strength. He refined the techniques to work in real-world self-defense situations, which further solidified the effectiveness of BJJ.



In the 1990s, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu gained international recognition through the inception of the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC). The Gracie family showcased their martial art's prowess by inviting fighters from different styles to compete in no-holds-barred matches. These early UFC events showcased the dominance of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, as Royce Gracie, the representative of BJJ, emerged victorious multiple times against opponents with diverse backgrounds.

The success of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in the early UFC events revolutionized the world of martial arts and combat sports. It shattered many preconceived notions about fighting and demonstrated the importance of ground techniques, submissions, and leverage. MMA fighters from various disciplines began

recognizing the need to incorporate BJJ into their training to become well-rounded combatants.

## **The Present and Future of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and MMA**

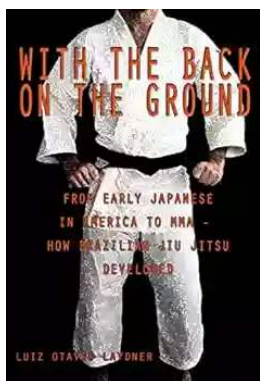
Today, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu has become an integral part of MMA training. Many MMA fighters come from BJJ backgrounds and utilize its techniques to gain an advantage during fights. The popularity of BJJ has also soared among practitioners and enthusiasts worldwide, with countless academies and competitions dedicated to the martial art.



The legacy of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu continues to grow as it remains a cornerstone of modern MMA. Its philosophy of utilizing technique and leverage over strength has influenced the way fighters approach combat sports. BJJ practitioners have

become renowned for their exceptional control, ground fighting skills, and submission holds, making them formidable opponents in any MMA match.

, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu's development from its early Japanese roots to its prominent position in MMA is a testament to the effectiveness and adaptability of this martial art. Thanks to the efforts of individuals like Maeda and the Gracie family, BJJ has evolved into one of the most influential and respected martial arts in the world. Its impact on MMA and the wider fighting community is undeniable, showcasing the power of technique, leverage, and control in combat sports.



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It wasn't likely, without the benefit of hindsight, anyone in the crowd at McNichols Sports Arena in Denver, Colorado, that 12th of November 1993 had a clue that they were witnessing history in the making. The modest audience attending UFC 1 was certainly surprised as they left the venue. Partly the surprise had to do with the violence they'd just seen, real human combat, with no rules or limits, mutually agreed to by contestants caged into a fenced enclosure. But that sense of surprise was also due to how easily the tournament winner dispatched his

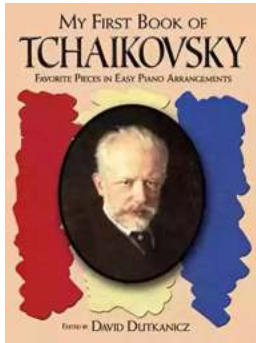


adversaries. The time his three fights lasted in all: five minutes, less than two rounds of a professional boxing bout. They'd have been more surprised still had they known the champion wasn't even in the top tier of his art's practitioners back in his homeland. With Royce Gracie's victories at the subsequent events the community of martial arts scholars became acquainted with what is now known as Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu but at the time wasn't yet called by that name. Naturally, analysis of this phenomenon brought with it controversy. What ensued was an intense "battle for legitimacy" where experts in an array of martial arts sought, to no avail, to come to a consensus on just what Brazilian jiu-jitsu is, what the Gracies' role in its development was, etc... Truth is, it is a modern day expression of an ancient philosophy of combat. Its initial success was the consequence of a process that began 90 years prior, when a group of Japanese martial artists brought judo to America and over the course of years unconsciously adapted their techniques to deal with the problem at hand when they were repeatedly challenged by American wrestlers who were almost invariably bigger and stronger. The natural consequence of this was the development of a style of fighting that would respect the natural physiology of humans, and a peculiar combat philosophy. The outcome of this philosophy of pursuing superiority led to the creation of vale-tudo in 1930s Rio de Janeiro. That was the starting point of the timeline in which Brazilian jiu-jitsu developed, quite unmethodically mixing combat in the gi, no-gi and "valendo tudo," or "anything goes." At several points the art came close to extinction or being absorbed by judo, escaping this fate mainly because of the obstinacy of Hélio Gracie. From the '30s onwards Brazilian jiu-jitsu plotted a path of near total isolation, restricted to a small number of practitioners but preserving the original combat philosophy, a still frame of an era on its way to forgottenness. Until it captured the world's attention on November 12, 1993. How this process unfolded, that is the aim of this book.



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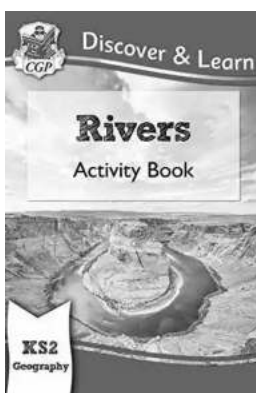
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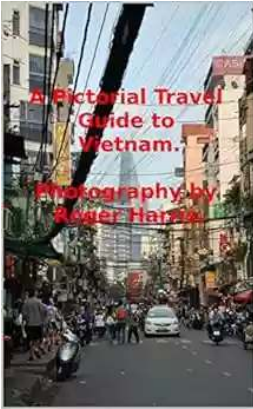
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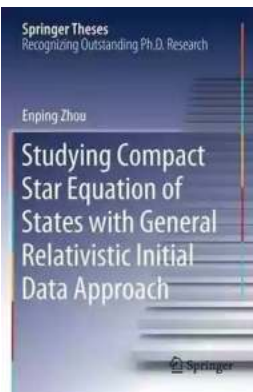
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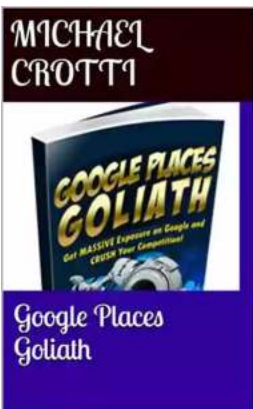
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