

The history of Krav Magá in Amapá from the oral report of a master

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ABSTRACT. This study aims to reveal the arrival of Krav Magá in the State of Amapá, record dates and precursors of the modality, as well as describe the contemporary aspects of this self-defense system. Krav Magá is an Israeli self-defense system, created by Imi Lichtenfeld in the 1940s. In Brazil, this system began in 1990, in Rio de Janeiro, and from then on it expanded throughout the Brazilian states. This research with a qualitative approach used the methodology of oral history, having as a methodological instrument a semi-structured interview, in which the subject of the research was one of the first practitioners in Amapá. After carrying out this research, there is – at the time – an army corporal as the initiator of Krav Magá in Amapá, around the 2000s. After the introductory process of Krav Magá, who continued the work with the modality was Sandro Coelho, subject of this research.

Keywords: Krav Magá; Self-defense; Oral history

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INTRODUCTION

In the 1930s, the violence suffered by the Jewish people during anti-Semitic activism and attacks by fascist groups in Bratislava - Slovakia, commonly triggered street fights. Faced with constant attacks, Imi Lichtenfeld, Jewish-Hungarian, later naturalized Israeli, inhabitant of Bratislava, led a group that fought against the fascists, and from the physical and mental experiences acquired through the combats he faced, Imi elaborated a method to fight for life in the midst of the installed turmoil, and called it Krav Magá.

In 1940, he left for Israel on one of the last boats that managed to escape the Nazis. Upon arriving at his destination, Imi's techniques were requested to train the Special Defense Forces of Israel, who were fighting for the independence of the State, and later, due to the levels of violence at the time, he expanded his techniques to civilians in general (Lichtenstein, 2006).

In Brazil, Krav Maga came through Master Kobi Lichtenstein, who arrived on Brazilian soil on January 18, 1990, sent by Imi with the aim of introducing the techniques in South America. In 2014, deputy Acelino Popó Freitas drafted a Bill that

established January 18 as the National Krav Magá Day (Brasil, 2014).

Krav Maga is the only technique recognized worldwide as an art of self-defense, not a martial art. There are no rules like the other modalities, the intention is specifically self-defense, staying alive after a possible aggression (Lichtenstein, 2006).

Krav Magá is a Personal Defensive Combat System, as it combines its own techniques and those of other arts, in order to prevent and act in situations of risk to the physical integrity of a victim (Sanches et al apud Fernandes, 2012). The classification of this self-defense system within fights fits according to the purpose of self-defense, as established by Mazzoni & Oliveira Júnior (2011), self-defense is an inherent factor in survival, where the practitioner uses the knowledge acquired through fights to avoid submitting to risky situations, as well as applying techniques if you are under threat.

This study brings as a research question: How was the history of Krav Magá in the State of Amapá characterized?

Because it is a relatively recent technique and little reputed in the State, this work is a particular way of recording its history for those who seek to have a greater understanding of Krav Maga.

The objective of this study was to reveal the arrival of Krav Magá in the State of Amapá, record dates and precursors of the modality, as well as describe the contemporary aspects of this self-defense system.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

For Gil (2008) the initial step for academic-scientific productions takes place through a review of the state of the art, in order to contextualize and base the research, so that, in this way, it determines the scope and prospects of the production. Therefore, we searched for books and academic-scientific productions on online consultation platforms - such as Google Scholar, Scielo, Lilas, Portal de Periódicos da Capes - that dealt with the theme addressed and later these productions were analyzed to support this research.

In a later stage, the Krav Magá School of the State of Amapá, located in the city of Macapá, where classes currently take place, was used to obtain more written material on the modality, considering the little production on this subject in Brazil and in the world.

In another stage of the present study, the oral history methodology was used, highlighting the interviewee's narratives without comparing with other types of modalities.

Regarding the methodology of oral history, Meihy (1998) explains that it is a set of procedures that begin with the elaboration of a project and continue with the definition of a group of people (or colony) to be interviewed, with the planning of conducting of the recordings, with the transcription, with the conference of the testimony, with the authorization for use, archiving and, whenever possible, with the publication of the results that must, in first place, return to the group that generated the interviews.

From the interviewee's oral report, it was possible to reconstruct the history of Krav Magá in the State of Amapá and to know the reality of the modality.

According to Thompson (1992, p. 17) oral history is a means of aggregating the memorial collections of a given place, being, therefore, an effective methodology in the construction of works in several fields of knowledge. It is extremely important "to preserve physical and spatial memory, as well as to discover and value human memory. The memory of one can be the memory of many, enabling the evidence of collective facts".

This production was based on a qualitative approach, which, according to Minayo (2017) can be used to research specific cases in their temporality and location, through expressions and meanings that people attribute to their thoughts, attitudes, behaviors and practices, considers the pluralities that concern social behavior based on the reality of an individual or a group.

This study researched the only existing Krav Magá school in the State of Amapá as a research field.

As for the data collection instruments used in this research, an interview was used, which for Minayo & Costa (2018) is a common and privileged

technique in the construction of knowledge and constitutes a conversation between two or several interlocutors, carried out by initiative of an interviewer and designed to build information relevant to a given object of investigation. The type of interview was a semi-structured script, which according to Minayo (2015) adds previously formulated questions, in order to contemplate the researcher's objectives through the research subject, characterizing the thematic axis of the oral history methodology.

The thematic axis interview with a semi-structured script was carried out with a Master of self-defense - Sandro Coelho, currently the only regulated maintainer of the Krav Maga school in the State in question. The adopted inclusion criterion was the subject's knowledge about the corporal practice in question, as well as the experience in the modality since the beginnings of Krav Magá in Amapá.

The interview was held at the Krav Magá School, and for its recording, a prior appointment was made with Master Sandro Coelho; to record the interview, the Voice Recorder application (Version 20.1.86.12) of a smartphone (model Samsung Galaxy A6+) was used and later the transcription was made.

Participants in this study were given a Free and Informed Consent Form (TCLE) consenting to their voluntary participation in the research, in order to guarantee the preservation of their identity and the project was forwarded to the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Amapá, according to resolution 510 of 2016 for research with human beings, approved by opinion 5,467,660 on June 14, 2019.

Because a qualitative research depends on different elements exemplified by the nature of the data and the methodological tools for data collection, its analysis requires a sequenced and specific process, in which the data are synthesized, categorized and interpreted. It is the role of the researcher to critically analyze the collected data, in order to verify untrue or distorted questions, so that it can be seen whether the data obtained correspond to the objectives of the work or whether it will be necessary to return to the field to carry out a new collection (Prodanov & Freitas, 2013).

Therefore, the interview was organized into two categories: A) general aspects of Krav Magá; B) Specificities of Krav Magá in the State of Amapá.

The interpretation of the data is characterized as the final part of the analysis, and it is the elaboration of a synthesis between the theoretical dimension and the empirical data: a dialogue is made between the theoretical foundation adopted, information from other studies and the narratives of the researched to seek broader meanings (Taquette, 2016).

For the aforementioned author, discourse analysis is an approach for treating qualitative material whose objective is to understand and reflect

the pluralities related to a given discourse, going beyond the strict meaning of the applied words, thus being the analytical form of this research.

RESULTS

General Aspects of Krav Maga

Krav Maga has Israeli origins, and according to master Sandro, the subject interviewed: *"The word in Hebrew only means "hand-to-hand combat", there is the combat part within Krav Maga, but it is focused on neutralizing your aggressor [...] in Krav Magá the words just vary, or defense system or personal defense, it is a hybrid system, which does not become rigid, it is evolutionary."*

As Master Sandro explains, Krav Magá is not a martial art because it does not add religious and philosophical aspects from the traditional arts. Because it is solely aimed at self-defense on occasions when life is at risk, Krav Maga is considered a Personal Defense System.

It is considered a hybrid system because it combines techniques from the most diverse fights in a single modality; all this worked in an evolutionary way, as the master Sandro Coelho calls it, since the studied, trained and developed blows are based on the reality in which the possible victim may face.

As for dealing with Krav Maga in the face of the reality in which the practitioner is inserted, Master Sandro states: *"[...] in order to know how violence works, we need to study, so KMRED, which is the school we are part of, always seeks to research, both in terms of pedagogy, didactics, how to teach, to be able to work with the student; it has a different focus, where we work with reality [...]"*

In order for the Kravista (Krav Maga practitioner) to have an effective performance during a situation that demands self-defense, it is necessary to use an efficient methodology for teaching Krav Maga that favors the development of specific skills in addition to technical knowledge, that improves adaptation to different situations, improvisation and that also deals with psychological aspects.

KMRED is a Krav Maga School whose motto is "opening the mind", as it is in constant search to learn about the actions of the aggressors, the weapons and the ways used, in order to develop effective methods of self-defense. Some more traditional Krav Magá Schools are directed exclusively at teaching blows, about this, master Sandro Coelho explains: *"[...] In many schools there is that thing where the aggressor is always passive [...] because the person does everything there and he doesn't react, he doesn't hit, he doesn't grab, he doesn't scratch, he doesn't bite, but in reality the aggressor will change his reaction when you react. [...]"*

Many times, the individual trained in a traditionalist conception ends up being limited in several aspects, he is commonly surprised when he is faced with a situation of imminent risk, since his training was only focused on ideal circumstances, in

which the aggressor would not fight back in the face of a reaction from the victim, would not use any objects as weapons, and from then on Kravista ends up not being successful at the time, as the psychological aspects interfere directly and the individual does not have the ability to improvise, therefore, he cannot deal with circumstances outside the training.

Specificities of Krav Maga in the State of Amapá

Regarding the insertion of the modality in the State of Amapá, master Sandro Coelho reports that: *"It was in the period of 2000 that we started [...] Augusto was the main responsible, he had contact with Krav Magá in the army there in Rio de Janeiro, he is from there and trained with Master Kobi. Then when he was relocated here he started teaching [...]"*

Based on Master Sandro's account, Augusto is the forerunner of Krav Magá in Amapá. The master explains that Augusto is from Rio de Janeiro and an integral part of the Brazilian Army in the city of Rio de Janeiro and it was in this unit that he had contact with the modality, being trained, at the time, by Master Kobi, Imi's successor.

In the year 2000, Augusto was relocated to the Army Base in Amapá, and based on the knowledge acquired in training with Master Kobi, he began to teach Krav Magá.

Although his graduation in the modality was just a student, it was these experiences that made possible the first experiences with this self-defense system. The first practitioners of the modality and the places used in the state in question were: *"Augusto, I (Sandro) and Francisco. At the time he taught classes where he could find a place and time, in the beginning he got a time at the Aqua Fisio gym. From there we trained at ACADEPOL, in a space they gave there and we trained, which was the Civil Police shooting range, ACADEPOL. The places where we stayed the longest were these. And at Academia Knockout Team."*

At first, the trio of friends made up of Sandro, Augusto and Francisco, met in assigned places to practice Krav Magá, practices conducted by Augusto based on the knowledge acquired with Kobi.

Currently, of the first practitioners, only Master Sandro and Francisco are still involved in the modality, the latter only as a practitioner. About the places made available for such practices, it was at the extinct Aqua Fisio gym, located in the Jesus de Nazaré neighborhood, in the municipality of Macapá, where they stayed for the longest time.

In addition to the difficulties concerning the availability of places in the early days of Krav Maga in the State, Master Sandro declares: *"[...] the masters of other arts think that we are going to harm them because of the number of students and such, but no, the our focus is directed towards self-defense, the other arts remain with the same purposes, competitive, for example [...]"*

For Sandro, some martial arts masters with a competitive nature and aimed at health see Krav Magá as a competitor in the fight market in the state, but Sandro explains that the objective adopted in the School of Krav Magá deviates from the common purposes related to aesthetics and performance, and deals exclusively with self-defense. He adds: “[...]there is a lack of interest on the part of the civil community and security areas in relation to Krav Maga[...]. In the police departments, we see the lack of interest, sometimes the person is there just to work on time, to close the shift, they think that that will never help, that's why they often end up being taken by surprise, they think that a weapon is everything [...] The public only searches when they leave their comfort situation, when they are robbed, attacked, when they are at risk[...]”

The master reported that he always promotes seminars and teaches self-defense courses, both for the civilian public and for the State Security Services, however, the participation of both is minimal. Master Sandro considers Krav Maga essential in security services, as cases where failures occur when handling weapons are common, triggering physical confrontations. For the community, knowledge of self-defense is also important to avoid aggressions that often lead to death.

There is only one School of Krav Magá in the State of Amapá, located in the city of Macapá, which Sandro Coelho operates, the only graduate as a master and instructor in the State. The public attended at the School is mostly composed of individuals from the civil community who are subject to risk situations or who have already suffered some kind of aggression.

DISCUSSION

The journey to understand the elements treated in this production took place through the use of a semi-structured interview as a methodological instrument, carried out with one of the precursors of Krav Magá in the State of Amapá. Thus, Master Sandro Coelho's reports culminated in the construction of the historical route with chronological notes. The historical discourse, nowadays, walks along different lines that, in some cuts, intersect, intertwine, complete or exclude each other (Nunes, 2011).

Master Sandro Coelho states that Krav Maga is not a martial art, but a system of self-defense, as it does not add specific characteristics inherent to religious and philosophical aspects, thus agreeing with Martins (2015) who declares in his study that Krav Magá has the particularity of being the only modality of self-defense considered pure in the world.

As for the arrival of Krav Magá in Amapá, there is the figure of Augusto Portela, at the time a corporal in the Brazilian army, as the pioneer of the modality in question. Augusto had his first contact with the self-defense system through Kobi, while

working in the army in Rio de Janeiro, his hometown and according to Master Sandro's report, Augusto was a yellow belt graduate, this graduation is an indicator that, according to Martins (2015), Augusto spent at least 12 months in the sport.

Within the Public Security Services, Krav Maga is fundamental for the training of professionals who need to be able to defend their lives and that of their companions and if they do not master the technique of self-defense, they will possibly be risking the fulfillment of a mission in which they are involved (Silva, 2013).

After being relocated to Amapá in mid-2000, Augusto got together with two people interested in experiencing Krav Magá – Francisco and Sandro – and they implemented the modality in the State. The reality experienced by Master Sandro during a good part of his childhood and youth instigated him to seek a welfare form to counteract the violence to which he was routinely subjected, he reported: “[...] when I was younger, that was about 30 years ago, the about being attacked, both at school and entering and leaving the street at home, we were always attacked by older people [...] And that always bothered me, this issue of cowardice[...]”

The rates of physical violence in the period of emergence of Krav Magá, as well as 30 years ago were high, even today these numbers are high, differing only in the ways used by the aggressors. Therefore, Krav Magá presents itself as an effective way of self-defense and the motivation for this practice is mostly associated with street aggression (Martins, 2015).

Adaptation and improvisation skills are essential qualities for a Kravista, as technical knowledge requires quick and accurate applications to neutralize an aggressor. to armed combat with an aggressor.

Training needs to go beyond staging where predetermined blows are applied, because in reality the aggressors are not passive to the point of not reacting to the blows dealt, quite the contrary, from a blow executed by Kravista, the aggressor will try to attack in every way to get out of the fight alive. Combat activities take place within an active-passive framework, which assumes that there will always be a course of action to be adopted by the aggressor and the Kravista (Cohen, 2010).

About the places where such bodily practices were initially experienced in the state in question, the research participant cites three spaces: 1) Aqua Físio gym, a space given to Augusto to socialize his practical knowledge acquired with master Kobi; 2) Civil Police Shooting Range - Police Academy (ACADEPOL); 3) Academia Knockout Team.

Master Sandro reports that the initial spaces where they practiced Krav Magá were provided by acquaintances of the practitioners, therefore, he considers that the practice has had difficulties since his arrival in Amapá.

Master Sandro also explains that another difficulty arises from the lack of interest on the part of the Public Security authorities, which are tied to predetermined movements, which makes them limited in terms of personal defense; and also by the civil community of Amapá, which, according to the interviewee, only seeks the modality when they are faced with a situation of threat or risk, violent situations, robberies, etc.

Agreeing with Martins (2015) who states that the main motivation for the practice of Krav Magá is associated with self-defense after some aggression situation.

In addition to the barriers already mentioned, the interviewee also mentions the commercial issue of other martial arts. It is known that fights have taken on a lucrative dimension within the sports market, aiming at aesthetic and performance results.

The objective of the Krav Magá School is only self-defense, which is why it is not similar to other fighting schools that have competitive purposes or the search for beauty standards.

In view of this, the Krav Maga school faces pre-judgments from Masters of other modalities who see it as a competitor in the market. As an example of Master Sandro's statement, there is MMA, which, according to Malak (2015) has become a very lucrative business. Its popularity, profitability and publicity reached levels close to the world of football. The fighters became media products, attracting a lot of publicity and media.

Due to the fact that self-defense is not an attractive "product" for the civilian public, its dissemination in media vehicles does not have such a large proportion when compared to other arts, which triggers limitations regarding the search and knowledge about the modality.

The practice of Krav Maga within the Military Forces is fundamental for the agent to become a non-lethal weapon, using his strength in an adequate way to immobilize, defend himself or carry out an arrest without the use of any lethal weapon (Freitas et al, 2018).

However, as reported by Master Sandro Coelho, in the State of Amapá, the self-defense system is little worked within the scope of the Security Services, and when offered within these environments, participation is not very profitable. Public Security agents from Amapá are notoriously limited to the use of firearms, without considering that these devices are subject to breakdowns, which will possibly result in hand-to-hand combat with an opponent in different day-to-day situations.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Considering the objective proposed in this investigation, it is possible to affirm that Krav Magá

was introduced in Amapá in the year 2000 from the figure of Augusto Portela, having Augusto, Francisco and Sandro Coelho as precursors of the modality.

Sandro, the subject of this study, is the only certified master and instructor in that State and is currently the leader of the activities of the Krav Magá School in Amapá.

This school serves a varied audience, mostly composed of individuals from civil society who have gone through or are subject to some risk situation.

The study found that in the field of Public Security participation and demand for the modality is low.

This work had as its main contribution the historical record of the modality in question. The limiting factors for this production were the scarce collection on Krav Magá nationwide and the lack of productions associated with the theme in the State of Amapá.

It is suggested that future researches incorporate in their questions, problems about the origin of Krav Magá in the Brazilian territory and a survey of the state of the art and representation in each state of the country.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

The author(s) declare(s) no potential conflict of interest in connection with the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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