The Social and Cultural Effects of Capoeira's Transnational Circulation in Salvador da Bahia and Barcelona

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To Antonio and Alaide

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ABSTRACT

The thesis is an inquiry into the social and cultural implications of the Bahian Capoeira teachers' transnational mobilities and consequent immobilities. Following the trajectories of young male teachers -in different instances and places- their transactions and encounters with various 'others', the study analyzes how the meanings given to their practices and the particularities of their socialities, are constantly transformed. Capoeira becomes the lenses to understand a fluctuating society with its historical and social particularities as Bahians, foreigners, researchers, Capoeira apprentices, young teachers and older mestres evaluate the possible outcomes of their actions, interests and identifications. Mobility and movement are examined both inside and outside Capoeira's ring (*roda*). They include Capoeira's game (*jogo*), tourist and migratory practices and everyday economies. From crossing national boundaries, the focus shifts on how people in the field define, affirm and challenge boundaries in different social and geographic scales that eventually implicate the boundaries of the self and its definition. The study illuminates processes of boundary negotiation, of opening up and at the same time, of closure as mobility brings into forth questions of relatedness and processes of becoming. The challenges and conflicts that both older mestres and younger teachers face are connected to deeper issues of belonging and affective relationships; of how gender, ethnicity, desires, human value and worth are experienced in today's changing world. Finally, the thesis is a reflection on methodological and theoretical uncertainties regarding the anthropological study of the 'Other'.

RESUMEN

La tesis analiza los efectos sociales y culturales relacionados con las movilidades trasnacionales e las inmovilidades de los jóvenes profesores de Capoeira del estado de Bahia. Siguiendo las trayectorias de los practicantes de un colectivo específico -en distintos momentos y lugares- sus encuentros y transacciones con varios 'otros', el estudio propone explorar la constante transformación de los significados atribuidos a sus prácticas como también de sus propias sociabilidades (socialities). La Capoeira se torna en una especie de lentes a través de los que podemos observar una sociedad Bahiana cambiante mientras investigadores, Bahianos, aprendices de Capoeira, extranjeros, viejos maestros y profesores jóvenes evalúan el potencial y los futuros resultados de sus acciones; sus intereses e identificaciones. La movilidad y el movimiento se analizan dentro como también fuera de la rueda de la Capoeira (*roda*). Se refieren al propio juego, a rutas migratorias y turísticas y economías del cotidiano. El interés se centra en cómo las personas definen, cruzan y negocian fronteras en diferentes escalas geográficas y sociales que, más allá de lo nacional, envuelven la definición del propio 'yo' (self) y su relación con el colectivo y la comunidad. Por lo tanto, la tesis propone examinar procesos de inclusión donde las fronteras se abren y al mismo tiempo, la fijación de dichas u otras fronteras, ya que la movilidad se refiere a formas de relacionar y se transformar. Los dilemas y conflictos que, sobre todo los viejos maestros y los profesores jóvenes tienen que resolver, implican cuestiones de pertenencia y la constitución de relaciones afectivas; cuestiones de etnicidad, de género, del valor humano y de los deseos tal como están siendo vividos en el mundo de hoy. Por último, la tesis incorpora reflexiones sobre incertezas teóricas y metodológicas respecto al estudio antropológico del 'Otro'.

LIST OF FIGURES

(1) Map of Pelourinho (Historic Centre).

(2) Mestres' Gathering, Fortress of Santo Antonio.

(3) At the *"Foot of the Berimbau"* – Commemorating Mestre Pastinha's Death.

(4) Roda da Paz – The *"Old Guard"*, Cruzeiro de São Francisco.

(5) Celebrating Mestre Baixinho's Birthday, Fortress of Santo Antonio.

(6) A Neighborhood on the Island.

(7) Fishing on the Island's Coast.

(8a-e) Debating Capoeira Definitions in the Press.

(8a) Jornal da Bahia, 02 Feb. 1963.

(8b) A Tarde, 14 Aug. 1983.

(8c) A Tarde, 23 Sept. 1974.

(8d) Jornal da Bahia, 02 Feb. 1963.

(8e) A Tarde, 16 Jul. 2008.

(9) Sunday Roda on the Island.

(10) *"Native Surf."*

(11) Learning to Play Capoeira.

(12) Capoeira Graffiti, Historic Centre.

(13) Capoeira Paintings, Historic Centre.

(14) *'"Capoeiristas" Threaten Tourists in the City,'* Tribuna da Bahia, 18 Aug. 1986.

(15) *'Capoeira, An Art which Became Commerce,'* A Tarde, 19 Dec. 1972.

(16) Instruments and Souvenirs in the Historic Centre (left) and Mercado Modelo (right).

(17) Tereiro de Jesus, Historic Centre.

(18) *'Emtursa Threatens to Prohibit Capoeira Exhibitions'*, Tribuna da Bahia, 15 Aug. 1986.

(19) Night Roda at Terreiro de Jesus, Historic Centre.

(20) Making Instruments – *"One Has to Be Inventive."*

(21) Searching for Materials at Mercado Modelo (left) and Feria de São Joaquim (right).

(22) Capoeira Mestres visit Dakar – *'The Great Trip to Africa,'* A Tarde, 13 April. 1974.

(23) Capoeira Leaves Bahia – *'Mestre Gato Leaves Bahia to Become a Professor Abroad,'* Diario de Noticias, 18 Feb. 1974; ' *"Capoeira from Bahia" to NY,'* A Tarde 5 Sept. 1980.

(24) The Sad End of Capoeira's Fathers; *'Pastinha Dies Abandoned,'* A Tarde, 14 Nov. 1981; *'The Distant Death of Mestre Bimba,'* Tribuna da Bahia, 6 Feb. 1974.

(25) Capoeirra's Barracão in Santo Amaro.

26) Capoeira Event in the Recôncavo – *"Capoeira Was Born in Bahia, in the City of Santo Amaro."*

(27) Celebrating São Simão's Feast Day on the Island – Procession to Protect the Forest.

(28) Celebrating São Simão's Feast Day on the Island – Bumba Meu Boi.

(29) Handmade Instruments Used in the Feast – Samba de Roda.

(30) Handmade Instruments Used in the Feast – Capoeira Angola Berimbaus.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 1

ABSTRACT 3

RESUMEN 5

LIST OF FIGURES 7

1. INTRODUCTION 11
1.1. *"Then, People Like him Will Seize to Exist"* 12
1.2. In Times of Crisis 15
1.3. The Subject of Study 18
1.4. Dissertation Outline 22

2. METHODOLOGY AND THEORY – WAYS OF KNOWING, DOING AND WRITING ETHNOGRAPHY 27
2.1. The Present Study 30
2.2. Entering the Field – Knowing through Relationships 32
2.3. Collecting Ethnographic Material 40
2.4. Ethnographic Material under Perspective – Writing Ethnography 43
2.5. Theoretical Reflections – Understanding Changing Worlds 46

3. PEOPLE AND PLACE(S) 55
3.1. First Impressions: *"This Cannot Be Terreiro de Jesus"* 55
3.2. Salvador and the Historic Center: A Tourist and Ethnographic Destination and A Place Where People Live 58
3.3. Capoeira's Geography in the Historic Center: Schools, Academies, Squares, and Capoeira's Fortress 61
3.4. The Island 72
3.5. Capoeira Practitioners as Researchers: A Contested Field? 79
3.6. *"Look, the White Guy Is Talking, While the Black is Nodding his Head"* 85
3.7. Conclusions 93

4. NOTES FROM THE FIELD – SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS 95
4.1. Definitions and Classifications 95
4.2. Capoeira's (Hi)stories 101
4.3. Capitães da Areia 112
4.3.1. *"The Guys From the Island"* 112
4.3.2. Cultural Sport Centers, Cultural Centers, Associations and Other Ways of Relatedness and Affiliation 126
4.4. Conclusions 138

5. CONSIDERING CHANGES IN BAHIA 141
5.1. "Feel Brazil In Your Skin" 141
5.2. "The People From Out There" 144
5.3. *"People Here Have No Culture"*: Performances and the Civilizing Effects of Culture 151
5.4. Every Friday 160
5.5. Making A Living With Capoeira 179
5.6. *Gringas* and *Caçadores de Gringas* 196
5.7. Conclusions 206

6. MOBILITIES, UNCERTAINTIES, AND PROCECCES OF CLOSURE 209
6.1. "Walking about This Great World" 212
6.2. And Then, *"He Remained Stagnant"* 220
6.3. Finding One's Place: Dislocations and Remoteness 222
6.4. Domesticating, Adapting and Distancing 227
6.5. "They Have To Return and Plant Here" 236
6.6. "We Are Barefoot Natives" 248
6.7. Conclusions 251

7. CONCLUSIONS 253

BIBLIOGRAPHY 263

1. INTRODUCTION

> Je hais les voyages et les explorateurs. Et voici que je m'apprête à raconter mes expéditions. Mais que de temps pour m'y résoudre! Quinze ans ont passé depuis que j'ai quitté pour la dernière fois le Brésil et, pendant toutes ces années, j'ai souvent projeté d'entreprendre ce livre; chaque fois, une sorte de honte et de dégoût m'en ont empêché. Eh quoi? Faut-il narrer par le menu tant de détails insipides, d'événements insignifiants? L'aventure n'a pas de place dans la profession d'ethnographe; L'aventure n'a pas de place dans la profession d'ethnographe; elle en est seulement une servitude, elle pèse sur le travail efficace du poids des semaines ou des mois perdus en chemin; des heures oisives pendant que l'informateur se dérobe; de la faim, de la fatigue, parfois de la maladie [...] (Lévi Strauss 1966 p.9).

Luckily, fifteen years have not passed yet. However, after almost five years of anthropological research among Capoeira practitioners and their social and cultural worlds in the state of Bahia and Barcelona, I am in a position to address and discuss the core issues of the present PhD dissertation. Nevertheless, before presenting the research questions, the theoretical framework, methods and results, I would like to elaborate on the perspective and particular scope of the thesis in order to make my intentions explicit.

Contrary to the Tristes Tropiques, this is an academic text with a specific purpose. It follows certain norms and conventions and is destined to a mainly academic public. However, and even if several years have passed since the first time I read Levi Strauss's work and many more since he wrote it, some of his preoccupations remain pertinent. His work, "a practical anti-racist manifesto"- borrowing Bourdieu's expression[1]- not only is inspiring but also addresses issues that should puzzle anthropologists working in ever changing worlds. Even if it does not matter whether we hate travelling and explorers or not, the question still remains and could be rephrased: why should we be interested in anthropological work and 'adventures' and to what extend could anthropologists be considered responsible in current situations of racism? Thus, I believe that the dissertation shares an ethical commitment, a –hopefully-

[1] This phrase is taken from an interview Pierre Bourdieu gave on the French TV concerning Lévi Strauss, his work and contribution to anthropology (The New York Times 29-11-2009).

profound respect to the subjects of study and a preoccupation with the role and place of anthropology and 'exotic travelling'.

The process of writing and interweaving the material is framed by two incidents. They both took place during the final phase of the dissertation's development. They refer to different situations and relate in distinct ways to the research subject. Nevertheless, they are both important as they helped me gain perspective and most importantly, reminded me of the study's social and political relevance. In other words, they encouraged me to continue with the task of transforming ethnographic material into written text.

1.1 "*Then, People Like him will Seize to Exist*"

The first incident took place in Barcelona in 2012. It sums up and highlights some delicate and difficult issues that emerged as a recurrent theme during the last five years of research. Depending on its interpretation, it could be a rather pessimistic epilogue to my field research.

It was a Friday night at the Arco de Triunfo in Barcelona. After two hours of Capoeira Angola training in the open space, the teacher gathered us to make an announcement. He said he was not satisfied with one of his students. He explained the reason and made clear he did not want that student to be part of the group anymore. I was surprised by the blunt way to state things, and what is more, in public. I had never witnessed anything similar during these last five years. He went on by saying that a year had passed and that student maintained the same attitude towards him, the group and Capoeira. He added that she kept ignoring and belittling him. Most importantly, she was bringing a bad energy to the whole group. He kept emphasizing bad energy and on how it affected everyone[2].

Earlier- during training- I had observed his expression while that particular student refused to perform the movements the way he showed us. I had also heard their conflictive perspectives on Capoeira. It was not their first argument; however, it was an

[2] Wilson (2001 p. 23-24) argues that among Capoeira players 'energy' refers to a "person's psychic effect upon others, and … the power of spiritual and supernatural entities". Moreover, she says that both the word *"energy*" and "*axe*" describe a positive flow during a Capoeira game.

awkward moment. To my surprise, not all students seemed shocked or upset. When everybody left, she explained her attitude to me. What I consider worth mentioning in this introduction is the following:

> "*Many students have already left because of him. But didn't you see in London? Capoeira will now be part of the Olympic Games. I am looking forward to it. Capoeira is a sport. This mentality [referring to the teacher's mentality] will have to change completely. The sooner, the better. Then, people like him will seize to exist. There will be no place for him.*"

Even though I was interested in her arguments, her conclusion sounded frightening. It hit a sensitive cord that gave an end to my empathy. Her prediction -and desire- of a future where people like my teacher, people with whom I spent so much time in Bahia, watching their struggles and frustrations, will eventually have no place, not only puzzled me but also upset me. What kind of future will that be and who is going to decide who and how will have a place in it or not? However, the only comment I was able to come up with was a rather ironic one: *and what shall become of me without "people like him?"*

When I went back home and navigated the social media –gathering information concerning social actors' online realities has also been part of the research process- I ran into some comments that could not be more relevant to the incident I described above. It was a rare coincidence. Mestre Cobra, a well-known Capoeira Angola mestre from Bahia, commented on Facebook concerning the closing ceremony of the Olympic Games in London[3]. He posted a text that quickly spread in the web as more people reposted it or left a comment on it. Among them, there were some of the Capoeira practitioners I had encountered during fieldwork.

[3] The role of the mestre in Capoeira will be discussed throughout the dissertation. At this point, it is important to know that 'mestre' is the ultimate title a Capoeira practitioner may hope to attain. There is no consent on how someone can become mestre, the path to follow and the different stages from which he -and recently, she- should pass. The process depends on the collectivity, his/her experience, affiliations and contacts. The figure of the mestre, at least among the people of the study, is a key figure. At the same time, the relationships between mestre and apprentices are always complicate.

The text is written in Portuguese and is titled "Closing the Olympic Games: What kind of Capoeira is this?". It is inspired by Brazil's presentation during the Olympic Games in London in 2012. Brazil, the country that will host the Games of 2016, performed a show that according to Mestre Cobra belonged to a time he considered long gone. Thus, he criticized the representation of a stereotypic and *grotesque* image of the country with Brazilian dancers performing while wearing wigs and black masks. He went on by establishing associations with shows during the 50's when it was common practice for white men to paint their faces black or even for black men to mimic apes and dance for a white audience. However, his great disappointment was "Capoeira's performance for the world to see". He wrote:

> It started with a group of poorly trained acrobats, with their bodies covered with oil wearing white abadas [trousers] performing pirouettes. No berimbau [Capoeira's basic one-cord instrument], no singing, no ginga [Capoeira's basic swinging movement], nothing! I reflected upon it: what kind of Capoeira is this that we aim to present to the world? It resembled a circus of acrobats that could bring profound embarrassment to any athlete… It was a group of poorly trained acrobats. I missed our berimbau, the great symbol of Capoeira. To be honest, I missed Capoeira. That was not a Capoeira play. That was individual acrobatic movements. Is this what Capoeira has transformed into? An acrobatic presentation without ginga or berimbau[4]? It was sad, considering the price we paid to get there. Was it worth it or was it just a thing for 'English people to see'? I believe that for some people participating in this show was a dream come true. But where is our Capoeira, our essence, existence and soul? What will Capoeira be like in Brazil's Olympic Games? We are losing our identity, our roots, presenting Capoeira as a commodity rotated and choreographed for "English people to see". Following this path, Capoeira's history and trajectory

[4]*Ginga* is the basic swaying movement in Capoeira. A Capoeira player balances from side –to-side while interchanging legs and stepping back and forth. It requires a good sense of equilibrium, flexibility and rhythm as well as the ability to be aware of what the other player does or intends to do. All other movements (attacks or defenses) depart from the *ginga*. The way someone executes this movement speaks about the individual and the collectivity to which he/she belongs (also see Downey 2005 and Wesolowski 2007). The berimbau is a one cord instrument made of a wooden stick (beriba) and a gourd resonator (cabaça). It has the shape of a bow. The sound is produced with a small stick that strikes the wire attached to the beriba and a rock or a coin that presses the string from the inside.

> no longer matter. Capoeira is losing her soul in a sport's trajectory. I am preoccupied with Capoeira's future in the Olympic Games of 2016. (Mestre Cobra, 2012)

One's aspirations can be another's agony and preoccupation. Actually, in 2010, while I was in Brazil, at the Fortress of Santo Antonio, I had an interesting discussion with a Capoeira Regional Mestre. It was the first time I heard about the efforts to include Capoeira in the Olympic Games as a sport. Whether Capoeira is a sport or not is part of endless and recurrent debates I will elaborate further on in the thesis.

Returning to our Capoeira Angola classes in Barcelona, the student never left. She slightly changed her attitude but she kept on non-performing the *ginga* and questioning the teacher's authority, lifestyle and philosophy. What is interesting in this episode is that it brings up a series of dilemmas and concerns that Capoeira teachers from Bahia face every day: In what direction do changes take place? How should they handle these intense interactions in the present and what will be their place in the future?

1.2 In Times of Crisis

The second instance refers to the current situation, a rather difficult time described or felt as a time of crisis; a crisis not just in economy but most importantly in democracy and society, especially in the European Union. However ironic it might sound, the first ones who mentioned me the phrase 'crisis in Europe' were Capoeira practitioners in Bahia. From their point of view, it was a bad moment as the European crisis had an impact on tourism and it constituted a profound obstacle to their desire to leave home and venture a trip to a European destination.

Being from Greece, a country which, according to Herzfeld (2009 p.131), has experienced and suffered from some sort of crypto-colonialism, the current situation made me reflect on my ethnography in two ways. First, I drew comparisons and in another level, I started relating to the subjects of research. Ethnography, as Chua *et al* (2008 p. 17) put it, is:

> […] ultimately the product of a historical, social and personal assemblage… which includes… the ethnographer's person…[and] also one's intellectual

background, institutional demands, conceptual genealogies, and relational quirks within and beyond the field, to name but a few.

Up to a few years ago, most Greek people overlooked their ambivalent relationship to the State and the rest of the world. An optimism concerning economy and a sense of individualism had started to spread. They were members of the European Union and had nothing in common with their *"backward"* neighbors from the Balkans. They thought that they could use the State to their benefit and they were clever enough to subvert paternalist discourses expressed from foreigners. Some used to think that the rest of the world was nothing more than *"some little Americans"* – another way to refer to people as being ignorant and easily deceived. They could afford to buy more products, get loans from the bank and own a house. However, they left aside any sense of social solidarity and altruism and gave more power to the politicians. When immigrants arrived, there was an open hostility. For Greek anthropologists it was the time when the "exotic" came to live among us (see Papataxiarchis 2006) and new ways of differentiation appeared in the big urban centers as well as in the rural areas. The State ignored the situation while media kept on with a tremendous propaganda. Thus, ghettos started to form generating mutual and in the course of time open hatred among foreigners and locals. Eventually, things changed dramatically. Prosperity- or at least an illusion of prosperity- was replaced by a devastated economy, debts and a new type of colonialism.

In this context, Greek people had to face it: once again they would have to follow migratory routes or stay in their country under conditions of poverty, unemployment and social injustice. In addition, foreign and national media as well as the Greek government evoked a series of stereotypes attributing responsibility to the Greek people. They were lazy, corrupt and cunning and they were responsible for their current situation. It was the time when people started internalizing all kind of discriminatory stereotypes, thus, allowing more space to paternalistic discourses. After all, *"this is who we are"*. These feelings of inferiority along with serious economic problems and lack of solidarity among society members create perplex and troublesome situations.

This historic moment made me start reflecting on my research subjects. It brought back to my mind details that had been left almost unnoticed. For example, their changing body posture every time they felt somewhat inferior, especially in front of

intellectuals or foreigners. I went through my field notes once again and I sensed their devastating feeling of always lacking something; for example, money and education. Interestingly enough, though, at the same time they seemed or felt as lacking something, they never missed a chance to point out to me how I was also lacking something equally fundamental: Capoeira's knowledge.[5] Nonetheless, I recalled their nervous smile when somebody would make a joke about Bahians being lazy, frivolous and non trustworthy. But, it also made me more aware of the necessity not to fall in the trap to use culture as a way to justify, understand and analyze social and historical inequalities. Stereotypes are good to think about and to examine but not to embrace.

But the current crisis also brought on the surface another aspect; that of anthropology's role and its relevance to the world we share. The rise of right wing political parties and of racism intertwined with nationalistic aspirations all over Europe, cannot be ignored. In Greece, for example, for the first time in its political history an openly neo-Nazi party occupies a substantial amount of seats in the parliament (21/300 seats after the 2012 elections). But more important are the changes taking place in the Greek society. From racist comments on Africans, Albanians and people from Pakistan, we have come to consider physical abuse and intimidation a common phenomenon. Pre-existing mistrust and hostility have transformed into deep hatred that has spread all over society. Immigrants and their children are perceived as the enemy.

In times of crisis, the nationalist adoration of Greek civilization and tradition seems justified. It offers an alternative that every day keeps conquering more space as more people embrace it. Religious and ethnic boundaries have been fortified in an absolute way, not just by closing frontiers but also and most importantly, in people's minds and ways of thinking. Culture-talk, making and discovering local traditions are common phenomena in small villages from the north of Greece to the Bahian Recôncavo. Thus, it is necessary to reflect on the kind of anthropology we embrace, its scope, concepts and objectives. As Pina Cabral says, it is important not to forget the emancipatory and universalizing legacy we inherited from modernist anthropology (Pina Cabral 2005).

[5] Mestre Barão, a prominent figure who is discussed in the study, used to say: "I might be an analphabet in reading but if you come to talk to me about Capoeira, be careful" (interview given in Abeiramar Tv, 7-04-2012).

Wolf (1994 p.10) emphasized that "[w]orldwide expansion […] has brought the diverse human groupings and cultures into an encompassing network of relationships". Mobility and boundary crossing bring challenges and trigger conflicts. Communities are considered being under moral and cultural threat and boundaries are challenged. Some people do not even have the possibility to leave their country while most of them are not welcome in host societies. Some, fail to *"adapt"* and keep feeling *"out of place"* - expressions I heard several times during fieldwork. Others, are supposed to be thankful for being able to merely survive whether in their country of origin or in the country or countries of destination. They have always been considered *"marginal" and "used to this way of life"*. In the meantime, "the particular is being universalized" as people from very different places in the world demonstrate similar attitudes in disporting their culture in a local and global stage (Herzfeld 2004 p.2). Thus, Herzfeld talks about "the presence of a hidden logic" that "has seeped almost everywhere […] disguised as difference, heritage, local tradition" (ibid p.2).

This is the context that shapes and is being shaped by Capoeira teachers' trajectories and life histories. These people, *"marginal"* or *"not that marginal"*, 'exotic' yet 'not that exotic', the ones who struggle to *"adapt"* themselves and their practices to a world that changes, who live, experience and talk about – or as they say, *"play"* with- culture, are the Capoeira practitioners I encountered during research and the focus of the present study. Hence, in a world where relations of social inequality, racism and xenophobia prevail and where ethnic and religious boundaries are fortified in the name of cultural difference, what is anthropology's place? Echoing Levi Strauss again, what is the value of the truths we travel so far to seek?

1.3 The Subject of Study

The aim of the present dissertation is to discuss the social and cultural implications of Capoeira's and the Bahian teachers' transnational mobilities and consequent immobilities. In particular, I examine how mobility transforms the meanings given to Capoeira, shapes and is being shaped by forms of relatedness among young Bahian Capoeira teachers, their apprentices, the older mestres and a changing Bahian society. Mobility here is discussed in relation to migratory practices, and tourism; as social media navigation and ultimately, as a way of being that shapes process of becoming.

Starting as an inquiry on how constant mobility or mobility as possibility, affect social interactions and cultural forms in Bahia, Capoeira becomes the lenses through which I study a fluctuating society with its historical and social particularities; a society that nevertheless is interconnected with the rest of the world and has the power to act upon it. The dilemmas, contradictions and conflicts that both older mestres and young teachers have to resolve are connected to deeper issues of belonging and affective relationships. Thus, the dissertation discusses processes of boundary negotiation, of opening up and at the same time, of fixation of boundaries and closure. Moreover, having as point of departure the present study, I explore the epistemological and methodological issues that arise in the anthropological study of social and cultural transformation in today's world.

There are certainly different ways to define the subject of study, approach social actors, and tell their stories. Yet the dissertation is conceived as a study of a set of questions and problems that puzzle social actors themselves. This decision is contingent to the group of people I finally focused upon and is the young generation of Bahian Capoeira teachers. They embody the experience of an interconnected world both as knowledge and possibility. Coming mostly from mono-parental families, they form a highly mobile group that experiences and encounters conflicts not only in the new contexts, where they move to, but also in Bahia. As they aim to mark their territory and find their own place in the world, they often have to negotiate their relationship with older mestres or other generation and ethnicity practitioners. As a result, a feeling of frustration and disappointment is always present in their narratives. As they grow older, some might find themselves fitting better in their community and its values. Others, however, might still encounter rejection and even struggle with ridicule as they pursue their dreams.

My initial interest, however, was due to the profound impact the transnational mobility of people coming from Bahia, carrying along their valuable social and cultural baggage, had on me. It seemed as one of these classic topics where I could study local and global interactions: them being the locals, even if in Barcelona locals would be their apprentices. Adding to that the enchantment of Capoeira's musicality, instruments and movements, it seemed an interesting and graceful subject with an almost readymade theoretical framework.

Capoeira has its own particularities; a very interesting history, a further interesting present and more importantly, is open to future possibilities. In the era of globalization, it is all over the world, reaching different social and cultural arenas. Consequently, a variety of situations where boundaries, relationships and meanings are constantly being challenged has been created. My first approach to Capoeira was part of my research that concluded with the Diploma de Estudios Avanzados. The study's title was *"Transnational Communities: A study among Capoeira groups in Barcelona"* (Lefkaditou 2007). Obviously, I had not yet been to Brazil. The subjects of study were Capoeira groups of different styles –Capoeira Angola, Capoeira Regional and Contemporânea- located in the city of Barcelona. It addressed the issue of an intense transnational mobility and posed some preliminary considerations on the making of communities that cross borders, on social networks and reciprocal ties. Accordingly, my future project would be to go to Salvador and explore how Capoeira's transnational circulation and especially, Capoeira teachers' transnational mobility relates to and has an impact on processes of social and cultural change in Bahia. It invited to approach the economic, social and cultural aspects of Capoeira´s transnational circulation.

Unfortunately, these topics risk the danger of ethnocentrism[6]. In particular, the people we study, their social relations and cultural worlds, are thought to be homogeneous, immutable and 'simpler'. Even when their worlds are rendered as postcolonial or defined as contexts where complicate social and cultural processes take place, social actors' practices –especially in relation to change - are considered 'given'. Change is, thus, often seen through the one- dimensional prism of commodification. This, of course, implies a gap and a sharp contrast between 'us' and 'them'. However, the identification –conscious or not- of a 'we' and the creation of an absolute alterity, is problematic. Moreover, when a Greek anthropologist trained in an occidental, British and American influenced anthropology conducts field research in a place like Bahia, the scheme changes and becomes further complex and possibly redundant, even if the 'we' refers to a common academic identity.

[6] Furthermore, Carrier (1992 p.199) argues that anthropologists fall in the trap not only to create a homogeneous "alien other", but also a fairly uniform "West". As such, changes in other societies are perceived as "local manifestations" of a uniform "West". According to him, Orientalism and Occidentalism are complementary.

However, since the time I wrote the dissertation for the Diploma de Estudios Avanzados, many things have changed. A long period of intense fieldwork research followed both in Brazil as well as in Barcelona. The research questions started to take shape in an ongoing process, following incidents and conversations taking place mostly in the field; following social actors and their everyday lives and dilemmas. Progressively, the core research question started acquiring a clear and specific form. The field extended in a way that encompassed discussions outside Capoeira circles and reached the shifting Bahian society. It came to include interactions with other anthropologists during workshops and anthropological conferences. Thus, recent dilemmas in the discipline or old ones expressed today in a different language have played a crucial role in my inquiries. Finally, as I have already mentioned, current social and political situations and developments, crisis in democracy, racism and xenophobia, reinforced my initial decision to get involved with the dissertation's subject.

Another influential parameter was the existing literature on Capoeira. Several books and theses on Capoeira have been written until today. Historians, anthropologists, artists, teachers, film makers, all have produced interesting works. As a matter of fact, it seems to be an overly studied topic ranging from phenomenological studies on apprentices' experiences to historical ones on the roots of Capoeira, the history of legendary figures or the life in the streets of Salvador at the time of the Republic, to more recent studies on globalization, transnationalism, resistance, hegemonic traditions and authenticity. All products of their times, are mostly written by Capoeira practitioners –to these we should include autobiographies written by Capoeira mestres. However, especially the anthropological ones, and to a lesser extent those written by historians, focus on Capoeira and rarely extend beyond Capoeira's ring (*roda*). At the same time, they seek to answer questions that puzzle the authors themselves as practitioners. Mestres, and to a greater extend younger Bahian Capoeira teachers, are absent as social actors and historical beings. Emphasis is often given on discursive practices but not on people as members of a specific collectivity, social class, family and neighborhood. Culture, thus, becomes detached from its social agents and their relationships. For this reason and due to the people I met in the field, I attempted a shift to Capoeira's social dimension focusing on the younger Bahian teachers.

There were quite a few incidents from the very beginning of fieldwork research in Bahia that shaped the course of research. Due time, I realized that the conflicts, recurrent narratives and preoccupations expressed by Bahian Capoeira teachers reflect

deeper issues that concern people living in today's world as well as social scientists. There is a constant interplay between mobility on the one hand and immobility, in the sense of a need and obligation to be fixed in one place, idea, belief system or social relationship, on the other. As people face a series of dilemmas they experiment with new ways of positioning themselves. Hence this dissertation is about stories of relatedness, inclusion and exclusion as the social subjects struggle to find their place in the world and assert control over their practices and lives. It is about how social actors relate and connect to one another, to their own –personal and collective- social identities. Moreover, it is about their aim to find answers to questions of belonging and of finding happiness in a world that changes fast following the rhythm of a capitalist economy and where social inequalities prevail. Questions that, after all, are not irrelevant to the common humanity we all share, even if the adjective 'common' is ambiguous, its content debated and scrutinized. Finally, the thesis is also a reflection on how anthropologists relate to their subjects, decide to study and write about them.

1.4 Dissertation Outline

The thesis is structured around seven chapters that interweave ethnographic material and theoretical reflections. Each one is subdivided in smaller sections. The first is the *"Introduction"* where I present the subject of study, research questions as well as the dissertation's plan. Indeed, over the course of the thesis I explore how a specific Capoeira collectivity inhabits the world in the midst of change. My approach has been shaped by focusing on the young Capoeira teachers' transnational mobility and consequent immobilities; the interaction among different agents inside and outside Bahia; and the particularities of their sociality. Mobility and movement is the key to further explore the collectivity's definitions of Capoeira as well as their aspirations. In the *"Introduction",* I talk about two incidents that framed research and explain my motivations to venture a study in the social and cultural worlds of Capoeira and my perspective. Thus, my motivations are intrinsically related with how I understand social anthropology as a discipline and its political and social relevance. By reflecting on the current social situation in Greece, I acknowledge familiar patterns. As a matter of fact, all along the thesis my experience of coming from a Greek island is a source from where I draw comparisons. By critically engaging with current research on Capoeira, I argue on the need to escape social actors' 'de-personalization'.

In Chapter Two, *"Methodology and Theory - Ways of Knowing, Doing and Writing Ethnography"*, I discuss methodological issues and reflect on questions of theory. First, I present the difficulties in immersing myself in the social and cultural worlds I studied and the methods I used to collect and analyze the ethnographic material. Thus, I explain how I came to know and relate myself to the subjects of study during distinct phases of field research in different contexts. I reflect on the shifts in status from anthropologist to tourist and to Capoeira practitioner, and how they all influenced research. I discuss the complexity of gaining trust and the ambiguities in the use of money as a form to reciprocate favors or approach people as well as the implications of realizing multi-site ethnography. I engage with a heterogeneous range of materials: interviews and field notes during participant observation; bibliography on Capoeira and ethnographies related to the subject of study; biographies; social media and the Internet; as well as Capoeira music and Capoeira related documentaries. Even if certainty in results is always under discussion, certain reliability in ethnography is achieved by the use of more than one method (Naidoo 2012; Reeves, Kuper and Hodges, 2008). Finally, I argue on the study's theoretical framework. I consider the anthropological debates on globalization and on processes of change and transformation. I examine the use of the concept of transnationalism in relation to transnational patterns of mobility and current debates on connectivity and sociality. Accordingly, in order to shift focus from larger processes to the specificities of the Capitães da Areia and from crossing state boundaries to the ones that define their 'very core', I clarify that over the course I engage with the the work of Maurice Bloch (2012), Nancy Munn (1986) and Marilyn Strathern (1988).

Chapters three, four, five and six, comprise the part where I discuss the ethnographic material. Each chapter begins with an incident that inspired the reflections that follow. However, the ideas are further elaborated in relation to several other episodes that took place during research. In Chapter Three, "*People and Place(s)",* I present the geographical and social landscape. The making of the thesis is shaped by field research in more than one geographic place, urban and rural localities, as well as in a series of diverse private and public spaces. From the city of Barcelona, I travelled to Salvador, the capital of Bahia, the *"black city"* and *"Capoeira's Mecca"*, as it is often called. From Salvador's urban space, I followed Capoeira practitioners' mobility in different instances in their lives, to the Island and the Bahian Recôncavo and back to Barcelona's parks, civil centers and abandoned old factories. Following Capoeira practitioners and focusing especially on the Capitães da Areia or the *"nativos do pé*

rachado", as they call themselves, I introduce the Island and provide bits of information on social realities there. Salvador and in specific, the Historic Center as well as the Island are experienced and discussed as tourist and ethnographic destinations and places where people live their lives. In Chapter Three I discuss the constitution of another field of interactions, conflicts and collaborations where agents with different aspirations, motivations and interests struggle to find their place. Therefore, I explore the complex relationship between researchers –foreigners and natives- and Capoeira practitioners. The discussion brings to the forth questions of representation and ownership that have come to acquire racialized connotations too. I finally explore the ambivalence among Capoeira practitioners towards the circulation of their images due to the use of the new communication technologies.

Chapter Four, "*Notes From the Field*: *Some Preliminary Considerations"* argues on how Capoeira is defined, felt and experienced. Capoeira seems to be elusive yet precise in its relative imprecision. Definitions are related to interests and motivations and thus, to politics and different personal and collective projects. According to Magalhães (2011), there is a dispute for hegemony in Capoeira Angola tradition in Bahia. I, therefore, briefly present Capoeira's history, especially after the 1930's and discuss how Capitães da Areia relate to this history, comment upon it and find their place in the midst of conflicts. I focus on their definition of Capoeira starting by their own assumption that *"everyone comes and imposes a story"*. Being from an island, the sea and their relationship with it become core themes in their lyrics, self representation and politics. For Capitães da Areia, you *"feel"* and you *"incorporate"* Capoeira Angola in a way that is *"automatic"*. The idea of suffering and its association with Capoeira's *"fundamentals"* (fundamentos) are prominent. Finally, I explore different ways to experiment with and understand forms of relatedness. After discussing the creation of associations similar to football associations in Bahia, I focus on how Capitães da Areia are relationally constructed as they experiment with different types of organization and relatedness: being a *"family",* a *"group"*, a *"cultural "center",* and *"association"*.

Chapter Five, "*Considering Changes in Bahia",* discusses encounters that set the context in which Bahians, foreigners, and Capoeira practitioners evaluate their practices, motivations, interests and identifications. I start by an implicit affirmation of boundaries in the presence of *"the people from out there"*. Then, I explore discourses on culture and its uses in the field. A recurrent preoccupation is how to define whether someone *"has"* culture. In this aim, I examine the implication of moralist discourses

and assumptions on commodification and a prevailing 'cultural anxiety'. I, then, turn to Capoeira *rodas* and performances and explore how people reflect on their practices and the distinctions they make between *"Capoeira for the tourist"* and what they experience as *"our Capoeira"*. Capoeira *rodas* are lessons on how to use and perceive the body as well as lessons on composure. Their evaluations are relevant to the idea that an apprentice may be his mestre's continuation while a young teacher may *"mirror"* his fellow teachers. I discuss monetary exchanges and how they implicate with definitions and perceptions of value. I thus, present transactions between apprentices and teachers. A Capoeira mestre *"gives"* Capoeira to his apprentices. Therefore, emphasis is given on the "personal relationships" the social subjects aim to establish through their transactions (Viveiros de Castro 2009 p.249). At the same time, while Capoeira seems to have a binary nature, selling something *"priceless"* also relates to perceptions of gender, mutuality, human value and strained desires. The chapter concludes by exploring the place of women, both foreign and Bahian.

In Chapter Six, *"Mobilities, Uncertainties, and Processes of Closure",* I explore the meanings attributed to mobility inside and outside Capoeira's *roda.* Mobility is highly evaluated and encouraged. It constructs the collectivity's and the wider Bahian Capoeira community's spacetime. Yet, it brings challenges and creates uncertainties. Mobility is examined in relation to its alleged opposite, *"stagnancy"*. But *"stagnancy"* means different things and relates to how they evaluate success and failure. Thus, the focus shifts on the delicate balance between autonomy and interdependency, exclusion, and the ideas of companionship and solidarity as they are shaped by both proximity and distance. The subjects of study have to return home and *"plant*" there. While new Capoeira communities are created outside Bahia, in Bahia new places emerge and are invested with value. The *"fountain"* has not gone *"dry"* and creativity goes together with*"demystification"*. The *"absentees"* eventually come back, yet, to leave once again. In fact, the *"barefoot natives"* keep returning. By narrating affective stories on their shared experiences of hardship, of sharing food, of the life in the island and of learning Capoeira, they reaffirm their co- presence despite distance. At the same time, they define the 'stuff' from which their core is made.

In Chapter Seven, I attempt a closure and allude to new possibilities for research. Both researchers and social subjects come to evaluate their co-existence, motivations, aspirations and the outcomes of their practices. The main themes presented in all previous chapters are brought together and considered more closely in the

"*Conclusions"*. Even though transnationalism has been a useful point of departure, research led to different directions. From crossing national boundaries, the focus shifted on how people in the field define, affirm and challenge boundaries in different social and geographic scales. By the end of the dissertation many changes have taken place in the social subjects' lives. In their *'pursuit of happiness'*, some of them eventually decided to leave their collectivity; others returned to Bahia and some, finally managed to *"gain respect"*. I suggest that the whole project has been a venture into learning together with the people in the field and with specific individuals. Yet, as the lives of the people implicated are an ongoing project, the conclusions too cannot be definitive.

2. METHODOLOGY AND THEORY – WAYS OF KNOWING, DOING AND WRITING ETHNOGRAPHY

> Imagine further that you are a beginner, without previous experience, with nothing to guide you and no one to help you. For the white man is temporarily absent, or else unable or unwilling to waste any of his time on you. This exactly describes my first initiation into field work on the south coast of New Guinea (Malinowski 1966 p.6).

Reflecting upon anthropological knowledge practices is essential. Making explicit how and what kind of ethnographic material is collected is necessary to justify arguments, perspectives and research conclusions. The methods we use speak of the topic we study in two ways. First, they reveal our approach towards the cultural and social worlds we analyze. In other words, they indicate how we position ourselves in relation to the people we aim to understand, and consequently, how we choose to study them (Engelke, 2009; Abu Lughod 2000).[7] Second, the research and analysis methods we embrace depend on the particularities of the topics we address. As such, how we decide to reflect upon and work with diverse social and cultural worlds results from the specificities of the societies we encounter and inhabit.

Ethnographic material is a peculiar kind of 'evidence'. Its peculiarity relates to the fact that it is collected by techniques whose integrity –in comparison to other methods such as, for example, statistical surveys- puzzles other scientists. Moreover, what and how anthropologists know (or claim to know) are inextricably tied to shifting conceptions of the very object and scope of anthropology. Thus, defining the concept of evidence is at the same a methodological and epistemological issue (see Engelke 2009). Nevertheless, contrary to other disciplines, social anthropology does not provide us with specific instructions and guidelines concerning its methods. For example, besides the

[7] Changes in positionality can be traced even since Malinowski attempted to introduce the point of view of the people he studied (Denzin and Lincoln 2011). The use of the pronoun *'we'* in ethnographies would be later on encouraged by Abu Lughod (2000 p.263). It was perceived as a strategy that demonstrated the immersion of subject and ethnographer and most importantly, a statement on the ethnographer's positionality. In a 'reflexive turn', anthropologists instead of considering and representing other cultures as alien, creating hierarchical discourses, begin to seek the familiar that turns social actors from merely research objects into subjects (Naidoo 2012 p.2).

vague statement of conducting 'participant observation', there are no certain rules.[8] This relative freedom not only generates mistrust towards anthropology as a discipline, or social science in general, but what is more, creates confusion among those who initiate fieldwork research. This confusion may lead to frustration that sometimes alternates with a sort of academic arrogance, in the sense of feeling too certain or powerful in relation to the people –the 'human laboratory'- we encounter in the field.

Even if ethnography is a social activity that involves an anthropologist as a social person with his/her preferences and aptitudes (see Pina Cabral and Lima 2005), methods such as participant observation, life history research or multi-site ethnography have come to be considered self- evident concepts. Thus, quite often they are not being further elaborated or tested in the field. As such, they run the risk of losing their power and vigor. In any case, they are important tools in attaining academic knowledge. They hold possibilities for changing the way we do ethnography/anthropology and study topics as the ones I address in the present dissertation. Moreover, for my research, methods such as multi-site ethnography have necessarily resulted from the specificities of the research subject and not the other way around.

The task of data collecting and analysis is not easy. Indeed, a nuanced type of social research is required. Its successful outcome depends on various factors and events that take place before, after and while being on the field (Van Maanen 1988 p. 75). One of them is the time invested in research. Time is crucial in gaining trust and achieving perspective. In the present research, time turned out to be an important parameter as it allowed me to observe social phenomena in a course of time and follow social actors during different stages and moments in their lives. Thus, I kept up with long term processes, achieving a relative depth, identifying and observing changes. Incidents that once seemed unique or happening out of the blue, due time, I realized that were part of larger processes and not necessarily a 'novelty' for the people I met. Time also enabled me to apply diverse techniques, such as social media research and multi site ethnography and build up a comparative perspective. Finally, it also helped me gain a relative and most valued trust. Actually, the kind of relationships we establish and our

[8] This uncertainty dates back to the 1980s when the debates on positivism and interpretation, on whether anthropology is an art or science, took place (Engelke 2009 pp.10-11). According to Terrades Saborit, more than being an art or science, ethnography's value depends on how it converses with other ethnographies (see Terrades Saborit 1993).

flexibility and possible adaptability to each context are factors that define data quality and credibility. What we know depends on how we know it as well as on how we immerse ourselves into other social and cultural worlds without losing sight of our identity as anthropologists and objectives.

Of course not all contexts present the same degree of difficulty. In the case of Capoeira in Bahia, the difficulties I encountered and I will further elaborate upon, are related to frequent displacements and to the need to learn not just another language -Portuguese- but also communicate the jargon used by Capoeira practitioners and Bahians in general. Having knowledge on the historical, social and cultural specificities of a former colony on the one hand and on Capoeira, on the other, was a demanding and necessary prerequisite. What is interesting is that Capoeira, according to my research subjects, is among other things, a kind of knowledge; a kind of game/play that you learn through constant training. Thus, from the get to go, we are dealing with different ways of knowing, of knowledge production and transmission: the anthropological one and the one expressed by Capoeira teachers and practitioners.

Since I was not a Capoeira practitioner -it took me almost a year to decide to take classes- I had to find other ways to communicate with the people I encountered in the field and participate in their collectivities. Most of the time, I shifted from being a complete ignorant to a possible apprentice, a willing listener or just capable to follow up their conversations and interactions without being discarded as an outsider. However, the greatest challenge had to do with the fact that Capoeira, at least today, designates an extremely complicate and competitive social field. This competition involves diverse social categories, identities and social positions that sometimes may overlap. Power relations, asymmetries and antagonism between men, women, tourists and locals, younger and older practitioners, mestres, groups, Brazilians and non Brazilians, Bahians and non Bahians, as well as researchers, generate conflicts, alliances, likes, dislikes and empathies. Different expectations, desires and objectives create tensions and misunderstandings. Capoeira, and by that I do not mean only the ritualistic moments of play and training but most importantly everyday life practices related to Capoeira, creates a space where masculine identities are constructed, realized and performed. The constant struggle between dominant and subordinate males is at play in every moment culminating in the Capoeira *roda*. But masculinities are also constructed in relation to women. This brings along conflicts, mistrust, competition and a peculiar but fragile kind of solidarity among women. Thus, being a female researcher aiming to study and

find her place in this world, is quite challenging. As a Capoeira mestre's wife in Bahia told me,

> *"Capoeira's world is very complicate. It is a difficult world. Sometimes things work out. Others, not so much."*

All these particularities shape and –depending on the point of view- limit or create research possibilities. In other words, they define the techniques applied in each case and research stage. It all depends on the ethnographers' disposition, inventiveness and analytic abilities. As Russell (2006) claims, participant observation is a 'craft' where the researcher becomes the "instrument for data collection and analysis from [his/her] experience" *(*ibid p.328; also see Fox 1991)[9]. Moreover, putting all the information into perspective, reflecting, 'intellectualizing' and writing about it is an even more complex and creative process.

2.1 The Present Study

The present study is based on thirteen months of fieldwork research in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil and two years in Barcelona, Spain. I should also mention my introductory research among Capoeira groups in Barcelona; a research that led to the Diploma de Estudios Avanzados concerning the making of transnational Capoeira communities in 2007. In terms of time, place and perspective-approach, I divide this study in three distinct and interconnected phases. Each phase and encounter informed the ones that followed. The first one refers to my initial explorations among Capoeira groups in Barcelona during 2005-2006. It was a preparatory and first approach to the subject. During that phase, I participated in various events and Capoeira encounters, mostly as a spectator. I also took notes during classes and interviewed both apprentices and teachers from diverse groups representing different Capoeira styles. However, I never participated as an apprentice myself and because of the particularities of living in a city like Barcelona, it was not possible to share much of their everyday lives. More to the point, after I returned from Bahia, I realized that in Barcelona it would have been quite

[9] Delgado (2003 p.1), comparing how journalists and anthropologists work in the field, says that they both exercise a work similar to that of an artisan. He goes on by saying that this *'craft'* requires a tape recorder, a pen, a notebook and most importantly, the ability to socialize.

difficult since Capoeira practitioners, with few exceptions, do not spend so much time together. Social and cultural worlds sometimes are kept apart. In Barcelona, Capoeira teachers' lives are seen under the prism of their immigrant experiences.

During that first phase, the skepticism and suspicion I encountered among Capoeira practitioners, made me aware of the difficulties in establishing relations of trust; difficulties that when I arrived in Bahia did not seize to exist. I spent hours, weeks, and months trying to figure out how to enter their world and gain their trust. Actually, throughout my whole research, the quest of succeeding not just to pass unnoticed but moreover, to be accepted, was a constant. In time, one of the issues that most troubled me was whether I should or could start taking classes myself and with whom. Was all the reluctance I encountered due to the fact I was not training Capoeira? This is an issue to which I will return. The first approach and encounters in Barcelona, nevertheless, allowed me to form some questions that opened me the way to venture an ethnographic trip to Salvador and the state of Bahia.

The second phase was decisive because of the material and information collected and the relationships established. Even though after returning to Barcelona, I reworked the material various times and reflected upon it in relation to new data, the present thesis draws largely on the data collected in Bahia. During that time, I defined my approach to the subject and worked with theoretical concepts and ideas. It is subdivided into two shorter periods. Namely, the first time I went to Bahia, in 2008 and 2009, and six months later, the second and final stay that lasted until the spring of 2010. It was the time when Capoeira became the lenses through which I approached and studied a changing local society.

Finally, while analyzing the material, I dedicated two extra years (from 2010-2012) researching social media, frequently meeting practitioners, attending encounters, taking classes, as well as conducting more interviews. This time, I mainly focused on Capitães da Areia, the group with whom I spent more time while in Bahia. Actually, coming back to Barcelona may perhaps have diverted me from Bahia's sensual realities (see Stoller 1989), but revealed me other aspects concerning community building and mobility and made me reflect on social and cultural processes in Bahia and on ideas and impressions generated there. Thus, in a sense, the present study is a temporal and geographical comparative one.

2.2 Entering the Field – Knowing through Relationships

Most anthropologists talk about a feeling of *'euphoria'* when they initiate their research (Russell 2006 p.341). Moreover, when they are foreign Capoeira apprentices and have the opportunity to go to Salvador for field research on Capoeira, it seems as a *'living fantasy'* (see also Downey 2005 and Lewis 1992). In my case, I was overwhelmed because, contrary to the majority of Greek anthropologists who believe "that home [is] the place to go" (Bakalaki 2006), I was presented with the opportunity to conduct field research in another society. However, I did not share the same enthusiasm all along. There were times when I felt nostalgic of previous research back home, in a more familiar and friendly environment. For several months, the fact that I could not stay a dispassionate observer made me experience awkward feelings towards the subjects of study. Nevertheless, even if complicate field sites do not guarantee good ethnographies or interesting PhD theses, they can be puzzling; emotionally and theoretically challenging.

As I already mentioned, in Barcelona I dealt with issues of inclusion and exclusion, of being accepted or seen as an outsider. Of course there was always the possibility of being considered a potential new member for each group I encountered. All these concerns, however, were expressed in a familiar, European context where teachers, as well as most of the students and I, all shared the same condition: that of an immigrant. In Bahia, however, as the context changed, my status shifted as well. Crossing boundaries and establishing connections became an even more perplex process. In Pelourinho - Salvador's historic center- I found myself in a position where I was seen and consequently, treated, as another white woman coming from a European country - a *"gringa"*- researcher and tourist at the same time. Wondering around the streets became a small everyday *'adventure'*. I limited myself to the historic center, as it was safer to a newcomer. Nevertheless, I was frequently surrounded by young men, Capoeira players, artisans, street vendors and small children, all offering or claiming something, making clear in every case, however, that I was not a local.

The contacts I had and could facilitate my entry to the field were very few. In most cases, foreign researchers on Capoeira go to Salvador as members of a group. As soon as they arrive, they look for their group or at least, for a mestre whom they have met as Capoeira practitioners in a *roda* outside Brazil. In other words, they have some *'references'*, a place to go and protection. The people they meet from that point on are

those related to their group. Especially in Capoeira, when you meet certain people, some doors will open more easily but others will automatically close.

I decided to go on my own risking the consequences of my relative freedom and independence. The only contacts I had were friends of people I met outside Brazil and I barely knew. The first was a girl from an upper class family living in the neighborhood of Vitoria that had nothing to do with Capoeira. The other, was an anthropologist and former Capoeira player living in Federação, and then Tiago, a young Capoeira player from Engenho Velho de Brotas. They all introduced me into different worlds with different perspectives: that of the upper middle class, of Bahian anthropologists and of Capoeira Regional practitioners coming from a less privileged community.

The first days I kept strolling around and made my daily routine observing people and activities especially at the Historic Center's square and steep streets, Santo Antonio and Carmo. I spent a lot of time getting to know the social and geographical lay out and visited Capoeira schools and workshops. The initial idea was to find and follow the groups I had already encountered in Barcelona. However, due to the fact that these people were dispersed all over Salvador and the difficulties arising with constant displacement, I had to change my plans. Even though I visited Capoeira groups in other neighborhoods, I mostly stayed at the Historic Center following specific people and their connections, something that would eventually lead me once again outside Pelourinho.

Having access to certain places was not an easy task and I needed to be accompanied by locals. In neighborhoods like Vale das Pedrinhas, where I attended Capoeira events on my own or later, at the Island, local Capoeira practitioners waited for me to get in the bus not just as a gesture of hospitality but also for safety reasons. These circumstances conditioned my research. Moreover, since the very first weeks, I had to decide whether offering money would be an efficient tactic in order to approach people. In other words, I had to figure out whether this practice would facilitate my entrance in their world and perhaps, enable me to take an interview and whether it would be considered legitimate. This is a rather delicate issue that many anthropologists prefer to leave untouched. Nevertheless, the kind of interactions and exchanges we have with social actors affect the production of ethnographic knowledge. Consequently, I believe that instead of silencing it, it is important to reflect upon it and discuss it. More than once, I heard that most Capoeira mestres would be willing to give me an interview

in exchange for money. Some locals seemed surprised while others suggested I could attempt a different approach showing gratitude. There was certain ambivalence to that. The same ambivalence I encountered in stories and gossips narrated during conversations among mestres while they were having coffee or lunch or while they were playing checkers (dama) outside the ABCA (Brazilian Association of Capoeira Angola). From time to time they would make comments or jokes on how specific older mestres gave Capoeira diplomas for money when they were in need. Monetary exchanges constitute an important factor in Capoeira and gossiping turned out to be one of their favorite activities.

During the first month of my stay in Salvador, I visited Mestre Congo's school in Pelourinho. On the street, a plastic white sign with red letters stood right next to the red chairs and tables from a nearby bar. Depending the time of the day, you could listen to Capoeira music coming from the school on the first floor. It was more like a gym, similar to the ones I had already encountered in Barcelona, decorated with newspaper photos from Capoeira events in Europe. Mestre Congo was obviously used to encounters with tourists. It felt like one disappointment after the other. Interview had a price and classes would cost me three times more than the usual. For Cabelo, a local Bahian who suggested me to visit that mestre, it was a shock. Couple of months after that incident, Mestre Moreno told me:

"All these mestres in Pelourinho would ask for money."

By the end of field research, most stated that even the most 'difficult' mestres are more willing to speak when money is involved.

In a society where tourist activities related to culture or nature prevail and where Capoeira attracts foreigners' attention, locals make a living in every possible way. Accompanying tourists to places like Feira de São Joaquim or taking them to a specific money exchange office or instrument shop are common practices. This means that local people collaborate and have some knowledge on which things matter to tourists. Moreover, it automatically implies the existence of a barrier between them and foreigners. After all, foreign tourists are *"gringos"* and it is difficult to attain a different status even if they play Capoeira. Social class differences, national identity or educational status, as well as gender, always condition ways of relatedness. In the case of a girl from France who trained Capoeira with Capitães da Areia in Concha, sometimes comments like *"she is full of money"* would be made. Or as Simone, a girl

from Italy who also spent some time learning Capoeira and living with them at the Island told me:

> *"I am kind of disappointed. They think a lot about money. Once, they got upset because we wouldn't share marijuana."*

The problem is to decide what a fair price would be, what the implications might be and what kind of relationships it would foster. I never offered to pay for an interview. Of course, there are always convert ways to offer money or show your gratitude and reciprocate a favor, like for example buying a meal, a drink or a bus ticket. The ambivalences towards money and researchers –ambivalences that will be discussed in the chapter concerning changes and cultural economies in Bahia- and the thoughts and discussions generated by these transactions feature prominently in the ethnographical material. Sometimes, it seemed that pronouncing the word 'anthropologist' or 'research' was enough. Perna from Capitães da Areia was used in these transactions. Once he told me about a friend from England who did research in the community of Rocinha, today known as Vila Esperança:

> *"She gave me some money and I helped her. She called me and said that she was going to study the community and she asked me whether I could help her because she couldn't go on her own. She helps, then I help. We are friends, anyway."*

For some mestres such as Mestre Chapeu or Mestre Leandro, Italiano or Olivio, that would have been an offense. I remember an evening when Mestre Chapeu and I went for a beer. It was the second time he would give me an interview- the first time being in his neighborhood in Cabula. Once again, before the roda in the ABCA, he refused to let me buy him a drink. Moreover, he, just like Professor –a young Capoeira practitioner and apprentice working at Mestre Prateado's atelier- seemed offended and preferred to invite me instead. In the end, I had to follow my instinct and I found myself engaged in different activities, such as buying cds or dvds, taking samba classes, offering a meal or just being there. However, that depended on the person, the kind of relationship I had or we aimed to establish. Time, as well as who and how people introduced me to their friends turned out to be important. As Noa - a young Capoeira player, friend of Capitães da Areia, suggested:

> *"If you go over and over again, they will help you."*

Thus, presence builds trust. For example, one day Mestre Querido from Santo Amaro was talking to a friend of his –another Capoeira Angola mestre- about an American researcher who e-mailed him asking for help. He was not used to this kind of relationships. He said that he was thinking of asking her money. I complained and asked him if it is always like that. He smiled and said:

"No. With you it's different. We know who you are."

There were some mestres, however, that remained reluctant to the very end no matter how many dvds or cds I bought. Even though I spent so much time talking to them, being friend with their apprentices, knowing their family and being always present, they avoided giving me an interview. Even though a researcher may have *'good'* intentions, many times he/she soon realizes that "some doors open more readily than others" (Van Maanen 1988 p.4) and some insist on remaining closed or half- open. As time passed by and as I begun spending more time with certain people, mestres from other groups, started shutting down again. I spent a few months trying not to be identified as a member of a specific group. In the end, it turned out to be impossible.

The fact I was not a practitioner demanded an extra effort from my side in order to be accepted, or at least, tolerated. Even though as a practitioner you manage to meet people more easily by sharing a common interest and activity, in the long run and after starting classes myself, I realized that my decision not to take classes from the beginning was wise. The first couple of months, it allowed me to meet more people and move discretely from one collectivity to the other. I also had more time to observe people as learning to play Capoeira is extremely demanding and physically challenging. Phenomenologists, such as Jorgensen (1989 p.63), advocate that a good method/strategy "or penetrating and getting experience of a form of human life…" is to become the phenomenon you study. But I wanted to avoid ending up writing another thesis narrating my personal experiences as a Capoeira practitioner in Bahia. Hence, for a long time I insisted on introducing myself as researcher and not pretending to be somebody else. As such, I tried to make my way into their world and learn whatever was possible. Mestre Barão using his own classificatory system concerning people near him, told me:

"You are a curious person."

On November 2008 I travelled to Brasilia. That visit coincided with a meeting between a Capoeira mestres committee and president Lula. While I was staying at a

friend's house I met one of the housemaids who was from Bahia. She was very young. She was from a small town and had never been to Salvador. I explained the aim of my stay in Salvador and my objectives. She observed that people in Bahia are nice, thus, I would have a pleasant stay. When I told her that I had difficulties with the people there and I attributed it to their engagement with tourism, she said:

"Really?"

Then she gave me a glance, observed my skin color and shook her head:

"They are afraid of you."

I really doubt they were afraid of me. Capoeira mestres and their young apprentices, especially those living at the Historic Center and those who had already lived outside Brazil teaching Capoeira, were used to foreigners and researchers. They were aware of their relative power. In addition, being in their place, they felt even more empowered. Nevertheless, her observation, coming from her own experience, touched a thorny issue concerning race relations and ethnicity. The presence of a difficult past and a present where social injustices still persisted could not be erased by buying a few cds nor by playing Capoeira, even in the most exquisite way. As Bakalaki (1997 p.509) emphasized,

> respondents' and anthropologists' impressions about their respective identifications may differ, and respondents' assumptions and expectations of identity as well as of difference can be unsettling to fieldworker.

Time and persistence were the only things I had. In the end, the fact that I took only few Capoeira classes in Bahia, did not compromise the reliability of the data collected. The people with whom I spent more time accepted me as part of their world even when I did not play Capoeira. The collectivity to which I finally focused upon accepted me as a friend and anthropologist and did not mind if I spent time with other groups, mestres, or teachers. They understood it as part of my research and even seemed pleased when I managed to interview a 'difficult' mestre. After a year they would say that I was also a *"brother"* - whatever that meant - to them and not just a *gringa.* I was *their* anthropologist. Back in Barcelona, Prego would present me to Capoeira teachers from other groups saying:

"She is an anthropologist. She is writing a book about me."

He liked the fact I was not writing about Capoeira and I put emphasis on the people. No matter how many times I insisted that it was not a book just about him, it did not make any difference. Having lived in Bahia among his friends created familiarity and acceptance. The fact that I was from an island and I had spent half my life there allowed them to relate to me. They were also from an island. Prego would say:

"She is native as well."

Indeed, as Harstrup (1993 p.174-175) observes:

> it is reasonable to expect that respondents perceive anthropologists as partly similar to and partly different from themselves.

These conscious or unconscious processes of establishing similarities and differences are central in the thesis. To the mestre's wife back in Bahia I reminded of her daughter who had lived all her life in the island and would have to leave in order to study. Even if in Bahia it was difficult for them to see other aspects of my personality and life, a family photo I had on Facebook with my cousins when we were little, was helpful. They would say:

"Look, the sun is also very warm there",

or *"Look! There are only women in this photo. Just like here."*

I tried to explain that we all looked darker because it was summer. The fact that there were only women was because most of my cousins are female. But they seemed to relate it to their reality of households where women are the dominant figures and men are almost absent.

The few times I took classes with them in Bahia were a 'big event'. Even Porreta with whom I never got along very well, said:

> *"I was giving class at the event and then I looked back and you know what I saw? I saw Dora. I saw her trying to do what I said. I really liked that."*

I took classes with four different teachers from the Capitães da Areia and few more with people from other groups. However, it was after I returned from Bahia to Barcelona that I took classes in a more consistent way.

Mestre Prateado once told me: *"Be careful not to stay only a researcher!"* He insisted that his apprentices should learn to play and make their instruments. Moreover, he encouraged them to dance *samba de roda,* study Capoeira's history and be familiar with popular culture and traditions such as *bumba meu boi*, *nego fugido* and the *burrinha*. This specific mestre urged his apprentices not to be one-dimensional and to engage themselves with different activities; to learn from wherever they could. At the same time, his observation insinuated his lack of trust towards researchers and intellectuals; his ambivalent posture towards them as they seemed to be lacking something Capoeira practitioners have.

Learning to play Capoeira definitely enriched me with a wide range of sensory experiences (Downey 2005). It was also satisfactory to participate in a Capoeira roda. It feels completely different playing Capoeira, training and challenging yourself to get to every move, follow the rhythm and play. You challenge your body's limitations and possibilities. Capoeira's playful movements can potentially make you feel in the words of Cabelo as *"being once again a child"*. As research had come to an end, it was satisfactory to see myself at the *berimbau*'s foot (pé do berimbau)[10]. It also gave me an excuse to be close to them without feeling like an alien anymore.

However, I noticed that it diverted my attention to different things. I also started to understand what the teacher's authority or more experienced practitioners' power feels like in class and in the *roda.* When you experience this frustration, suddenly, anthropological sensitivity is seriously tested and challenged. You gain in perspective but in the end, these feelings of frustration are not very different from the ones I felt as an observer or a female friend, a tourist or an anthropologist: they all have to do with matters of exclusion, inclusion and relatedness, of struggling to find your own place and understand a different way of thinking. When you are on the side of the apprentice you suddenly begin not to care so much for the younger teacher's reasons and motivations. In Barcelona, the tyrannical presence of the older mestres seemed no longer that tyrannical and because of geographical distance, I found myself engaging in a sort of longing for the 'exotic' that once was routine and everyday life.

[10] The Capoeira practitioners who are about to play in the *roda* (Capoeira's ring/circle), first have to crouch and position themselves at the "foot of the berimbau", right infront of the orchestra. From there and after they salute one another or shake hands, they enter in the middle of the circle and play (also see Vieira 1998 p.109-110).

The way I involved myself changed. I started with a 'pure' academic interest in studying social and cultural changes but in time my own interest and disposition was transformed. My status shifted not only because of being in different contexts. During all these years of research I came to attain different roles, statuses and consequently, distinct ways to relate to the subjects of study seeing things from diverse angles, "switching back and forth between the insider's view and that of an outsider" (Russel 2006 p.336).

2.3 Collecting Ethnographic Material

As I have already said, after the turmoil of the first month, I started establishing a research and everyday life routine. I visited all schools and academies I could find in the historic center, as well as some in other neighborhoods. At that time, I did not have a specific group upon which I could focus. In addition, I found it useful talking with people from different schools, ages and nationalities. I searched for bibliography at the Afrobrazilian museum, at the Mandinga project, at the Centre of Afro Oriental Studies and I contacted local researchers. I started collecting bits of information that directed my attention to specific issues that served as inspiration and guidelines. For instance, my very first encounter with Mestre Prateado during my first week in Salvador revealed elements that turned out to be fundamental in the present thesis. Similarly, small episodes, quarrels, disputes, whatever my eyes and ears could capture served as inspiration.

As a result, I draw upon a wide array of sources invoking mestres biographies, newspaper articles on Capoeira and the Historic Centre from the sixties to the present, lyrics, documentaries and films on Capoeira. I also found interviews on the Internet, texts written by the mestres I encountered, photos and videos. I took interviews that were audiotaped and later transcribed and I always carried with me a notebook writing down any ideas, incidents or even phrases and expressions I found interesting. I spent hundreds of hours watching Capoeira practitioners play, making instruments, talking about events or incidents important to them. I attended events and festivals and after a couple of months I started to get to know the people who would eventually become the subject of study.

The study's focus became more specific after I met some young Capoeira teachers from the Capitães da Areia, apprentices of two well-known Capoeira Angola

mestres. The more I got to know them the more I became motivated. It was clear that their experiences, feelings and opinions were excluded from anthropological accounts. I gave emphasis to their stories, their interactions with older mestres, non Bahian apprentices and between them. I looked carefully at gestures, bodily expressions and the language they used during Capoeira play, singing, and instrument fabrication, as well as during other moments and activities in their everyday lives. How they embody, challenge or handle power is characteristic of their body posture and performance. At the same time, young men like Neguinho were more critical to their culture or the concept of culture, the relationship with older mestres and local society. If older mestres are reflective and have a good knowledge concerning Capoeira, human behavior and Bahia, young teachers and apprentices still maintain a more polemic and ambiguous stance towards hierarchies as they struggle to find their place. Thus, they sometimes offer more articulate opinions and penetrative points of view. There are different roles and statuses in the field and it took me some time to decide what my focus would be as I related myself differently with different people. People who complained or felt somewhat marginal had some very interesting and critical ideas and insights. By that, of course, I do not mean that there are more or less authentic natives (see Kuper 2003).

As Van Maanen (1988 p.3) sustains:

> [a researcher has to] share firsthand the environment, problems, background, language, rituals and social relations of a more - or – less bounded and specified group of people… [in order to succeed] a truthful account of the social world being studied.

Hence, I shared the mundane rituals of everyday life: having lunch in a small restaurant near Praça da Se, searching for material in small shops at the Cidade Baixa and in Mercado Modelo in order to make *berimbaus* and *pandeiros*. I participated in gatherings and food preparation after *rodas* and accompanied them to the airport every time one of them would leave. I visited their families and met their friends and neighbors. Since I was a foreigner it was considered normal to ask 'naive' or 'inappropriate' questions or to stay during men's gatherings in Mestre Prateado's atelier.[11] In time, they got used to

[11] On more than one occasions, my 'ignorance' saved me from awkward situations and made people tolerant of my curiosity. For example, I was able to be present during gossiping or stories' narratives that they would have perhaps avoided revealing in front of others. My assumed poor understanding of the language also contributed.

my presence. We celebrated Christmas and Easter at their homes as well as birthdays and wedding ceremonies. Going fishing was another activity in the Island. As such, sharing everyday life experiences with all the drama that usually takes place created intimacy and gave perspective on the problems -economic, social and personal- people face and have to resolve (also see Herzfeld 2009). At the same time, in the process of trying to gain people's trust and friendship, one might find out that frustration may also result because friendship and reciprocity are not everywhere the same. They are culturally and socially defined; molded in relation to a specific community (Loizos and Papataxiarchis 1991).

Even if, especially during the second visit to Bahia, I focused upon the young teachers of Capitães da Areia, I kept on meeting people from other groups as it gave me more perspective and allowed me to draw comparisons. I explored recurrent narratives and I also had the chance to compare different trajectories, opinions and ideas on Capoeira. Obviously, I met more people that were related to Capitães da Areia and visited the places they frequented. My encounters varied from Capoeira *rodas* at the beach in the Island, to Barceloneta and from the intimacy of everyday contacts and encounters, to chats on Facebook.

In addition, because of the time I dedicated, I had the opportunity to follow their trajectories in different moments in their lives. For example, I was present when someone would return frustrated from Europe to Bahia, while others would be getting ready to migrate. I met those who dreamt of a life abroad or only knew about other countries from stories they heard and finally, decided to venture their own trip. I met them when they went to Bahia on holidays and I also saw them back in Barcelona living there or spending a couple of days due to events. I encountered them when they got married and I met them again divorced with children. I observed changes in their relationships and conflicts, the most important being at the end of my research when Porreta decided -to everyone's surprise- to leave Capitães da Areia.

All these "translocal experiences", in the sense of following people who constantly transgress boundaries in different social and geographic scales (see Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013; Hannerz 2003), required a multisite ethnographic research (Marcus 1998).[12] The issue of place is central. Writing about the articulation of

[12] The paradigms of globalization and transnationalism had a serious implication in ethnographic method and analysis. According to Marcus, tracing interconnections and

transnational, national, local and personal experiences, however, has been quite complicate (Abu-Lughod 2000). Even though it turned out to be necessary and inevitable, the greatest risk was to fail ethnography's "thick description". I contend that all these places are interrelated because of social actors' activities. Even if Bahia is this ethnography's core location, all other places as experiences, states of belonging or places in the imagination are considered and included in the study. They shape identities, life experiences and choices. Indeed, global flows affect ways of belonging, differentiation, communication and connection. Moreover, it is these particular trajectories that Capitães da Areia lead that actually oblige ethnographer perhaps more than any other case study to see them as part of the global ecumene overcoming binary dichotomies such as local/global, hegemony/anti-hegemony and West/Others.

2.4 Ethnographic Material Under Perspective – Writing Ethnography

Methodology does not only refer to research techniques but also to the writing process itself; the way we think about our research subject and reflect on our material and the way we talk and write about it (Agar 1996 p.53). It is an ongoing process; "Like field notes, ethnographies and histories, oral and written, they are products of engaged human perception, conception, and communication" (Douglas and Spearritt 1982 p.87). As writing transforms data and personal observations and ideas into texts, ethnographies are products of interaction among people, places and theories. My writing is informed by research experiences both in Barcelona, Bahia and the Internet. It also engages into a dialogue with other ethnographies and literature on Capoeira as well as anthropological studies concerning social and cultural change.

Juschka (2003 p.87) correctly suggests that, "In the writing of ethnography the knower, known, and knowing are in the hands of the ethnographer". Actually, the difficulty in writing stems from the awareness of the responsibility towards both the subjects of study and anthropology as a discipline. Moreover, physical distance or proximity during writing affect the way we think, recollect and analyze our material (Engelke 2009). In my case, physical distance as well as research in newspaper articles and ethnographies on similar topics, gave me the opportunity to reflect on the material

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relationships among diverse sites, challenging distinctions between macro and micro, is *"ethnography's way of making arguments and providing its own contexts of significance"*. (Marcus 1998 p.14, emphasis in original).

in different ways. Thus, I consider the larger economic and political processes. Then, comparing my material to situations, events and discourses that took place in the recent past –since the sixties- made me realize that what seemed to me unique and new, perhaps resulted from the fact that everything in Bahia was new to me. However, I chose to keep as guidelines core ideas and questions that emerged spontaneously during research in Bahia and I had written down in my field diaries.

At the same time, PhD dissertations are charged by their own 'aura'. They are destined to a specific public that has its own expectations and demands. They have to meet specific scientific criteria and standards and somehow, contribute to the discipline. The aim is to establish a nexus between ethnographic interpretation and the reader's critical experience (Terrades Saborit 1993 p.2). In addition, a PhD dissertation is supposed to be original and demonstrate the researcher's skills and scientific capacities. Nevertheless, we should always be aware of the limitations and difficulties in "clarifying the mechanisms of what is real" and representing them in written text (Delgado 2003 date p.6).

Before going to Bahia, I had my own aspirations and expectations. From that point on, one of the most troubling issues I had to deal with was to understand and explain what I saw in a society I had never been to before. In other words, exploring the causality of behaviors, values and social and cultural life in a world that seemed different but at the same time similar. As Bakalaki (1997 p.510) says "difference acquires its significance against an assumed background of sameness". But, what made them '*unique* and *different"*? Were there any particularities that resulted from their involvement with Capoeira? Or, maybe, because they were Bahian? A local historian advised me to work with the subject seeing it as unique and focusing on Capoeira's particularities. Thus, one of my major concerns was how to make sense of social subjects and their worlds without falling in the pitfall of essentialism and extreme relativism as both construct the image of a unitary and one-dimensional Other.

Indeed, many anthropologists struggle to avoid paternalist and discriminatory practices in their own ethnographies (see Larrea Killinger 2012). However, the perception of authoritative essentialization in anthropological texts cannot be resolved at the level of the text. It is relevant to how anthropologists conceive other societies and understand anthropology. Thus, I aimed to understand the subjects of study as socially embedded and at the same time inhabiting the world we all share. Soon I realized that

being a Capoeira teacher is one among other ways of constructing their identity and relating to others. Their age, ethnicity, place of origin, profession, education, kinship ties and marital status also matter while competing groups coexist. Acknowledging that the *Other* may not be that unitary, as well as that perhaps there is no longer -if there has ever been- a unitary Western Self is methodologically and epistemologically important (Pina Cabral 2010, 2005; López Bargados 1995, Abu-Lughod 1989).

Acknowledging change and historicity is a way to avoid essentialism (Carrier 1992). Thus, perceiving social actors as immersed in historical processes of colonialism seemed a way to understand their present. However, it did not prove to be sufficient. Even if in a recent anthropological conference on Latin American Societies, colonialism was the point of departure, I think that it creates a research area for the study of an essentialized *Other*: the colonized people. As such, colonialism is considered as an absolute causal force.[13] Nevertheless, recent history, globalization, mobility and the current economic system all shape and transform local societies and cultural meanings. Thus, articulation –acknowledging the fact that we inhabit the same world simultaneously- is what precisely allows us to make sense of differences and similarities (Carrier 1992) leaving possible paternalisms aside.

At the same time, Capoeira practitioners are also producers of knowledge demonstrating some remarkable similarities with anthropologists. Not only they use Capoeira to understand the world we live in but their observational skills and capacity to understand other people's behaviors are characteristic. Prego once said that we have to think fast and study our opponent. Indeed, in Capoeira you have to be able to predict the other player's move, character and possible weaknesses or strong attributes. During a game, you learn about the person who plays with you and his/her character and quite often you can tell the kind of relationship between those who play. If anthropologists observe, so do Capoeira practitioners, and if anthropologists use their theoretical and explanatory frameworks and mediate between worlds, so do Capoeira practitioners.

[13] An example of drawing boundaries between a colonial/postcolonial 'Other' and a 'Western Self' was given during a workshop on the topics of interest and affect in former colonies. The distinction between 'us' and 'them' was ultimately translated as a distinction between societies where affective relationships are disinterested and the ones based on a mixture of interest and love.

In the dissertation I use anecdotes and small incidents that took place during fieldwork as a vehicle to communicate key issues and elaborate upon them. What social subjects do or say are considered equally important (Bargados Lopez 1995 p.117). 'False' information or exaggerations concerning social actors' involvements in various incidents are included and studied. Indeed, I realized that creating a positive self-image, trying to impress, surprise and even gossip were part of a creating masculine identities process. I tried to resolve the problem of translating certain words and concepts by placing them in the context where I encountered them. Words can mean different things to different people. Even through time, meanings change and cultural symbols attain new ones, while the greatest difficulty is to capture what remains implicit and unsaid.

Summing up, the dissertation is written as an incremental process of discoveries concerning Bahian society, Capoeira, the world we inhabit, myself as an anthropologist and anthropology as discipline. As Pina Cabral (2010 p.274) argues:

> The ethnographer's method is essentially to make sense of what others are doing and saying in terms of an assumption of essential human similarity and a world that is common at once to self and other.

My effort to put that in practice is perhaps highlighted in Chapter Seven where Neguinho watches and comments on his favorite movie, 'The Pursuit of Happiness*'.* As older mestres criticized younger practitioners for wanting to leave Bahia or for being *"extremely ambitious"* and as anthropologists discussed cultural specificities witnessing Capoeira's commodification, I preferred to ask Neguinho what made him happy. His answer speaks eloquently of the anthropological negation of their human condition:

> *"What? How strange! You know, nobody has ever asked me before."*

2.5 Theoretical Reflections – Understanding Changing Worlds

Understanding a world which is described as "multipolar", "globalized" and "post-colonial" (Moore 1996) is a challenging endeavor. It often requires multidisciplinary approaches or at least taking into account and reflecting on complex political, social and economic processes, and transformations. Attempting to explore how people and specific collectivities inhabit that world poses further challenges, as I have already discussed in the previous sections. Nonetheless, only by grappling with the specificities

of the lives of the people in the field, anthropological knowledge may overcome the hurdles and be constructed from a privileged point of view.

Since the 1990s there has been an explosion of studies on globalization. The scope and the approaches vary as much as the phenomena they cover and the different social contexts (see for example, Ong and Collier 2005; Held and Moore 2007). Some of the main themes raised by researchers are associated with migration and population mobility (Lindquist 2009; Hall and Williams 2002; Malkki 1992); tourism and tradition (Herzfeld 2004; Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos 2004; Macleod 2004; Urry 1995); ethnicity and processes of commodification (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009; White 2000); governance and the place of technologies in everyday life (Ong and Collier 2005; Ginsburg, Abu-Lughod and Larkin 2003). In many ways, they overlap. They present a recurrent preoccupation with the concept of culture (Held and Moore 2007; Ortner 2006; Sahlins 1999; Wolf 1994), and attempt to capture change maintaining a local/global perspective.

The predominance of neoliberalism in the economic and political life is believed to have an impact on the direction towards which change takes place. Herzfeld (2004), talks about a logic that has penetrated all spheres of social and cultural life shaping values and politics of representation. Accordingly, people from all over the world embrace specific understandings of tradition that may lead to their further marginalization. It is a logic that shapes values and desires (Held and Moore 2007 p.7), while at the same time creates hierarchies and generates processes of inclusions and exclusion (Herzfeld 2004). In this context, culture is perceived and marketed as "valuable resource" (see Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos 2004). Hence, anthropologists discuss strategies and actions taken by local communities to appropriate their culture and gain political and economic control over it. Inquiring into the politicization of difference, the 'rediscovery' and negotiation of the past, and the relationship between culture, market and identity, anthropologists argue on a "thickening of ethnic identity" (Comaroff and Commaroff 2009). In the case of the San people in Africa, for example, Comaroff and Commaroff (2009) discuss the management of cultural resources encouraged from both inside and outside the community. The result is the creation of a "newly empowered San" identity (ibid p.92-93).

Researchers articulate arguments on the relationship between "inside" and "outside", while they aim to attribute agency to local communities. In studies on island

communities, for example, the focus shifts on interactions among diverse agents of change; local people, tourists and foreign settlers (Macleod 2004; Gmelch 2003). As such, not only "external social and cultural forces" are acknowledged (Ortner 2006), but local agency is also examined. Sahlins (1995) criticizes anthropological approaches for instrumentalism. As he puts it (Sahlins 1995 p.403):

> This is perhaps the main criticism of contemporary culture-talk: it is really instrumental, an ideological smokescreen of more fundamental interests, principally, power and greed.

A further critique addresses the use of binaries and the prevailing assumptions of cultural loss. As such, Moore (2011 p.6) reflects on a "nostalgic oscillation between the celebration of identity and authenticity" that goes together with fears "about the loss of culture and cultural selves". Consequently, she suggests that anthropologists should think of people as producers of culture and moreover consider that:

> The plural, unpredictable nature of processes of change and transformation means that analytical frameworks can no longer depend on the earlier binaries, those of local/global, inside/outside, micro/macro (ibid p.3).

It is here where an opportunity arises to discuss the current historic moment in which changes take place and how the concept of transnationalism allows us to overcome the above mentioned binaries. According to Appadurai (1992), this era is characterized by "a definite rupture with the past" that results not only from the constant mobility and the mass migrations, but most importantly, from the new role that the mediums of telecommunication and the Internet have come to play (Appadurai 1992 p.10-11). It can be argued that since today more people than ever before have access to images and information from a variety of social and public spheres, new aspirations are created. Electronic media "allow scripts for possible lives" to be lived and the search for a better life through migration is generated (Appadurai 1992 p.6). At the same time, the possibility to travel across countries relatively cheap, while maintaining contact with the country of origin, makes the decision of leaving ones home and settling to a foreign place easier. Physical distance has shrunk. Exchanges across borders take place with higher intensity, transactions are facilitated by advanced technology and most activities are realized through the crossing of national borders on a regular basis. Nonetheless, boundaries are not easily crossed by everyone since national and international politics aim to control and regulate migration. Therefore, there is constant tension between

mobility as hope, desire and possibility, and an unequally connected world. As Salazar (2013 p. 552) puts it: "the ability to move and the freedom not to move [are] spread unevenly within countries and across the planet".

The notion of transnationalism is examined under the scope of various perspectives that comprise a fragmented research field and further complicate its establishment as an area of study with a "well-defined theoretical framework and analytical rigour" (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999 p.218). Scholars of transnationalism follow different classifications of the transnational phenomena and consequently, distinct approaches. Most research focuses on migration and immigrants' experiences and has as unit of analysis the "ethnic diasporas". Others, suggest different kinds of typologies and draw distinctions between economic, political and socio-cultural transnationalism, transnationalism as a sort of consciousness, and transnationalism "from above" and "from bellow" (Portes et al.1999 p.221), or even present an alternative approach to transnationalism focusing on the cultural traffic of commodities across borders. Nevertheless, there seems to be a difficulty in defining the range of activities that the research field can and should encompass. At the same time, it seems useful to consider whether all the interest that has emerged on transnationalism is just a new trend that will fade away with time or whether it actually delineates a promising research field and a justifiable "new area of investigation" (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999 p.218). In what follows, I will try to understand what kind of realities social anthropologists attempt to interpret by using the concept of transnationalism and what differentiates them from past experiences.

Most researchers acknowledge that transnationalism has its historical precedents and precursors (Vertovec 1999 p.441)[14]. Nevertheless, they argue that there are some qualities, as well as some new features, that definitely differentiate it from past phenomena. One of these elements, and at the same time one of transnationalism's 'preconditions', are the advances and innovations that have taken place in the area of communications and technologies (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999 p.223). Mediation plays an important role and facilitates constant mobility and communication. As Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt (1999) have convincingly argued in a recent volume of

[14] Similarly, hunter- gatherers, nomads and forest foragers have demonstrated remarkable patterns of mobility that are consinuously transformed, even if "the bias in the study of hunter-gatherers remains on (corporate kinship) groups" (see Doerte Weig 2013).

the Journal of Racial and Ethnic Studies commenting on the nature and viability of the concept of transnationalism, social scientists are dealing with a new and rather rigorous area of investigation. An area which implicates a lot of people both as groups and individuals across the globe to activities and enterprises that show stability and resilience over time, in movements back-and- forth between host and home countries.

The focus, thus, gradually shifts towards the transnational patterns of mobility and the very idea of mobility is put under scrutiny[15]. Researchers focus on different kind of mobilities: forced displacement, mobility in relation to immigration, cosmopolitan mobility and mobility in tourism. Glick Schiller and Salazar (2013 p.185) argue that historical processes used to be presented as confined by national boundaries due to a "methodological nationalism". Accordingly, the critiques resulted as response to nationalist theories that describe the relation between people, place and national territories in an essentialist way. Social anthropologists started to question the political stance that links people to places in a naturalized way and claims that 'authentic' social experience should be centered in circumscribed places (Clifford 1997 p.3). Therefore, they started to talk about more processual and experiential ways through which identity is constituted and at the same time they strongly rejected the idea expressed in nationalist literature that the most important universal human need is the need to be rooted (Malkki 1997 p.52). According to Malkki, the connection between people and place has come to take metaphysical dimensions in nationalist discources. The use of metaphors on roots and rhizomes, homelands, and mother-lands is revealingTherefore, contrary to this "metaphysical sedentarism" and as more people are "chronically mobile and routinely displaced", mobility should not be seen "in terms of a pathology" (ibid p.52).

Glick Schiller and Salazar (2013) embrace mobility and not stasis as the norm, and discuss their interrelationship. Their argument contrasts with previous assumptions that presented cultures as bounded to certain geographical and discontinuous territories. In addition, the above mentioned scholars suggest that researchers should not only abandon a binary way of thinking, but should also strive to examine differentiation and

[15] Researchers explore different kind of mobilities. Mobility is associated with immigration (see Glick Shiller), cosmopolitanism (Werbner 2008; Hannerz 1997) and tourism (Graburn 1989).

connection as they take place simultaneously (ibid p.187-188)[16]. Indeed, the present reality of constant crossing of physical boundaries and transnational connections has generated a rethinking of key concepts such as culture, community and difference, and has led to a revision of the relationship between identity and locality. Therefore, even though cultures have never been homogeneous, and it cannot be sustained that in the past it was possible to "map the globe as a set of culture regions or homelands" (Gupta and Ferguson 1992 p.10), the increased mobility of people, cultural products and practices that prevails today, makes the argument more explicit: each culture cannot be considered as a clearly defined unit. In that case and if we accept that we gain a sense of self by thinking ourselves through difference and if a sense of community and identity is related to the construction of boundaries, it would be rather interesting to explore what happens today when the meaning of boundaries is transformed (Malkki 1997 p.58) or at least, when our understanding of what boundaries are, takes different dimensions.

As Hannerz observes, "boundaries do not really contain but are more often interestingly crossed" (Hannerz 1997 p.2). This means, according to the same scholar, that culture too circulates in a way that generates situations of mixing, hybridity, collage and creolization. The concept of hybridity however risky and ambiguous might be –not to mention its biologistic connotations- implies more flexible situations where what is supposed to be local or to belong to one culture, becomes "infused with influences of the outside"; influences that do not exist in a autonomous domain, but get meaning and form through concrete and everyday local manifestations and interactions. According to Glick Schiller and Salazar (2013), boundaries are also important to think about because they entail the idea of relationality.

Consequently, the approach is two-fold: on the one hand, it questions the meaning of place and its relation to culture, and on the other, it sustains that boundaries

[16] Glick Schiller and Salazar (2013) build upon theories that use the concept of network. Following a similar line, Vertovec argues that networks are "structures or systems of relationships" that constitute new "transnational public spheres" (Vertovec 1999 p.449). The construction of viable social networks provides the "channels for the migration process itself" and generates flows that seem to be self-sustained (Vertovec 2004 p.2). These channels play an important role because through them it is possible for the immigrants to find jobs and accommodation, while at the same time they organize and sustain immigrant experience. Likewise, according to the scholars above, through these networks the creation of new forms of solidarity and identity on a transnational level is being enabled (ibid: 449).

today –and not just the physical ones- may be more flexible contributing to the construction of hybrids and identities of 'impurity'. Actually, there is a vast literature that focuses on cosmopolitan values, on processes of disembedment (Werbner 2008; Urry 2003), and aims to point to the creation of new spaces where identity can "be detached from embodiment and other essentialist anchors" (Miller and Slater 2000 p.5). However, the basic premise is that globalization is not only about dislocation and uprootedness. It is also about interconnectedness and embededness that result from the compression of space and time (Vertovec 2004 p.219). Indeed, increased mobility "does not cut off but rather creates connections across physical distance", as well as a sense of community and belonging (Romhilda 2002 p.18). The importance of place and boundaries in creating a sense of belonging has not seized to exist. It has just been transformed. Thus, it is interesting to see the ways through which social scientists have begun to reflect on how locality, territoriality and belonging are understood and experienced by transnational communities.

Many anthropologists suggest that we should change our way of seeing and interpreting reality, a shift of perspective, as Eriksen (2007) invites us to do. As Fog Olwig (2003 p.59) puts it,

> […] the more global our lives seem to be, the more we insist on the existence of demonstrably different places where we are socially and culturally anchored[17].

Actually, a place does not have to be a physical site. It can also be an "anchoring point" where "mobile people can find a source of identification", a place in the imagination, a place remembered, a place in cyberspace. To this aim, Miller and Slater (2000 p.7) suggest that anthropologists should study the way the very "concrete and mundane enactment(s) of belonging" are expressed today.

It becomes clear that as people feel more insecure and vulnerable, they try to find ways to connect and to create security. One of these ways is through the creation of

[17] Fog Olwig (2003 p.60) gives us the example of the Caribbean diaspora. For the people of the Nevis island in the Caribbean who have migrated to the U.S.A., the family land and the right to own it still symbolizes stability, continuity and rootedness; values that are considered of great importance. At the same time, many islanders decide to build a house on the family land and to create a home. This house is often built in western style showing how people try to domesticate globalization.

what Appadurai calls “new public spheres” (Appadurai 1992 p.10). These public spheres are created mostly through the Internet, where, according to Eriksen (2007), we witness the “rerooting” of people who are supposed to be “uprooted” and the creation of communities based on the principles of reciprocity and trust. Thus, we can argue that even though communal relationships have been transformed and are no longer based on face-to-face contact, the importance of communities as units of belonging has not withered away. While we are facing disintegration, at the same time we are witnessing movements of integration (Appadurai 1992 p.1-2).

In light of the above, there are also studies that point to the need to pay not so much attention to the “uncertainties and cultural mixtures” but to “the factors that create stability, predictability and order” and to the new ways through which communal relationships are being experienced and maintained (Eriksen 2007 p.5). According to Eriksen (2007), there are still moral communities connected through ties of mutual obligations and balanced reciprocity that work on a transnational level. For this reason, he sustains, anthropologists should explore what motivates the construction of these moral ties and bonds. Eriksen focuses on the symbolic exchanges that take place and, according to him, follow the principles of prestation and counterprestation Malinowski encountered in the Trobriands. He assumes that the quest for fame motivated the Trobrianders to engage in their Kula system and likewise, what motivates people today is the quest for recognition and attention (Eriksen 2007 p.6). Consequently, the focus shifts once again to the specific collectivities and the way they perceive and handle sociality in the midst of a changing world and constant mobility.

In the thesis, I have taken into account theoretical approaches that shift attention from the study of larger processes to forms of sociality among specific social actors and furthermore, individual stories and trajectories. After fieldwork, I was able to re-connect with the anthropological world and theories in order to make sense of the data and information gathered in the field. In specific, during the writing process, I engaged with anthropological insights and ethnographies that directly address the issues that troubled me in the field. Among them were that of relativism and universalism; understanding forms of relatedness that entail tensions, equality and domination; and finally, the cultural meanings of mobility, mobility as a process of becoming and a way to relate. Nancy Munn’s ethnography *The Fame of Gawa* (1986) and Marilyn Strathern’s *The Gender of the Gift* (1988) have been helpful and thought stimulating. Building upon Malinowski’s work, they explore the production of social life through transactions and

mutuality and thus, by looking back to them and through a comparative perspective, Eriksen's (2007) discussion on what he calls "moral communities" goes a step further. Ultimately and as I discuss throughout the thesis, they shift focus to questions about the self, the individual (or dividual) and the person and can be critically engaged with Bloch's (2012) work on relativism and universalism.

3. PEOPLE AND PLACE(S)

3.1 First Impressions: "*This cannot be Terreiro de Jesus*"

Arriving at Salvador's international airport, Deputado Luís Eduardo Magalhães, the sound of the *berimbau* could be clearly heard. A small welcoming committee -Bahianas dressed in their typical white, voluminous layered dresses along with young Capoeira practitioners playing Capoeira's most cherished one string instrument- was handing small colorful ribbons to the newcomers. An awkward moment as most people walked past them, rushing to the exit. Then, these relatively few tourists and locals crossed the street and passing right next to small stands selling *acaraje* and *cocadas*, reached the bus stop. It was almost five o'clock but already quite dark. Eventually, a bus, resembling my island's old school buses, arrived. Its final stop was Praça da Sé, my destination. From there, I would have to go to Terreiro de Jesus and continue to my hostel. I carefully read all intermediary stops written with white paint on the front, just to make sure it was the right bus. When all passengers got on, the bus driver gave us a tiresome look simply to check if we were ready to go -he would rather be someplace else: another striking similarity with bus drivers' dispositions back home.

Bahia, *"land of happiness"* and of so many other things, yet to be discovered.[18]

Leaving the airport and heading to Pelourinho, the bus passed through Itapuã following the coast line, the Orla Maritima. Some people were still out on the streets or waiting at the bus stops. I forced myself to feel overwhelmed: *"Indeed. So many black people*. I had read it so many times in the past: The place with the biggest black population outside Africa.[19] I could at least pretend to spontaneously make the same

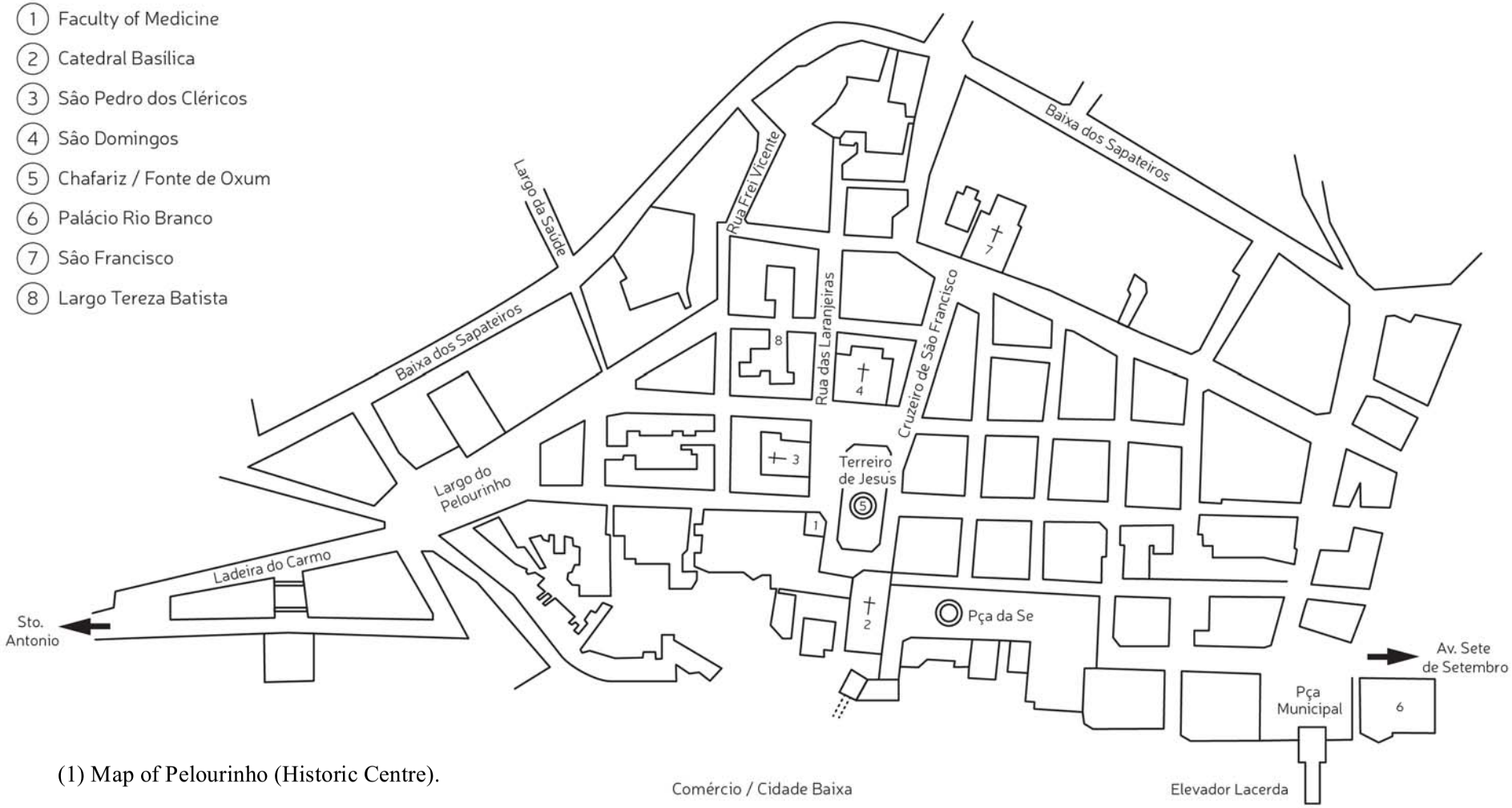
[18] The state of Bahia, in the northeast of Brazil is described as "*Land of Happiness"* (Terra da Felicidade) after the song "*Na Baixa dos Sapateiros*" written by Dorival Caymni. This characterization remains a powerful representation in many sites providing tourist information on Bahia and its people.

[19] Travelers and scholars, since the 19th century, had been impressed by Salvador's population and the presence of cultural elements that seemed to originate from different African ethnicities (Abreu 2000, Abib, 2004). Indeed, Salvador is often described as Black Rome and is presented and perceived as the place that embodies African culture in Brazil (Gonzalez and Duccini 2010).

observation and share the same enthusiasm; do something 'anthropological'. But my excitement was overly rehearsed to be actually able to see color.

From the neighborhood of Itapuã, to Orla, Pituba, Amaralina, Rio Vermelho and Ondina, we then crossed the big avenue - Avenida Oceanica- arriving at the tourist district of Barra. Many tourists got off the bus. The few of us who remained went up to Campo Grande and crossed the Avenida Sete, an avenue full of small shops about to close for the day, to Piedade –places that I was soon going to walk about. Then, up to Castro Alves square, and finally, we reached the bus terminal near Praça da Se. That was it. *"But where was it?"* I turned right, went past some stopped taxis and the emblematic Elevador Lacerda that, in my anxiety, I did not even notice. I crossed Praça da Se and headed to my destination. Terreiro de Jesus; symbol of so many things and stories related to Capoeira and cultural life in Bahia. Without doubt it had to be a beautiful place. Then, I walked a bit further, passed next to a pharmacy and arrived at a dark, poorly lit and deserted square. I obviously had not arrived yet at Terreiro de Jesus but I did not know which direction to follow from that dangerous looking square on. I asked a man who was sweeping the street. He replied: "*It's here*". I looked around to locate it. *"Where?"*, I asked again. He replied somewhat disturbed: *"Right here!"*. As a small child approached extending his hand towards me, I thought: *"This cannot be Terreiro de Jesus".*

These were the very first impressions in September 2008 inaugurating my first stay in Bahia.



(1) Map of Pelourinho (Historic Centre).

3.2 Salvador and the Historic Center: A Tourist and Ethnographic Destination and a Place Where People Live

> "In Pelourinho's vast territory, men and women teach and study. A vast and diversified territory, it extends to Tabuão, Portas do Carmo, Santo Antônio Além – do- Carmo, Baixa dos Sapateiros, to the markets, Maciel, Lapinha, Largo da Sé, Tororó, Barroquinha, Sete Portas and Rio Vermelho … Next to the church Rosario dos Pretos, on the first floor, with five windows wide open over Largo do Pelourinho, mestre Budião established his Capoeira Angola School: the students came late in the afternoon and at night, exhausted from work but willing to play[20]." (Amado 2001 p.15)

The city of Salvador, capital of the state of Bahia, was officially founded in 1549 by the Portuguese Crown. It was Brazil's first capital until 1763 when Rio de Janeiro became the new political and administrational center. Its history is intrinsically related to that of colonialism. By 1558, Salvador played a leading role in the New World as one of the cities with the biggest imports of people from Africa who were turned into slaves and later on distributed to work in the plantations. Because of its particular topography it was vertically divided and built in two levels: the Upper City (Cidade Alta) and the Lower City (Cidade Baixa) to the north and northeast. The first, destined for the colonial administration, while the second formed the commercial zone including the port (see Nobre 2003). Political, social and economic changes can be traced in the city's geography. The designation of specific districts as economic centers and poles of development affected the population's allocation in Salvador, following, however, different patterns than the ones in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (Finn 2012). Therefore, changing concepts of development in local and later on in national and global level resulted in the investment and use of new areas and the valorization or degradation of others.

[20]"No amplo territorio do Pelourinho homens e mulheres ensinam e estudam. Universidade vasta e varia se estende e ramifica no Tabuão, nas Portas do Carmo e em Santo Antônio Além-do-Carmo, na Baixa dos Sapateiros, nos mercados, no Maciel, na Lapinha, no Largo da Sé, no Tororó, na Barroquinha, nas Sete Portas e no Rio Vermelho… Ao lado da igreja do Rosário dos Pretos, num primeiro andar com cinco janelas abertas sobre o Largo do Pelourinho, mestre Budião instalara sua Escola de Capoeira Angola: os alunos vinham pelo fim da tarde e à noitinha, cansados do trabalho do dia mas dispostos ao brinquedo." (Amado 2001 p.15)

From the 16th to the 18th century, the colonial aristocracy resided in the Upper City, more specifically, in Pelourinho - today's Historic Center- and its nearby areas as it is reflected in the buildings' and squares' architecture. Near the end of the 18th century, Salvador due to the cocoa plantations was still an important economic power, yet, a regional one (Nobre 2003). Due to processes of hygienization and modernization, new areas of development were established away from the old center. Thus, in the 19th century and as slavery was coming to an end, the lower classes remained in the center, while those who abandoned it were the elites (Pires de Oliveira 2004 p.11). The center's public space, namely, the streets of Misericordia, Saldanha da Gama, Passo and Pilar, squares like Praça da Se, Terreiro de Jesus and areas like Baixa dos Sapateiros were frequented by people belonging to the lower classes. Among them, we can identify the presence of Capoeiras (Pires de Oliveira 2004). With the construction of Avenida Sete, the upper classes found their way to the south. During the 1930s and 1960s processes of industrialization led to the establishment of other urban areas as poles of attraction and economic investment. In the 1970's the expansion of the area near the airport resulted in Pelourinho's further degradation (ibid 2005). By the 1980s, Pelourinho was perceived as a dirty and dangerous place. Upper class residencies were established away from the center as well as luxurious shopping centers. Today, even tourists spend relatively little time in the Historic Center as they prefer to stay near the beach or in coastal resorts. Still, in 1985 it was nominated by UNESCO as World's Cultural Heritage because of its colonial architecture. During the 1990s a series of measures were taken aiming to rehabilitate the Historic Center.[21]

In his novel *"Tent of Miracles"* (Tenda dos Milagres), Jorge Amado describes Pelourinho as a vast university where people learn and teach (Amado 2001). The romantic tone, pertinent to his time, is also indicative of the effort to reinforce public policies aiming to protect the afrobrazilian culture. Nonetheless, it entails a great truth. The Historic Center, especially for an anthropologist, is a place where valuable learning processes can be observed and experienced. In the core of these processes are the people who live in the Old Center or just pass by it. Still, the value of these lessons should not

[21] Several initiatives have been taken aiming to recuperate and restore Pelourinho's physical area, focusing on its "productive potential" and "social organization" (Araujo de Araujo 2007 p.18). The projects of Pelourinho's reconstruction and revitalization have not yet been completed. At the same time, they have triggered conflicts. A thorny issue discussed in the local press is the problem of its patrimonialization and the residents' consequent allocation.

be attributed to a supposed embodiment of afrobrazilian cultural elements by its residents but to the intensity and particularities of everyday interactions. Through these interactions all social actors –locals, visitors, tourists and ethnographers- teach one another and at the same time, learn from one another. Pointing out how people's lives intersect in Pelourinho, a street vendor told me:

> "*This is the world's center. Here, you can find the rich and the poor; the tourist and the* pickpocket; beggars *and the elite; musicians, artists and artisans; prostitutes and priests; drug dealers and family people; all together, one next to the other; it is unique. A place where you can observe the world's injustices. They say it's dangerous but it's not because of its residents. It's all these people who come from nearby neighborhoods but also from far. They come because of the tourists. I, myself, live in Cosme de Farias. I come here to sell handmade jewelries and beads to the tourists."*

The impression of living in a place full of contradictions –as the above quote also indicates- was prominent since the very first days I stayed at Frei Vicente Street in Pelourinho. Moreover, a sense of degradation and abandonment was present. With its colonial and baroque architecture, it resembled a luxurious scenery that was falling apart due to the passage of time. In that theatrical stage, under the visual effect of old churches and cathedrals, skinny, hectic figures- mostly because of the use of crack (a cheap crystalline form of cocaine)- in raggedy clothes were wandering around like shadows asking for food or money.

Most people from Bahia avoid the Historic Centre. They describe it as a centre of prostitution, sex tourism and a pole that attracts thieves and drug addicts. Moreover, they emphasize the unpleasant atmosphere and *"intense energy"* of the place. The days that followed I had the opportunity to better observe Pelourinho and the interactions among diverse social actors. As summer approached more tourists arrived and the place begun to vibrate differently. Shops with souvenirs, bars, restaurants and Capoeira schools were filled with visitors and foreign and local Capoeira players. Among them, there were quite a few ethnographers and social researchers, exploring health care issues, questions on heritage, sex tourism and Capoeira. Pelourinho turned out to be a meeting place; a *"place of reference"*, as some of its residents claimed, and an observatory.

A month later, however, an anthropologist from the Federal University of Bahia suggested I should do fieldwork in the periphery, and study Capoeira away from the impact of tourism. It would be an opportunity to work with children in projects of social inclusion in other communities. Nonetheless, due to the people I got to know and the appeal Pelourinho had on me, I decided to stay there and follow the people I met and their walkabouts. I occasionally visited neighborhoods such as Engenho Velho de Brotas, Federação, Ondina, Vale das Pedrinhas and Cabula and visited Capoeira schools there. But I preferred to focus on the Historic Center and its people. After all, the young men I met were themselves once teenagers who had learnt Capoeira in their own communities also as a form of social inclusion.

3.3 Capoeira's Geography in the Historic Center: Schools, Academies, Squares, and Capoeira's Fortress

> *"Capoeira in Pelourinho / I played there as well / On Sunday and holidays / All Mestres were present."* (Capoeira Lyrics, Mestre Boca Rica)

Pelourinho is the only place with such a great concentration of Capoeira schools and academies. Entering from Praça da Se and passing next to Zumbi's statue and the shops that sell cds and music instruments, a Capoeira *roda* takes place every day in Terreiro de Jesus[22]. The square is surrounded by the Faculty of Medicine and the Afrobrazilian Museum, the Catedral Basilica, São Pedro dos Clérigos and São Domingos and is navigated daily by tourists and those locals who live near the square, or have shops in nearby streets. Small incidents fuelling gossips that circulate all over the neighborhood, quarrels, meetings and festivities, are part of everyday life. Residents know each other or at least they have stories to tell or to create about almost anyone who passes from there. Many stories that stir their imagination have to do with Capoeira practitioners, their fights, quarrels and achievements and of course, with foreigners and tourists. According to Artista, a Peruvian who lives there the past ten years and sells jewelry on some tables next to the square, Terreiro de Jesus is an emblematic place, especially for Capoeira practitioners.

[22] Zumbi is a prominent yet ambiguous historic figure. He was leader of the Palmares Quilombo, a maroon (born free/ runaway slaves) society in Alagoas, defeated by the Portuguese in 1697 (see Burdick 1996). *Roda* is the circle formed by both Capoeira practitioners and the orchestra. Each time, two Capoeiristas come to play (jogar) inside the circle.

In charge of the daily *roda* is Mestre Morto yet various Capoeira Regional players come from other neighborhoods to participate. Some of them live in Europe and come to Salvador only for a few months. That Capoeira is called *"street Capoeira"* (Capoeira da rua) but is rather looked down and not very popular among the Capoeira practitioners with whom I became familiar. Thus, according to them, it is not street Capoeira but *"Capoeira for the tourists"* (para o turista ver). Nonetheless, it is one of the most common images tourists will take from Bahia. These Capoeira practitioners spend most of their time playing Capoeira under a few palm trees, next to Baianas who sell *acaraje* and fried fish[23]. They show up early in the morning at about 10 o´clock and start their routine performance that ends late in the afternoon. The sound of the *atabaque* (a tall wooden drum) fills the place. Tourists pass by, watch or stop to take pictures. Of course, they have to give some money in return. The mestre exhibits great skills in locating tourists that try to take a picture secretly from some distance. Once you stop to look at the performance, he comes immediately with a hat in his hands asking for money. Occasionally, they stop to flirt with tourists, wait for friends to show up or sleep and rest at the Cathedral's stairs.

In order to walk about Pelourinho, tourists and residents have to cross the Terreiro and then, one possible direction is to go left. Following the street next to the Faculty of Medicine are restaurants, shops with souvenirs and among them various paintings depicting Capoeira scenes, black women, or the Historic Center's landscape. On the same street, on the left side and next to all these shops there is a covered walk. It leads to the community of Rocinha; an entire hidden world. In the past, it used to be a place where many Capoeira practitioners went to listen to music and have a beer. Ediandro still lives there and occasionally provides Capoeira teachers who come from Europe with *caxixis* in order to sell them back to their European students[24]. I visited the neighborhood and Ediandro's house with Professor. Once there, a local reggae musician asked the purpose of my visit in Bahia. When I explained him, he affirmed: *"You are in the right place"*.

[23] *Acaraje* is a typical food related to Candomble and is sold almost in every street corner in Salvador. *Baianas do acaraje* are the women –usually wearing characteristic clothes- who cook and sell it. Their profession has also been nominated Brazilian Heritage.

[24] The *caxixi* is a small percussion instrument Capoeira players use as they play the berimbau. It consists of a closed weaved basket with a flat-bottom filled with seeds –especially pau Brazil seeds- or other small particles.

Walking down the street is the Largo do Pelourinho. On the right, the Foundation "Casa de Jorge Amado" and the City's Museum and left to it, in the Street Gregorio de Matos, among shops with percussion instruments and hostels, is Mestre Bimba's Foundation, run today by his son, Mestre Nenel. Near there is Mestre Barão's Capoeira school. Walking up the street and near Casa do Olodum and the Maua Institute, two small children, shyly and a bit bored, played the *berimbau*. On a sign outside the building it wrote "Brazilian Association of Capoeira Angola" (ABCA). As a matter of fact, the Historic Center has innumerous associations, syndicates, research centers and institutions of all kinds, as well as various projects for social inclusion. Their presence is telling of the place culture has in local and national politics as well as the debates on citizenship and social inclusion.

Entering the ABCA, there was a young woman knitting behind the bench. She is Mestre Canarinho's wife and the little boys are his grandchildren. Contra Mestra Maria is responsible for the small shop with souvenirs in the entrance. T-shirts depicting Capoeira mestres, or even Michael Jackson, and Capoeira books are laid on a table. On the Association's second floor, every Friday, a Capoeira *roda* takes place. Signs warning the visitor it is prohibited to take photos are everywhere on the walls. The tourists or those who do not play Capoeira have to pay 5 reais (Brazil's currency) to go up to the first floor when there is a *roda*. This rather symbolic price, however, classifies visitors in two categories: Capoeira practitioners, on the one hand and all the others, on the other. ABCA is the place where encounters and presentations related to my research took place. At the time, Mestre Lirio, who practically used to live there, was president of the ABCA. Indeed, most mestres live in the same space where they teach. But the ABCA since its establishment in 1985 changed directory quite a few times reflecting different visions in relation to Capoeira, conflicts and changing relationships with the Government and the Bahian State. Of course, there are more schools, academies and mestres to be found in the Historic Center. Among them are Mestre Congo and Mestre Italiano. The last one no longer plays Capoeira but owns a shop with paintings.

On the other end of the Largo do Pelourinho begins the Ladeira do Carmo. Passing next to the Convent where Mestre Bimba is buried, the street leads to the neighborhood of Santo Antonio. There and next to the community of Chacara de Santo Antonio, is Forte do Santo Antonio, Capoeira's Fortress. Many foreign Capoeira apprentices from Japan, Italy, the United States, among other countries, and even local apprentices, such as Daniel and Fitinha live near the Fortress as well as in the

neighborhood of Carmo and nearby Barbalho. The first time I visited it, on the top of the entrance, a big board saying "Capoeira for Peace" was hanging, reflecting Capoeira's place in present-day debates on peace, inclusion and conflict resolution. Passing the gates and the guards there is a sort of a square patio around which are located seven Capoeira schools. Every once in a while a mestre would come out and look around while a few visitors circulated from one school to the other. Once in the patio, and because of its architecture, I had the feeling of being observed. It was no coincidence that as time went by, most people taking classes or teaching there, had an idea about who I was without even having talked to me.

The Fortress was built in 1624 during the Dutch Occupation. Its uses and architecture changed with the course of time. From Fortress, it became State prison in 1830 and later on, a Correctional Institution. In the beginnings of 1979, the Fortress was occupied by the Carnival Group "Os Lords". In 1981, it was reformed by the National Historic and Art Heritage Institute (Iphan), Bahia's State Cultural Foundation (Funceb) and Salvador's Municipality and hosted a Popular Culture's Center and two Capoeira schools: Mestre João Pequeno's Sport Center of Capoeira Angola (CECA) and Mestre Moraes' Capoeira Angola Group Pelourinho (GCAP). But a couple of years later, as mestres commented during a reunion, the Fortress was practically abandoned and they even had to get electricity and water from the neighbors. Several years later, in 2002, an initiative was undertaken by the NGO "Forte da Capoeira" or "Brazilian Society for the Protection and Preservation of the Capoeira- Fortress". The aim of the NGO was to "preserve the fight that was developed in Brazil by the slaves who came from Africa" (Diario Oficial 02/03-11-2002). Seven mestres presented the NGO's charter to the Secretary of Culture and Tourism. Among them were Mestre Sabio, Barão, João and Grande.

In 2006, the Fortress was restored by the Ministry of Culture and the Iphan as part of a project of tourism development called Prodetur. During the same year, Capoeira was nominated as Bahian Heritage by the Institute of Artistic and Cultural Heritage (Ipac) that since then took over the Fortress's administration and declared it Cultural Heritage. Today, the relationships between the mestres who have their schools there, as well as between them and the Fortress's administration or the mestres from the ABCA, are anything but harmonic. As such, the mestres in the ABCA refer to the former as *"those from the Fortress"*, a characterization that speaks volumes on conflicts concerning its administration and use. Nonetheless, even the mestres who had

academies in the Fortress expressed dissatisfaction during reunions. Mestre Moraes, for example, said that the Fortress ended up being *"a museum without life; a cemetery"*, while Mestre Grande did not seem satisfied and told me they had *"put them up there where nobody goes"*. He also added that he preferred to stay in his academy downtown, in the center where there was *"more movement"*. The mestres were well aware of the musealization processes that were taking place and, according to Eriksen (2004), go together with commercialization and reification.

Walking around the patio, I could see the names of globally recognized Capoeira mestres on the schools' entrances. On the right, adjacent to a small pavement that led to the library and the exhibition space was Mestre Bola Sete's "Centro de Cultura da Capoeira Tradicional Bahiana", sharing the same space with Mestre Pele's "Grupo de Capoeira Angola Pai e Filho". Then, it was Mestre Curio and his "Ponto de Cultura Irmãos Gêmeos". Outside his school, he used to leave offers to the Orixas – the deities of Candomblé - food or cigars. On the other side, there was Mestre Morães and his "Grupo de Capoeira Angola Pelourinho" – GCAP. Right next to the GCAP, a red billboard wrote: "Academia de Capoeira Angola da Bahia, Mestre Boca Rica". To the other side there were two more schools: Mestre Joao Pequeno's CECA who at the time was 92 years old and next to it "Filhos de Bimba", the only Regional Capoeira academy in the Fortress. The Fortress hosted and still hosts diverse activities, fashion shows, book presentations and art exhibitions. It was and until today remains a space that many Capoeira practitioners visit; place of reunions and commemorations.

The Fortress of Santo Antonio, the ABCA and Terreiro de Jesus are also frequented by those mestres and Bahian practitioners who live or have schools in other neighborhoods away from Pelourinho. Mestre Chapeu, Mestre Vicente, Mestre No, Mestre Lua de Santana, Mestre Querido from Santo Amaro, Mestre Pequeno, Mestre Cobra, Mestre Lua de Bobo from Arembepe, as well as Capoeira groups like Nzinga or Topazio, usually showed up at the *rodas* organized by the above mentioned mestres, or went to the Center and organized their own. Even mestres from other small towns in Bahia regularly visited the Center adding to the complexity of interactions. Who frequents which *roda* and when or how they decide to give a performance is related to the alliances and networks they construct and their aim to establish each one's place in Capoeira's world. It also reveals past conflicts and new ways to appropriate the city's landscape due to the presence of foreign apprentices and tourists, changing public

policies and finally, as I will further discuss, Capoeira practitioners' experiences in other countries and places.

However, in all these walkabouts, a specific place and the people who frequented it came to play dominant role in my research. From that point on, the people I met, the places I visited and the ideas generated were all shaped by those first encounters. Indeed, one day, after having crossed Largo de São Francisco, and turning left to the church, there was an old man sitting at the stairs by the post office. Black, with grayish dreadlocks, wearing a colorful cap, leather sandals and loose clothes, he was observing the people who were passing by, a common practice in Pelourinho. He seemed a rather peculiar figure and captured my attention.

A few days later, I decided to visit a well-known Capoeira mestre, Mestre Prateado and his "Atelier de Instrumentos Percussivos". I found it in the street of Ordem Terceira. Outside the door, on a wooden board were hanging beautifully made instruments. Among them were *xequeres*, *chocalhos* and *jembes*. On the top of the door, a black sign with big yellow letters wrote "Atelier Percussivo" and on the bottom, with white letters, Mestre Prateado. On the left of it, a small *berimbau* was drawn and on the right, two big drums (*atabaques*) bearing red, green and yellow colors; the colors that stand for Ethiopia and Rastafari. I entered the Atelier and I met a man sitting on a small wooden sculpted chair. He was busy working with a small drum. I suddenly realized that he was the same man who was sitting outside the post office a few days earlier. Mestre Prateado turned out to be one of the people who occupied a prominent place in my research.

The atelier was divided in three parts. In the first part, on the left wall, there was a variety of light instruments made of coconut shell and pumpkins, as well as small handmade drums. On the right wall and on the top there were big boards of printed and carefully placed newspaper articles about Capoeira's history and folklore. The depicted images long gone mestres: Mestre Canjiquinha, Mestre Gerson Quadrado, Mestre Pastinha and Mestre Caixara. Underneath, there were the *berimbaus*, painted and sculpted with a characteristic fire technique. On the same wall, placed meticulously on an African textile, there were also *pandeiros* made of real leather and on the wall opposite to the entrance, the big drums, the *atabaques* and *tambores*. Posters, paintings and small sculptures from Africa were in the corridor that led to the next space, fusing the 'utilitarian' and exhibitional character of the place.

In the other room sitting in a bench, I saw the mestre's wife, Dona Luuisa, a woman from Switzerland. She was crafting the designs on the instruments. In the middle of the room, there was a decorated table and on the walls, instruments not just from Bahia but also from Africa, while others made reference to indigenous populations and cultures. Some were gifts the mestre had received and others. Outside, in a kind of open patio, there was the working space. The smell of leather, wood and fire dominated the place. It was filled with large pieces of leather, half finished instruments, seeds, posters and tools. Next to a small table, was a young boy of about twenty years old. He was working the leather in one of the *pandeiros*. He gave me a quick look and silently, went back to work. That was Professor, a young boy from the Island and Mestre Prateado's apprentice. The atelier was a vibrant world. Handmade instruments and Capoeira's past, gifts from foreigners, souvenirs and memorabilia from the mestre's journeys; raw material from the island and the rural Recôncavo, together with the presence of different people working and learning or visiting the place, defined its particularity. The Atelier or shop (loja), as they preferred to call it, turned out to be a meeting place for many Capoeira mestres, foreign and local apprentices.

On my way out, I saw the mestre with a berimbau in his hands and I commented: *"it is beautiful".* He then replied with a bit of irony: *"just the way the tourists like them… colored… but what can we do?"*. They say that Mestre Waldemar, in the 1960s, started producing colorful *berimbaus* for the tourists as opposed to the plain ones. However, more than anything, it was Mestre Prateado's way to demonstrate, at that particular moment, a sort of skepticism towards change and hostility to foreigners. The inversion of roles was awkward. I was in the receiving end of attitudes very similar to the ones people in my island had towards tourists. His wife, nevertheless, a foreigner herself, was very proud of their instruments and their techniques. Thus, the mestre's comment was not so much about feeling obliged to fabricate different kind of instruments. It was his way to classify me, as well as the Medicine student, who also happened to be present, as tourists who imposed changes.

Several months later, I saw *pandeiros* hanging on the wall, all of them with beautiful colored prints. Most material comes from the Interior or from the Island- especially the pumpkins and the *beriba* wood. But the mestre travels to Africa too. He handles the wood to make the *atabaques* and *tambors*' body in the island. Some insinuated he does not share all his techniques with his apprentices. In his site, he describes the atelier as a center of reference and research on percussive instruments and

indeed, he has a great reputation. Later on, I saw many mestres visiting him, people from Candomble houses, film-makers and researchers, neighbors coming to borrow a tool or ordering an instrument, as well as plenty of young Capoeira practitioners. It was the place where they gathered and prepared themselves before getting to the *roda* he organizes every Friday night at Terreiro de Jesus.

During that first conversation, besides the attempt to construct a boundary between them and foreigners, Mestre Prateado made another two powerful comments. When I told him that in Barcelona I met Prego, an old apprentice of his, he said:

> *"They all have left. They all want to leave. They don't have anything else in their minds. And then, they leave. But how many students does Prego have there? Thirty?"*- he asked challenging an answer while I suppose he suspected that Prego did not even have ten students. And he went on: *"These are very few students. Am I right?"*

Then, I asked him if he gives classes and he said:

> *"No, that was in the past. Today, I prefer teaching small children. I run a project at the island and yes, I prefer small children. They will say 'thank you' while the older ones, will give you a kick."*

These comments at the beginning of the research pointed out that mobility was not that positively evaluated after all. For reasons I will discuss in subsequent chapters, it was a debated and infused with different meanings practice (also see Salazar 2013). The "*kick*" mentioned in the quote above could be a movement performed during a Capoeira play. Still, kicking your own mestre demonstrated lack of respect and was a challenge to his authority. Moreover, Mestre Prateado's comment implied that older apprentices eventually abandon their mestre and as sush, they turn out to be ungrateful. These observations speak volumes about the tensions between generations. They offer some first insights concerning autonomy and interdependence and of how they are both shaped and framed by mobility. Indeed, after that incident, another mestre, Mestre Grande, acknowledged the complexity and focused on the difficulties to maintain contact with the young teachers who leave Bahia and thus, to guarantee continuity.

The days that followed I spent some time at the hostel Mestre Prateado and his wife run on the second floor of the building. His wife emphasized that the hostel was destined to people they already knew but since Prego had sent me, I could also stay. The

hostel had an 'ethnic' aesthetic that went back to hippy cultures in the 1970s. Handmade objects and crafts, walls decorated with instruments; furniture made of big pieces of wood, a wooden table for the guests and a large painting depicting a colorful Pelourinho materialized the owners' vision. During the few days I spent there, I got to know Professor, Neguinho, Siri and Perna: all apprentices of Mestre Prateado in the past, except of course from Professor who was working there at the time and still is. They were all from the same Capoeira group as Prego, the Capitães da Areia and came from the Island.

Neguinho was spending more time there. He was only twenty two years old, a year older than Professor and Siri. He had a French accent and it was his way to demonstrate he still had something from the four years he lived in France. While Professor and Siri lived in the neighborhood of Cabula and during the weekend went at their parents' home in the island, Perna spent most of the time at the Island. When he visited the Historic Center to run errands or play Capoeira, he used to stay in the Chacara of Santo Antonio, in the house of a Capoeira practitioner and artisan friend of theirs. Neguinho lived in a very small apartment at the Terreiro. His flatmate, Cabelo, was twenty six years old. He was raised by his grandmother in the Interior of Bahia and arrived at Salvador with some of his relatives seeking for a better life. His values and belief systems were changing due to his experiences in the Historic Center. At the time he was responsible for the house that a Portuguese had rent them. Cabelo used to help his aunt, Dona Madalena. She was renting two square meters in the building's corridor where she used to sell sandals and souvenirs. She shared the space with Artista, artisan and friend but Dona Madalena lived in another neighborhood. Finally, at the other side of the corridor there was a samba bar frequented mostly by Bahians and occassionaly, tourists.

The building, the corridor and the sidewalk were full of life. But there were more people frequenting the place, working together, arguing and gossiping. Ediandro, an artisan who lived with his children and wife in Rocinha, used to leave some of his handmade earrings to Artista so that he could sell them for him. The corridor was also the place where Pedro, a sixty-year-old man spent the night when everybody left. Mestre Prateado also went up to that building to chat with Artista or Neguinho. Other mestres would occasionally drop by to have a *jatoba* (a type of drink) at the bar next door. Cosme, who was selling cigars, matches, peanuts and chewing gums to the locals, used to leave his merchandise to Cabelo and came to ask for it the following day. He,

like many other street vendors, had witnessed many changes and had many stories to tell about the people who frequented the place. In the celebration of São Cosme and Damião he used to make *caruru* – a food made of shrimps and okra- and invited Cabelo and Artista, as well as other people from the neighborhood. Thus, the building's residents and users all knew each another and had some sort of interaction, even if they followed different trajectories.

Moreover, Neguinho's house, because of its strategic location, was also a gathering place. His Capoeira friends, as well as friends or relatives from other neighborhoods, used to gather to drink, smoke, chat and have something to eat. Those who came from the island to attend a *roda* at the Historic Centre usually slept there and left the following morning. It was a place to listen stories about the world *"out there"*, about Capoeira *rodas*, as well as narratives on life's difficulties, failures and successes, hopes, jokes, disappointments and quarrels. During these mundane tasks and gatherings social actors expressed ideas about what was appropriate and which should be each ones' place in the world. Of course, there were always new people to meet, like foreign Capoeira practitioners or teachers who came to Bahia on holidays.

(2) Mestres' Gathering, Fortress of Santo Antonio.

(3) At the *"Foot of the Berimbau"* – Commemorating Mestre Pastinha's Death.

(4) Roda da Paz – The *"Old Guard"*, Cruzeiro de São Francisco.

(5) Celebrating Mestre Baixinho's Birthday, Fortress of Santo Antonio.

3.4 The Island

"à beira-mar"

It was early in the morning and with some friends from France and Spain we were having breakfast in a small coffee shop near Mestre Prateado's Atelier. Neguinho saw us from the street and invited us to go with him to the island. He had to run some errands for Mestre Prateado. In the past, before going to France, he used to work there but when he returned, his place was already taken by Professor. Just like Siri, he was also counting on the mestre's help but the mestre also counted on them since they were the few who had stayed. The relationship between master and apprentices bears its particularities (Herzlefd 2004; Lancy 2012). Moreover, Mestre Prateado did not teach them Capoeira, even if he was a Capoeira mestre, but rather crafting and making instruments. Thus, the apprentices spent several hours every day working with and for him until they would leave or a new one would come. Lancy (2012 p.4) defines apprenticeship as a "contractual relationship … of a specific duration which is designed to serve two ends". It provides cheap labor and at the same time, it is a learning experience for the novices. The appreciation and gratitude for what they learnt with him went together with a feeling of frustration due to the peculiar bonding and nature of their relationship.

We all agreed to go to the island and headed to the port. We passed next to the Baianas Memorial and the Santa Casa da Misericordia and arrived at Palacio Branco's square near Elevador Lacerda. Siri suggested we entered the Palace. There, we had a view of the port and Siri, proudly stated that Salvador was once Brazil's capital. A few days later I recalled that observation while we were watching a documentary about Pelourinho and its colonial architecture. Perna affirmed: *"It was us who made it all"*. It was their way to appropriate history, memory and place. Tourist brochures and documentaries on Pelourinho's heritage mention the slaves who carried the black stones to pave Pelourinho's streets. In Perna Longa's narratives they were the agents of all the beautiful architecture. It was not the Portuguese. It was them. In the same way, Salvador, their city, was once Brazil's capital even if Bahia today is looked down by other Brazilians.

As Herzfeld (2009 p.113), argues, "the material evidence of [the] past affects the perceptions, sense of belonging, and cultural orientation of present populations*"*. Yet, their perceptions were shaped by the presence of buildings and objects that were marks

of an unequal past - let along social inequalities in their present. Indeed, inside the Palace, the walls were covered by portraits depicting Bahia's governors. Not a single black person was on those walls. However, Siri considered it a great opportunity to start performing Capoeira's *bananeira* (handstand) on the varnished and polished floor, under the look of all the governors and among the tourists –Brazilians and foreigners- who were also visiting the Palace. Sophie, a French friend was asked to take several photos as Siri was standing upside down in his *bananeira,* observing playfully and challenging the world. At that moment, the look on Brazilian tourists' face – Brazilians coming from other States and belonging to other social classes- did not escape my attention; they were exasperated. Ironically enough, even if it was *"them who made it all"* and Capoeira today is Brazil's Immaterial Heritage, young black Capoeira practitioners –especially those living at the Historic Center, as I will discuss in Chapter Five- still suffer discrimination. Moreover, even if in official discources the Bahians had created their heritage, Bahia is a place repleat with inequalities that shape relationships and perceptions of the self.

We then took the Elevador Lacerda and went down to Cidade Baixa, the Lower City. We passed next to Mercado Modelo, another important site in Capoeira's history and for those who still frequented its daily *roda*, in its present as well. We headed to the port. We had to wait in the queue as it was Saturday and people from the Island who worked in Salvador during the week were returning to the island to spend the weekend. We then got on a bouncing boat (*lancha*) and the trip, after passing next to Sao Marcelo's fortress, had just begun.

We finally arrived at the port of Lagoa. From the boat we could see the palm trees, church ruins, as well as small children jumping all around the water. The Island is in the Bay of All Saints, forty minutes by boat from Salvador. Besides its natural beauties, every year it attracts many Capoeira apprentices and tourists. Most of the locals have sold their land to wealthy Europeans or people from Salvador, while a big part of the island still belongs to big land-owners. The island is divided in two municipalities: Costa Verde and Coqueiro. In the 1970's the establishment of the ferry boat as a means of transportation facilitated contact and changed the relationships between the island and the Metropolitan area (see Roque de Lima 2000).

From there, we walked up to the *"mestre's project*". On the top of the hill, there was a small shack made of wood and palm tree brunches. It was the place where Mestre

Prateado was giving classes to the community's children. After getting funding from the Project Capoeira Viva, he started working with the local community, teaching Capoeira and instrument making. Project' became synonym to place and those who knew, used to say: *"I am going at the mestre's project"* instead of Lagoa.

Some children came to welcome us but Siri did not allow us to take any photos since the mestre was not present. In fact, hesitance on whether to take photos without the mestre's or any mestre's or teacher's permission, was a constant. After taking the instruments the mestre needed, we went back to the port and from there we took a small bus to Mangue Azul, where Neguinho's house was. We passed from different places with small colorful houses, gas stations and Evangelical Churches until we finally arrived. We entered the small neighborhood's gate and headed to the house. It was a small street with sand and grass that was leading to the beach. The house had flowers and hibiscus trees on the outside, but the interior was quite humble. It had a small living room with a plastic white table and a simple piece of furniture with a TV on. Neguinho's mother was there. She raised her two sons on her own, as most women in the island. She used to make cookies, *cocadas* (coconut sweets) and food and sold them to the locals and foreign and Bahian tourists who stayed in the island during holidays. She also used to clean houses or wash clothes and she took care of her mother, an old skinny woman who lived near the house. She was getting ready to go to the Evangelical Church. Like Siri's mother, she did not have a clear idea on the doctrines. According to her, *"They are faithful. They all are Christians and that is all that matters"*. Then, disappointed, she gave a look at her son and added:

> *"Before going to France, he believed in God. He was religious. He says he does not believe in God. But how is it possible to not believe in God? He changed. When he came back, he was a completely different person. He did not like anything. He did not like the house. He did not like the walls. He said that we should have painted the house. He changed."*

His mother, like Siri's mother and most mothers with whom I talked to later, was ambivalent in relation to Capoeira and her son's activities. Of course, things had changed. Thus, despite the criticism from behalf of the neo Pentecostal churches against practices related to the Afrobrazilian culture, their mothers seemed to tolerate Capoeira. In addition, if their sons earned their living with Capoeira, it was more acceptable. Nonetheless, their sons changed too. Interactions with tourists, their travelling

experiences, the Internet and the mestres' influence had an impact on them. In addition, the radical changes that had taken place in Neguinho's life away from Bahia -and some of them were not very pleasant- made his mother consider him *"ungrateful"*. He had, thus, become a *"completely different person"*. As Gregory Bateson (1972 p. 336) argues:

> If a man achieves or suffers changes in premises which are deeply embedded in his mind, he will surely find that the results of that change will ramify throughout his whole universe.

Then, we went to the beach and Siri brought a spear he had let to his neighbors. Fishing was a very common activity not just during their leisure time but also as a means of subsistence. Most young men, however, were unemployed. They used to work in building construction for a few days or weeks every year, get involved with tourism or they even had to leave and go to Salvador. A couple of hours later, Siri said we could go walking to Concha from the beach and visit their friend, Porreta. Thus, I could meet the other Capitães da Areia. It was far and took us quite some time to get there. When they were children, they used to go all the way walking to see their mestre and take classes. It was another 'test' in order to prove they really wanted to learn Capoeira. On our way, on the left, we could see the city of Salvador far in the distance. Neguinho said:

> *"When I was a small child I always wanted to live in Salvador. Of course, I liked it here in the island. I used to sell small breads and cookies. My brother thought it was embarrassing and did not want to do it. But I was helping our mother. I did not mind. But Salvador, over there, was the big city. Every time my mother went to Salvador to run errands, I always insisted to go with her. She did not want to take us and I did not want to live in the island at the time. Today, I do not mind. Well, if I ever have money, I will build a house right here."*

Salvador was once considered the big city and young boys dreamt of living there. Then, other destinations were added, foreign ones. On our way, we passed from Hotel Paraiso and we also met neighbors, friends and relatives at the beach. When we arrived at Concha, it was already dark.

Concha is a touristic place with more residents. But there were remarkable differences even in the same locality. Thus, the households' architecture revealed social

inequalities bigger than the ones I noticed in Mangue Azul. There, we met Perna and we also had the chance to get to know Janaina –the only woman of the Bahian Capitães da Areia- Jorge, Marisco, Leão and Camarrão. They talked about a friend of theirs who was killed. Then, the discussion went on to how things had changed in the island due to drug trafficking and violence. Leão mentioned that people nobody knew started to show up in the island and create problems. It was dangerous not only in Salvador but also in the island. He added:

> *"Ten years ago Pelourinho was great. Everything was clean. It was safe. No drugs. You could work with tourism. Of course, there were more tourists. But today…And with the crisis it is even worse. But now even the island has turned into Babylon. You can trust nobody. One day I was walking from Concha to Aguas Claras from the beach and they tried to rob me."*

Jorge also mentioned that on "*the other side of the motorway"* drug trafficking, crimes and violence were common phenomena, making it, thus, a dangerous boundary to cross. He further added:

> *"You hear about a friend and you cannot believe it. He is in jail. He is involved in drug trafficking. Corruption is everywhere."*

The narratives on drug traffick, on changing social conditions in Bahia and a feeling of insecurity were recurrent. These disources shaped how people felt about their place and their lives, even if non Brazilians sustained they were *"exaggerations"*. Together with their everyday experiences, they had an impact on how people perceived their human and social condition and the sense of control they had over their lives. Indeed, Lutz and Abu –Lughod (1990) emphasize the political dimension of discources in shaping what is considered as the most profound and natural aspect of human lives, the emotions. Capoeira, in this context, received positive connotations. Thus, they described themselves as *"lucky"* and grateful to their mestre for having taught them Capoeira. At least in their narratives, it offered them the possibility to do things differently and distinguished them from the others;

These were the first encounters with the social actors and their places. Nevertheless, in the present study, place will also be discussed as a place in the imagination, a symbolic place, a destination or a place in between. Hence, place is often related to expectations and aspirations and to processes of identification and

differentiation: those who belong to a certain place and those who are excluded both from that place and from establishing a relationship with its people. Place, a social setting indeed, brings to forth issues of community, of the Capitães da Areia collectivity and its limits. It contains people and ideas but its boundaries can be crossed and subverted or reinforced. Indeed, someone belongs in one place but perhaps, not in another. It is about a place within a social structure and each one's place in Capoeira and in the world.

(6) A Neighborhood on the Island.

(7) Fishing on the Island's Coast.

3.5 Capoeira Practitioners as Researchers: A Contested Field?

It is practically impossible to cite all studies written and published about Capoeira. Since the 1990s, the amount of work on Capoeira is impressive and encompasses a wide range of research areas and disciplines: history, anthropology, performative arts and physical education. To this literature we should also include the one whose authors are Capoeira mestres and it involves mostly biographies and personal narratives. The anthropological studies can be classified in different categories. Regarding their authors, they are both Brazilians and non Brazilians. Another possible categorization involves the context of study. In some cases research has been realized in Brazil while in others, and especially the last decade, in other countries. Among them, the U.S.A have prominent place. In Brazil, there is variation too. Rio de Janeiro, Santa Catarina and São Paulo are as much a focus of study as Salvador and the state of Bahia. Finally, another possible criterion of categorization is relevant to the approach, the definition of the subject of study and the addressed questions.

The definition of the subject of study relates to the authors' identity and thus, to specific interests and aspirations. What I consider worth mentioning is that most studies on Capoeira –with the exception of early folklorists and ethnohistorians such as Edison Carneiro and Waldeloir Rego in the 1960s and 1970s- are conducted by Capoeira practitioners. Before starting field research in Brazil I was warned that practically in every corner, street or academy I would find Capoeira practitioners/anthropologists taking notes. In the Jair Moura Institute, located in the Garcia neighborhood, I found a plethora of dissertations, many books and articles on Capoeira, all stuffed in the shelves of the Institute's small library. Even if anthropologists were not literally out in the streets informing their diaries, Capoeira was definitely a research topic that attracted both foreigners and locals. If, by some, playing Capoeira is considered a trend, then, being a Capoeira practitioner and writing about it, is a must. Brazilians, Europeans and North Americans, from diverse disciplines, demonstrate an extreme interest in writing about Capoeira. As I already observed, what they have in common is that most of them are practitioners who either combined their studies in anthropology with their practice or decided to turn to anthropology because of Capoeira. Among them, there are a few who started practicing Capoeira because of their research.[25]

[25] Among a great number of studies, I encountered the case of an anthropologist from the United States who wrote a dissertation about pilgrimage. In specific, she compared her personal

One of the most influential books on Capoeira is written by John Lowell Lewis, now a classic for those wishing to study topics related to Capoeira in Bahia. It is titled *"Ring of Liberation: Deceptive Discourse in Brazilian Capoeira"* and was published in 1992. According to the author:

> If this study is of a certain kind of play in Brazilian culture, it is grounded on a theory which in turn derives culture, at least, in part, from the activity of human play. (Lowell Lewis 1992 p.2-3).

Thus, the author follows Gadamer's (1975) discussions on play and carefully examines Capoeira's body play and musicality. His research conducted almost twenty years ago is of great value because of the detailed information and knowledge on the topic. His approach pays emphasis on the importance of discourses in order to contextualize Capoeira's performance. Making use of the Laban Movement Analysis, he argues that Capoeira is an inversion of the moral codes balancing between domination and liberation. Lowel Lewis attributes these characteristics to Capoeira's origins and the slaves' fights for liberation. The social subject is not specified, in the sense that he does not talk about a specific group of people or collectivity but is rather a semiotic analysis of Capoeira in Bahia. Therefore, another characteristic of his study is that he draws homologies between different domains and takes general Bahian or Brazilian cultural traits that later on he applies to Capoeira. A predominant trait, for Lewis, is that of 'malandragem' (cunning/deception). As such, he understands Capoeira as a metaphor that inverts power relations and in specific, relations that exist in Brazil since slavery[26].

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initiation to Capoeira and her experience as a PhD student (Miller Griffith 2011). There is also the case of two anthropologists who divided their working duties. Thus, one of them participated as practitioner-anthropologist while the other as observer (Stephens and Delamont 2006).

[26] Lowell Lewis is not the only scholar who engages with the idea of deception. Wesolowski (2012) also argues that what Capoeira says about practitioners and Brazilians in general, is summed up in their understanding of 'malandragem'. According to her, 'malandragem' is about opportunism, improvisation, self preservation and survival (ibid p. 86). Unfortunately, 'malandragem' has become the basic lens through which scholars choose to see and understand young Capoeira teachers.

The latter observation brings to the forth questions of power and resistance, and will be addressed by several authors thereafter.

In 2001, Margaret Wilson published the article *"Designs of Deception: Concepts of Consciousness, Spirituality and Survival in Capoeira Angola in Salvador"* that is exemplary of studies on Capoeira's capacity to transform the apprentices' bodily consciousness. Accordingly, she approaches Capoeira Angola as "music and movements of bodies" and most importantly as "the energies in between" (2001 p.22). A few years later, however, a book that had great appeal on Capoeira practitioners was Greg Downey's *"Learning Capoeira: Lessons in Cunning from an Afro-Brazilian Art"*. It was published in 2005. The author, an apprentice himself, discusses extensively how perceptions change by learning Capoeira and concentrates on the "experiences of learning" (Downey 2005 p.10). In the introduction of his book, his period of learning and studying Capoeira in Salvador is described as "a living Capoeira fantasy". Thus, the anthropological evidence results from reflections on his personal and in particular, bodily experience as a foreign apprentice. His approach is a phenomenological one that has as subject of study foreign Capoeira apprentices and their bodily experiences in the Capoeira Angola Group Pelourinho (GCAP). It belongs to a time when researchers on Capoeira decided to focus more on the body and Capoeira's corporeality.

In the Instituto Jair Moura, I met Frede Abreu. Actually, my visit at the Institute made me realize the necessity to consider the world of Bahian Capoeira researchers. Frede Abreu was a Bahian historian and researcher who not only conducted research on Capoeira, but was also familiar with most researchers and their endeavors. He collaborated with the Institute and the Mandinga Project as well as with Instituto Maua in Pelourinho and had wrote various texts and books on Capoeira's social history, such as *"O Barracão do Mestre Waldemar"* (2005) and *"Capoeira in the 19th Century"* (2005). In the Jair Moura Institute, he was responsible for the archive, newspapers, posters and all audiovisual material related to Capoeira. After receiving funding by the project Capoeira Viva in 2007, he tried to better organize a digital archive. He had achieved reputation among Capoeira practitioners as well as researchers. Thus, he used to be invited by Capoeira groups during their events to give speeches on Capoeira, its history and important Capoeira figures from the past such as Besouro, Mestre Noronha and Mestre Caiçara. I visited Frede Abreu's archive several times during which I had the opportunity to discuss with him on various topics related to Capoeira. Yet, he had demonstrated skepticism on research and recent publications on Capoeira. According to

him, there was lack of quality due to the limited time dedicated to research. In addition, he argued, almost everyone writes about the same topics. According to him, interesting work on Capoeira had been realized by historians. In the archives, he argued, one could address more original questions.

Returning to Greg Downey's phenomenological study, Frede Abreu commented that there was a time when phenomenological studies were prominent. The Institute had organized seminars in relation to the topic. However, he sustained that several kinds of discourses and ideologies were constructed in relation to Capoeira that reflect politics and interests. Yet, in the end, he argued, it all comes to everyday experiences (vivencias). He brought as an example the use of the concept of "resistance" and the dimensions it has come to attain in Capoeira literature. Indeed, many researchers approach Capoeira as an "art of resistance". During the 1990s but still until today, Capoeira is evaluated positively or negatively as a form of resistance, as not an 'actual' resistance or as something in between. The title of the article *"Capoeira's Fortress: Escapes (dodges) between Resistance and Spectacle in Salvador"* (Ferreira da Fonseca 2009), is characteristic. The author commenting on Capoeira practitioners' presence in Pelourinho, he observed that "their bodies are one more artifice", while the Historic Center "is projected strictly as a place of consumption" (Ferreira da Fonseca 2009 p.35). Another example is Camille Marc Dumoulié's study titled *"Capoeira, a Philosophy of the Body"*. She argues that there is a black versus a white ontology in Capoeira and she observes:

> […] there is a true capoeira poetic, understood in the dual sense of practice and bodily activity, and as an aesthetic. If capoeira is an art of resistance, it is not one that measures forces against the world of the whites (the latter being the stronger), but rather revolves around a certain will to power in the Nietzschean sense (Dumoulié Marc 2012 p.2).

The existential and experiential studies on Capoeira are all together present, while new ways to talk about the subject and the apprentices' experiences bring to forth questions of legitimization and authenticity. Thus, the third study I consider is titled *"Capoeira Pilgrims: Negotiating Legitimacy in a Foreign Field"*. The author, Lauren Miller Griffith, discusses her experiences as female foreign apprentice in the group International Foundation of Capoeira Angola in Bahia (FICA). She distinguishes

between different types of authenticity according to the processes by which a foreign apprentice conquers legitimization in FICA. She says:

> When individuals associate authenticity with stasis, they may inadvertently stall the natural development of a cultural practice … Existential authenticity is a value judgment that the individual makes about herself and her lifestyle choices. One way for them to combat this stigma is to deepen their connection to *capoeira* through a pilgrimage, traveling to Bahia to train with a Brazilian *mestre* […] My work with FICA Bahia suggests that charismatic claims to authenticity, particularly someone's attitude, their openness, and their dedication to the group, far outweigh traditional claims to authenticity. (Miller Griffith 2011 p. 254)

Her work is interesting regarding foreign apprentices' experiences inside Capoeira's ring and the academies. In the end, she acknowledges that acquiring legitimization as a foreigner is possible. Thus, she concludes:

> Whereas Bourdieu' claims that one can only enter a social field 'by birth or by a slow process of co-option and initiation which is equivalent to a second birth' (Bourdieu 1980:68), I argue that this process is achievable through accumulation of sufficient capital (ibid p. 257-258).

Her research is an example of studies realized by foreign practitioners and of their self-reflective preoccupations. As in the case of the above mentioned scholar, most research in Bahia has been done among two Capoeira groups that have attained international fame: FICA and GCAP. At the same time and due to Capoeira's expansion, a large number of studies focus exclusively on new settings such as Madrid (Guizardi 2011), Switzerland (Aceti 2007), the USA (Green 2009; Stephens and Delamont 2006; Downey 2005) and Paris (Vassallo 2001).

Nonetheless, two scholars have offered valuable insights and information concerning Capoeira's history and present. They both are Brazilians and engage with questions of power and legitimization, hegemony and counter hegemony. The first is Simone Vassallo who did field research in Paris and later on in Rio de Janeiro. In her article *"Capoeiras and Intellectuals: The Collective Construction of an 'Authentic' Capoeira Angola"* (2003), she discusses how intellectuals, their discourses and interests exercised power in the construction of what she describes as an authentic Capoeira

Angola. Her article is important as she acknowledges different agents in Brazil and their relation with Capoeira mestres. Her focus is on processes of authenticization relevant to the role played by researchers from the 1930s to the 1980s. Eventually, she compares their narratives to the ones of Mestre Pastinha's. She also reflects on the contradictions where on the one hand Mestre Pastinha proudly elaborated on his modernizing project while on the other, the intellectuals looked for and emphasized purity in his work. Her evaluative conclusion goes as follows:

> That is why this game modality cannot be thought of as an eminently traditional activity but also as a product of modernity (Vassallo 2003 p.17).

Tradition, authenticity and legitimization will soon become the lenses through which anthropologists discuss changes in Capoeira, as well as the relationship between its practitioners and the State. Wesolowski (2012), for example, argues that Capoeira players argument on authenticity, legitimization and authority by using a constellation of symbols such as that of Bob Marley and the Candomble's deities and most importanly, by projecting an exotic and muscular body.

In 2011, following the same line of inquiry as Simone Vassallo but positioning himself differently, Paulo Magalhães published his MPhil dissertation, *"Game of Discourses: the Dispute of Hegemony in the Tradition of Bahian Capoeira Angola"*. His work is quite different and inspiring due to his approach, his political identity and the fact that he had access to the Brazilian Association of Capoeira Angola –currently being member of its directory- and to most mestres in Bahia.

Paulo Magalhães is the first to actually elaborate on the different lines and traditions in Capoeira Angola in Bahia that up to that point were omitted and gives space to voices that had been silenced. His theoretical approach on hegemonies and anti-hegemonies can be debated. However, the information he offers allows us to see Capoeira Angola and even Capoeira's history in Bahia from a different perspective and interpret social subjects and their projects accordingly, moving away from the prevailing assumption of Capoeira in Brazil and in Bahia as homogeneous. His study is important in order to understand politics in Bahian society as well as Capoeira's past and present. He questions the meaning of tradition and by citing interviews given by Bahian mestres and information from the local press he manages to accentuate issues on politics and conflicts. He focuses on the older mestres and as member of ACANNE, a non hegemonic Capoeira tradition according to the author, his aim is to "do justice to

the non hegemonic lineages in the Angolan field, their heritage and traditions". He concludes that his aim is to

> demystify signs of identity that pass as tradition in order to be able to look at the right direction of the profound fundamentals (Magalhães 2011 p.168).

Summing up, the above mentioned researches reflect different historic moments and shifting research interests in the discipline of anthropology. For example, Lewis work is close to a postmodern project, discussing culture in terms of a text while Downeys' approach is directed by an interest in phenomenology and performance. Moreover, Capoeira is discussed in terms of authenticity and resistance; commodification and globalization; tradition and its invention or lately, hegemony and counter-hegemony. Furthermore, the authors' nationality, local and political identities as well as their status as apprentices or non apprentices, affect their approach and define the subject of inquiry. However, Paulo Magalhaes' study is the only one where we can clearly see the diverse Bahian Capoeira social subjects and their relation with political life in Bahia. Still, in his study the social actors are once again the old Capoeira mestres in a Bahian context and not their young Bahian apprentices and teachers and their mobile experiences.

In such a crowded academic field where mestres, teachers, apprentices and researchers interact, it is difficult to find a place. Nonetheless, some sort of reassurance came after an observation Prego made in Barcelona. When asked whether he minded the fact there were too many Capoeira groups in Barcelona, he confidently replied: *"There are too many Capoeiristas in Barcelona and too many groups all over the world. But, only we are Capitães da Areia."*

3.6 "*Look, the White Guy Is Talking, While the Black is Nodding his Head"*

In 2007, Mestre Prateado, along with his friend Mestre Querido, organized a Tribute to Mestre Ticum, an old mestre from Santo Amaro. Many people who know or collaborate with Mestre Prateado participated: several Capoeira mestres and Bahian practitioners, those Capitães da Areia who at the time were in Bahia - Sardinha, Jorge, Macaco and Perna - and people from the community. Finally, among the participants, there were two Bahian historians. Two years after the event, Cabelo was watching the documentary filmed during the tribute. In the documentay and when the *roda* ended, a discussion on

Capoeira's past in Santo Amaro and in the Recôncavo Bahiano took place. Sitting on a bench, next to Mestre Ticum, a historian debated on rural Capoeira's history. Suddenly, Cabelo shook his head and lamented: *"Look, the white man is talking while the black is nodding his head submissively and listens."* Cabelo's commentary draws attention on questions regarding representation and inequalities in Bahia. Therefore, in this section I will discuss how the subjects of study think and talk about researchers.

Cabelo's aim was to make two points. The first underlined the presence of an intellectual talking about Capoeira's history in the Recôncavo Bahiano while the seventy-five-year-old mestre who was from the Recôncavo himself, remained silent and listened. Yet, he was not just listening. He was also *"nodding his head submissively"*. Thus, Cabelo observed that historical knowledge and the authoritarian right to produce it were assigned to historians and intellectuals. The second point was on paternalism. Cabelo identified and described it using categories such as *"white"* and *"negão"*.[27] As such, and by using racial categories, he reflected on hierarchical patterns and relations of inequality that have not yet seized in Bahia. In this context, the right to talk about history acquires social and racialized connotations. Indeed, even if the concept of 'race' is contested in the academy, it is, however, still used as a marker, "an ideologically charged distinction in social stratification" (Harrison 2002 p.145).

In the past, Brazil had been described as an exemplary of racial equality and as a place where a harmonious coexistence between black and white people took place. In the 1930's Gilberto Freyre talked about the country in terms of a meeting place for the Portuguese, the Native Americans and the Africans. One of the most important theories aspiring to integrate the black populations in the Brazilian nation state, was that of the 'racial whitening' or the famous 'mulatto escape hatch (Wade 1991 p.83), that 'accorded people of mixed ancestry a special place' and enabled their social mobility (ibid p. 171). Nonetheless, after the Second World War, the UNESCO's anthropological studies on race conducted by researchers such as Marvin Harris, Florestan Fernandes and Thales de Azevedo, exposed racial and social inequality in Brazil and questioned the 'idyllic panorama of tropical racial harmonies imagined by Freyre in the 1930's' (Winant 1992 p.192). As Burdick (1998 p. 1) observes:

[27] The term is used to refer to men in a friendly way but mostly to black men. Using the superlative, the term also entails a degree of exuberant sensuality and power.

> …the fact of Brazilian color prejudice and its consequences for the everyday lives of millions of men and women can no longer be denied… [T]he question is no longer whether a Brazilian's color influences her life chances, but how. [28]

Even if, as Burdick (1998) argues, people in Bahia have difficulties in identifying racism in their everyday experiences, the categories of *"black"* and *"white"*, are quite often evoked in order to express social and economic inequalities.

A similar incident to the one I mentioned earlier took place several days afterwards. After having talked to an anthropologist from the Federal University of Bahia, I detected some sort of skepticism towards my decision to conduct a research related to Capoeira. Next, and while I was walking up the muddy road to Mestre Prateado's project in the island, I thought about confining to him my own preoccupations. Thus, I said:

> *"Mestre, the other day I was talking with a professor of anthropology from the Federal University of Bahia on my research subject. He did not seem that interested. Maybe it is because there are too many studies…"*

He interrupted me: *"No! You know why? Because he does not know. That is why."* Then, he added:

> *"Did you read what that University professor said about Capoeira? That Bahians can only play the berimbau because it only has one string chord. They have prejudice. Why would he say that about the berimbau?"*

Mestre Prateado referered to a statement made by a professor of Medicine at the Federal University of Bahia. The incident was discussed in the press during 2008. It appears that a professor from São Paulo, during class, argued that the poor results in the exams were due to the fact Bahians had a very low IQ. According to the same professor, the *berimbau* -the Capoeira instrument that has become Bahia's symbol- is the type of instrument for those who have very few neurons. This comment, of course, was overtly racist and yet, the relationship between academics, intellectuals and Capoeira practitioners is more complex.

[28] Nevertheless, according to activists, Brazilian people have difficulties in '…identifying racism in their own experiences' (Burdick 1998 p.2).

At this point, I think it is important to consider the fact that most Capoeira mestres and a great part of the young Bahian men who play and teach Capoeira, do not have a university formation. In addition, the ability to use historic documents and elaborate scientific authoritarian discourses is confined to very few. Thus, the current situation accentuates asymmetry and complicates the relationship between Capoeira practitioners and intellectuals. Nonetheless, as I have already pointed out, various scholars emphasized the role played by intellectuals and researchers in the construction of discourses on Capoeira (Vassallo 2003; Magalhães 2011). Indeed, during the 1930's and at least until the 1980s, foreign and Brazilian intellectuals selectively promoted specific Capoeira features, qualities and images to the public and collaborated with certain mestres. Yet, the discussion follows interactions and mutual influences until the 1980s.

The flow of images and ideas, the practitioners', tourists' and researchers' mobilities, and the use of new technologies as means of representation, create a field where different scopes intersect and new possibilities emerge. Historians, artists, social workers and Capoeira practitioners collaborate, know each other and compete one another. The influence current discourses on culture and tradition have and the role played by intellectuals in the present, cannot be overlooked. The fact that Bahian Capoeira practitioners and mestres write or chose someone else to write their biography -as in the case of Mestre Barão- or, as in the case of Mestre Prateado, to film his life experiences, create new tensions in relation to mediation and representation. For example, while his book was in the process of writing, Mestre Barão seemed displeased. In relation to the author he had assigned to write his biography, he said:

> *"I don't like what he did. I don't know if I will allow him to keep on with what he is writing. From what I see, he just wants to pass his ideas in my own book."*

Intellectuals as biographers mediate once again by writing down mestres's thoughts and experiences.

What is worth mentioning here is that Bahian academics and intellectuals, who are themselves Capoeira practitioners, assume the role of the legitimate story teller and mediator between Bahian Capoeira practitioners and the 'rest'. They, thus, create a collective 'we' in relation to foreign others. Indeed, some local researchers enlisted me as a 'competitor' or as a new type of European intellectual 'colonizer'. These discourses resemble the ones expressed by native anthropologists and their right and ability to

better represent their own culture. At the same time, of course, these identifications, relationships and collaborations are never free of conflict and that is indicative of processes of identification and differentiation that take place simultaneously. As Jenkins (2007 p.6) observes:

> […] because identification makes no sense outside relationships, whether between individuals or groups, there are hierarchies or scales of preference, of ambivalence, of hostility, of competition, of partnership and co-operation, and so on.

Mestre Cobra published on the Internet a text with his thoughts about the relationship between Capoeira, intellectuals and knowledge. Having attended a dissertation's defense on Capoeira, the mestre reflected and established associations between the Capoeira *roda* and its rituals, and what he identified as ritual in the thesis' presentation. Furthermore, he argued he was pleased that all people present -those who defended the thesis as well as the committee- were both Capoeira practitioners and academics. After recalling how academics influenced Capoeira during the 1930s, he suggested that the people he calls "Capoeiristas Doctors" and "Doctors Capoeiristas" may change the university's culture in the present. He, thus, accentuated the need to create a community of both Capoeira practitioners and researchers. Of course, his rhetoric is pertinent to his experiences and projects and the fact that he is part of a Capoeira group with international appeal, Capoeira Mundo.

Differences in social status, the factor of age, as well as belonging to different Capoeira collectivities should be considered. The insistence on the right to read the research once published, the curiosity over my field notes, as well as the comment made by Siri: *"You know everything about us but we know nothing about you"* are indicative of their desire to have control over their own representations. Moreover, they express insecurity when people on whom they *"know nothing"*, write and make publications about them. At the same time, in the case of the Capitães da Areia, Mestre Prateado's influence on his young apprentices should not be underestimated.

One day Mestre Prateado brought up an incident where his daughter found an expensive book on Afrobrazilian culture with his photo inside. Therefore, she asked the bookshop's owner why she would have to purchase a book that has and makes use of her father's photo. Her stance was encouraged by her father who believed they should determine how and who is going to use their image and benefit from it. Moreover, as

was mentioned in another instance, Mestre Prateado *"already had a name"*. Therefore, he could selectively choose how to use his image and public public self presentations and who had the right to participate in the process.

With today's technological advances, social media such as Facebook and video-sharing websites like Youtube are new spaces that facilitate representation and communication. An incident revealing how these new means are perceived and the danger they are thought to entail, took place in the Capoeira Quilombola collectivity in Salvador. During the *roda*, the group's mestre was playing with a young apprentice. Suddenly a carefully executed take down made him lose his balance and fall. In the mean time, a Peruvian practitioner sitting in the *roda* was filming the game. In just a few seconds the mestre gave a kick towards the Peruvian apprentice and the camera dropped off his hands and broke. He immediately apologized. When the *roda* ended, the mestre made a joke about Youtube and people publishing videos there. According to Porreta, who later on reflected upon the incident, the mestre's kick was deliberate. In fact, the mestre aimed to prevent someone from publishing and perhaps circulating a not very flattering, for him, moment. Consequently, the issue is not only whether others should benefit economically from their work and image. It is about how they manage and control the process through which their name and fame are constructed positively or conversely, are tarnished.

Facebook is a way to keep in touch with friends, relatives and in general, with people you choose to relate. It enables communication and self-representation. Moreover, it gives its users the opportunity to create or participate as members in more than one communities or groups and to organize or participate in various events. Since 2010 most Capoeira practitioners I met in Bahia use Facebook. Photos, videos, events, thoughts and ideas concerning their personal and social life, their joys and frustrations are posted on their Facebook profile. Yet, not all of them have Internet access or free time. However, it is a space where self-representation and communication on things new to Capoeira take place. Facebook facilitates a more direct representation since users can publish their own thoughts, ideas and performances and choose how to present them in public. Of course, in the case of older mestres, their wives or older apprentices usually take over the role of maintaining these profiles.

When I returned to Barcelona a photo album a girl from Germany, friend of the Capitães da Areia, was published on Facebook. It was titled: *"An appointment with*

your true self". It included photos of the Island and its landscape and close ups of the Capitães da Areia engaging into different activities. In another profile from a foreign Capoeira apprentice, photos of people from Africa and scenes from their everyday life captured during her dance associated travelling experiences, formed an 'exotic' backdrop that circulated on Facebook. Contrary to that, Mestre Prateado wanted to control the circulation of his images. Indeed, in social media a photo can circulate very fast and people that you do not know may not only see but furthermore use it without asking permission. The photo and the images they depict attain a life of their own. Therefore, the issue of intellectual ownership should also be considered in order to understand why some mestres refuse to pose for a photo.

Nonetheless, the same mestres show up in tributes to Bahian political authorities and their 'overexposure' in several other instances seems to contradict with their overall stance. But then again, they evaluate their actions considering future positive outcomes. Monetary transactions may also take place. Yet, some appear more polemic and others more flexible and easy going. The younger teachers and the ones who have not yet 'established their name' are more eager to pose for a photo. As a matter of fact, some like Prego, who insisted on tape recording his interview to have it as a sort of *"testimony"* (depoimento), enjoy exposing themselves. Constructing a positive and flattering image is desired. Nonetheless, learning together with specific mestres makes them more aware in relation to questions of representation and appropriation and while they may pose for a friend, they will refrain from posing to a researcher. Mestre Barão used to warn them about the dangers of "*giving*". In an interview at the program of the AbeiraMar Tv, he repeated a discourse he often elaborated during his events:

> *"All these mestres, they gave and they gave and what happened to them? They stayed anonymous. This is my fear. I do not want to make the same mistake… because Pastinha worked with his heart and I do not want to fall in my mestre's error. How did he die? I did not see any of them when he was abandoned at the shelter… Because everybody today talks about Pastinha but when he was in need, nobody gave him a hand. This is my preoccupation. And they used him. They used him a lot. They really did use him... Capoeira is the history of people who suffered, of resistance, of a fight. Why do they want to end with the history of the people and leave the history of the capitalist system? Capoeira is peace… They say that I am problematic and that every black man who comes and tells his story wants to create confusion. But I have my history. It is a history that*

comes from the past. It's the history of my people. My mirror is my mestre who gave all that glory to Bahia, to Brazil and the whole world and then, he died in misery causing pity. It is the example of Mestre Bobo, Mestre Caiçara and of so many others. Canjiquinha, and even Mestre Bimba. And that, upsets me…"

And in some other point:

"When I tell my history, it is because I am also people (povo). I am also black and I love my color and I am proud to be black."

Mestre Barão's preoccupation is to not end up like Mestre Pastinha and furthermore, to be able to write and tell his own story. Researchers might be ambivalent on their own ethical role and involvement. Nonetheless, they aim to collaborate with the subjects of study, understand their point of view and ideally, resolve issues that concern people in the field, human beings in general, and the academy. However successful or not, their endeavor presupposes respect and interest towards the subjects of study.Still, that does not mean that people in the field share their point of view. Where researchers see common interests or good intentions, the social actors might see manipulation, inequality and appropriation of ones' right to self determination. Cohen (2000 p.2) argues that the differences

"… which discriminate people on either side of a boundary are not just matters of degree or relativity (powerful/powerless; central/peripheral/; authentic/inauthentic) … but of kind: each party sees different issues being at stake, or the terms by which they perceive them may be incongruent and incommensurate."

Mestre Barão does not refer only to intellectuals and researchers but to all people, including Capoeira mestres and apprentices, who used Mestre Pastinha's name and his teachings without retributing thee favor while he was alive. This is a common narrative that even younger apprentices express when they discuss how others try to use their name and their knowledge and then, abandon them. I will return to this topic further in the thesis as it speaks on ideas of restrained desires, expectations and mutuality. Finally, Mestre Barão argues on who has the right to talk about Capoeira and its history. Being a Capoeira Angola mestre, he objects historians' questioning concerning Capoeira Angola's authenticity. He also questions the state's aim to define what Capoeira is and what kind of classifications should exist. Being black and

"people" give him the legitimate right to talk about history. Furthermore, I believe that Mestre Barão -due to his experiences- is more aware of the fact that:

> "History is precisely the organization of the past in terms of the present situation … [thus] culture is the organization of the present in terms of a past that is already organized by the present" (Friedman 1992 p.196).

3.7 Conclusions

In this chapter I presented the social and cultural field as it is defined by a series of places and different actors that communicate, interact, collaborate and challenge one another. The Historic Center turned out to be a tourist and ethnographic destination, a place people inhabited, a hostile environment, a *"place of reference"*, and a place where social actors returned to. The different aesthetical judgments made by residents, tourists, myself and State's representatives and institutions, demonstrate different objectives, motivations and interests and reveal how people may relate differently to each place. Defining one's place is relevant to his/her relation to other people and their respective places.

Finding a place in history, academy and in social media are constant preoccupations for researchers and the subjects of study alike. The ambivalences towards intellectuals reveal the ambiguous relationship between Bahian Capoeira practitioners without any formal education and local academics and deep suspicion towards the State, its institutions and representatives. At the same time, Capoeira mestres seem to privilege local over foreign researchers, or at least, it is expected that they do. Here again, there are boundaries structured around the implicit acknowledgment of a 'we' that dictates who has the right to represent whom, why and under what conditions. Writing about Bahian Capoeiras while being foreigner was perceived a colonizing act (also see Juschka 2003). But being Bahian and at the same time Capoeira practitioner and researcher, does not necessarily guarantee a free from conflicts and harmonious relationship. Consequently, representation, in the specific collectivities, is about asserting control over ones' own image, practices, name and person. It is intrinsically related with how they interpret motivations and interests and with inequalities that imply or reinforce boundaries in Bahia and outside its borders. Ultimately, it is about how Capoeira teachers and mestres want to *"make a name for themselves"*, circulate their image and acquire fame.

4. NOTES FROM THE FIELD – SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Definitions and Classifications

"Then someone comes and imposes a story upon it"

Defining Capoeira has long been subject of debate.[29] The urge to render intelligible what is unknown through the construction of classificatory/definitional theories constitutes an interesting process. Cohen (1985 p.12) argues that, "all definitions contain or imply theories".[30] Hence, they reflect our interests, needs and objectives. Classifications are ways to describe the world and most importantly, to think about the environment upon which we aim to act. As Keck (2010) writes, classifications take place especially when people face situations of uncertainty. In the case of Capoeira, changing classifications and definitions speak clearly about the implication of national,

[29] First, the origin and the meaning of the word 'Capoeira' have been greatly disputed. Some suggested it comes from the Tupi Guarani *caa-puêra* and means a deforestated piece of land. Others, say it is the name of a bird living in the Amazon or even a type of basket that slaves used to carry with them to the market (Abib 2004 p. 97-98). Second and in addition to etymological interpretations, Bahian journalists, since the sixties, offer various definitions depending on the historic moment and the purpose of the published article. Citing mestre Pastinha, 'A Tarde' defines Capoeira as 'art and healthy sport' (A Tarde, 22-02-1969). Actually, the local press participates in all debates and ideological conflicts on Capoeira. Newspapers like 'Noticias da Bahia' or 'A Tarde' are spaces of an intense political struggle molding opinions concerning the path Capoeira had taken and should follow. Thus, one can see political affiliations and alliances or discordance between Capoeira mestres, politicians, journalists, the State and other local and later on, non Bahian agents.

[30] Gelman and Legare (2011 p.379) argue that explanatory systems of knowledge are integral to human cognition. Even what these scholars call "intuitive" theories are not "neutral or passive snapshots of experience. Rather, they embody cognitive biases that influence thought and action. Moreover, quoting Waxman and Gelman, they argue that both theories and data- and by data they refer to sensory perceptions and experiences- interplay (ibid p.380) but knowledge cannot be reduced to one or the other.

transnational, local and community politics. Thus, Capoeira is described as art, martial art, playful game, life philosophy, way of life, culture, *"our culture"*, afrobrazilian culture, *"our history"*, education, profession, national sport, and lately, popular culture, and heritage.

Definitions are related to both interests and motivations. Motivations, according to Pina Cabral (2010 p.271), are defined by two parameters: "the categories of identity that inform an agent's motivational perceptions and […] the intersubjectively produced categories that characterize the field of action". All along with politics, there is the unspoken 'obligation' to define something using terms, concepts and words that can be understood by a wider audience and represent everyday and more tangible to them experiences.

Nowadays, even if most people are familiar with the name or even the practice itself, many still form the same question: *what is Capoeira*? Especially outside Bahia, people are puzzled as Capoeira seems familiar to what they already know, but yet, it is not exactly the same. Thus, it is difficult to classify it in pre-existing categories. In Barcelona, for example, even if people are familiar with the sight of Capoeira performances, especially during sunny days at the park, they often use verbs such as *"dance"* to define Capoeira's practice.[31] As such, Capoeira players *"dance"* Capoeira.

Studies on Capoeira, pamphlets distributed to inform and attract tourists in Salvador, as well as discourses during classes or events, all begin or eventually end up giving a definition of Capoeira. These definitions usually include information on its history and past as well as on the history and trajectory of the group that provides the information. What Capoeira is, as well as what Capoeira is not, are equally important. Thus, it is interesting that Capoeira is perceived as many different things that can be mutually exclusive and contradictory. For example, as social actors reflect upon it, it

[31] The insistence in using the verb 'dance' by non Capoeira practitioners as well as the need to classify Capoeira into pre-existing categories can also be understood by applying James (1981) observation that "We carve out order by leaving the disorderly parts out [. . .] We carve out everything, just as we carve out constellations, to suit our human purposes." Psychologists Gelman and Legare (2011 p.386) argue that "essentialist accounts" – and by that they refer to the acknowledgment of underlying commonalities underneath a supposed common appearance that leads to specific taxonomies and classifications- constitute a cognitive bias that we can trace in accounts that date back to Plato and Aristotle.

can be a fight and a dance, a game (jogo) or a fight camouflaged as dance,[32] sport and tradition. Mestre Barão, mestre of the Capitães da Areia mestre, during an event he organized in his academy at Salvador's historic center, quickly recited his almost all-encompassing definition: *"Capoeira is art, dance, malicia, philosophy, education but it is not a sport."* As in social categories, where the ones involving the most ambiguous symbolism are those whose "meanings are the most elusive, the hardest to pin down" (Cohen 1989 p.15), Capoeira's malleability and plasticity reveal a constellation of symbolisms, ambiguities and controversies that often generate conflicts.

Some definitions are prominent and have come to attain historical depth.[33] Others, are relatively new and build upon older ones or relate to ones' interests and lifestyle (Downey 2005). But in the end, all definitions seem to fail to quite capture it. Therefore, this confusion creates an impression of Capoeira being 'familiar' and 'exotic' at the same time. The challenge it poses is that there is always something more

[32] According to Drauzio (2005), the use of the word "game" (jogo) refers to the playful movements and sequences. Drauzio uses the word "lúdico" that can be translated as playful as well as festive. This term, I argue, refers not only to the movements but also to the time and place –the context- where Capoeira is enacted or at least is believed to have enacted in the past. Waldeloir Rego (1968) and Frede Abreu (2003), for example, mention festive occasions where Capoeira rodas took place in the past and emphasize its festive and leisure character. Returning to Drauzio, Capoeira can also be described as "dance" (dança). This quality is attributed due to the rhythm and the use of musical instruments in movements' execution. In other words, it makes reference to Capoeira's musical element. The third word used to describe Capoeira is "fight" (luta). According to the same author, the confrontational relationships that gave rise to Capoeira's existence in the past and have not yet seized, justify the use of this term (Drauzio 2005 p.2). The word "fight", however, is rather controversial. According to Lewis, the use of the word "play" opposes that of "fight" and Capoeira events are described as "brincandeiras" (children's games/plays) (Lewis 1992 p. 2).

[33] According to Magalhães (2011), these prominent definitions reflect the construction of a "hegemonic" Capoeira Angola tradition in Bahia that silences other Capoeira Angola voices and actors. However, more than a hegemonic Capoeira Angola tradition in Bahia, nowadays and after Capoeira's nomination as Brazilian Immaterial Heritage, there are also disputes at a national and transnational level. The lines even between what is called Capoeira Regional and Angola are blurred. In this context, it is difficult to clarify whether the distinction between what today is called Capoeira Angola and Regional has always been the same.

to it that renders it impossible to apprehend. Learning Capoeira is perceived as a process of constant apprenticeship through spoken and unspoken ways (also see Downey 2005). Of course, various Bahian mestres or younger practitioners contribute to this idea. Mestre Ticum from the small town of Santo Amaro during an event said: *"Capoeira has no limit."*

In these discourses Capoeira is personified and presented as boundless and all encompassing. As I discuss in more detail in subsequent chapters, Capoeira is sometimes perceived as being above and beyond the people who practice it. This sort of mystification, the fact that it has not limits, along with secrecy or the 'untamed' element of both Capoeira and its Bahian practitioners, are barely subtext as the following quotes from Mestre Canjiquinha and Mestre Pastinha, respectively, demonstrate:

> *"Capoeira is joy, enchantment and secret."*[34]

> *"Capoeira requires a sort of secrecy, loyalty with your colleagues (companheiros de jogo) and absolute obedience to the patterns that rule it"*[35]

Thus, Capoeira, despite its practitioners', researchers' and intellectuals' best efforts to render it intelligible, still appears to be elusive yet precise in its relative imprecision.

More important than the secret itself is the promise of a secret; the promise of a secret knowledge. The prerequisite to get to it or to have it revealed to you is similar to the difficulty to *'domesticate'* the people who embody it. It was all this strenuous effort

[34] Mestre Canjiquinha- Washington Bruno da Silva- was born in 1925 in Salvador, in Maciel de Baixo. Son of a poor family, he was raised by his mother. He worked as a shoemaker, at the Sport Club of Ipiranga and selling food. He learnt Capoeira with mestre Aberre. Canjiquinha, Capoeira's joy (a alegria da Capoeira), as they used to call him, participated in many Capoeira performances that were considered folkloric, thus, created more conflicts among Capoeira mestres in Bahia (Abib 2004).

[35] Vicente Ferreira de Pastinha, or mestre Pastinha, was born in the end of the 19th century. According to his narratives, he learnt Capoeira with an African named Benedito. Later on, in 1940, he took over the *"roda of Gengibirra"* where several Capoeira practitioners of the time used to frequent. Jorge Amado's and Carybe's friend, he taught Capoeira Angola in Pelourinho. In the process of Capoeira's valorization, he became known as "Capoeira Angola's father" in opposition to mestre Bimba and his Capoeira Regional Baiana (Abib 2004 pp.154-155).

to create some sort of mystery in all possible ways that captured my attention. This vagueness and polyvalence are related to how Capoeira's past is perceived, negotiated and connected to the present. It is a constant effort to define one's place in the world, and thus, as I have already commented, it is also politically charged. In the face of that, I decided not to ask so much about the content of the secret, but inquire into the mechanisms by which it is constructed and through which it gets disseminated. Moreover, instead of citing all possible definitions, I will try to clarify how specific social actors from the Capitães da Areia define Capoeira - *their* Capoeira- and how they experience and relate to it considering the broad social and cultural spectrum in which they are embedded.

But, starting right where the field research ended, I will discuss an incident that took place in Barcelona. On May 2012, I finally met Gato, a Bahian teacher who lived in Lille. He was invited –along with other Capitães da Areia teachers who live in France, Cachaça, Cloe and Nana- to participate in an event organized by the group in Barcelona. As we were sitting at the park of Ciutadella watching Cachaça giving class, Gato gave me his own explanation on Capoeira's definitions. It could be considered as a concluding remark in this entire quest for definitions, approaches, explanations and the related conflicts. When I asked him what Capoeira is, he said:

> *"Everyone has his own philosophy. Even among us, each one has his own style… his philosophy. Then, someone comes and imposes a story upon it. I do things my way."*

His remark was disarmingly simple and profound at the same time. Instead of giving a clear definition, he commented on the mechanisms behind every definition. Questioning the validity of all definitions and their fictitious character, he demonstrated awareness of processes I hesitated to discuss with him. Definitions and discourses are of value but of a relative one, at least, among Capitães da Areia. *"People come and impose stories"*. I recalled Neguinho's unwillingness to assist in older mestres' gatherings back at the Forte de Santo Antonio in Salvador. He used to say:

> *"Why should I go there? To listen to the older mestres stupidities? I have already heard all that. The same old things over and over again. They talk and argue over the same things, who is the best and all that."*

If people create *"stories"*, this is because they probably want to tell these *"stories"* to other people willing to listen to them or maybe they feel they have to. An afternoon sitting at Mestre Moreno's porch at the Island, Camarão told me:

> *"It is especially the foreigners. All these gringos have given power to the old mestres. They imitate the way they play and do as they say."*

On another occasion, Leão while preparing his suitcase to Israel, said:

> *"Foreign students are responsible for this. They have made all these mestres behave like that. They have idolized them as well as their stories."*

After saying that, he connected to the Internet and showed me a text he had written. He named it "Capoeira's Demystification". There, in a polemical mood he argues:

> *"Many Mestres and tutors (scholars) will talk about Capoeira's Movement and they will impress with their historical and anthropological discourses. Many people will become blind by their words' beauty and veracity. Thus, they will carry on their theories deceived by words and didactic expressions and they will not experience the magic and liberating consciousness that Capoeira has to offer to the being in an existential action."*

I assisted several gatherings, events, tributes and reunions. Depending on the organizer, young Capitães da Areia would choose when to participate. As I also discuss in Chapter Six, gatherings aiming to bring Bahian mestres together –especially, Capoeira Angola mestres- to celebrate an event, book presentations or commemorations of Mestre Pastinha's death, were important occasions. During them, they redefined their relationships, expressed comments on changes in Capoeira, its history and ambivalent relationship with the State, with local communities, foreign practitioners and researchers. These preoccupations in Bahia –but not so much in Barcelona- were also articulated during workshops or film making in the town of Santo Amaro. The tributes to Mestre Ticum and Mestre Pequeno, also discussed in Chapter Six, are exemplary.

All these discursive practices shape and speak about practitioners' identities. They draw symbolic boundaries that separate those who embrace the same symbols –or at least, embrace the meanings attributed to common symbols- from others.

> Symbolic boundaries are conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space. They are tools by which individuals and groups struggle over and come to agree upon definitions of reality. Examining them allows us to capture the dynamic dimensions of social relations, as groups compete in the production, diffusion, and institutionalization of alternative systems and principles of classifications" (Lamont and Molnar 2002 p.168).

However, in order to decipher the meanings of the symbols in relation to the subjects of study, it is necessary to trace how they came to exist and understand Capoeira's history or histories. Qualities, values and ideas are not properties inherent to Capoeira. Even the negation of definitions, as in Gato's case, is a kind of definition, of a different order but still, a definition. To this aim, we should keep in mind that Capoeira's definitions and interpretations of its past are embedded in processes of nation formation, of a Bahian and national identity articulation and of local and personal projects and politics. After all, it is these personal projects and the way they relate or shed light to broader political and social issues, that interest me and I discuss throughout the dissertation.

4.2 Capoeira's (Hi)stories

> *"The past? Everybody knows about the past"* (Professor)

It is difficult to briefly write Capoeira's history. This task often leads to rather schematic and oversimplified representations. Even if for the purposes of the study it is necessary to find a way to inform the reader in order to place the social subjects in their context, there is always the danger to contribute in stereotypic representations by silencing voices and choosing dominant representations over others. But Capoeira's history –being the story of people and their places- follows multiple paths and is characterized by as many twists as the people who make it. Yet, this is not a study on oral history or history. It is an anthropological study that aims to comprehend how specific social actors today, relate and give meaning to their practices. In order to make it possible we have to consider the historic and social context and the discourses and practices that prevail and influence them.[36]

[36] Luckily, the last decade, social historians in Bahia (Liberac Cardoso Simões Pires 2001, Pires de Oliveira 2004, Albert Dias 2009, Abreu 2003 and 2005) have shifted their interests to the

Until a few years ago heated debates concerning Capoeira's origins took place. The main question was whether it came from Africa or Brazil. Some opted for a solution in the middle: it was actually invented by African slaves in Brazil and used as a way of resistance to colonial domination (Assunção 2004 p.5-6).[37] As Pires de Oliveira (2009 p.43) puts it, Capoeira's origins are traced in African slaves' and their descendants' experiences in Brazilian territory. Eventually, though, questions on origins end up revealing more about those who ask them than the topic under question.

During the colonial era, according to Assunção (2004), Capoeira was looked down. It was perceived as offensive to the public. If any freedman or slave was caught practicing it, he was punished and whipped (ibid p.9). Nevertheless, many studies, especially the last decade, examine how Capoeira practitioners collaborated with local elites or even the police at the time. Hence, not only its description but also its political uses and connotations are problematized. Historians today suggest that in times of elections or manifestations, Capoeira practitioners collaborated with political parties using physical force and Capoeira movements against their rivals. These ambivalent relationships with the authorities are used as an argument to question whether and to what extent Capoeira was actually a liberating practice. The fact that many old mestres I interviewed were policemen in the past or were recruited in the Navy, may perhaps seem incoherent to those who understand the concept of resistance in specific ways. Still, as many mestres today argue, Capoeira was also a kind of personal defense. During an interview, Mestre Chapeu told me that he learnt Capoeira to defend himself while working. Personal defense is a discourse widely expressed. Perhaps, it reveals

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study of everyday social life in urban Salvador focusing on a plurality of diverse social actors that shaped Capoeira's past and present. This movement, along with shifts in the discipline of history and its research methods, is perhaps related to current processes. Indeed, the rediscovery of other important actors in Capoeira's social and cultural worlds –others than the prominent figures of Mestre Bimba and Pastinha- is related to attempts to identify a number of local agents in order to root Capoeira in its place, Bahia. Similarly, all these historic figures can be evoked to legitimize mestres who are not affiliated directly with Mestre Pastinha and Mestre Bimba.

[37] Andrade Amaral (2011 p.3), for example, who is interested in the study of a diasporic African culture, suggests that Capoeira should not be understood as "reminiscent" of a tradition anchored in specific origins or roots but rather as a diasporic culture, result of practices of resistance, adaptation, hybridity and negotiation. Thus, he decides to take the discussion to a different place.

changes in the practice of Capoeira that took place during the 1930s and I discuss in the following paragraphs. Interestingly enough, the idea of Capoeira as personal defense might not be altogether different from specific understandings of it as arm of resistance or even, a form of liberation.

In the years of Independence there were relatively few regulations concerning Capoeira. However, after the proclamation of the Republic in 1889 the Brazilian elites considered it a barbaric practice that had to be controlled and if possible, forbidden. It was the time when processes of "hygienization" took place (Assunção 2004 p.10). Capoeira had no place in a modern society aiming to evolve following European paradigms. In addition, researchers suggest that the relationship between politicians and Capoeira practitioners and their dubious involvement in political life, motivated a series of measures taken against them (see Vassallo 2003). Thus, the Criminal Code of 1890 on vagrants and Capoeiras, due to the Republic's civilizatory agenda, considered both idleness and practicing Capoeira, crimes (Albert Dias 2006; Assunção 2004).

As such, during the nineteenth century as well as in the beginnings of the twentieth century, Capoeira was still associated with marginalized people and street life.[38] Late in the 1930s there was a shift in politics. Romantic ideas on purity in culture emerge and Capoeira attains positive connotations. Intellectuals and artists such as Carybe, Pierre Verger and Jorge Amado and social scientists such as Arthur Ramos and Gilberto Freyre, encouraged a different approach towards what would be considered

[38] Recent historical studies describe "Capoeira's culture" of the time as intrinsically related to the streets of urban Salvador. Research in police and newspapers' archives has brought into light valuable information on everyday life in the end of the 19th as well as in the 20th century. Conflicts due to territorial issues, passion crimes and street fights are identified as possible involvement of Capoeiras. Abreu (2003) mentions Capoeiras such as Porreta and Guaxini and Albert Dias (2004 & 2006) talks about the values, social practices and strategies of the people who formed part of the "street universe". According to Albert Dias, these people were in between two worlds, that of hard work and that of the street. They used Capoeira both in their leisure activities and during conflict resolution. Their values were related with territorial politics, an idle and *bohemian* lifestyle (malandragem) and the construction of masculine identities. Among them she distinguishes bravery (valentia). In the Bahian press they were called "vagabundos", "desordeiros" and "valentões" (also see Pires de Oliveira 2009 and Magalhães 2011).

Afrobrazilian cultural manifestations and traditions (Pires de Oliveira 2005 p. 48). From that time on and until the 1960s folkloric studies flourish.

These changes in Capoeira's status are associated with two Capoeira mestres from Bahia: Mestre Bimba and Mestre Pastinha. However, it was the historic moment and the political scenery of the time that framed their activities. Liberac (2009 p.22) mentions that in 1937 –the year that Mestre Bimba gave a Capoeira performance for president Getulio Vargas- an AfroBrazilian congress took place in Salvador aiming to establish and define the conditions of a dialogue between intellectuals and cultural agents.[39] Historian Frede Abreu, during a personal interview, argued that Mestre Bimba was a very intelligent man of his time. In his words:

> "*Mestre Bimba understood what was going on in his time. He wanted to change Capoeira's status. He went with his Capoeira and made them accept him*."

Bimba is defined by his apprentice and also historian, Muniz Sondré (2002 p.11) as "one of the last great figures of what could be called the heroic cycle of blacks in Bahia".

Mestre Bimba aspired to show that Capoeira was not a mere folkloric manifestation neither a practice related to outcasts and the street culture of the '*valentões*' of the late 19th and early 20th century. He presented it as an efficient self-defense method. To this aim, he introduced a series of movements, that many sustain were inspired from jiu-jitsu and other martial arts, preparing his students for any kind of combat. Then, he named it "Regional Bahian Fight" (Luta Regional Baiana), since Capoeira was still prohibited (Magalhaes 2011 p.21). He also introduced novelties like white trousers (abadas) and a system of graduation with the use of belts similar to the ones in martial arts. In addition, he insisted that his students had a job and were not idle. That meant that they had to show a working card in order to attend classes. In 1937, he inaugurated the first legal Capoeira academy, the 'Centre of Regional Physical Culture'. Today, he is accused or praised for making Capoeira appeal to people from the middle

[39] Under Getulio Vargas presidency and the attempts to discover the roots of a national identity, miscegenation was considered positively. It was a genuine and unique Brazilian characteristic (Albert Dias 2004, 2006). In this political scenery and presented as product of miscegenation, Capoeira, had to be appropriated by the State as its national emblem.

and upper classes. Among his students there were lawyers, doctors and university students.

The other prominent historic figure is Mestre Pastinha. After leaving the Navy, Mestre Pastinha, according to Magalhães (2011), founded a Capoeira Angola school in Campo da Polvora. Later on, and after facing conflicts with other mestres of his time, he established the 'Sports Centre of Capoeira Angola' and decided to be the only mestre maintaining, however, ties with other Bahian Capoeira Angola mestres. Mestre Pastinha also wanted to escape all associations with street life, violence and marginalization. Paulo Magalhaes (2011) who acknowledges the existence of a traditional Bahian Capoeira prior to Mestre Pastinha, suggests that after these innovations and the creation of the 'Sports Centre of Capoeira Angola' the gap between Mestre Pastinha and his contemporaries, grew even more.

Mestre Pastinha introduced innovations too: a yellow and black uniform after his favorite football team –'Ypiranga'-, a graduation system with diplomas, and he systematized Capoeira's movements and Capoeira's music elements. Since then, Capoeira Angola groups use the same kind of instruments that Mestre Pastinha established but they do not all appear in the same order: *atabaque, agogo,* two *pandeiros, reco –reco* and three *berimbaus.* Finally, his students would have to wear shoes. More importantly, his innovations were presented as an effort to re-establish Capoeira's connection with its tradition and thus, were considered purist. Carneiro (1937 p.149), a folklorist and communist of the time, argued that Capoeira Angola was Capoeira's purest form. In fact, Capoeira Angola until today is considered the *"mother Capoeira"*. Paulo Magalhaes (2011) discusses how mestre Pastinha was related to prominent figures that belonged to the communist party, while mestre Bimba was associated with the Nationalist political party. However, Mestre Bimba had many communist students and inversely Pastinha had nationalist ones. Thus, it is difficult to claim that they had a clear and specific political identity.

Mestre Bimba and Pastinha, two different personalities, as they are commonly portrayed in all history texts, became the 'fathers' of two different genealogies. These genealogies gave legitimization and at the same time 'haunted' their contemporaries, as well as future generations. The two different traditions, lines or Capoeira styles they established, will both struggle to occupy a proper space by cooperating with and antagonizing one another (also see, Britto 2010). Depending on personal and collective

projects, they will be criticized as less or more pure, as traditional or modern, or as having contributed to Capoeira's commodification, preservation and folklorization.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Bahian local press comments on Capoeira's continuous transformation. There is an expressed need to contain it and create a national sport. However, as in all articles and politics on Capoeira, there are several contradictions. Thus, according to an article published in the newspaper 'A Tarde':

> Capoeira is no longer a popular thing (coisa do povo). It has turned into dance or fight following specific patterns… Each one is trying to create a type: angola or regional, or most of the times, a variant of both… Capoeira could become national sport and national pride. However, it has turned into a mere theatrical show… performed with originality and dexterity… But it stopped being folklore to become theater. It has lost its popular taste (sabor do povo) and it has transformed into a script due to a dubious historical literature ('A Tarde' 06-03-1967, my translation).

Here, the article expresses a preoccupation of Capoeira having lost its "popular" character and appeal. Transforming it into a national sport or "pride" was suggested as a solution. In addition, as a sport Capoeira would enter in competitions. But more importantly, it would indicate and promote a 'healthy' lifestyle quite different from the one in the past and I would argue, still present.[40] The only problem would be how to achieve that transformation.

The process of Capoeira's further institutionalization came along with the making of academies, federations and associations. Its further bureaucratization and its conception as national sport, caused conflicts and debates. Carlos Senna, Capoeira mestre from the *turma de Bimba* –a former Mestre Bimba's apprentice- identified personal interests and motivations:

> There was a beautiful but very poor woman. She lived an erroneous life. She had no relatives and family. Suddenly, she became wealthy and beautiful and then, thousands of parents and relatives showed up… If China has Kung Fu and Japan

[40] The efforts to discipline Capoeira practitioners' body and practices are still present under a different guise. The inducements to avoid alcohol and marihuana are characteristic.

> Gigorokamo, why can't we develop mestre Bimba's legendary figure? ('Diario de Noticias' 01-07-1974, my translation).

The article, without denying that Capoeira is Brazil's national sport, suggests ways to regulate it. According to Carlos Senna the important issue was who should participate in these processes and whether they had some knowledge of Capoeira. A sense of Capoeira's "disempowerment" (enfraquecimento) and "devaluation" (desvirtuando o esporte) are present in the same article. For Senna, Bimba's Capoeira Regional was also changing: from the outfits practitioners wore to a less number of strikes (golpes).

Several months before this article appeared, the same newspaper published an interview with Mestre Totonho de Mare, a Capoeira Angola mestre who started playing Capoeira in 1911. The article was titled: "*Totonho de Mare still Remembers the Fight (luta)*". His view was expressed eloquently:

> Then, came mestre Bimba and he mixed up everything. This, also happened under the influence of jiu-jitsu. Before him, there was only Capoeira Angola ('Diario de Noticias' 13-02-1974, my translation).

But for him, even Capoeira Angola had changed:

> Capoeira Angola was once beautiful. Today, it is not genuine. Back then, you did not have to pay. They did it out of love for the art… Today, Capoeira is more valued… The high roda (alta roda) frequents. Today, they teach Capoeira to the upper class's sons (filhinhos de papai) ('Diario de Noticias' 13-02-1974, my translation).

This is just an example of the turbulent discussions that took place almost forty years ago and have not yet seized. They all demonstrate that not only Capoeira Regional opened the way to changes and the doors to upper class practitioners. Indeed, debates and conflicts among 'Angoleiros' were also present as much as they are today.

During the 1970s Capoeira practitioners from Bahia started to migrate to Europe and the USA. In the 1980s and due to the Black Social Movement's impact, intellectuals' interest and Capoeira's globalization, a process of re-discovering Capoeira Angola emerged. Having been associated with folkloric presentations, Capoeira Angola was seen as *"old people's thing"* that had no appeal to young people. But that started to

change. Mestre Prateado in an interview for the magazine 'Nova Referência' in 2002, emphasized:

> Then it changed... I mean that conception of Capoeira being a street fight (briga) and being marginal. It changed due to a cultural process, a process of consciousness. There you could see the blocos afro, Ile Aye, Olodum. It was all that valorization of black culture... Since then, up to the present, we keep adding by making new discoveries in relation to Capoeira, a new political consciousness-back then we did not have all that consciousness.

In this short abstract, as well as in other parts of the article, Mestre Prateado discusses Capoeira's relation with the Black Movement and the debates and ideas concerning black identity and culture.

Summing up, from the 1930s up to the 1980s, Capoeira has been depicted as "folklore", "national sport", "fight", "black culture", and "afrobrazilian cultural manifestation". After the 1980s, Capoeira practitioners travelled all over the world more than ever before in the past. Engaging in transnational activities sustained by their own networks, they carried along an important cultural and social baggage. Nevertheless, some argue that Capoeira's big explosion during the 1990s is fading away. In Barcelona, for example, some Capoeira teachers believe that there is no longer the same interest. Others claim that too many teachers have left Bahia and there is no place for all. Older mestres in Bahia, for their own reasons and comparing to their experiences, believe that there is a kind of closure. Mestre Prateado in an interview said:

> *"The whole thing just collapsed. It dropped because it just did".*

Mestre Prateado's reflection should not be perceived as mere pessimism. His observation is important to understand how older and younger generations experience their practices today and think about change. It has political connotations and is related to identity politics and processes of closure that take place in Bahia.

In spite of everything, in 2007 the program *Capoeira Viva* funded projects, ideas and actions that aimed to contribute to Capoeira's valorisation by safeguarding tradition and using it as an instrument of citizenship and social inclusion. Many of the mestres I talked to, while in Bahia, were at the time still working in a variety of funded projects.

In 2008 Capoeira was acknowledged as Brazil's Immaterial Cultural Heritage. The proposal was prepared and presented by an interdisciplinary committee in which both anthropologists and historians participated. The spirit of the registration was that of preservation and active participation. Accordingly, mestre's office was included in the Book of Knowledge and Capoeira's roda in the Book of Forms of Expression. This nomination also advocated a series of measures to give economic benefits to older mestres, measures for the protection of the beriba wood used in the making of berimbau and the creation of a Capoeira National Centre of Reference. In a private conversation with the Bahian historian Frede Abreu, I was told that it was the mestres' themselves who struggled to achieve this nomination. He also commented:

> *"But I wonder if anything is really going to change. I have serious reasons to doubt it."*

Still, several mestres criticized Capoeira's nomination in terms of lack of transparency and participation. Many mestres also expressed mistrust towards the State and its politics. In addition and most importantly, the use of the word "Brazilian" was also questioned. During a commemorative event, Mestre Barão observed:

> *"And they said it is Brazilian! Brazilian? They are taking away our origin. It is not Brazilian. It is Afrobrazilian."*

Hence, once again the nomination brought questions about ownership, ethnic identities and representations. Mestre Barão, here, is not denying his own national identity of being Brazilian. However, today's nomination brings under a different guise the heated debates on origins that in the past were resolved by a subtle Brazilian nationalism. Removing the suffix "afro" suggests a total appropriation of Capoeira by the Brazilian State leaving aside the role that Afrobrazilians have played. Thus, according, to Mestre Barão, the social actors are left aside and their history is coarsed.

But there are more agents at play. It is characteristic that the Secretary of Tourism in Bahia is also currently working on a project on mapping Capoeira in order to promote ethnic tourism. As a matter of fact, the last couple of years, a number of initiatives by Bahian, as well as Federal authorities, to map and register Capoeira practitioners and groups have taken place. As Bahian mestres argue and as articles in the Bahian press of the last three decades show, it is clear that it is not a new phenomenon. Mestre Prateado's skepticism and lack of interest when I introduced him

to a friend of mine who works at the Iphan (Institute of Historic, Artistic and Cultural Heritage) is related to his past experiences. He commented: "*They always come to register.*" Registering and controlling, after all, are State's tasks. As a matter of fact, since 2010 anthropologists' collaborate as mediators between local practitioners and local and national committees in a project aiming to nationally register Capoeira.[41]

Amongst all these controversial and politically charged definitions, Capoeira is further discussed as symbol of peace and "Capoeira Rodas For Peace", bringing together Capoeira's "old guard" mestres (velha guarda), take place every Christmas in Salvador's historic Centre. Finally, the official tourist site of Bahia describes Capoeira as an all encompassing practice: a martial art, mixture of dance and fight, philosophy of life, personal defense system originating from African slaves brought in Brazil; a local afrobrazilian fight that conquered the world. Thus, from being persecuted and stigmatized as 'pathology', Capoeira has become a different kind of symbol, or even better, a constellation of symbols. Whether its Bahian practitioners are still stigmatized as "pathology" and discriminated or not, how they evaluate changes and understand their practices will be discussed further in the thesis.

[41] According to the Iphan, the objective is to map "Capoeira's universe by identifying mestres, professors, instructors, groups, individual researchers, research institutes and all kind of entities that bring together Capoeira groups". This initiative is taken by the Iphan, the Secretary of Cultural and Identity Diversity, the Secretary of Cultural Politics and the Palmares' Foundation of the Ministry of Culture (portaldocapoeira.com).

Presidente Vargas, Quando Viu um Jôgo de Capoeira, Disse:

Este é o Unico e Verdadeiro Esporte Puramente Nacional!

(8a-e) Debating Capoeira Definitions in the Press.

(8a) Jornal da Bahia, 02 Feb. 1963.

(8b) A Tarde, 14 Aug. 1983.

CAPOEIRA, LUTA OU ESPORTE?

O berimbau soa notas nostálgicas. Os mestres, de roupa imaculadamente branca, agacham-se próximo aos instrumentos e fazem uma prece, acompanhados do lamento de uma ladainha. Pouco depois o berimbau muda o toque e bate forte. Os mestres tocam com a ponta dos dedos nos instrumentos e no chão e se benzem. Um canto corrido é levado pelos marcadores do ritmo e tem início a capoeira.

(8c) A Tarde, 23 Sept. 1974.

Capoeira baiana agora é matéria de universidade

O principal elogio para a decisão da UCSal, em transformar a capoeira em matéria obrigatória do currículo de Educação Física, é dado por Josevaldo Lima de Jesus, o mestre Saci, primeiro campeão brasileiro

E o impasse crescia quando se sabia que outras escolas de Educação Física do Brasil já possuíam curso superior de capoeira. Isto é, a luta era ensinada como matéria. Como era o caso da Universidade Federal e da Gama Filho, no Rio de Por-

vantam o braço. Mas se a gente pergunta "quem quer aprender capoeira, que sabe capoeira" quase que a sala toda levanta o braço. É o tal negócio o menininho fica lá, o tempo inteiro olhando o pai jogar capoeira, o irmão

(8d) Jornal da Bahia, 02 Feb. 1963.

É, camará, a capoeira é patrimônio cultural!

(8e) A Tarde, 16 Jul. 2008.

4.3 Capitães da Areia

4.3.1. *"The Guys From the Island"*

"What is the point of being a Capoeira if you don't feel pain?"

My main focus here is how the subjects of study – the Capitães da Areia- define and understand *their* Capoeira and in what cases and how they evoke history.

Historian Frede Abreu referred to them, smiling, as *"the guys from the island"* (a galera da ilha). Their real name – that in order to maintain their privacy I have changed- suggests they are Capoeira Angola practitioners. Their collectivity was formed in 1999 with Mestre Moreno's arrival to the island. However, there is a confusion concerning the beginnings of the group. According to their narrations, two people marked their history: Mestre Prateado and Mestre Moreno. Normally, in each Capoeira collectivity there can be only one mestre. Therefore, the particularity of being related to two mestres has had an impact on their learning experiences, identity formation, politics and ways of intercollectivity relatedness.[42] Both mestres' aspirations and personal trajectories are of great importance as they dispute over their apprentices. As Bateson (1980) argues, what makes history unpredictable are the changes brought by and instrinsically related to individual trajectories.

[42] At this point I would like to clarify the terms I use when refering to the subjects of study. When talking about Capitães da Areia or similar Capoeira formations, I interchange between the use of the term "group" as it is colloquially employed by them; and "collectivity" in relation to how Marily Strathern (1988) defines the "collective". She says (ibid p.48):

By collective, I mean forms of activity in which persons come together on the basis of shared characteristics. What they hold in common is regarded as the rationale of their concerted action. This is usually group affiliation or gender. Shared characteristics may lead to sharing actions, or they may promote competition and rivalry over what is not shared. Thus, I define as collective action not simply the mobilized internal solidarity of clan groups but relations between clans where they are divided by something to which they can all lay claim such as their names or reputations and individual histories.

I further use the term "community" (comunidade) to refer to the Bahian Capoeira community or the Capoeira community in general, as they are also reffered to by the subjects of study.

Mestre Prateado is a black man of about sixty years old. As I have already mentioned, he owns an *'atelier'*, a shop of percussion instruments in Salvador's historic center. Most Capitães da Areia have been, and in the case of Professor still are, his apprentices. Once, Leão implied that there are things that he never teaches. Others, such as Neguinho, from time to time reflect on their *"luck"* to have learnt from him how to fabricate instruments while getting some money for it. In other occasions, they comment on the difficulties and hardships in working and learning at the *"shop"*. Perna said:

> *"I worked there for six years. The mestre and his wife, at the time, were almost always away, travelling. Thus, I was left most of the time on my own. I had to look after the shop; I had to make way too many instruments every day; and be responsible for the rooms he rents. Too much work. From 7 o'clock in the morning until 7 o'clock in the afternoon. And then, I had Capoeira class. After that, I would take the bike and go home all the way to Vitoria. Now, I work for myself. I am on my own in the island and I have peace of mind. Sometimes, I even sell to the mestre, if he asks. I use material I find in the island, wood and metal I find at the beach, materials that other people used…they are old and they don't need them anymore."*

But Mestre Prateado did not have an easy life either. He was born in Salvador in a poor neighborhood and was raised by his mother. To my surprise, he first learnt Capoeira with Mestre Bimba. Today, he explains his choice by saying that back then he had *"no consciousness/awareness"* of what was Angola or Regional. As he says in his documentary on his Capoeira and his "Capoeira Angola Nucleo":

> *"One day, in Pelourinho, I heard the sound of the berimbau. It was Mestre Pastinha at the time. I went up to see, but since I did not have consciousness of what was Angola or Regional, since I did not have cultural consciousness, I did not like it…I kept on with my search for finding out what Capoeira was all about. One day, walking up to Maciel de Cima, todays Rua das Laranjeiras, I heard Capoeira music. I went up… There was Mestre Bimba and I said: 'This is my place (a minha praia)'. There was Saçi, Filhote de Onça, Bira Acordeon, Camisa Roxa… so, I was registered there."*

Mestre Prateado explains that since he was young, he preferred the fast rhythm and the physicality of Mestre Bimba's Capoeira. However, later on, while he was learning

Capoeira with Mestre Bimba, he got to know Mestre Canjiquinha's students. They became friends and then, Mestre Canjiquinha accepted him as student. For him, Mestre Canjiquinha was a *"hero"*. He was among the first Capoeiras who travelled with folkloric groups and thus, influenced Mestre Prateado's perception in relation to Capoeira. Mestre Prateado became member of Canjiquinha's folkloric group and started travelling in Brazil. After his involvement with people from the Candomble, he started working with the *"ogans"* percussion instruments[43]. Then, in Rio de Janeiro he met the Capoeira group Senzala, another Capoeira Regional group, and the Theatre of the Oppressed (Teatro do oprimido). After that, he started travelling all over Europe. In 1980 he returned to Salvador with his wife and decided to move to the Island where he still lives.

I met Mestre Moreno at one of his Bahian apprentice's house when he came to Bahia from England. He arrived along with some of his students from London. At the time he used to share a flat in London with his student, Passarinho. Mestre Moreno was very busy constructing his house and a hostel on the second floor where he was planning to rent rooms to Capoeira practitioners and his foreign students. He is about 50 years old and was born in Salvador. His appearance was quite different from that of Mestre Prateado. He is younger, *"moreno"* and with short hair. He learnt Capoeira Angola with Mestre Barão in Pelourinho.

Mestre Barão, one of the Bahian mestres who received the title of the *"guardian of tradition"*, is considered by the Capitães da Areia as their *"grandfather"*. He has two schools, as he calls them, in Salvador: one in Pelourinho and a relatively recent one, in the Forte de Santo Antonio. He advocates Capoeira Angola's afrobrazilian origins and organizes commemorative events where he exposes his ideas on Capoeira's present situation. He frequently invites representatives of the authorities where they discuss public policies and debate changes and issues related to Capoeira. While I was there, and in the absence of Mestre Moreno who was in Europe, some Capitães da Areia visited his school to attend a roda. However, they were somewhat discouraged by Mestre Barão for playing *"way too violently"* and being *"disrespectful"*. He then added: *"Didn't your mestre teach you how to respect?"* and Porreta claimed to have replied: *"Our mestre taught us the kind of respect he learnt*

[43] *"Ogan"* is a male title given to people who offer their services and support Candomble houses.

from his own mestre". The tension between their own mestre and their mestre's mestre and their different way of playing Capoeira perhaps affected their decision to never return.

This tension perhaps dates back in 1999 when, or right after, Mestre Moreno received his title of mestre by the ABCA (Brazilian Association of Capoeira Angola). Mestre Barão used to say that Mestre Moreno *"modified"* his Capoeira, implying at the same time lack of respect. Nonetheless, the latter denied the changes and suggested other reasons and motivations behind his mestre's disapproval.

Back in the 1990s, when Mestre Moreno was still a trainer (trenel), he was friends with Mestre Prateado. When the latter left Bahia, he is supposed to have let Mestre Moreno know that there were many young boys on the Island learning Capoeira with him or interested in learning Capoeira. Accordingly, he suggested he should go there and that is what Mestre Moreno he did. But nobody actually knows or wants to tell how the story was. How things happened is somewhat blurred or left aside. Some say: *"That is what I have heard"*, or *"Don't ask. Better leave it the way it is"*. In 1999, Mestre Moreno founded the "Capoeira Cultural Centre Capitães da Areia" in the fishing village of Concha. When Mestre Prateado returned, many of the young boys kept on sharing their learning experiences by being Mestre Moreno's apprentices in Capoeira and learning how to play music and make instruments with Mestre Prateado. Thus, for them both are *their* mestres. As Prego says:

> *"With Mestre Moreno I found out what Capoeira is about. Then, there in Pelourinho, at the Terreiro de Jesus, I discovered real Capoeira. It was that side, the percussionist one that really helped Capitães da Areia."*

The relationship between the two mestres has its ups and downs. Today, Mestre Prateado affirms that he has nothing to do with Capitães da Areia history. He had decided a more autonomous path in the sense that he is responsible for his own "Cultural Nucleo" of the street Capoeira Angola, where Capitães da Areia also participate and intersect their paths with his. Overall, though, these apprentices are claimed and disputed by both mestres. Professor is still Mestre Prateado's apprentice and member of the Capitães da Areia, while the Capitães da Areia who live in Bahia or return for holidays, always visit him and frequent his *"shop"* (*loja*). They also participate at the *roda* he organizes at the Terreiro de Jesus every Friday, as well as in every event.

While I was in Bahia and since Mestre Moreno was travelling in Europe, his students spent most of their time with Mestre Prateado. Thus, it is important to have in mind that young Capitães da Areia can claim legitimacy from people who followed different paths, visions and ideas and can define their Capoeira in seemingly contradictory ways. They can be associated with both sides and built upon different elements. Indeed, they often make a distinction, a *'division of labor'*. Camarão said:

> *"Mestre Prateado's Capoeira is more related with the old and spontaneous tradition, like street Capoeira. Mestre Moreno's Capoeira is based in more modern Capoeira. There is that thing of the group and the uniforms in moderm times. Mestre Prateado is safeguarding Capoeira's culture in its true tradition."*

Accordingly, one *"gave"* them the *"old tradition",* while the other the *"modern"* Capoeira Angola.

Another important element that distinguishes them from other Angoleiros is their place of origin, their local identity: they are Angoleiros of the sea. Coming from an island, the sea structures their everyday experiences. It provides material resources; it is a place for leisure activities; boundary and connection with the rest of the world. In a film presentation of their project "Capoeiragem no Mar" (Playing Capoeira at the Sea), Jorge pointing to the sea, said: *"This is our means of transport and subsistence. It aliments our sons, brothers and families."* The sea is rich in symbolism and is frequently evoked in many popular Capoeira songs as well as in their own songs. The one Cachaça wrote is among the most emblematic. It describes their experiences as fishermen, their relationship with the sea, with Capoeira and Cachaça's personal trajectory and feelings towards their practice:

> I sailed my boat in the sea / I am an Angoleiro of the sea / The sea is my friend / She sustains me / One day my mestre told me / Cachaça, pay attention! / What I teach you / Is Capoeira Angola / Keep it in your heart / The sea is home for the fish / Capoeira comes from Salvador / At the beach of Concha –where I was born / At the Island / Is where everything begun / Capoeira is my school /Since she gives me lessons / She runs through my veins / She is my blood / And lives in my heart[44].

[44] "Botei meu saveiro na mare/ Eu sou angoleiro do mar/ E o mar é o meu amigo/ Ele quem me sustenta/ Meu mestre me disse um dia/ Cachaça, presta atenção/ O que te ensinou/ É Capoeira

The song begins by describing one of the most common activities in the Island: fishing in order to make a living. Indeed, most Capitães da Areia before leaving the island were fishermen and those who remained, still dive to fish. The boat Cachaça refers to is the *'saveiro'*, a long and narrow fishing boat, typical in Bahia. Being a fisherman and being a Capitã da Areia both form part of his identity and consequently, of every Capitã da Areia coming from the Island identity. Then, he talks about his mestre and the two important things he taught him. First, what he learns from him is Capoeira Angola and then, Capoeira's place is in the heart. He should keep Capoeira there.

Cachaça goes on by narrating the collectivity's story. He observes that as naturally as the sea is the place for the fish, the same way Capoeira comes from Salvador. By that he means that Capoeira came along with his mestre, when Mestre Moreno arrived. In specific, at the beach of Concha -his village and their group's home- is where he trained and learned to play Capoeira and thus, where everything begun. From being a fisherman, he became a Capitã da Areia. Once again the narration is both personal and collective.

From that moment on, he embraced Capoeira and practicing it became a learning process, a school to him. In this sense, Capoeira is perceived as a life teaching experience, his only school. From that point on, he grew with and into this knowledge (also see, Ingold 2011 p.162). We should keep in mind that these men had an elementary education in public schools that did not extend over three or four years. Their poor education was constantly brought up in Mestre Prateado's and his wife's comments.

But going to school is valued in order not to be an *"ignorant"*. Sardinha, in their film 'Capoeiragem no Mar', decided to show us the school that the *"new generation"* of the Capitães da Areia attend in Concha. He said:

> *"This is the school for our little students. Because it cannot be just Capoeira. They have to learn to write and read to be someone in life. Not to become a doctor or a lawyer but to be experienced."*

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de Angola/Bota ela no se coração/ O mar é morada de peixe/ Capoeira vem de Salvador/ Na Praia da Concha/ Onde eu nasci/ Na ilha/ Foi onde tudo comecou/ Capoeira é a minha escola/ Pois é ela que mim da lição/ Ela corre na minhas veias/ É o meu sangue/ Mora no meu coração."

While I was there, native Capoeira teachers, such as Janaina, sometimes with the help of foreign visitors, gave classes to the children living in the community. In various occasions, Capitães da Areia from Europe, collaborated by gathering learning material and then, sending it to the Island. Here, we can see that a collectivity's expansion constributes to its viability. Moreover, in Sardinha's phrase *"not to become a doctor or a lawyer but to be experienced in life"*, we realize the awareness of the limited possibilities and choices. These children, just like them when they were children, will never become doctors or lawyers. They can just hope to learn how to read and write. As a matter of fact, most Capitães da Areia come from families where the absence of a father conditioned their lives. The hardships they faced while they were children are quite similar to the ones children have to face today.

In Cachaça's case, Capoeira taught him how to lead his life. As a matter of fact, Cachaça is quite often brought as an example among friends and family. He used to be a young boy who led a rather 'reckless' and worrisome, to his family, life. Consequently, Capoeira is perceived as a life changing experience, something that makes him feel gratitude towards his mestre. As they comment in various occasions, their mestre *"gave"* them Capoeira and *"giving"* them Capoeira was perceived as giving them life (also see Munn 1986 p.50). Capoeira compensates for the lack of formal education. This perhaps also reflects contemporary discourses on social inclusion, citizenship and the *'civilizatory'* role of culture. It also implies that Capoeira can be a different kind of school. The song ends by further elaborating Cachaça's relationship to Capoeira. Capoeira is as vital to him as his blood. Moreover, it is described as literally being the blood that runs through his veins. It is what gives him life and a sense of self. Capoeira, after all and following his mestre's advice and example, lives in his heart.

As I have already discussed, there are different ways to talk about Capoeira depending on the historic moment, the social agents and their purpose. The messages this song conveys speak about a personal and experiential perception that is transformed into a collective one. Being a song and musical expression, it is a powerful medium. Music in Capoeira is of paramount importance. Capitães da Areia emphasize that a good Capoeira practitioner has to be able to play all Capoeira instruments and sing. As Prego said, this is part of Capoeira's *"fundamentals"*. Prego also used to say that when he first started taking classes, he was very shy and did not want to sing. In time, he got over those feelings. Downey (2005) also mentions that foreign apprentices have to overcome shyness, implying that Bahians do not necessarily pass from the same

process. Yet, insecurity, concerning their self-presentation in public performances, is a constant. Moreover, Prego said that he was shy even during classes.

Inspired by Cachaça's song –Cachaça was the one who taught Prego how to play Capoeira Angola back in the Island- Prego wrote his own songs. Since he lives in Barcelona he uses his songs as a means to narrate his story to his students so that they know where he comes from. During an event I gave him Mestre Prateado's documentary on his experiences and vision on Capoeira. He was eager to present it. He said it was very important for his students to see it and he observed that these were his *"roots."*

Similarly, his songs speak about his personal experiences. They are improvisations that have not yet been recorded. They all present recurrent patterns as they speak of people and places important to him: his mestres, and all Capitães da Areia from the Island. He used to sing: *"At the beach of Concha I saw Cachaça, Sardinha, Siri, Neguinho Gato, Peixe Espada and Mangue playing Capoeira."* After reciting all their names, his song suggests how they all have *"dendê"*, the spicy palm tree oil that gives Bahian food its characteristic flavor. As Wesolowski (2007) observes, *"dendê"* in Capoeira refers to the qualities a practitioner must have in order to 'spice up' a game. Among them, spontaneity, humour and cunning, have prominent place. But from time to time, Prego also attributed the quality of having *"dendê"* to his own non-Bahian students that were present in the *roda* in Barcelona. In a kind of personal biography, he evokes the presence of all others by using their names. Then, places and people become one and in his narratives he passes from Aguas Claras to Concha and then, to Mestre Prateado's roda in the Terreiro de Jesus in Pelourinho and finally, to Barcelona.

Their Capoeira is defined by the social and cultural landscape of their collectivity. Magalhães (2011) acknowledges the existence of regionalism in Capoeira debates. Attending various mestres reunions, I realized that the question on whether Capoeira is African or Brazilian is somewhat left aside, even if in some occasions the search for Capoeira's roots in Africa has not yet seized. The debate is transformed as it involves the competition between different localities not only in Brazil but also in the state of Bahia. Does Capoeira come from Salvador or from the vast Recôncavo Bahiano? Is it urban or rural? Moreover, if it comes from the Recôncavo, then, from which locality? Angoleiros do Sertão, Angoleiros da Serra and Capitães da Areia are Capoeira collectivities whose names speak volumes on how locality is a symbolic

marker of identity. Of course, Capitães da Areia cannot and are not interested in claiming that Capoeira came from the Island. However, they establish different types of associations and connections.

Here, I would like to comment on a specific incident. One morning in October 2009, Siri and I arrived at Lagoa. Before taking the van to Concha, we stopped to have breakfast in one of these small café-restaurants they call *"lanchonete"*. After a while, Janaina arrived. She talked to us about children's day and its celebration. She explained that since she had to do everything herself, they only had a small *roda* with the children and the *"puxada de rede"*. *"Puxada de rede"* (pulling the net) is a fishing tradition in Bahia. Freed slaves used to fish from October to April to catch a fish called *"xareu"*. Fishermen would go during the night to throw their nets and in the morning they would gather and draw them out while singing. Today, as I found out later on, many Capoeira groups perform the *"puxada de rede"* as part of Capoeira presentations. As a matter of fact, in Salvador I had seen one such performance in a Capoeira academy. Sadly, I did not have the opportunity to participate or watch one on the Island. Thus, I will not elaborate further on that. What is of interest here is that to me, at that time, the fact that a Capoeira teacher taught children how to pull the nets made no sense. When I asked Siri, he thought about it for a second, he smiled and said:

> *"But this is also part of Capoeira. Back then, those who had nothing, who were very poor and played Capoeira, had to fish. These were the first Capoeiras, poor people. They had to fish to survive."*

In this sense, Capitães da Areia established an important connection. They create associations with historical patterns that evoke Capoeira's social origins. Even if Capoeira does not come from the Island, the first people who practiced it in the past were also fishermen.

I am not sure on what Capitães da Areia know about Capoeira's history and trajectory. Some, like Cachaça and Prego, maintain websites where they write on Capoeira's history, Capitães da Areia story and their own personal story. Prego once observed that his site was outdated and he would have to find someone to change it. The texts on his site are actually a collage of bits of information from other sites, written by other people, especially his students. Prego always cherished the idea that whatever new comes, it comes from Bahia and not the opposite. *"It is all there. You are lucky to have been there"*, he used to say.

In Bahia I had the chance to listen to their comments and ideas and observe their learning processes that varied from Capoeira books presentations in the Forte de Santo Antonio, to documentaries and film presentations in cultural centers, and everyday conversations. One day, late in the afternoon, on my way to the Forte de Santo Antonio, I saw Professor and Siri. They were sitting at the stairs outside the Fundação Casa de Jorge Amado, at the Largo do Pelourinho.[45] Professor had just finished with his work at the atelier. He was getting ready to go to his English class. They were watching the few people that were still out in the street: some tourists visiting the Foundation holding brochures before heading to nearby restaurants or at Barra and some street vendors competing over tourists. Siri was complaining. He also wanted to learn English but he had no money. Once he had, he would definitely take classes. As a matter of fact, the Ministry of Culture had distributed a manual including vocabulary and expressions on how to teach Capoeira to foreigners in English. *"You can have it. Take it. You cannot learn English like that"*, they told me.

In his other hand Professor was holding two Capoeira journals. He gave them to Siri. Since his mestre was not there, he could at least read about Capoeira, he said. The journals belonged to Mestre Prateado, their mestre. Siri argued that Mestre Prateado had a very rich archive with journals, rare videotapes with old Capoeira mestres playing and many books. He would let them read those books or journals as long as they returned them. Actually, Mestre Prateado's wife –Dona Luisa- seemed to care for Siri and Professor. She knew them since they were children and she would always give them something to read. Professor told me that he was also reading a book *"like the ones"* I read. This book was written by Frede Abreu. It was about Capoeira during the 19th century. He said:

> *"I still haven't finished it. It's taking me a while now. I read sometimes at work and then I give it back to the mestre. I do not have much time and it is not very easy to read."*

Then, Neguinho came and joined us. He took one of the journals and started reading slowly. It was an article on Mestre Bimba:

[45] The Fundação Casa de Jorge Amado preserves the poets' collection and archives. His wish was for the foundation to be not just a place for research but a place of encounters and cultural exchange between Bahia and other places (Fundação Casa de Jorge Amado, Facebook 2013).

"Hmm, you see? You see what he did? He went and taught Capoeira to all these 'filhinhos de papai'[referring to upper class off springs]. He did not like us. He wanted lawyers and doctors. I know all that. He discriminated. You had to go there well-dressed and if you didn't have money, you couldn't go."

I suddenly recalled a conversation with Tamara, an anthropologist and former Capoeira Regional practitioner, a few weeks before that incident. She commented on the distinction and conflicts between Angola and Regional:

"Capoeira Regional is more popular. It is like pagode.[46] *Angola, is like samba. It is more intellectualized."*

With that in mind, I tried to argue that Mestre Bimba was also coming from a poor family and was black. But that, to Neguinho and Professor, made no difference. They simply dismissed the changes Mestre Bimba introduced.

During a morning gathering in Cabelo's house in Pelourinho, I had the chance to understand these conflicts even better. Those gatherings were always ethnographically fruitful. After having interviewed Mestre Nenel, Mestre Bimba's son, I arrived with a dvd he had given me. It was named: "*Mestre Bimba: A Capoeira Iluminada"* (Mestre Bimba: The Illuminated Capoeira). We all sat on the old wooden floor and watched it. The comments made during the documentary defined their Capoeira in relation to Capoeira Regional. Here, I will only discuss two of their observations. The first was a spontaneous reaction by Porreta and Indio. As the film presented Mestre Bimba playing in *rodas* back in the 1940s, Porreta exclaimed surprised: *"This is Angola. He is playing Angola. Look. It is not Capoeira Regional."* Neguinho shook his head in discordance, somewhat annoyed. Perhaps it was because Porreta's own style of playing was influenced by traveling to Rio de Janeiro. It was not a coincidence that Mestre Prateado used to say every time he saw him: *"And now, the cirque de soleil"*, alluding to his ability and insistence in playing with a more acrobatic style. But Porreta's observation is common. It reflects a discourse widely expressed in Bahia. Mestre Pastinha and many Capoeira Angola mestres, especially today, insist that Mestre Bimba was an *Angoleiro*. (also see Magalhaes 2011). Others say that the only *"real"* Capoeira

[46] Pagode is a popular music style in Bahia. Some Capitães da Areia enjoy it because of its rhythm. However, they criticize the lyrics for being vulgar, offensive to women and inappropriate for small children.

Regional is the one that Mestre Bimba's son teaches in Bahia and the rest is *"Contemporânea"*. Consequently, Bahia is both Capoeira Angola's and Capoeira Regional natal place.

The second intriguing observation came when the documentary presented a training session of Abada Capoeira, one of the most famous Capoeira Regional groups. Tenths of young people wearing their white *abadas* were executing the *ginga*. Their uniformity was striking. Porreta, Coqueiro and Siri started making jokes. They said: *"Look! Capoeira's MacDonalds."* Obviously, in this context, MacDonalds stood for standardization, quantity and bad quality. This standardization contrasts with the idea of variation in play and is also related to ideas about personhood; of being unique as a member of a collectivity and in relation to others. Herzfeld (2004) also discusses the relationship between aesthetic creativity and individuality among the artisans and their male apprentices in Crete. According to Porreta, Capoeira cannot be molded in specific patterns that do not allow individual expression. Wesoloski (2007), conducting research among the Abada group -*"Capoeira's MacDonalds"- ,* comments that they, too, value individual expression even if an 'outsider', as myself or the Capitães da Areia, observe stunning and absolute uniformity. Thus, it is interesting to examine the cultural meanings attributed by the Capitães da Areia concerning individual expression.

According to Porreta, Capoeira is *"free like the wind"*. Camarão further elaborated on this idea of being free to have an individual style and of being unique:

> *"A Capoeirista does not have to follow his mestre's style. But there are always these students who want to copy their mestre, especially 'gringos'... What is more interesting is that Capoeira can adapt to different movements… other Capoeira players' movements. Movements that we seek outside our own group. This is what makes a Capoeirista have a style different than his mestre's. We take movements from a Capoeirista during a street roda, from other groups and we also create our own particular movements. Of course it depends on the group but Capoeira must always be spontaneous… free… In modern times, the academies impose and the students willingly try to follow or copy their mestre's style. This is the problem: Capoeira must always be spontaneous. Each one must have his own style of playing."*

This comment is a critique on Capoeira's institutionalization that took place especially after the 1940s as we have already seen. It is also an observation about the changes that

new people -especially foreigners- bring. Thus, according to them, their Capoeira is more free and expressive. Perna and Prego during training always insisted: *"Play a beautiful game"*; *"Show some expression in your* movement"; *"Don't look what the others do. Look at the sea"*. All these are qualities that further elaborate what their Capoeira is and how it should be experienced, perceived and performed. Here, being expressive contrasts uniformity in movements' execution and repetition that disciplines the body.

Moreover, Porreta's description of Capoeira as *"free"* does not only articulate politics in different historic moments and contexts. The sea and the wind refer to their surfing practices in the island. It is an experiential connection to the present. As he wrote in another instance on his Facebook profile: *"The sea is braking and the roda is on fire."* Surfing and playing Capoeira express and display similar qualities and define their practice's power and free spirit. These ideas are influenced by current discources that describe Capoeira as a form of liberation and resistance. Nonetheless, they are also informed and are instrinsically related with their personal experiences as well as their activities in domains outside Capoeira. For Professor, who is working several hours silent in Mestre Prateado's atelier, the political uses of the word "freedom" and the discourses on whether Capoeira was or still is a liberating practice, aquire different meanings.

> *"Capoeira is liberation (libertação);a way to express yourself. When the slaves played Capoeira they felt free. They were working all day long and when the night came, they played Capoeira. Just like today. With the Independence it was still prohibited… it was perceived as violent but they kept on playing. It was part of their leisure time. Today it is ours… culture as they say. But it is also a way to relax. Today it is cultural heritage. About the origins? Hmm… There are some debates but it is ours. It belongs to Brazilian people."*

Professor chooses to describe Capoeira as *"liberation"* and establishes associations with hard working people who practiced Capoeira in the past. Similar to people who used to play Capoeira at night, he goes up at the Terreiro after having finished with his work and plays Capoeira with his friends. It is a distraction; a way to relax. But, answering to my question, Capoeira is also Brazilian heritage. The fact that he prefers to call it *"Brazilian"* has to do with how he experiences his identity: among other things, he is also Brazilian.

In an aim to find a *'solid'* definition and follow current debates on whether Capoeira is Brazilian or Afrobrazilian, I asked Neguinho whether Capoeira should be defined as AfroBrazilian culture. He looked at me and said: *"But there you go again. Culture? You keep confusing it with culture."* This observation insinuates that perhaps there are different ways to think about social practices or even that popular understandings of the concept of culture can be different at least from the ones I had in my mind. My initial anxiety to locate explicit and coherent definitions on Capoeira and compare them to others did not allow me, at first, to see that social actors can convey their messages with more than one ways. Thus, I would like to close this chapter on definitions with Neguinho's comment. One day, Neguinho took my notebook that was left on a coffee shop and wrote down:

> *"What is the point in being a Capoeira if you don't feel pain? If you don't know Capoeira's fundamentals?"*

Neguinho elaborated on life's hardship and suffering. He referred to feelings and experiences. As Capoeira is related to suffering, his stance towards Mestre Bimba's changes and the incorporation of upper class practitioners is better understood. In addition, it was a way to interpret his difficult situation at the time and a means of empowerment. Cohen (1994 p.20) sustains that there is always space for individual reflexivity and that "common forms" do not necessarily "generate common meanings". Neguinho would have to endure since, after all, what is the point in being a Capoeira if you do not suffer? He went on saying:

> *"Life is difficult. But we have to work in order to make it. In Capoeira Angola you feel. Because it is something that came from the slaves; because there is feeling. You incorporate it. It is automatic. The ladainha song is the moment that mostly expresses suffering. It is the moment when the black man sings."*

In this case, Capoeira is understood through structures of feeling, empathy and embodiment. Neguinho expresses his experience of being black and underprivileged while Professor chooses to talk about his working experience and moments of distress. Perhaps, suffering, for Neguinho, could be a sufficient way of knowledge for a Capoeira; Capoeira's fundamentals as such.

Their definitions, thus, comprise different aspects. They depend on diverse factors and most importantly, on the place, the time, each individual and collectivity.

Capoeira definitions also entail evaluation. There are disagreements, confusions, conflicts and arguments. A changing definition or a new element added often means or announces a new alliance, or even better a shift in alliances. It is a way to find a place, make sense and establish connections with their Capoeira and more over, with each other and their own self.

4.3.2 Cultural Sport Centers, Cultural Centers, Associations and Other Ways of Relatedness and Affiliation

"In Pintupi life, autonomy is inseparable from relatedness." (Myers 1986 p. 239)

Until this point, several ways to describe Capoeira collectivities have been mentioned: *"groups"*, *"academies*", *"schools"*, *"associations"*, *"cultural sport centers"*, *"Cultural Centre of Capoeira"* and *"nucleos"*. If Capoeira's definitions reveal political and socio-cultural processes as well as personal and collective trajectories inside and outside Bahia, every way or word invoked to describe ways of relatedness and association is invested with cultural meanings. These meanings may be ambiguous, politically charged and historically defined. Yet, the relationships they describe and the 'nature' of the socialities that use these terms in order to describe them, need to be analyzed too.

During an event in Mestre Querido's *barracão* (the space where he gives classes) in the town of Santo Amaro, an old local Capoeira Angola mestre argued that in his time there were no academies. As a matter of fact, as we have already seen, Capoeira's space was in the streets. After 1937 with Capoeira's legitimization, the first schools and academies opened (Vassallo 2003). As a result, Capoeira's legitimization went hand in hand with its institutionalization. Progressively, all Capoeira mestres started to establish their own rules and symbols that eventually distinguished them from some collectivities and demonstrated relatedness to others. Conflicts, disagreements and heated debates -that echo until today- revolved around the use of uniforms and their respective colors, graduation belts and diplomas (also see Magalhães 2011). Since Mestre Pastinha's Capoeira Angola was projected as the *"purest"* and more *"traditional"* one, all others would have to find ways to establish associations with that Capoeira and follow Mestre Pastinha's paradigm or find arguments to defend their own collectivity. However, that does not mean that they interpreted Mestre Pastinha's Capoeira similarly or followed the same paradigm. Different interest groups interpret

and organize symbols and actions differently. Thus, I would like to discuss how specific types of formal and informal affiliations have come to exist and how social actors understand and make use of them. Should it be understood as 'mimicry', 'westernization' and 'loss of authenticity', as it is sometimes implied, or as one among different ways to be in the world and to relate?

First, I will discuss the types of formal organization and then, I will reflect on the patterns of socialization and the relationships they establish. Abner Cohen (1976) in his study of power elites and social classes highlighted the analysis of the symbolic mechanisms that bind members and families together. Among these mechanisms he distinguished the life styles, forms and ways of socialization and descent. These mechanisms consolidate the formation of coherent and cohesive groups that cooperate and endure. Capitães da Areia employ these mechanisms and I will attempt to give examples of that in this section. At the same time, I find interesting and pertinent Marshall Sahlins' (2011 p. 13) observation that "kin persons are not the only kind who are multiple, divisible, and relationally constructed". The latter idea, though, is perhaps made clearer in Chapter Six where I discuss patterns of mobility.

While conducting field research in Barcelona and before going to Bahia, *"family"* and *"group"* were common words to describe the collectivities and the relationships among their members (Lefkaditou 2007). Later on, in Salvador, terms such as "federations" and "associations" were added. Thus, it is necessary to examine the difference between all these types of organization and moreover, understand the co-existence of terms or functions that seem mutually exclusive as they are used by the same collectivity.

Concerning associations, Mestre Guerreio, from Capoeira Quilombola, observes that creating athletic associations, karate associations, working unions or Capoeira Regional associations, was popular practice. In the end of the 1980s, there was an expressed need to control the changes that were taking place in relation to Capoeira and create a collectivity that would bring all Angoleiros from Bahia together (Magalhães 2011). Thus, after reunions, conflicts and disputes, the ABCA (Brazilian Association of Capoeira Angola) was founded in Salvador. The association currently organizes a *roda* once a week and hosts various events. It is organized similarly to any formal association with president, vice president, economic counselor, though the persons involved in its management have changed various times. Magalhães (2011) identified conflicts in the

past as result of conflictive political ideas. In specific, between socialists who were also members of the Black Movement, and those closer to Carlismo because of the place afrobrazilian culture had during the dictatorship[47]. The conflicts, however, continue until today and are expressed through the narration of different stories, affiliations with local politicians and the use of different symbols.[48]

Here, I will briefly elaborate on some of these symbols starting by the colors used in Capoeira Angola, the meanings and politics attached to them. The colors of the uniforms Mestre Pastinha introduced in 1942 and are widely used among Angoleiros are that of black and yellow, the colors of his football team Ypiranga. However, many Capoeira Angola groups have objected to it (Taylor 2005 p.203). Pastinha's first students and later on symbolic figures in Capoeira Angola, Mestre João Pequeno, who recently passed way at the age of 92, as well as Mestre João Grande, both opted for the use of white color instead. Even under other mestres' pressure, they insisted in the use of white (also see Magalhães 2011). In a reunion commemorating Mestre Pastinha's birthday, Mestre Vermelho refused to debate over Capoeira's colors. He reflected that it was an overly discussed topic that only caused disputes.

Still, Capoeira Angola is widely associated with black pans and yellow T-shirts. Capitães da Areia, following Mestre Barão's tradition and thus, also Mestre Pastinha's, also use black and yellow uniforms, especially during events. However, they insist that uniforms to them are not that important and their apprentices should feel free to go to class the way they like. While in the island, they never use uniforms. During training sessions or even *rodas*, they use shorts and rarely wear t-shirts. When they participate at Mestre Prateado's street *roda* at the Terreiro de Jesus, they do not wear uniforms at all, while in the ABCA they have to wear at least their group's t-shirt in order to be allowed

[47] 'Carlismo' refers to clientelism and "the associated logic of domination through paternalism as practiced by the late senator Magalhães." (Reiter 2008 p.343).

[48] Criticizing and questioning other mestres, in different occasions, was common practice. Even the possession of the mestre's title, as Paulo Magalhães (2011) also confirms, was questioned. For example, among the most frequent critiques was that Mestre Canjiquinha used to sell diplomas due to his economic deprivation. Accordingly, certain mestres in the present had received diplomas that did not correspond to their actual knowledge and qualities.

to play. But Mestre Prateado does not allow everyone to participate in his roda with shorts. If he/she is a foreigner or someone he does not know, he rarely lets them play.

An interesting incident took place in Barcelona. Inspired by the Capitães da Areia in other European countries who started to use t-shirts in different colors such as light blue and orange, Prego suggested printing T-shirts in a color different than the black and yellow or black and white. With the exception of one student who said that uniforms do not matter, the others rejected his idea. When I suggested using purple and the teacher seemed to agree, they said:

> *"Purple? Purple in Capoeira Angola? No. Capoeira Angola's colors are black and yellow. With some exceptions we wear black and white because it does not look very different and is also widely used. Capoeira Angola's traditional colors are black and yellow. Thus, we should continue as such."*

In this case, the Bahian teacher wishing to introduce a novelty encountered the non-Bahian students' resistance to change. Obviously, these colors have become more of a powerful symbol to the European students than to him or the other Bahian Capitães da Areia. As such, even if Prego wanted to use a color to differentiate Capitães da Areia in Barcelona from Capitães da Areia elsewhere, his students' desire to maintain associations with the widely accepted image of Capoeira Angola -even if these colors originate from a football team that has nothing to do with Capoeira- convinced him that it was better to 'stick to the tradition'.

Capitães da Areia define themselves as a *"cultural center"*. It is important to examine the reason behind and the purpose of a center defined as such and moreover, how people relate to it and express commitment (also see Pettigrew 1979). I have already mentioned that Mestre Pastinha created a Sport Cultural Center combining two different and by many Capoeira Angola practitioners such as the Capitães da Areia and Mestre Barão, incompatible qualities. The use of the term *"cultural centre"* and the omission of the word sport are telling of how Capitães da Areia define their objectives and place themselves in the arena of politics and representations. Indeed, the concept of culture is a powerful one and its preservation and decimation are considered legitimate goals. Sport, today, is more associated to Capoeira Regional. Thus, their aim is to teach Capoeira's "*fundamentals"* as they are taught by Mestre Moreno and by his own mestre, Mestre Barão. Consequently, in the official site, their apprenticeship –the way

they play Capoeira and some of the symbols they use relate to Mestre Barão and consequently, to Mestre Pastinha, presented in their site as their *"great grandfather"*.

The order by which they position the instruments in the *bateria* (orchestra), for example, is characteristic. It follows Mestre Barão's example and is different from any other Capoeira Angola collectivity. However, there are also important differences with Mestre Barão, not only in the way they play Capoeira but also as we have seen in the colors of the uniforms they use –at least, the orange or blue ones- their own logo, as well as the space where classes and *rodas* take place. As I have discussed, Capitães da Areia train at the beach and in the open space and they also participate in street *rodas*, something that is inconceivable by Mestre Barão and his view of Capoeira. In addition and since the young teachers have left Bahia and went on by making their own apprentices, the focus in their presentations shifts to the trajectory of the individual teacher, his relationships and learning experience with both Mestre Moreno and Mestre Prateado.

At some point and in accordance with the NGOs explosion in Brazin, the collectivity officialy included as one of its objectives to help underprivileged children or young adults in the Island. Thus, they began with thirty adolescents and young men that today have grown up and teach Capoeira in different countries or in Bahia. As part of their self-representation they also describe themselves as an NGO. For this reason, they develop multiple and diverse activities and cultural strategies to earn funding from the State and develop their projects. Some of them are responsible for a project whose aim is to link local actors, with state, national and especially, international ones. Most travel and live abroad and make sure that economic support from their foreign students is used to sustain the social projects held in the island. These projects aim to educate children coming from poor families. They teach them Capoeira, fishing and surfing and develop activities on nature's and traditional knowledge preservation. The project 'Capoeiragem no Mar' formed part of the group's activities in Bahia. Mestre Moreno explained their motivations and goals:

> *"The truth is that the group's teachers themselves saw the necessity to pass something to these children of the community of Concha. So, it begun with professor Janaina and after her, with Sardinha. With the project 'Capoeiragem no Mar' we aim to organize annual festivals to integrate/bring together these children with mestres… with people from the society. Because I think that this is*

important. At the same time, our goal is to engage in an exchange with people from France, England, Italy, Japan, so that we can all be integrated in a festival here in Concha, at the Island."

In the spirit of today's world where NGOs come to replace State policies and social care programs, Capitães da Areia have come to incorporate NGO's practices and discourses. Namely, they praise voluntary work, sustainable development initiatives and respect to the environment. Indeed, in the open space of Concha, where they give classes, they have painted the wall using different colors to express their ideas concerning their objectives and who they are. Thus, for example, they write:

"We are not many but we are Capoeira Angola";*"Lets thank the sea, lets respect, lets clean"*; *"Put the garbage into the garbage can"*; *"Resistance and faith.*"

As Friedman (2010) observed during a conference on Globalization and Fantasies, what matters today are corporate players and corporate groups. Consequently, anyone who looks like a corporation has the possibility to negotiate with the State. In other words, in the case of the Capitães da Areia, their practices might be pertinent to a new type of governance. At the same time, different people may relate with the Capitães da Areia for a different set of reasons and for limited purposes and project their own ideas and desires. Thus, Leão stated:

"For me, Capitães da Areia is future Capoeira. I am an activist and founder of the Quilombo Movement in Salvador. I develop social projects and it is satisfactory to see Mestre Moreno's initiative, especially with the children."

However, not everyone is considered qualified to engage with these forms of organization. The adoption of a vocabulary on environmental policies and social inclusion is widely used and sometimes, it fosters policies helpful to the local community. Still, quite often volunteers and project managers are foreigners or people with some kind of formation who can handle bureaucracy and mediate between practitioners and the State. Even if forms of governance are not the dissertation's subject, what is of interest is how a Capoeira collectivity may incorporate different functions pertinent to present politics and at the same time, appeal to foreign and Bahian practitioners alike. Capitães da Areia, such as Perna, develop individual projects in order to get funding. As a result, the project "Capoeira, Resistance, Tradition and

Preservation" funded by the program Capoeira Viva in 2007 aimed to reinforce the adolescents' self –esteem in the community of Concha through the valorization of tradition, environmental and cultural sustainability and physical exercise. It is especially in these projects that Capoeira is embraced as tradition and their objectives are described as related to efforts of cultural and natural preservation.

Yet, institutionalization and regulation are evaluated differently. On the one hand, they are perceived as paths to valorization and as such, as means of empowerment that allows Capoeira practitioners to achieve different goals. On the other, they acquire negative connotations as they segregate Capoeira practitioners belonging to different groups. Mestre Cobra in an article that currently circulates in social media suggested:

> *"Do we want Capoeira's institutionalization or a Capoeira community that works with the 'system' in order to honestly obtain what we need, without bending to get what this system has to offer us?"*

Mestre Cobra makes a distinction between community and institution. A Capoeira community and an institution, according to Mestre Cobra, are not compatible as they refer to different things. Nevertheless, how easy it is to define, today, an all-encompassing Capoeira community midst all the diversity, different interests and objectives? Moreover, I argue, in the case of Capoeira the existence of institutions is not all that incompatible with other types of relationships. According to Cohen (1993 p.84):

> Associative relationships are segmental, involving only a part of the person, utilitarian, non –moral, while communal relationships on the other hand, are moral, non –utilitarian ones, in which men treat one another as ends in themselves.

However, Cohen goes on by saying that it is difficult to find relationships that are "purely communal or associative; most combine the two, though in different proportions" (ibid p.84). This observation applies in the case of Capitães da Areia as they combine both aspects. Nonetheless, each member embraces distinct types of relatedness and to a different degree. In the case of young teachers such as Neguinho, Professor and Leão the struggle is how to involve a part of their person and their identity in these all-encompassing relationships. The use of key terms such as *"group"* and *"family"* illuminate the ambiguity that determines the ties that bind them.

Furthermore, Neguinho, for example, describes Capitães da Areia in France as *"association"* basically referring to the way Capitães da Areia are formally organized and registered in the city of France where he lives.

In their everyday language, they employ the terms *"family"* or *"group"* and of course they may call one another as *"brother",* their mestre as *"father"* and their mestre's mestre as *"grandfather"*. The skepticism expressed by people who do not belong to these collectivities towards the use of terms that imply biological kinship, is relevant to the way kinship is generally understood and valued in every society. According to Viveiros de Castro (2009 p.241):

> "Classical anthropological renditions of non-western forms of kinship are wrong … because they presuppose a pseudoscientific notion of biological causality."

Wesolowski (2007 p.291) argues that Capoeira collectivities should be understood as a "metaphoric home" built on relationships of obedience, reciprocity and "rebellion". Indeed, as in the case of the Capitães da Areia, their relationships are characterized by obedience and reciprocity. However, even if they distinguish between their kinship ties outside Capoeira and the ones related to Capoeira, I believe that instead of seeing a Capoeira collectivity as a "metaphoric home", we should shift attention to the particularities of their practices. I find Viveiros de Castro's approach pertinent due to the emphasis he gives on specific types of transactions and their importance. Thus, by citing Gregory Bateson, he emphasizes:

> […] in a gift economy (where things and people assume the form of persons) relations between human beings are expressed by classificatory kinship terms. In other words, they are kinship relations. (Viveiros de Castro 2009 p. 249).

Therefore, how transactions take place explains the terms they use. At the same time, as in the case of the Piro, I think that what is constructed and "taken as given" by them is their affinity. In this case, being *"brothers"* means that they acknowledge both similarities and companionship.

Accordingly, Cachaça on a photo depicting him together with his mestre, commented: *"Thank you for everything you have done for me. I am happy to have you as a mestre, as a friend and brother. I respect you like a father."* And the mestre responded:*"The words of a disciple are the words of a friend."* In this case, the apprentice also uses fraternal terms to describe his relationship with the mestre. The

term *"friend"* further elaborates on the idea of companionship and an implicit equality. The mestre, however, responds by using the term *"disciple"*, a word that Mestre Barão uses to describe apprentices that pass to another level of affinity and commitment. Mestre Moreno, following his own mestre, calls Cachaça a *"disciple"* emphasizing the status of both. Yet, only a disciple can aspire to, furthermore, become a friend.

It is interesting how they employ ideas on brotherhood and friendship. Prego, for example, presented Cachaça during an event as a *"brother"*. In his words:

> *"Cachaça is my brother; not only in Capoeira. He is my brother and friend while hanging out and in our surf school. He is the one who shown me the way to Capoeira and I thank him for that. Mestre Moreno, he means a lot. We [Capitães da Areia from the Island] have all come from him. He is the one who taught us and Mestre Prateado educated us."*

By attaching kinship terms as well as fraternal and talking about past experiences and everyday interactions, Prego defines the type and content of relationship. According to Schneider and Homaus (1955 p.1196):

> Kinship terms serve two basic functions: First, each term consists of an ordering or classifying component. Second, a kinship symbol is used to designate the proximity of relationship between a set of individuals within a society.

The use of these terms invokes sentiments and suggests ties that are built upon and foster strong emotions. Furthermore, it attaches social actors with moral obligations and into schemes that are more powerful than the ones that bring together members that pertain to formal associations. As Ballweg (1969 p.84) points out:

> By the use of kinship terms to specify relationships, a sort of social grid emerges in which the individual is able to locate himself in relation to other members of his culturally defined kin-group. The position a person holds within the kin network carries with it a set of role expectations that outline the interactional patterns associated with a specific set of kin ties.

Expectations and failing ones' expectations will be discussed further in the thesis, especially in relation to mobility. But, age also plays an important role in these ties as much as the figure of the mestre and how he handles questions of autonomy and interdependence.

Yet, the simultaneous use of the term *"group"* demonstrates ambiguities. If family type relationships imply moral obligations in a subtle and more affective way, and friendships among men evoke companionship, a group has more 'formal' functions. It generates commitment by the use of symbols such as the group's logo, the way they play Capoeira and the clothes they wear. Therefore, it sustains shared ways of being and shared symbols that differentiate them in relation to other Capoeira collectivities. Nonetheless, many Bahian apprentices, as Indio, juxtaposed the idea of being a *"free person*" that freely relates to others and the idea of the *"group"*. He used to say: *"To me this thing of a group does not exist. I am a free person."*

At the same time, the degree of participation and interdependence was not the same for those who connected to the group for limited purposes such as the foreign apprentices. This is also relevant to the fact that personhood among Bahian apprentices who later on become teachers, is relevant to the experiences, affective ties and knowledge acquired in their Capoeira collectivity and the wider Capoeira community. The foreign apprentices are, however, those who give power and legitimacy to their teachers' movements for relative autonomy in relation to all others, encouraging - depending on the teacher and his age- another type of authoritarianism.

Similarly, when Prego quite often insisted on the existence of a *"first base"* (a primeira base) and *"second base"* of the Capitães da Areia teachers in their *"group",* their relationships' nature seemed even more perplex and the parameter of age appeared to be crucial. Consequently, the younger ones would seek their mestres' interference in conflicts' resolutions. As such, during a disagreement, the mestre was called upon several times by the younger ones to take sides. To them, he was the *"captain of the boat"*.

Actually, there were several incidents when some of the older ones in order to inhance their self image and interests, gave diplomas and symbolically *"stole"* the younger teachers' apprentices. The result was that the younger ones complained as they considered it lack of communication and consideration. After all, communication and respect are considered important elements in all families. Communication would acknowledge the younger ones' place and contribution to the collectivity. However, on the one hand, the latter were not yet aware of the fact that they would first have to subordinate themselves to the older ones. On the other, something they all knew, self-

interest and economic benefits, especially with the entrance of newcomers and their symbolical appropriation, give a different tone to their relationships.

In addition, their relationships are not irrelevant to the experiences most of the younger teachers have in relation to family and more importantly, to how gender is perceived and constructed. As a matter of fact, the younger teachers come from families where the paternal figure is missing or despised. A certain degree of understanding towards their fathers came later, especially for those who, as they argued, found themselves later in life following a similar path. Nevertheless, the mestre often appears as such a paternal figure who sets an example with his life - also drawing our attention to questions of gender - and is also supposed to lead the collectivity.

Respect towards the elders and especially the mestre are discussed as inherent in every Capoeira collectivity and interestingly enough, respect to the elders is presented by intellectuals, academics and educators, as an element inherent to Afrobrazilian communities in general (see also Abib 2004). These assumptions legitimize the mestre's authoritarianism and praise the importance of communal forms of belonging. For women, however, finding a place is even more difficult, as Janaina argued. Moreover, Abelha –a foreign apprentice- claimed that *"they understand friendships in a different way"*, acknowledging the difficulty in establishing relationships of trust and friendship in the world of Capoeira and in her collectivity, in specific.

A significant aspect in this collectivity is the emotional attachment. However, those belonging to it may also feel constrained (Cohen 2002). As such, it is important to focus on the individual, without necessarily establishing associations with the the individual/society type of relationship. In addition, we should consider the factors of locality and age as crucial. The family element creates communal relations that are not, at least openly, calculated but rather, are embodied, sensual, and emotionally charged (also see Amit 2002).

Still, a puzzling issue concerning how mutuality and belonging are materialized and conceived emerges in the case of a teacher from the younger generation who left the collectivity. His students did not remain in the Capitães da Areia but instead, opted to follow their teacher and create a new collectivity. For this reason, it is important to emphasize on the particularities of the relationship between a teacher and his students. Everyday interactions and mutual help, as well as being the person who transmits knowledge, create solidarities that may subvert the larger collectivity and obligations

towards it. Indeed, the collectivity carries in it the seeds that will break it down one day. If that were not the case, the students' decision to follow their teacher would not have been justified by other Capitães da Areia, who perhaps implicitly share the same *"ambition"*.

As research advanced, the importance of other kinship ties and the making of new ones turned out as equally important in order to understand ways of relatedness. Actually, comparing to the example of other Capoeira collectivities, I realized that diverse forms of relatedness emerged and became fused. Thus, Mestre Bimba's son, Mestre Nenel claims that his father's academy never closed and that he *"gives continuity"* to his work. In this case, it is a direct passing of the school from father to son. Contra Mestra Maria is married to the mestre of the group to which she belongs; Mestra Zangada to Mestre Barão. Tiago, from Engenho Velho de Brotas is learning to play Capoeira in his father's group and Mestre Boca Rica's son has also begun to get involved in Capoeira Angola along with his father.

At the same time, in the Capitães da Areia collectivity another process is taking place. Cachaça became Sardinha''s daughter's godfather while Neguinho decided that Dona Luisa and Mestre Prateado should become his son's godfathers (padrinhos). The ones who belong to the *"first base"* and come from the same locality, from Concha, became bestmen. Others, married their female apprentices. All in all, it is an interesting shift. As Mark Nutall (quoted in Sahlins M. 2011 p. 5) says:

> If a relationship does not exist, then one can be created. At the same time, people can deactivate kinship relationships if they regard them as unsatisfactory. People are therefore not constrained by a rigid consanguineal kinship, but can choose much of their universe of kin.

Indeed, from kinship that was symbolically invoked, expressing relationships of mutuality, they furthermore constructed relationships of spiritual kinship. Friendships and relationships were sealed by new kinship ties expressing not only political affiliations and commitment but also, emotions and solidarities. Nonetheless, the fact that they use different terms that overlap and contradict one another in order to define their relationships, suggests a need to shift attention from etymology and terms, to specific practices and actions. In addition, interpretations presenting Capoeira collectivities as "surrogate families" (see Wesolowski 2007), limit the discussion as they entail the danger to impose our own preconceptions regarding kinship and

friendships on different ways of experiencing relatedness. For this reason, in order to comprehend the complexity and nature of their socialities, it is important to explore how "mutuality of being" and "participation in one another's existence" are expressed and realized (see Sahlins 2011).

4.4 Conclusions

Capoeira appears to be elusive yet precise in its relative imprecision. Definitions are related to interests, motivations and politics. Questioning the validity of all definitions and their fictitious character, Prego explicitly argued, *"people come and impose stories"*. How practitioners talk about and define Capoeira relates to the power or lack of it to exercise and assert control over it. It is ever-changing and politically charged. The concepts and vocabulary they use is relevant to their personal and collective identities, Capoeira identities, Capoeira Angola identities, local, black, ethnic and national ones. As we have seen, discourses and interpretations of Capoeira and its history are always positional and entail evaluation. As Jonathan Friedman (1992 p.194) argues on history:

> History and the discourse about the making of history […] is dependent upon where one is located in social reality, within society, and within global process.

Of course, as we have seen, this also applies to anthropologists and reseachers' views concerning Capoeira's definition, uses and histories.

Similarly, definitions and classifications speak eloquent on how the social subjects relate to one another and how they position themselves in a global scale as collectivity and as individuals. The Capitães da Areia use terms such as "cultural centre" and NGO and run social inclusion and environmental sustainability projects such as the "Capoeiragem no Mar*"*. The sea is a powerful symbol. Their social experiences of coming from an island influence the way they understand and experience Capoeira as well as their own identity, collectivity and forms of relatedness. Some of the key concepts to be considered are that of *"family"* and *"group"* and their symbolic power. On the one hand, they are a *"group"* and that speaks on specific types of organization and bonding as they maintain associations in different countries. On the other, they also describe themselves as *"family"*. Indeed, their discursive practices and symbols are not detached from their social relationships and ways of affiliation. As Cohen (1974 p.23) suggests:

> Symbols are objects, acts, relationships, or linguistic formations that stand ambiguously for a multiplicity of meanings, evoke emotions, and impel men to action.

The young teachers are related with two different personalities, Mestre Prateado -a *"special"* and *"charismatic"* person, as Cachaça one day observed, however difficult- and Mestre Moreno, more easy going and docile. Interestingly enough, the fact that Mestre Prateado spent many years playing Capoeira Regional is not looked down. His work as an instrument maker and his involvement with folkloric groups, his street Capoeira and the events he organizes are believed to have brought him closer to tradition. While Mestre Moreno is their *real* Capoeira mestre, as they say, and has practiced Capoeira Angola with a Capoeira griot[49] all his life, he is more related to an outward looking project. But after all, as Prego said, Capitães da Areia teach a *"complete Capoeira"* combining all their mestres elements. They teach the *"fundamentals"*: Capoeira's history, music, philosophy of life and movements as they are inspired by both of their mestres as well as their experiences in the different countries where they have their groups. But as Neguinho eloquently observed, Capoeira's fundamentals can, after all, be all the suffering they experience and embody. Furthermore, they appropriate their mestres' teachings and lifestyle examples. Thus, they are inspired both by the example of Mestre Prateado who has openly followed a more individual path as much as by the idea of a group and collectivity as expressed by Mestre Moreno. Thus, their collectivity carries in it the conflicting powers that threaten to bring it apart.

Capitães da Areia are an interesting case study of a collectivity whose name, symbols and practices encompass elements that come from seemingly different and perhaps contradictory spheres in social and political life: a group, a Capoeira Angola cultural center, a family, an NGO, an association. More importantly, by establishing kinship ties such as those of godparents and best men, their forms of relatedness take a new shift. Changes in Bahia and new patterns of mobility will further test their relationships and will allow us to explore their "transpersonal" and transnational "practices of coexistence" (Sahlins 2011 p.14).

[49] In Bahia, *"griot"* is the title given by the State of Bahia to a person who in preserves and transmits culture and oral traditions to the younger ones in their community. The title makes reference to the African griot, the story maker and teller.

(9) Sunday Roda on the Island.

(10) *"Native Surf."*

(11) Learning to Play Capoeira.

5. CONSIDERING CHANGES IN BAHIA

5.1 *"Feel Brazil in Your Skin"*

Late at night and as everything was closing at the Terreiro de Jesus, I found myself sitting by the door watching Artista slowly placing all the jewelry back into his house. He used to buy them at a very cheap price from the small shops in Baixa dos Sapateiros. Then, he sold them back to the tourists or made new ones. During the day, and especially in the afternoon, neighbors and friends used to drop by to chat and gossip. They argued over their small businesses and money conflicts, they played draughts and fed their imagination with stories on increasing violence, on those who made fortune or lost it due to what they judged as vanity or ill-management. They stoically observed people passing by, following Artista's motto on accepting life the way it is. Maybe because of their age, the influence of Evangelical and Pentecostal Church or their strained economic situation and alternatives, they gave an impression of stillness. *"People should not be ambitious."*, they used to say. *"Forget the past. Forget what happened even yesterday. Yesterday is also past. In life, you have to resign.",* Linda, a young girl studying journalism, Artista and Dona Maria –Cabelo's aunt- used to repeat. However, not everyone felt the same.

The late at night conversations were held mostly among men. Those who stayed until late helped Artista collect all the rings and necklaces, the small, improvised tables and the red withered displays. It was a common every night ritual. Cabelo and Neguinho sometimes also lent a hand, while the musicians from the bar in the end of the corridor used to stop for a minute, had a word or played some music before saying goodnight. Groups of locals left the bar searching for a taxi and Terreiro de Jesus was once again left to its night residents and after midnight life. Being on my way home, I used to stop by and chat with them for a while. That night we started talking about my trip to Brasilia and I made the mistake to compare it to Bahia. I focused especially on how people treat foreigners in both localities, according to the experiences I had that far. Since it was my first time in Bahia, my impressions were similar to those of many Capoeira apprentices that were visiting Bahia for the first time. It was a feeling of not being quite welcomed. As a French friend told me:

> *"Here it is the people who come from the lower classes that do not treat you well. They see you like money. You are a gringo to them and I am kind of*

surprised since I thought it would be quite the contrary. I mean, the people from the upper classes."

The same impression was shared by other people who had just arrived in Bahia and did not necessarily play Capoeira. For example, a young student of medicine from Sweden who was conducting research on diabetes and its high rates in Bahia, compared Salvador to Campinas. He described people in Salvador as not very friendly and said: *"It is as if they did not want you here. At times, they can also be quite rude."* After my first trip to Bahia, while I was away, I started considering the impact of tourism, the relationships it fosters and the type of imaginations it generates, especially in relation to foreign others. Nonetheless, back then my focus was on the existence of boundaries that seemed to separate Bahians and foreigners. I attempted to figure them out in relation to ethnicity, class, educational differences and a colonial past. Social interactions sharply contrasted the ones someone would imagine having with the friendly and warm Bahians depicted in tourist brochures.

Returning to the late night episode, Artista, even though he was from Peru, spoke on behalf of the locals, who nevertheless remained silent. He spoke using stereotypes reffering to friendly Bahians as opposed to foreigners and insisted on their right to see *"gringos"* as money. It was his way to demonstrate solidarity to Bahians and present himself as one of them. Later on, I realized that his foreign identity always stood as a symbolic marker that along with his mood swifts differentiated him from others and kept him in a rather marginal position. During that conversation, Professor and Perna, who were also present, looked away. They did not agree but they also made no effort to disagree. It was not an easy topic, especially for people in Capoeira. In fact, trying to figure out whether the relationships held between Bahian Capoeira practitioners and foreigners were disinterested or not, or being apologetic about it, was a thorny issue and recurrent preoccupation. A possible misconception concerning the other or a specific interpretation of the social reality Artista described could always put relationships at risk. Similarly, the advices on how not to provoke others by letting them see the money you have or valuable objects, never seized. For example, a friend's mother from Brasilia said:

"If someone does not even have food to eat or nice clothes and sees a nice pair of trousers in my wardrobe… If I were him or her, perhaps I, myself, would steal. It is wise not to provoke."

Indeed, almost everybody, my Bahian Capoeira friends as well as people from other Brazilian states from different social classes and occupations, made similar comments. Pelourinho was a difficult place and Capoeira's world, as I have already mentioned, a complicated one. This suspicion had class and ethnic connotations as it built upon stereotypic images and tropes. Still, as the research advanced, I realized that trust -or the lack of it- affected as well the way Capoeira teachers related to one another and perceived the world. Moreover, as I further discuss in this chapter, the lines that separate practices and relationships based on interest and the supposedly disinterested one are rather fine. As it happens in most cases, they blur. The subtle obligation to help those who have less, the lack of trust and the contempt towards people who seem so wary of others, shape ways of relatedness between Bahians and foreigners as well as among Bahians themselves. When it involves relationships held among foreigners and locals, the difference is perhaps one of degree.

Reflecting on Artista's comments, I noted down something that Perna said as he accompanied me up to the building after that night incident.

> *"What did you expect? You are not in Europe. Did you think it would be easy? You are going to learn but you have to know who you are and how people might see you here. When I was in Europe, you really think people were always nice to me? Sometimes, I myself feel a stranger in this place. I do not see you as a tourist but you should know where you stand. You have to learn how things are here and how people are. What did you believe people would think of you here? It takes time. You have to feel Brazil in your skin. Do you know what that means?"*

Perna's comment seen out of context could probably be interpreted differently. Yet, having been said at that particular moment, it had a powerful impact. As it was accompanied by a gesture he made touching his own skin, it was suggestive of the hardships and experiences attached to being black, Bahian or even a foreigner. His observation was also a stance on how people experience and perceive reality; a reality that is not necessarily pleasant but nevertheless one has to deeply feel. It brought on my mind Stoller (1992 p.5) who sustains that "one cannot separate thought from feeling and action; they are inextricably linked". Thus, it served as an invitation to capture social reality in its experiential sense and at the same time, it was an acknowledgement of certain aspects of that reality. It would also be a constant reminder of how my own

feelings and "suffering" would affect my perspective. Finally, it had to do with the ability to demonstrate resilience, just like Neguinho and him did. Someone should develop a thicker skin and therefore, grow stronger in order to feel what it is like living in Brazil, in Bahia and the city of Salvador. Otherwise, as Neguinho argued in another instance, I would end up having nothing but a *"fantasy"* about Capoeira and the people in my mind; a world that does not really exist.

Taking all the above into consideration, in this chapter, I discuss how Bahian Capoeira practitioners -mestres and teachers- evaluate their actions, practices and motivations in the presence of various others. Therefore, I attempt a first approximation focusing on activities in the Historic Center and the Island in the presence of the *"people from out there"*. Then, I discuss the meanings and uses of culture in relation to moralist discourses, development and commodification. In the midst of all that 'cultural anxiety', I turn to Capoeira *rodas* and performances. They are a privileged space to examine a series of assumptions on what the social subjects do and how they reflect upon it; how they connect to one another, their values and expectations. In the last two sections I explore questions related to motivations and interests. First, in the Making a Living with Capoeira I examine monetary exchanges and perceptions of value and mutuality. In the last section, I turn to desires and affective relationships focusing on the presence of foreign women.

5.2 Economies and *"The People from out There"*

Since the beginning of summer and during Christmas holidays, next to the everyday Capoeira *roda* in Terreiro de Jesus, several *berimbau* sellers came to take prominent place. Colorful *berimbaus* in different sizes -some of them being plain souvenirs-, small drums and other instruments, were exposed by Mestre Gage. Occasionally, Caboco -a mestre who lived in the island of Itaparica showed up to sell instruments. Caboco's *berimbaus* were quite different. They were thoroughly polished with varnish but maintained the *beriba´s* and *cabaça´s* natural colors.

Capoeira teachers and artisans who live in the Island take the *lancha* or the ferry boat that connect the island to the mainland to sell their artifacts to tourists, foreign apprentices and local shops. Sometimes, they sell their instruments in large quantities to Bahian teachers who return from Europe on holidays. Once back in Europe, they will re- sell these instruments- especially, *berimbaus* and *caxixis* that are easier to transport-

to their apprentices. Thus, a whole network of exchanges that links social actors and their economies in diverse localities is constructed. But Siri and Neguinho –who at the time were unemployed- engaged themselves in other tourist related activities. They used to accompany tourists to Mestre Prateado's atelier or *"shop"*, as they used to call it, hoping that their mestre would reciprocate the favor. Had he sold a satisfactory quantity of instruments, he gave them some money in return. Moreover, they occasionally provided information on how to find an exchange office or accommodation, in case a friend of theirs rented a room or Mestre Prateado had space in his hostel.

As a matter of fact, many locals rented part of their houses to tourists while others worked as receptionists or waiters in bars. Nevertheless, the majority hired to work in the tourist sector were foreigners. In addition, in the Historic Center, besides the religious institutions who owned property and rented it to locals, it was mostly foreigners who bought and restored old buildings. Coming from Germany, Portugal or Italy, they had enough capital to invest. In the nearby neighborhood of Saude, for example, as well as in the Island, foreigners had transformed various localities into tourist resorts, guest houses and hostels. Even throughout events such as the Olympic Games, the World Cup and the Carnival that were described as important moments during which Bahians expected to improve their economic situation, not everyone benefited or participated equally. The involvement of people from the economically and socially disadvantaged classes was confined to a limited set of activities. Thus, Mestre Barão in a gathering described a socially segregated Carnival.

> *"The elite stays at the camarote while those who produce culture -the people of Bahia- sell churrasquinho (kebab) or cheese to the tourist and stand in the queue."*

According to him, the carnival's popular character had changed. In several occasions, older mestres commented on the little money the majority of the population made comparing to the state's, private companies' and famous artists' benefits involved in the Carnival and other big festivities. Mestre Barão further compared Capoeira to the Carnival. Thus, he argued on an aim to make Capoeira elitist just as they believed had occurred with the Carnival. This belief was transformed into common knowledge; a recurrent topic and narrative shared by social actors[50]. Together with the use of

[50] According to Michael Chwe Suk Young (2001 p.12-13), common knowledge is a message/information that has been successfully communicated and is based on a historical

expressions such as *"Capoeira's elites"*, *"Capoeira's mafia"*, and *"those who are in the government's little pot"* communicated attitudes towards perceived injustice; the ambivalent relationship with the State and political parties and uneven participation and conflicts over resources.[51]

Bahians' presence seemed to be conditioned and peripheral as tourism related economies hierarchically involved a series of agents. Nevertheless, the people living in the Historic Center and the island made a living in every possible way. The arrival of big cruise ships (*navios*) -especially during January and February- signaled the onset of the tourist season. From Ediandro who crafted *caxixis* in the neighborhood of Roçinha in the Center and Bahian artists such as Pintor to Neguinho's mother who bought beers and prepared food to sell to both foreign and national tourists, they all struggled to find their place as craftsmen, painters or cooks and improve their economic situation. Even street pocket pickers waited for the tourists' arrival. From time to time, a woman would enter rushing into one of the Terreiro de Jesus arcades or small streets trying to sell a mobile phone she had just robbed from a *"gringo"*. Others would ask from a tourist to buy them food so that they would give it later on to a drug dealer in order to buy crack. The locals observed those events with mixed feelings and occasionally bought stolen mobile phones or wallets. In other instances, some -and these were not necessarily pocket pickers- found amusing stealing tourists' purses or scaring them to give them money, even if most of the times their attempts failed.

The *gringos* and *gringas* who arrived from different places bringing along imageries and desires for curios and souvenirs, were *"the people from out there"* (*a gente la de fora*). Pelourinho's residents had an idea about what these people were

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precedent. But, successful communication goes beyond the simple distribution of a message. It is about knowing that other people also share this kind of knowledge. Hence, distinguishing between different levels of knowledge and metaknowledge, Young suggests that common knowledge is essential in order for a collectivity to coordinate its actions.

[51] In several occasions, the subjects of study commented not only on the existence of elites in the society but also in Capoeira. For example, during a song contest in the square Teresa Batista, some mestres and their apprentices who dropped by as spectators or participated as members of the judging committee, said that the results were more than expected. While in other incidents they commented on the importance of having contacts or expressed surprise on someone's ability to find significant sponsors to finance his events.

looking for. They wanted to buy *"something more natural and different"*, as Artista repeated every time he went to the zoo to get feathers and make jewelry. In turn, the Capoeira players by the church opinionated on what foreign women wanted. Everyday activities, economies, politics and imaginations were somehow related to these *"people from out there"*. The expression Linda used describes eloquently the idea of the constant presence of a world outside known boundaries; a world of which she knew what was revealed to her especially through interactions with tourists in the Historic Center. Hereafter, Capoeira turned out to be a privileged space for exploring these encounters. In particular, the type and intensity of interactions and the economies articulated shape and are being shaped by the teachers' personal trajectories inside and outside Bahia.

Interactions with foreign tourists bring to forth not only conflicting interests among local agents but also create solidarities and generate processes of self reflection. Indeed, perception, as self awareness, and presentation, in the sense of presenting oneself through what he chooses to teach or give, are mediated by the implicit or explicit existence and conceptualization of social and cultural boundaries (also see Cohen 1996). Hence, in another instance, while talking to his cousins, Perna made a joke on how *"they"* – the foreign apprentices- go to Bahia and learn how to make instruments. Eventually, *"they"* would return to their countries and since they had more resources, they could make more profit. Thus, he said:

> *"You see how they are? They come and watch and learn from us and then, they want to go back and teach or sell instruments. They have money, so, they can do it better. Or at least, it's easier for them."*

Indeed, the younger teachers sometimes admitted that their mestre refused to teach foreign Capoeira players how to make percussion instruments and warned his apprentices to be cautious when they teach others. Yet, they would have to make their own decisions concerning what they would reveal and to whom, even if that would probably defy to some extent their mestres' advice. Once away from Bahia, geographical distance gives another dimension to their activities and choices.

Boundaries are attached to specific understandings of collective and individual identities. Sometimes they are drawn out of difference. Others, or even simultaneously, they are built around commonalities and common objectives (see Cohen 1985). However vague, identities and boundaries are at the very core of most anthropological

studies and inquiries. According to Barth (2000), boundaries divide while at the same time, they create relationships and engagement. Nevertheless, as he argues, anthropological theories do not necessarily coincide with native understandings and practices. Hence, since he acknowledges qualitative differences between cognition and practice-lived experience, he urges us to understand boundaries by exploring their cognitive aspects as they are expressed in people's social practices.[52]

In the case of both younger and older Capoeira teachers from Bahia, their Capoeira related economic activities translate into an all-encompassing series of everyday practices, ways of interaction, forms of relatedness and communication. A careful reflection allows us to see how they involve different spheres and domains of their lives. Therefore, their conceptualizations of boundaries move beyond the simple distinction between 'us' and 'them'; between 'them' and *"the people from out there"* or eventually, between what someone might call, the individual and the society. They are informed by interactions with foreign tourists as well as by the presence of various others. Yet, they are materialized, conceived and communicated in more complex ways forming lines that intersect or are interestingly crossed.

There have been various episodes during fieldwork that illustrate this point. Most of the turbulent weeks Neguinho spent in Salvador during 2009, his great preoccupation was how to return to Europe and, of course, how to make some money. One night I met him and two of his best foreign friends –a Swedish and a French- near

[52] Discussing the example of the Baktaman and the Basseri, he argues that their conceptualizations of boundaries differ significantly. In the case of the Baktaman it is the use of distinct taboos and social bonding and not the implicit drawing of boundaries that shapes their experience, while the Basseri conceive their world as a "scene of movement [where] groups hold elaborate and clearly defined grazing rights […] conceptualized not as bounded territories, but as migration schedules" (Barth 2000 p.19). Echoing Bloch (1992; 2012) who urges anthropologists to consider cognitive scientists' work, Barth chooses to explore how cognitive and social processes interact. For this reason, he incorporates Lakoff's kinesthetic image schemas as patterns that are repeatedly executed through bodily experience and seeks to explore the "preconceptual sources" and "experiential bases" of the concept of boundary (Barth 2000 p.22). Thus, he comes to a conclusion that different lives result to the creation of different images and different conceptual categories. Furthermore, the cognitive act of boundary drawing sets in motion processes and operations that also depend on the social life of the people we study and this may eventually lead to reconceptualizations of boundaries (ibid p.30-31).

the taxi station. They were rushing to the hospital. They said that Neguinho could not see. While in the taxi, I found out that during the past few days he had been working hard to make percussion instruments. He was going to sell them to his foreign friends in a relatively cheap price. But he did not have all the necessary tools and material. Thus, he had already asked Professor to help him in his endeavor while the mestre was away. In reality, the mestre was quite aware of their activities but he allowed them to go on. Still, he wanted to be informed. That time, they decided to keep it a secret. Neguinho wandered around all little shops in the Lower City (*Cidade Baixa*) buying wire and nails. He used to pick his material meticulously watching for the details and for this reason the mestre appreciated his work. He even ordered leather from a man outside Salvador and spent all the money he had to get the rest of the material from a music instruments' shop in Pelourinho. He finally visited an electrician to help him with his work. But since the electrician was not an instrument maker, Neguinho had to watch carefully during the procedure and give instructions. He eventually had his job almost done. All he had to do was to wait for the leather to dry and then, place it on the *pandeiro's* (tambourine's) body. But things did not work out the way he hoped. He had injured his eye. The doctors told him that the damage was severe after having spent too much time staring at the intense light during welding. On our way back from the hospital, and accompanied by his closest friends, who had gathered money to buy him proper food and medication, he said:

> *"I shouldn't have stared so much into the light. I know that. I should have used protection. It was not the first time. I could feel my eye hurt. But I had no choice. Maybe I should have done it with the mestre. But what could I do? That technician had no idea and I had to look all along in order for him not to make a mistake. Otherwise, all my work would be ruined. Then, late at night, I woke up and I couldn't see. I called for the others but I couldn't see them. The doctor said that I have injured my eye and that if that ever happens again, I might lose my sight."*

Later that night, they all went to assist the Friday night *roda*. Neguinho, playing the *berimbau*, stood next to his mestre. His right eye had a big white bandage on to protect it from the light and a possible infection. His mestre looked at him and immediately figured out what had happened. At some point, he told Professor: *"Look at him. He messed up his eye. He must have been trying to make instruments. Am I right?"* Professor, as always, kept quite. Their foreign friends were also present but they were to

be trusted. They would not tell the mestre. After all, they were the ones who were going to buy those instruments. As for the mestre, he did not insist. He had a lot of experience teaching and working with these young men who seemed to respect him and even playfully called him *"uncle"*. *"But, I am not their father. I cannot tell them what to do in their lives",* he often repeated. Besides, with Perna they already had an unofficial pact, an agreement on what kind of instruments he could independently make and sell and Neguinho's activities were very sporadic and not an actual competition or threat.

This episode, however, draws attention to the choices they make considering their current situation and the presence of others. The young men think about their possibilities and the mestre is quite aware of their options. Their decisions will ultimately affect their present as well as their future projects. There is actually consensus even if their actvities seem to threaten their relationships. As Lancy (2012 p.114) argues:

> The apprentice threatens their livelihoods as an eventual competitor but also by his or her behavior, public standing, adherence to tradition, respect for the master, and progress or lack thereof.

As it will be further discussed, it is about a constant effort to define the relationship between self and collectivity as transnational mobility and tourism give it an interesting twist.

Perna, during one of their lunches in a restaurant near Terreiro de Jesus, said:

> *"It's like this. I have to look after myself and my family. That's what we all have to do. If I don't do that, then, who is going to do it for me?"*

His account of their social practices, invites us to reflect not so much on what globalization does to people but on how they make choices and what does a right choice consist of. They are likely to reflect and calculate what is to their best interest. Eventually, how they position themselves towards various others –others that also include their biological families- is crucial in order to understand the interplay between economy, culture, collective identities and ultimately, the self. For this reason, as Marilyn Strathern (1988 p.14) also suggests, we should consider the importance of talking about sociality not only in the plural but also in the singular. As she notes:

> Social life consists in a constant movement from one state to another, from one type of sociality to another, from a unity (manifested collectively or singly) to that unity split or paired with respect to another.

Following Strathern (1988 p.14), we should explore how "this alternation is replicated throughout numerous cultural forms". As a matter of fact, the management of resources – material and immaterial- in relation to the perception of time plays a key role. For the young Capitães da Areia in Bahia, time passed by in a peculiar way. It was a time of preparation; of being in an expectation mode. Yet, expectation and anticipation were built around some basic ideas and understandings on how economies and globalization work.

5.3 *"People here have no culture"*: Performances and the Civilizing Effects of Culture

The walls of the under construction building next to the bank and near the Elevator Lacerda were decorated by a massive graffiti. It was divided in three sections with Capoeira inspired themes on. The first one depicted a cunningly smiling Mestre Pastinha and next to him, a *berimbau* and a man with white trousers performing a handstand (*bananeira*). On the right, the other section showed São Jorge on his white horse and next to him and almost in the centre, a big black angel dressed in white. On his hands there were still the bracelets of broken chains. He was sitting and holding a *berimbau* above smaller figures kneeling underneath him. These figures varied in size and depicted men agonizing in chains, women carrying sugar cane and scenes from everyday life during slavery. A young girl was drawn close to the angel. Sitting on her knees, she was writing down what the angel presumably dictated. On the right –a commentary on Capoeira's recent history- an almost erased and less elaborated part of the graffiti presented less known mestres with their names underneath, Mestre Jorge Satelite and Mestre Paulo dos Anjos.

After having known the people, their stories and aspirations, I could guess the artists's identity. In a place where everyone struggled to find his/her place in history, the graffiti's creators used powerful means and aesthetic forms to narrate and enact their version of Capoeira's history. They made a statement on their mestre's contribution, Mestre Paulo dos Anjos. By executing it in a place that, to them, symbolized an

established order and hegemony -that of the Historic Centre and its Capoeira academies- it was altogether more powerful.

The following year, when the construction of the building was completed, the graffiti disappeared. On the walls of the buildings surrounding the Terreiro de Jesus square, a different set of objects enacted Pelourinho's history and present. These were the Bahian colorful pareos. Placed one next to the other, they represented urban scenes and the colonial architecture of Salvador's center, the ribbons of Our Lord of Bomfim, the symbol of Olodum and Bob Marley. Destined for tourist consumption- even if Bahians also bought and used them- they captured the gaze of people passing by. Their statement was perhaps different from that of the graffiti. However, they all shaped the Historic Center's material environment. They visually represented a constellation of symbols related to Capoeira, reggae music, religiosity, black identity and past times. As such, they communicated messages and information on the city's past and present.

Walking about Pelourinho and accompanied by Julho, the receptionist of a hostel in the Frei Vicente street, we came up to some young men sitting on a bench staring at the tourists. The receptionist, a man around his thirties from Curitiba, said: *"Look at them. People here have no culture."* I was surprised. In a place where culture –however defined- was out on the streets and the Bahian state was in great pain promoting ethnic tourism, Capoeira, music and Candomble, hearing that people had no culture, seemed an oxymoron. Poverty, social inequalities, violence, seemed palpable and observable realities. But, culture? How is it possible to accuse Bahians of not having culture when, in other discourses, they were presented as bearers of culture? Is it possible for anyone not to have culture? Thus, Julho, added:

> *"Since I arrived here and up to now, there hasn't been a single day that I won't see them hanging around disturbing tourists or urinating in the street. They are very dirty and impolite!"*

In this case, culture is perceived as equivalent to specific behaviors: being polite, maintaining healthy habits and avoiding idleness. Thus, it resonates with past racist discourses on Brazil's hygienization and the need to cure of pathologies, as well as with recent ones on civility. In this context, Bahia and its people receive ambiguous connotations. As Anadelia Romo (2010 p.1) puts it:

> Alternately romanticized and denigrated, [Bahia] has served both as a cradle of Brazilian national identity and as an embarrassing symbol of Brazil's backwardness.

In this context, the receptionist's definition is complementary. First, -and this should be understood in relation to Capoeira's nomination as immaterial and not material heritage- it separates people, the social and material from a perceived immaterial cultural sphere, however this sphere is defined. In turn, back in the 1980's, Mestre Pastinha claimed that *"Capoeira does not need anything. I am the one who is in need"*. Second, they both reside in the assumption that culture is about morality or at least, that culture entails the possibility of moral improvement. Yet, in the case of a state that represents the country's African roots, moral improvement is latent and conditional.

In this context, transformation is presented as possibility. Culture can play a significant role in a process that will eventually lead to civilization. An example of that was given during the celebration of Mestre Barão's birthday. Various representatives of cultural institutions, commissions and Candomble houses expressed their ideas on Capoeira's educative character, the role played by the mestres and the programs of social inclusion. In addition, they drew attention on the need to *"create public policies that will reinforce the country's civilizing processes."* Capoeira, thus, remains an ambiguous symbol of Brazilian culture and Pelourinho is transformed into a *"Cultural Pelourinho"*. At the same time, the initiatives to *"revitalize"* the Historic Center, to reconstruct its spaces and deal with problems and *"pathologies"* related to poverty and drug trafficking, coincide with the development of the tourist industry. Yet, when a Pelourinho's resident criticized these policies, she noticed:

> *"Pelourinho's revitalization is revitalization in quotation marks. What we need is to revitalize our moralism because we do not want to see our brothers sleeping on the pavement."*

Thus, change, moral improvement, economic development and culture are all placed together in an implicit or explicit way by a series of agents. In the same spirit, a Capoeira Angola mestre, Mestre Grande, during a documentary on Capoeira, Samba de Roda and Maculele, suggested that a viable solution would be for the state to *"give culture to the people*". By focusing on the elders and how Capoeira and culture may induce respect towards the elders, Mestre Barão elaborated on his social work and

emphasized the absence of financial support from the state. Assuming she was in accordance with the mestre, a foreign apprentice from Japan, commented:

> *"You are right. Something must be done with the people here. You get on the bus and you see old people standing on their feet and nobody offers them a seat. People in Salvador have no education."*

That comment was followed by silence. The mestre who used to be rather argumentative and expressed his ideas in a characteristic performative way, seemed distressed and hesitant, but remained silent.

Culture, popular culture and education are used interchangeably. This inevitably brings mestres and Bahian Capoeira practitioners in an awkward position as they actively engage into these debates. Capoeira as popular culture is discussed –in the best case scenario- as means towards positive change. However, the confusion over the content of that change and the expectation of change, results from and at the same time, is the cause of contradictory and conflicting definitions of culture and education. In most cases, they are based on an implicit paternalistic premise that acknowledges essences inherent to the people. These negative qualities and dispositions induce them to certain actions. Thus, education here is understood as training to a socially acceptable and proper behavior that may lead to personal transformation. It is no coincidence that like many other mestres, Mestre Canjiquinha stated that because of Capoeira he settled down and had a family. At the same time, and especially since the 1990's, there are several studies that emphasize Capoeira's pedagogical potential[53]. Quite often, they are

[53] The studies on Capoeira's pedagogical and educational character emphasize the importance of oral tradition, the perception of the body and community (see, Abib 2004 and Conceição 2009). The sociologist Pedro Abib, for example, wrote: *"the university, that represents scientific knowledge, has to acknowledge popular knowledge (os saberes populares) as fundamental to make the world more human. Knowledge – scientific and popular- cannot be hierarchically classified"* (A Tarde 8/03/2008). The article was homage to Mestre João Pequeno and his nomination as "Doutor Honoris Causa" in 2002 by the Faculty of Education of the Federal University of Bahia. An interesting detail here is that his friend, Mestre João Grande, had already received a Doctorate of Humane Letters from Upsala College in New Jersey several years ago, in 1995, and in 2001 he was awarded the National Heritage Fellowship by the National Endowment for the Arts in the United States.

part of debates concerning citizenship and social inclusion in Brazil.[54] But even then, Capoeira teachers and mestres are considered inadequate to comply with current pedagogical methods.

Lack of culture is also discussed in the sense of loss and deprivation due to historical processes and in specific, enslavement and colonialism. As a Brazilian from São Paolo argued:

> *"They have lost their culture because they were taken away from their place. Thus, they no longer have culture. They are more confused."*

While the Bahian intellectual Ildasio Tavares (1977) in his preface on Modern Art in Bahia, laments that Bahians "live in a city without memory", he nevertheless emphasizes a "cultural cannibalism" in the present that has caused a cultural, urban and architectonical disintegration. As he concludes, Bahians had everything but they lost it in the process. Thus, he locates loss of culture in a different historic moment.

In the present, however, the tourist industry developed by investing on key aspects of popular culture, meaning, of the Afrobrazilian culture (Adelia 2010). Indeed, tourism is promoted and perceived as indispensable to local economy and Capoeira as central to that economy and Bahia's image abroad. Thus, contrary to tourism in other places that rely mostly on natural resources, in the Historic Center, culture and ethnicity have a prominent place. As Comaroff and Comaroff (2009 p.1) suggest:

> Ethnicity is *also* becoming more corporate, more commodified, more implicated than ever before in the economics of everyday life. Cultural identity … represents itself ever more as two things at once: the object of choice and self-construction, typically through the act of consumption, *and* the manifest product of biology, genetics, human essence.

[54] As a matter of fact, since the 1990's the NGOs in Brazil have played an active role in shaping discourses on citizenship leading various social projects. Similarly, their discourses have been appropriated by various institutions and organizations as well as by the government and in several occasions these organizations work for and execute projects on behalf of the state and private institutions. The proeccupation in a neoliberal market where the NGOs have to come to play an important role substituting statal and public policies, is efficiency. In this context, SETUR, a governmental institution aims to promote Bahian Capoeira as an 'ancestral element" and key for the development of an efficient ethnic and cultural tourism.

As such, the question is how these processes relate to the assumption that Bahians have or do not have culture. In turn, in an African context, a Tswana elder said: "If we have nothing of ourselves to sell, does it mean that we have no culture?" (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009 p.18). Hence, if local Bahians have something of 'themselves' to sell, does it mean that they, after all, have culture? An answer to that has already been given by Julho.

There is, however, another possible interpretation. According to Acúrsio Pereira da Silva (2003 p.94):

> The act of making profane or transforming into a mere commodity or even elitizing popular cultural elements is accelerated in every sphere where the adjective 'exotic' serves in Tourism as a 'cultural tatoo', leaving the print of a 'consumption good'. The commercialization of afrobrazilian culture and especially capoeira's image is common place […] Unsatisfied by transforming this rich culture into commodity, they even sell black people's image as eccentric, picturesque or as another curiosity among other.

Here, the author reflects on what he perceives as a different type of loss: namely, culture's transformation into mere commodity due to tourism. Recently, there is a new term that spurred on with official incentives and discusses the relationship between culture and economy, that of "creative economy". Thus, the site of the International Office of Capoeira and Tourism announced the creation of the "Capoeira Network: Creative Economy". Responsible for the network was the organization "Mandinga Project" and it was financed by the government of Bahia. One of its objectives was to organize an event at the Fortress of Santo Antonio in order to discuss Capoeira's perspective and development as commerce in the context of a creative economy. It is not coincidental that among those invited was Emilia Biancardi, a researcher known for having participated in the organization of folkloric groups that during the 1970's travelled from Bahia to other states. As I have already noted, Mestre Prateado had also played an important role in those groups. Therefore, the aim was to examine Capoeira's status and potential in a global level and set the principles of an efficient creative economy in both a Brazilian and global market. Indeed, the last decade, there has been an implicit or explicit awareness of the possibilities that Capoeira teachers' trasnationalism has created. Thus, aiming to promote the creative and positive aspects

of commodification, Capoeira was examined as a "rentable cultural product" considering its "internationalization" and "mestres' professionalization".

Writing on culture and commodification, Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2004) suggests that there is no absolute distinction between what he calls "fabricated" and "real", "artificially" and "organically" created culture. Nevertheless, he sustains that there is a gap. Similarly, Comaroff and Comaroff (2009) make a distinction between culture as objectified and alienated in the market, and culture in its anthropological dimension. There have been given various definitions to culture. Anthropologists from very early on have been in pains to define culture and thus, their object of study (Boas 1940; Tylor 1958; Geertz; 1973). My purpose, however, is neither to elaborate an alternative definition nor to argue on whether it is possible to distinguish between an objectified and an organic culture. By tracing the concept's history (see also Ortner 2006), we observe shifts in anthropological theory from structuralism and marxism, to interpretation and theories of practice that depart from an acknowledgment of culture's constraining qualities. It is a shift from the study of essences to the acknowledgment of agency and relationships, where relationships are understood as interactions.

In Bahia, and in particular in Capoeira's social circles, culture lies at the core of conflicting debates that confuse both Capoeira practitioners and researchers. As Sahlins (1999) puts it, everyone today has discovered they have culture. In Bahia, of course, people are no quite sure on whether they have culture, on what culture is all about, on the historic moment they attained it or lost it and as such, on the relationship between culture and change. Hence, as Grillo (2003) said paraphrasing Hannerz, what is on the street is not just "culturespeak" but more importantly, culture anxiety. Anthropologists are not left out of this anxiety as they have, consciously or not, contributed to it. Actually, there is a tautology between anthropological and non-anthropological definitions of culture that mutually influence one another.[55]

[55] Social anthropologists have noticed that "culture" "society," "individual," "social relations," or "identity" usedin different contexts. They are used in everyday discourses, other disciplines and, of course, in anthropology (Bakalaki 2006 p.265). However, they insist that their meanings and uses differ. Bourdieu (1984), cited in Bakalaki (2006), for example, sustained that there is an anthropological sense of culture. Hence, according to him, only if culture in its "ordinary" usage is "brought back" in its anthropological dimension, researchers will be able to have a better idea of their subject of study. However, we cannot claim that there is a clear cut

At the same time, there is a growing skepticism and disenchantment with the concept (Moore 2011 p.10) to the point to consider it obsolete. Reflecting on the dichotomical debates between nature and culture, Tim Ingold (2004) argues that people live *in* a "relational world" and for this reason anthropologists should move not only beyond biology but also beyond culture. Engaging with an anthropology that supersedes dichotomies, anthropologists, as he advocates, should be able to get out of the dead end in which they are and comprehend historical transformation. Aiming to figure out the fallacies of dichotomic ways of thinking –in this case, universalism and culturalism - Maurice Bloch (2012) also explores interrelations and interactions. Accordingly, he focuses on the communication of information –verbal and non-verbal-, its implicit and explicit character and the internal and external processes that make human history and transformation possible. As such, he sets the cognitive frame in which anthropological ideas should be placed.

But skepticism towards the notion of 'culture' had also been expressed by social subjects during research when they drew my attention on the fact that I kept confusing with culture something that, according to them, was not culture. Capoeira performances have been paradigmatic in understanding the people I studied and eventually, in theorizing and writing about them. As "praxical beings", we all think and act transforming, at the same time, our world. Our thinking and acting, though, involve reflection and cannot be reduced to either one or the other.[56]

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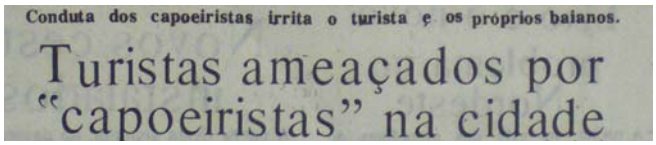
distinction that separates the concept of "culture" in anthropological minds from the one that exists in the minds of other human beings. The case of Bahia and the confusions in the uses of the concept are an example of that. Moreover, the interactions between anthropologists and Capoeira practitioners, where in many cases practitioners are also anthropologists, and the active participation of intellectuals in theorizing Capoeira, make altogether these exchanges or "interpenetrations" (see Bloch 2013), more complex.

[56] According to Margolis, Karl Marx (1989 p.370) advocated the idea that there is not an essentially unchanging independent world and an autonomous rational cognitive power that resides in people. For him there are no internal and external historical processes. Thinking has a history and it changes in relation to the world. It is not ahistorical and abstract, innate, autonomous and totalizing. Thus, the idea and possibility of change and transformation are prominent considering the historic nature of human beings, their world and the relationships they establish.

(12) Capoeira Graffiti, Historic Centre.

(13) Capoeira Paintings, Historic Centre.


Conduta dos capoeiristas irrita o turista e os próprios baianos.

Turistas ameaçados por "capoeiristas" na cidade

(14) *'"Capoeiristas" Threaten Tourists in the City,'* Tribuna da Bahia, 18 Aug. 1986.


CAPOEIRA

UMA ARTE QUE VIROU COMÉRCIO

(15) *'Capoeira, An Art which Became Commerce,'* A Tarde, 19 Dec. 1972.

(16) Instruments and Souvenirs in the Historic Centre (left) and Mercado Modelo (right).

5.4 Every Friday

> *"Every Friday he goes up the slope to play Capoeira in the Terreiro. There is Maracatu, Samba de Roda, Bumba meu Boi and Capoeira Angola."* (Every Friday, lyrics by Mestre Prateado)

In Capoeira performances what practitioners know –or do not know- is put *"in a practical context of perception and action"* (Ingold 2000 p.161). Performances are essential to Capoeira and in the life of every Capoeira practitioner and especially, as in the case of study, in the lives and trajectories of young Capoeira teachers and their mestres.[57] The performative aspect and bodily communications start from, are mediated by or return and culminate to Capoeira's roda. Yet, they always extend and move beyond it in terms of space and time. Therefore, thinking, acting and reflecting are all put together and allow us to comprehend social processes that are not confined to Capoeira's ephemeral –yet repetitive- circle. The difficulty lies in capturing and depicting the material conditions of performance: the flows of movements and interactions, gestures, body postures, gazes. It is impossible to render intelligible what practitioners call *"the energy"* of a r*oda*, whether it is 'good' or 'terrible', 'pure', 'tense' or 'awkward'.

Starting from space, Capoeira *rodas* involve both public and private space. As I have pointed out earlier, with the establishment of Capoeira academies, a great deal of training and playing has been confined inside these academies. As Porreta said once:

> *"Where are all the Angoleiros from Bahia? I know. They are chained in their academies."*

His distress was not so much caused by others' unwillingness to appropriate public space. Actually, Capoeira is still performed –though sporadically- on the streets and squares during various events or days of the week but every group, or association, or network of people have or aim to establish their own space. Consequently, Porreta criticized a current reality that dictated when, where and with whom they should choose

[57] By Capoeira performances I mostly refer to Capoeira *rodas*. To a lesser extend and where necessary, I include performances during classes and training. Occasionally, I also move beyond Capoeira's circle since performances are enacted in a diverse set of practices, gestures and speech acts.

to play. In public, Capoeira *rodas* are the image that local people and tourists have of Capoeira, of what Capoeira players do and who they are. These images will most likely circulate through tourist brochures, social media and videos posted on Youtube. Yet, even there, they are mediated by means that fail to capture sensory experiences adequately and most importantly, they interrupt the continuum of the practitioners' experience.

Capoeira *rodas* take place during special events such as weddings, commemorations of birthdays and moments considered important in the life of an individual or the collectivity; during homecomings or farewells, friends' gatherings, and of course, during class. They can have a repetitive character, for example, once a week, or in the case of Capoeira in the Terreiro de Jesus, they may take place every day. During research, I observed innumerous Capoeira performances. As practitioner, I participated in very few. In Bahia, I watched the first performance as spectator among a group of tourists. It took place at the Mestre Bimba Association -a Capoeira Regional Association- in the Historical Centre. I had no information on the people and their school and I did not develop any sort of connections thereafter. That had a lot to do with my lack of interest for what I perceived and later on I would be taught to consider with contempt as *"Capoeira for the tourist"*.

It was late in the afternoon and a man was giving away flyers to the tourists informing them on the *"show"*. Some tourists decided to pay in the entrance and walked up the stairs. The young people playing Capoeira and later on dancing samba, were not facing one another as it is common. Instead, they were facing the tourists, the audience. The small children seemed somewhat embarrassed. That was an awkward and uncomfortable moment. Sartre (1943) argues that the other's gaze takes away our freedom since it turns us into "an object in his/her world, a character in his/her life drama".[58] But, the other's gaze is quintessential in Capoeira's performances. Indifference is neither possible nor desirable.

[58] Judaken (2008 p.25-26) elaborates on the two possible responses to the gaze of others articulated by Sartre. He says that what Sartre calls "masochism" is the desire to make yourself the object you would like to be perceived. The other, is to appropriate and objectify the Other. This is what Sartre calls 'sadism'.

I was looking forward to Mestre Prateado's *roda.* Back then, I was not aware of his reputation. Still, my curiosity was growing due to Siri's and Professor's stories and enthusiasm: *"You have to see the mestre's roda. That is a real roda. It is street Capoeira."* But the *roda* did not take place the Friday I dropped by. It was pouring and besides, there were not enough people. Some of the young Capitães da Areia could not leave the island due to the bad weather and the rest were travelling in other places in Brazil or in Europe. Still, the following day Neguinho came at the *atelier* with an invitation that had his mestre's name on. It was Mestre Josivaldo's birthday. He was going to commemorate it at the Fortress of Santo Antonio and invited other Capoeira mestres to join his *roda* and honor him. Later on that night we went up to the Fortress. Mestre Prateado sat next to Mestre Rasta. Mestre Chapeu and Mestre Olivio were also there and Mestre Josivaldo, since it was his birthday, was the first who started playing. A few local women with small children were sitting on the benches watching and taking photos. At some point, Professor came to play. At the time, he did not have enough experience and the mestre was watching somewhat disappointed. Then, Neguinho went at the berimbau's foot (*pe do berimbau*). He was going to play with his mestre that stood opposite of him kneeled. A player is not supposed to kneel but he was an old mestre and he was justified due to past injuries. When the *roda* ended, the mestres and the the younger ones went to a nearby bar to have something to drink, a common practice after a *roda.* On our way back to the center, Neguinho seemed pleased. He had actually played well even though he did not train a lot due to lack of space. He said:

> *"Did you hear what the mestre sung when I was about to play with him? 'The boy is good'. Do you know what that means? He was telling the other mestres I am good!"*

According to Neguinho, Bahian mestres did not know him very well. He left Bahia when he was seventeen. He was younger than other local Capoeira practitioners such as Cachaça, who even though lived in France, had already established a wider circle of contacts and relationships both in Europe and back home. Neguinho's situation was more complex. Returning to Brazil was not his choice. He was deported. Once in Bahia, he had to deal with the possibility of not being able to return to France. For this reason, he had to conquer his space in Bahia and, at the same time, he had to deal with how locals from different social classes and different collectivities perceived Capoeira practitioners in general, and Capoeira practitioners who returned back home, in particular.

Being introduced by his mestre in a *roda* where many important Capoeira Angola mestres were present was of paramount importance to him. Participating in the *roda* was more than an individual experience of playing. It was about being tested while presented in front of those who had authority. His presentation was mediated by the mestre's intervention. His gesture –that I hardly perceived due to my limited experience- was motivated by affective emotions and the possibility of action, of playing together as Capoeira practitioners, almost equals. In this case, Neguinho would have the possibility to enter the process of being constituted as social person. He was not another young man playing Capoeira that happened to be present. As a matter of fact, that was the case of Mosquito, a Catalan I had already seen playing in *rodas* in Barcelona. Due to his enthusiasm for Capoeira and Bahia, he travelled at least three times to Salvador. He had met Mestre Pequeno and Mestre Chapeu in a festival in Spain and he decided to travel to Bahia and look for them. But he was moving around as an individual. He was tolerated or even accepted but he was not actually recognized as a person.

For Neguinho, in order to be recognized as a person, he would have to be acknowledged through another person, his mestre; and through him by the community of the mestres who were present. For the mestre, and considering that most mestres were accompanied by one or two of their apprentices, his apprentice was if not an extension of himself, his continuation. The boundaries between the mestre and his apprentice seemed fused and uncertain. This is what Bloch (2013) discusses as social interpenetration that is made possible by the –uneven, in this case- distribution of knowledge.

Young Bahian Capoeiras frequented various *rodas* according to how they perceived and drew boundaries and connections to others. During Fridays they occasionally visited Capoeira Quilombola, an academy located in a poor lit street outside Pelourinho. Mestre Guerreiro firmly held onto his ideas and political beliefs. Nonetheless, he got along well with Capitães da Areia and he was familiar even with the younger ones. That afternoon the academy was crowded by foreigners and locals, practitioners and observers and it was quite remarkable to see all these foreigners in a place so difficult to find. When the *roda* ended, everyone started eating fruits and drinking sodas that were placed on a small table. When I asked them if they were more nervous playing there, they denied it. Nonetheless, their body posture seemed different than during Mestre Prateado's *rodas.* On our way back, at Carlos Gomes street, we met

some Japanese apprentices going to Capoeira Mundo where Mestre Gigante used to lead the *roda.* Professor observed:

> *"We sometimes go at the Capoeira Mundo. But you enter the roda and the mestre there comes very hard on us. Besides, his students never come to play with us. If they don't come, then why should we go?"*

From time to time, they used to go and play with them, especially Porreta and his friends who at the time were not in Bahia. But even in this case, they usually avoided going at somebody else's *roda*, especially when there was only one or two of them.

But what was it that made Mestre Prateado's *roda* so special for the young Capitães da Areia? As I have already mentioned, Terreiro de Jesus square even if at first sight caused me a different impression, is considered a place of reference among Capoeira players. Interestingly enough the ones that mostly occupy that space are Capoeira Regional players during the day. Cabelo who was not a Capoeira player, used to call them *"exhibitionists"*. Standing by the door of his house and Artista's little shop, with the arms crossed and observing people passing by, he would comment:

> *"Here, Capoeira is natural tourism; an informal tourism. These ones sell image. They are exhibitionists. They are the worst. They play Capoeira and live their lives by going out with foreign women… But you see, they always return here and they play Capoeira. They travel and then they leave and they come back and that's how things are."*

Cabelo did not belong to the Capoeira players' world. Yet, he shared a flat with them. He wanted to learn to play Capoeira in the future. Like other young local men, he had relatively few chances to meet foreign women or learn foreign languages – something he admired- compared to Capoeira practitioners of his age or even younger. Nonetheless, his criticism was part of the criticism Capoeira practitioners themselves used to make.

At the same time, Capoeira in the Terreiro de Jesus square had preoccupied institutions, the authorities, neighbors and practitioners from different groups and places in the world, for quite different reasons. A newspaper article during the 1980s mentioned how tourism was at stake because of Capoeira practitioners' activities both in the area of Mercado Modelo and Terreiro de Jesus. According to the Municipal Company of Tourism:

> If the Capoeira fighters continue to get money from tourists using violence, they will not be allowed to keep on with their exhibitions near Mercado Modelo […] Gratification should be left to the audience's judgment. They cannot force a tourist to pay not to mention, to establish a price […] In the Terreiro de Jesus, the situation is more complex […] It is more a question of safety since the people there are not organized as in the Mercado Modelo […] Our objective is to please and attract more tourists in the capital of Bahia since this is a source of income. At the same time, Terreiro de Jesus is a public square.

Since then, some things have changed. Everyday Capoeira *roda* at the Terreiro de Jesus is on the cover of Bahian tourist magazines. Next to them, there are stands with Bahianas selling *acaraje* and every Tuesday night, the place is filled with stands selling food and drinks and a small stage for concerts. The square seems more organized. Yet, the mestre responsible for the everyday *roda* quite often forces tourists to give money and has a fixed price for the photos, unless, of course, a police officer is near.

But Capitães da Areia attend a different *roda* at the Terreiro. It is Mestre Prateado's *roda* that takes place every Friday night. Tamara, an anthropologist and former Capoeira player, once told me:

> *"You are lucky to have met Mestre Prateado because his style is different. He does not have a space. His Capoeira is a more anarchist Capoeira; a street Capoeira."*

It is interesting to reflect on the associations they established. A Capoeira *roda* could be *"anarchist"* while a mestre could be a *"fascist"* or a *"democrat"*. Often, all these qualities were attributed to the same person. Capoeira was described as "anarchist" due to the fact it was performed in the street. The mestre did not have an academy or space to teach Capoeira. It was not even training. It was a *roda.*

As I have already discussed, playing Capoeira or hanging out on the street had attained negative connotations. Thus, Capoeira legitimization was accompanied by a movement from the streets to the academies. Eventually, Capoeira would be used as a means to keep children off the street. As Mario from Engenho Velho de Brotas claimed, many children –including himself who was a mestre's son- learn Capoeira in order to stay away from the street and thus, away from illicit activities and practices.

During a workshop in the Forte de Santo Antonio, a father argued that he stopped his son from taking Capoeira classes for two reasons. According to him, it seemed too violent and bringing the example of Capoeira near Mercado Modelo, it was for the tourists. Mestre Rasta, who was there, explained that the street was part of Capoeira's history and tradition and playing in spaces such as Mercado Modelo and Terreiro de Jesus was not because of the tourists' presence. Indeed, violence, tourism and tradition were among the topics that prevailed in discussions concerning Capoeira performed at the street. There was yet another aspect that preoccupied mainly female researchers and practitioners. On women's day, the Capoeira Angola group Nzinga organized a *roda* at the square of Cruz Caida near Terreiro de Jesus, while they also distributed pamphlets on Capoeira and gave *acaraje* to the people watching the *roda.* Later on, a debate took place. The topic was about women's role in Capoeira. A researcher and Capoeira practitioner said:

> *"There is a sexist heritage. Even today Capoeira is a masculine territory. The values that prevail are associated with bravery, cunning, betrayal. All these are values associated to masculine qualities. The old patterns still persist. In the lyrics, in the values. There is still a long way ahead of us if we want to fight against violence and sexism."*

This discourse refers to Capoeira in general and not only to Capoeira performed in public space. Nonetheless, it recalls the image of street bravery that I have already discussed and the *valenteões* of the 19th and 20th century. At the same time, the majority of Capoeira practitioners in Bahia who play at the street are men. When there are women, they are mainly foreigners or they come from upper social classes. Consequently, another characteristic was added to street Capoeira: that ofa masculine territory.

But Friday night was the night Neguinho and Siri anticipated. They used to meet early in the afternoon at the *atelier*; an *atelier* they preferred to call *"the shop"*. Among the first ones to arrive was Mestre Querido from Santo Amaro, a good friend of Mestre Prateado, and Noa who lived in Salvador and was son of a Capoeira mestre. Professor was already there since he was working, and then, of course, Siri and Neguinho. Mestre Prateado always had a story to share unless they started gossiping. Gossiping mainly involved men and most of the times I was not present. It was difficult being there if you were not someone's wife or if you were not a man. However, when I was present -and

that was either when there were only the few people I knew or when there were that many people that being woman did not make me feel awkward- Mestre Prateado would talk to Mestre Querido about the past. He used to say that when he was young, he walked about the whole city going to *rodas* or just walking about. He would, then, add pointing at Professor:

> *"These ones, they do not go to see anything. They just walk about the Historic Center and they think they do something. In my time, we never stopped. Well, the truth is that today it's not safe to go wherever you feel like. If you get into a fight today, things have changed. The other will pull a gun and that's it. But, still, these ones they do not even know the city."*

Being socially successful- at least in Capoeira- also meant being adventurous. Hence, when two other young Capitães da Areia, after having attended a *roda* in the Capoeira Quilombola, arrived in their characteristic way with the teacher all puffed up in pride and his apprentice following, Mestre Prateado made a joke and said laughing:*"Look at them. They arrived. The adventurers of nothing."* They did not hear him and Professor, as always, sat quiet listening and working over a tambourine. Then, as it would normally occur, the others arrived from the island: Perna and Anna who was Italian. Sometimes Janaina, the only female Bahian teacher among them, would also come along. Arraia would drop by later from the neighborhood of Santo Antonio, and probably Leão. Depending on the time of the year, Cachaça, Peixe Espada and even Mestre Moreno would come together with Manhoso from Japan, Mestre Punta or mestres from the Recôncavo. There were also the foreign practitioners who stayed at the hostel. They would all sit together inside the working space chatting, or if there were many people, they moved to the street. Then, they would divide the instruments and they would start playing music and singing all the way up to the Terreiro de Jesus. That was the *Nucleo's exit* (*a saida do Nucleo*). Dona Luisa, Mestre Prateado's wife, filmed them from the hostel's little balcony. But they could be seen in the distance as they went up the Cruzeiro de São Fransisco, at about nine or ten o' clock, jumping all around, blowing some bizarre horns Mestre Prateado had made and beating their drums. As a matter of fact, Mestre Prateado always used instrument not typical to Capoeira *rodas.*

At some point, the *Nucleo de Capoeira Angola*, would eventually arrived at the Terreiro de Jesus. Street beggars, tourists and locals would gather or stop for a minute. Then, the mestre used to make give a very short speech. Most frequently, it was a

comment about whatever he considered important; politics, a Capoeira event, the need to contribute to the *roda* by bringing food they would later on donate to an institution, or he sometimes criticized the government and lament on the fact that there were children living on the streets. Then, he used to say *"Eaa!"*. "Eaa" is not a word. It is an exclamation. It is something they invented and use at the beginning of a *roda* or at the end of a discourse or announcement, expressing their enthusiasm or approval. Another way was for one of them to say *"whoever gets it, may say 'ea'"* (*quem esta ligado, diga 'ea'*) and the others, would reply: *"ea"*.

After that, those who were going to form the orchestra (*bateria*) took their place. They were people who knew each other and knew how to play the instruments. The instruments were not for everyone. If someone was not familiar to them, he would have to ask permission. Once, a Japanese apprentice started playing the tambourine and after a while, Mestre Prateado gave Perna a meaningful look to replace him. Since he was a bit out of rhythm, the mestre communicated his contempt. After all, due time it had become his *roda* and he was in charge.

Yet, I was not quite sure whose *roda* it was. Siri and Professor called it both *"our roda"* and *"the mestre's roda"*. Sometimes, they would say, *"there is roda at the Terreiro tomorrow"*, but the mestre called it *"Nucleo's roda"*. Giving name to a *roda* was important just as giving a name –meaning his/her Capoeira name- to a novice practitioner. It was telling of the fame someone had accumulated. On the contrary, several contramestres or young teachers expressed frustration when their mestre's name overshadowed their own or when someone appropriated their work and gain all fame and recognition. As such, Contra Mestra Maria, wife of a mestre from the *old guard,* sobbed: *"I do all this work. I work a lot but I know. It will never be my name. It will always be his"*.

A couple of years later in Barcelona, Prego complained about his mestre, Mestre Prateado: *"It is always his name. It has always been like that; only his name"*. Nonetheless, when a Capoeira teacher from another group asked whether *"Prego's roda"* was going to take place that Sunday at the park of Ciutadella, Prego observed in content that his name was given to the *roda.* It was *his roda.* He did not mind that they did not say Capitães da Areia *roda.* He did not even care that the presence of the teachers from other groups that also frequented, was omitted. He was pleased to be able to have a r*oda*, to have appropriated both the r*oda* and the space, while he was also

recognized among Capoeira teachers in Barcelona. In turn, one day, one of his students also complained: *"I don't like that. It is always him. He decides everything. It is as if he was the group. We don't get to decide"*. Seen under this light, it is difficult to decide who is a *"democrat"* or a *"fascist"*, as Prego and other Bahian Capoeira teachers used to characterize their own mestres from time to time.

Back in the Terreiro de Jesus, the game started and Coqueiro, a Capoeira practitioner from Minas Gerais, who was friends with the Capitães da Areia, asked me: *"What do you think? "Can you tell to which group each player belongs to? Each group has a different style"*. He also commented on the people who were playing at the moment by saying, for example, *"She plays beautifully"*. As such, what makes a game beautiful depends on where you have learnt to play Capoeira. In time, I learnt to appreciate Capitães da Areia. Consequently, I came to believe that it was what Capoeira Angola was supposed to feel and look like. I did not really think about it or theorized. I could sense the differences just like I felt it was very different seeing Capitães da Areia in Barcelona and in Bahia. I knew that while in Bahia, I never considered their game "violent" or "aggressive", as some would say. I only started thinking about it in Barcelona and I knew it was difficult to verbalize it. As Tim Ingold (2000 p.166-167) once observed:

> The knowledge obtained through direct perception is [… *practical* […] [O]ne learns to perceive in the manner appropriate to a culture, not by acquiring programs or conceptual schemata for organizing sensory data into higher order representations, but by 'hands-on' training in everyday tasks whose successful fulfillment requires a practiced ability to notice and to respond fluently to salient aspects of the environment […] Attuned through prior training and experience to attending similar invariants, and moving in the same environment in the pursuit of joint activities, they will pick up the same information.

It was actually that "attunement" due to every day encounters, constant observation and participation in everyday life tasks that extended beyond a *roda* that shaped my perception on how things *should be* even though I took very few classes. Hence, on the one hand, when I started taking classes, some apprentices in Barcelona used to comment that it came naturally to me. On the other hand, I could not help thinking that people in Barcelona did not play *as well* as the ones I had met in Bahia or that there was s*omething* missing. I could even tell when an apprentice had learnt Capoeira in Bahia.

There was a great difference even if that person was playing Capoeira for much less time comparing to the majority of the rest of the students. But eventually, by watching videos on Youtube and away from Bahia my own perception started to change again and Capitães da Areia started to seem less Angola. Thus, I recalled Janaina who sitting at the stairs of a church in the neighborhood of Carmo in Salvador, was reflecting on how Capitães da Areia who lived abroad had changed their way of playing. She said:

> *"They have changed. I think they come back here but they don't play as good as in the past. But once in Bahia, they train and they get back to where they were. The only one who left and improved his game is Sardinha."*

I was not quite sure whether these changes happened due to lack of training. Nonetheless, a contra mestre from another Capoeira Angola group in Barcelona preferred playing outside Bahia since there was, as he argued, less competition. On the contrary, Perna missed Bahia when he was away. He felt constrained for not being able to play Capoeira the way he was used to; among *"good"*, for him, and skilled Capoeira practitioners. Still, Janaina's critique could have resulted due to the fact that once away from Bahia, the teachers kept learning by seeing other people or at least Capoeira groups with whom they were not so much involved while in Brazil. Mestre Barão used to say that his former apprentice, Mestre Moreno, *"modified"* his game by learning with others. Still, he insisted that he was his only mestre despite the fact that, later on, Mestre Moreno learnt with others. Consequently, Janaina may have observed not lack of improvement but a change to a different direction.

When Porreta returned from his trip to São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro and came to attend Mestre Prateado's *roda,* I noticed a difference in the way he played comparing to the other Capitães. Mestre Prateado called him *"cirque de soleil"* due to his insistence in performing acrobatic movements. In Capoeira you learn to play by imitating others, those you admire and eventually, more than anyone else, your teacher. Thus, the way you perform a movement and the way you move are telling of a community of shared bodily experiences and values, while the relationship between teacher and apprentice, and their connection, become increasingly more important. According to Mauss (1973 p.75-76):

> It is precisely this notion of the prestige of the person who performs the ordered, authorised, tested action vis-a-vis the imitating individual that contains all the social element. The imitative action, which follows contains the

> psychological element and the biological element. But the whole, the ensemble, is conditioned by the three elements indissolubly mixed together.

Here, Mauss brings together the social, psychological and the biological while accentuating the importance of imitation in relation to prestige.

At the same time, learning something new signals a change and depending on the change, it can be accepted, embraced or discarded by the rest. It was not clear back then but in time it became apparent that Porreta was already establishing his own networks and that was expressed in his way of play playing, his *"jogo"*. They were ambivalent towards changes, since they were related with notions of personhood and their very collectivity. Someone's particular way of playing could be perceived as demonstrating continuity with the collectivity, an accepted individual style, a relative rupture or an individuation that would lead to a definite rupture and independence. As I have mentioned earlier in the thesis, Camarão argued that:

> *"Every Capoeirista has his own style of playing. He is not obliged to follow his mestre's style. What is more interesting is that in Capoeira different movements can be adapted; from other Capoeiristas and we look for these movements outside our own group. This is what makes a Capoeirista have a different style from that of his mestre. We take movements from a Capoeira in a street roda, from Capoeiristas from other groups and of course, we create our own movements."*

Camarão takes for granted that a Capoeirista should have his/her own style. He insists that it is especially foreigners who copy their mestre. Hence, copying is not valued positively. Imitation, for him, also involves creativity. But copying means lack of both experience and creativity. The player still does not have a proper style or the skills that make him stand as a person. According to Camarão, it is not exactly part of the process, but it is definitely part of the learning process for the foreigners.

In Barcelona, even the smallest gesture, such as in the way the apprentices used their hands, seemed identical to that of their teacher's. Others would sing in a way you could barely tell their age confusing them with old Capoeira mestres. Even how they spoke Portuguese and the expressions they used did not correspond to the way of speaking when using their native languages. Sometimes, it seemed comical, while others, puzzling; especially when female practitioners used expressions that could easily

be considered sexist. Yet, it was part of what they learned to consider as innate to Capoeira.

Interestingly enough, young Bahian Capoeiras were more critical concerning their personal autonomy and relation to the community. As noted above, Porreta's way of playing in Bahia was considered with skepticism. Some praised him, while others questioned him. This brings us again to the question on what kind of transformations can be accepted and what do they stand for. During a Capoeira *roda,* the players come to interpenetrate each others' space as they move in a circle circumscribed by other people sitting on the ground. They both have to learn from one another, attempting to read each others' mind and bodily expressions, while those who observe them may also learn from watching, and attempt to influence the game. Most of the times, changes take place unconsciously. They may be subtle but they are present. Someone who has prior training and shares a community of experience can easily grasp and identify them in those who play. Mauss in his Techniques of the Body (1973 p.75), wrote:

> Cases of adaptation are an individual psychological matter. But in general they are governed by education, and at least by the circumstances of life in common, of contact […] Training, like the assembly of a machine, is the search for, the acquisition of efficiency. Here it is a human efficiency.

But Capoeira efficiency is also about human efficiency. Likewise, Mauss sustained that in order for a technique to be effective there must be some sort of tradition and transmission which eventually distinguishes human beings from other animals. In Capoeira, a mestre can be granted both efficiency in his techniques and innovation. For this reason, when Neguinho found out that a new song his mestre had taught him was not originally his, he was surprised and devastated. Even if Capitães da Areia affirm that they can trust nobody, they do trust and cherish the knowledge of the older mestres, and especially their own mestres. Therefore, Prego in Barcelona was also looking forward to Cachaça's visit, since he was the one who had taught him to play Capoeira. Since Cachaça, who was his teacher, had travelled more in Europe and had also been recently to Brazil, he expected to learn new movements from him. But when I argued that there was also another teacher of the group who seemed to have his own particular style and movements, Prego denied it and said: *"What style? What different movements? That does not exist. We all do the same things."* Acknowledging that someone has the ability to perform new movements, and what is more, to teach them, is restricted to few.

In this sense, Porreta would slowly have to find his space by participating in Mestre Prateado's *roda* and connecting to the people he chose to connect, just like Neguinho and Siri aspired to find their own place looking at the same time outside, beyond Bahia.

Herzfeld argues that the play of imitation and invention is not only a social matter but also an aesthetic one "in the sense that everyday performances of the self are judged by criteria of taste and appropriateness" (Herzfeld 2004 p.39). Nevertheless, this presupposes a common ground of understanding and a shared experience upon which they can come to an agreement. It consists especially of an education in composure and a sociality "that is given […] in the direct, perceptual involvement of fellow participants in a shared environment (Ingold 1993 p.222-223). This shared environment varied and did not only include the physical environment. It involved Mestre Prateado's *roda,* Terreiro de Jesus, the rural Recôncavo, fishing, surfing or playing Capoeira on the island, as well as *rodas* at Neguinho's house. It even extended beyond Capoeira to the way they understood sociality and mutuality with various others.

Actually, Mauss (1973 p.78) established connections between what he called "modes of training, imitation and especially those fundamental fashions that can be called the modes of life, the modes, the tonus, the 'matter', the 'manners', the 'way'". Therefore, when Mosquito –the Catalan apprentice- returned to Barcelona and attempted to explain the reasons why he stopped taking classes in Spain, he said, *"The difference lies in the intensity. There, you are Capoeira. You go out, you have a beer. It is different. It is everywhere."* His argument was to some extend shaped by the fact that distance and time had turned Capoeira in Bahia into something more exotic, and perhaps, authentic to which he no longer had access. However, it was also an acknowledgment of the importance of sharing that particular environment. In this sense, apprentices in Barcelona who had never been to Bahia could not a priori share his understandings. The people and the environment were altogether different.

As Mestre Prateado's *roda* kept going, Noa and Professor held a tambourine upside down and went to ask for money from the audience. They said they needed *"reinforcement"* (*dar uma força*). They were not embarrassed. Sometimes they insisted or made a joke about it. In the end, they eventually shared the money to buy something to drink or to eat. I was surprised by this practice since they were so judgmental towards Capoeira's commodification and the everyday *roda* at the Terreiro. But, to them, this was not about making profit. They were giving a performance and something should be

given in return. They did not care about how much money they would gather. Likewise, quite often, someone would throw money in the circle. The two players that were in the middle at the moment would try to deceive one another and get the money without using their hands.[59] The audience used to participate applauding or encouraging those who were playing and from time to time, someone would even throw more money into the circle. The presence of money could perhaps be considered as part of a series of symbolic transformations. In this context, it was part of the performance and the play. After a time, throwing money in the middle of the game or asking for money, seized to impress me. On the contrary, this practice in Barcelona was looked down by the students.

Mestre Prateado used to say:

> *"Capoeira today has lost that element, the joke (brincandeira); being playful. I like it when Capoeira is spontaneous. You go up and down, you do your pantomime but there is meaning to all that. Sometimes, there is someone who has only one or two movements but is more Capoeira than that guy who does amazing stuff and acrobatics."*

Mestre Prateado's perspective has been shaped through his trajectory; his participation in folkloric shows and collaboration with theatrical groups, as well as during his travelling experiences. For him, Capoeira was about being playful, spontaneous and not taking yourself too seriously. Playing with money in the *roda* transformed possible negative connotations to positive ones.

The *roda* at the Terreiro de Jesus was described as *"an open roda where the old relationships between Capoeira and other manifestations of street and working class artists, were reanimated"*. Mestre Prateado, in particular, was interested in all kinds of traditions, from harvesting rites in the rural areas to "indigenous customs" represented by Paje Guare, in an aim to bring them together in the festivals and events he organized, such as the Festa de São Simão. Nonetheless, I was surprised when he said that he had nothing against folklore as long as it included different *"personas"* (personagem),

[59] Actually, Lowel Lewis (1992) noted that this was a common practice he had already encountered long ago in the city of Santo Amaro.

since, to me, folklore signified lifeless and outdated practices.[60] Hence, if I were to choose a word to describe what they did, that would not be it. Yet, Mestre Prateado insisted on appreciating folklore that included different *"personas"*and asserted his right to *"play"* with culture. Thus, concerning the *"Nucleo de Capoeira Angola"*, he observed:

> *"By participating in these [folkloric] groups, I started to make some money that did not depend on Capoeira. As such, the show aspect, that of the spectacle, emerged; doing Capoeira, folkloric, but, still, with personas. It included that vision, as well. In reality, the Nucleo did not drastically change (quebrou) anything. It changed absolutely nothing but it came to add so that the story would not end up being just Capoeira […] and in this proposal, we demystify. We try to demystify many things that sometimes are concepts that even young people who think they are old, have -these mestres of thirty or forty years old- […] well if you are thirty or forty years old and you have fundamentals (fundamento), you are not going to compare yourself to the one who is sixty, seventy or eighty. Yet, these are the people who think they own tradition and everything has to follow certain rules. No, for me, things are different. I also demystify. I respect authentic history, traditional history but I also play (brinco). I expose myself. The bad thing with the Capoeirista today is that he wants to be cool (porreta). He never exposes himself because they will say he is ridiculous. But I expose myself. There are certain things where I expose myself and I pass as ridiculous. Yet, in what I am looking for, in what I am… Capoeira for me is freedom … freedom of expression, of action."*

Mestre Prateado, here, embraces the element of the show, the spectacle. Yet, Cabelo observed earlier that those who play at the everyday *rodas* at the Terreiro are negatively classified as *"exhibitionists"*. What they present is a commodified *"Capoeira for the tourist"*. Nevertheless, Mestre Prateado, according to Cabelo and all Capitães da Areia, does not fall into this category. In his performances, he incorporates elements that have personas. Hence, spectacle is transformed into something positive. Similarly, *'demystification'* is essential because people have the right to *'play'* with culture. The element of time and age are important, since, according to Mestre Prateado, the young

[60] Conversely, there are Capoeira groups such as Nzinga that criticize Capoeira's folkloric elements and connections and relate them to Capoeira's commodification.

ones are those who do not want to break traditional rules. Playing is perceived as a way to demystify *"authentic history"*. Thus, he acknowledges that *"authentic history"* entails myths. In order to reveal them, one should not be afraid to look *"ridiculous"*. Looking *"ridiculous*" also opposes struggling to look *"cool"*, something that especially younger practitioners and teachers desire. His perspective has shaped and influenced the young Capitães da Areia as much as his example and way of life.

According to Abacaxi, an apprentice in Barcelona who had also been to Bahia: *"In Bahia Capoeira practitioners do not have the "ego Europeans have"*. But that seemed to contradict what Professor had told me. Professor argued that Capoeira players in Bahia are more *"competitive"*. Thus, he observed:

> *"The foreigner sees Capoeira more as art; as culture. Even in the way they play, they see it as culture. The Brazilian is more competitive. He wants to show he is better than the other."*

Professor, especially in the past but even to this day, Capoeira players wanted to go to a *roda* and demonstrate they are good (*mostrar serviço*). Professor introduces the element of competition among men that also relates to a preoccupation with the body, its perceptions and uses. Even if Capitães da Areia do not invest time nor money, and do not have the exaggerated athletic bodies of Capoeira Regional players, they still do care for it, as much as they criticize Bahian women for not taking care of themselves and for gaining weight. Since a Capoeira *roda* is also the time and place to impress the women who are present, I suppose they would rather look *"cool"* than *"ridiculous"*.[61]

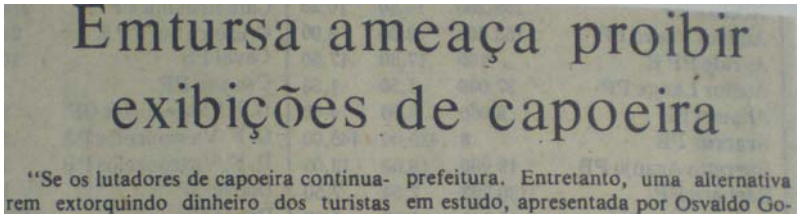
Misunderstandings happen when there is no agreement on what is considered *"legitimate"* in Capoeira. There have been several incidents in Salvador where a foreign practitioner, during *rodas* taking place in a private space, would argue that *"Capoeira is a game"* and thus, aimed to stop it in order to prevent possible conflicts and violence. On the contrary, the Bahians would oppose him by saying that *"this is Capoeira and it is not about picking a fight but answering a challenge"*. Yet, from time to time, they even resolved personal differences and conflicts inside the *roda*. Thus, one would learn

[61] In the movie "Besouro", a rather sensual and exoticized version of the famous Capoeira's story, Besouro was accused by his fellow Capoeiristas that due to his vanity and exhibitionism, he distracted himself and neglected his mestre. Thus, the colonial authorities trapped and executed him. Even if it is a stereotypic image, it entails some truth.

and realize what is accepted and what the rules are, by breaking them. As Mauss (1992 p.473) noted, “error may be a principle […] Example and order, though, that is the principle”.

Most foreigners who visit Capitães da Areia sustain that they are more aggressive. Still, what means *“being good”* or *“aggressive”* varies from school to school, from mestre to mestre and from player to player (also see Aceti 2007). In the case of the Bahian Capitães da Areia, it does not mean that they *“do not have that ego”*, but rather that they handle differently the idea of performance and joking relationships. Moreover, the people –both local and foreigners- who meet in the *roda* and the further connections they can initiate from that moment on also matter and all form part of a continuous process in their constitution as persons. The Bahian mestres or teachers who decided to stop by Terreiro de Jesus, reconnected with other Bahians practitioners. From time to time, Mestre Bomba, Mestre João and Mestre Canarinho also participated in the Terreiro de Jesus *roda*. Similarly, the Capitães da Areia who visit Bahia during the Carnival, always come by the Friday r*oda.* Every year they come to meet, play and learn from the people they know. They show up to help the *mestre*, reaffirm their relationships and demonstrate they had not forgotten him or the other people with whom they are connected.

(17) Tereiro de Jesus, Historic Centre.



Emtursa ameaça proibir exibições de capoeira

"Se os lutadores de capoeira continuarem extorquindo dinheiro dos turistas prefeitura. Entretanto, uma alternativa em estudo, apresentada por Osvaldo Go-

(18) *'Emtursa Threatens to Prohibit Capoeira Exhibitions'*, Tribuna da Bahia, 15 Aug. 1986.

(19) Night Roda at Terreiro de Jesus, Historic Centre.

5.5 Making a Living with Capoeira

In a rare occasion, the day of Mestre Pastinha's death commemoration, several mestres put their conflicts aside and gathered at the Fortress of Santo Antonio. It was a time to reminisce the past and reflect upon it. Most of them observed that changes in Capoeira signaled a worrying development. Some articulated long discourses. Others, said a few words and almost everyone stated opinions pertinent to his trajectory, and for this reason, expected by all others. When they finished, Mestre Pequeno decided to speak. He was sitting near Mestre João and Mestre Ticum from Santo Amaro. Coming from a village in the Recôncavo and being old, he was among the very few other mestres did not bother to question. He was considered as one of the *"elders"* of Capoeira's *"old guard"*. He said: *"I would like to ask you one thing, just one. Where was Capoeira born?"* The children sitting on the floor next to Mestre João, answered: *"In Africa."* Then the mestre said: *"And who was the greatest Capoeirista of all times?"* Nobody answered. So the mestre went on and the others already knew what he was about to say. *"Capim [referring to a young mestre sitting near him], help me. Where was Capoeira born?"* Someone replied "*In Santo Amaro.*" The mestre, indignant, said:

> *"This is a big lie. I am telling you that Capoeira was born in the countryside. It came from Bahia's rural area. Before, it was prohibited. Today it belongs to the barons. Before it had no value. No value at all. Today, it is in the politicians' pocket. When they started selling t-shirts, it became commerce. Today, it is just politics. I am telling you that Besouro [the legendary Capoeira figure] did not learn Capoeira in Santo Amaro."*

Hence, in a time when Capoeira is most *"valued"*, it is simultaneously discussed as having been transformed into commerce. Moreover, it is perceived not only as striped off from its value but also a means through which politicians have become wealthier. In this context, various actors choose different ways to endow it with significance and value. Capoeira groups as N'Zinga reclaim Capoeira's value by connecting it to current afrobrazilians' political struggles and fights. Mestre Prateado, *"has nothing against folklore"* as long as it *"has character"* and appeals to a demystified tradition. Others call it a sport, and some a profession. In this case, and if Capoeira is acknowledged as profession, Capoeira teachers should no longer be considered *"lazy"* or *"vagabonds"*. Similarly, paying for a class is also symbolically relevant to its value.

The expression: *"Capoeira today is pure commerce"*, is, however, frequently echoed among practitioners in Bahia as they evaluate transformations. This accusation involves almost everyone. Comparing past and present and being preoccupied with the future, they discuss Capoeira's commercialization as a process of constant loss and degradation. Here, I will focus on two aspects of these discussions. First, Capoeira's professionalization and second, the perception of money and monetary transactions as they both connect to questions of interest and motivation. I should also mention that these topics turned out to be quite complex to reflect upon. Perhaps due to a western type fetishization of money, I have taken it as a constant reminder of the difficulties in establishing the kind of relationships I would have hoped with some of the people I met. Actually, it was transformed into a barometer of the quality of those relationships. It is quite different studying exchanges and transactions that involve other people and it is completely different participating in these exchanges or considering yourself as part. Likewise, and this is relevant to what I just mentioned, it is not easy to unlearn what you think you know and put aside your values and ideas. As such, I had to reconcile my ideas on money and mutuality, the Greek folk saying that if you want to pick a fight with a friend you should lent him money and what I encountered in the field. The fact that in an argument with my Capoeira teacher we attributed causality to one another's behavior by saying *"so this is just because of money"* but never came to an understanding, speaks volumes.

In Bahia, transactions took place between Bahians and "*the people from out there*", men and women, older and younger men, in a context where tourism was an important source of income. At the same time, Bahia, the city of Salvador and the last few years, the rural Recôncavo, were perceived as the *"fountain"*, the center from where everything begun. More than part of official politics, Capoeira teachers considered that in Bahia lied Capoeira's past and present. Both novelties and tradition were to be found there and then, they were taken all over the world, especially by younger teachers.

Among those who visited Bahia, Capoeira's putative center, were Mosquito and Pierre. They spent most of their time training with Mestre Chapeu in the neighborhood of Cabula. Since they were foreigners, they could also attend any *roda* they wanted especially in areas where Bahians were used to the presence of foreign Capoeira practitioners. After training, they used to go out for a beer or to have something to eat with the mestre. There, Mestre Chapeu talked about his trips to Europe and once, he

even mentioned his last trip to Greece. Mosquito enjoyed these encounters. He used to say that with Mestre Chapeu things were different:

> *"You go out after class; you have something to drink or to eat and you invite him and that's it. You don't have to pay. The other ones, they want money."*

His approach was criticized by some of the teachers who used to say: *"But he, he leaves nothing. He just wants to take. He never gives money to help us."* Pierre, on the other hand, did not mind paying. He, however, considered it unfair that foreign practitioners should pay more. He said it was like an unofficial rule that different prices should exist. Even if he understood it was due to the difficult economic situation Bahians were facing and a way to help small children and promote their social inclusion, he still felt discriminated.

In another instance, Mestre Barão argued that the state never helps them not even to buy t-shirts for the children's uniforms. As he said, the only ones who help and pay for classes are the foreign students. Nonetheless, during that same encounter various people, representing afrobahian cultural entities, pinpointed Capoeira's alienation and appropriation by foreigners and white people. Thus, a young black Bahian Capoeira teacher with dreadlocks intervened and said:

> *"I am confused with all this discussion. I am from Bahia and I teach Capoeira in Australia. There are many people there who look a lot like us. They are black and they are poor and they are discriminated. They are even worse than us. I know, there are many social inequalities. But there are also many white people from different countries and cultures. And they come to class and they are the ones who pay and they want to learn. And we see that foreign people value Capoeira and we travel all over the world because of them. And the mestre a few minutes ago made a statement about how foreign students help even more than the Bahian state. Then, how come this is a problem? Since I live in Australia, I would like to know because it does not make sense."*

Nobody answered his questions or made any comment. These were dilemmas that preoccupied young teachers, especially those who lived abroad. Yet, they were out of the scope and politics of that encounter.

Mosquito, and especially Pierre, also went to train at the island. They enjoyed Porreta's classes because according to Pierre, he did a lot of warm up before class,

which is something that most teachers skipped. Professor also started taking classes with Porreta and he liked his classes due to the fact that *"he paid a lot of attention"* to his students. When the mestre, Mestre Moreno, came from England, he set the price for the classes. Actually, in most academies official prices were more or less the same or even higher than in Europe. Of course, there was not an established and fixed price and they always made exceptions. Pierre and Mosquito thought that the price was high and protested. Thus, Porreta reassured them that they could make an arrangement and that the mestre did not have to know. Pierre kept on with the classes and was very proud to attend as many *rodas a*s possible, training with different people every day. Conversely, Siri criticized both Porreta and Pierre. The first, for wanting to make money and the second for training too much. He justified his opinion by saying that, *"It's because of the body. It doesn't respond the same way. In the end, it's the opposite of what you expect."*

Two years after that incident, a female apprentice from Chile complained that her Capoeira teacher did not live in accordance with his *"profession"*. She said that he lived a *"bohemian"* life that contradicted the fact that, according to her, he was an athlete. He drunk and partied; he arrived late and he was not punctual. Siri and he were from the same group. They, however, were as different as Pierre and the girl from Chile who defined and related to Capoeira differently. Nevertheless, in both cases we can identify the implicit idea of regularization and efficiency that probably do not correspond to how Capoeira teachers relate to their practice. At least, there is ambivalence.

Likewise, after Pierre mentioned the incident on the classes' price in the Island, Siri said:

> *"Porreta wants to make a living by teaching Capoeira. But it cannot be like this. You cannot expect to live from Capoeira. If I could, I would rather have a job and play Capoeira just for me."*

Siri, here, expressed the idea that Capoeira should be something you do for yourself and not a means of subsistence and a profession. When I asked Professor, he said:

> *"I don't want to be only Capoeirista. Just Capoeira; to live exclusively by Capoeira. Because it's very difficult. There are many groups. Even in France there are so many from the same group. And then, there is that dispute. But*

mestres here do not live exclusively from Capoeira and those who do, do not live well."

Professor emphasized the difficulty in living a good life due to competition. He furthermore commented that deciding to become teacher is challenging and may lead to disputes even among teachers that belong to the same group. Indeed, when Porreta returned after a long period of travelling, it was clear that there was not enough space for everyone, unless they wanted to be *"enslaved"*, as they used to say, to one another.

Professor had a small income since he was working with Mestre Prateado. All others had to find their own way by avoiding conflicts, regulating their relationships and collaborating. Thus, Janaina was responsible for the small children and Perna would occasionally teach adults, especially foreigners in the island. Porreta would recommend to his foreign students to order instruments from Neguinho and the latter would have to find a way not to show disrespect to the mestre, as well as to Perna, who also sold instruments and had already come to some sort of an agreement with the mestre. Another possibility would be to withdraw and engage into other activities, like fishing, cultivating the land, working as artisans and occasionally helping in construction. Finally, there was always the possibility to leave but even then, it would not be easy to avoid disputes.

Consequently, the issues that arise and shape Siri's and Professor's opinions, are both pragmatic and ethical. They demand reflection over one's own interests and possibilities and on how they perceive their practice and relate to it. Ultimately, it is about how they perceive themselves in the present, who they want to be and how they relate to others. Furthermore, as I have already mentioned, Mestre Prateado encouraged his apprentices to be not just Capoeira players and appreciated the fact that some –very few- of the young teachers, while in Europe, took language or cooking classes. All knowledge was welcome. But, in turn, as I have already mentioned, Mestre Prateado suggested I should learn Capoeira in order not to be just a researcher. In any case, though, Mestre Prateado emphasized that Capoeira is not about becoming rich. He said: *"If you get to make lot of money, ok. But this is not what Capoeira is about."*

The debates on Capoeira's professionalization are long standing. One day, Capitães da Areia went to attend a *roda* at Mestre Canarinho's academy at the Fortress of Santo Antonio. There was the *"old guard"*, as they call older mestres, represented by Mestre Canarinho and the younger ones, teachers and apprentices from other Capoeira

groups. When the *roda* ended, the younger ones thanked the mestre and expressed their ideas on the difficulties they were facing and the need for older and younger Capoeira practitioners in Bahia to collaborate. Then, a teacher about thirty years old from Salvador who also lived in Barcelona, said:*"In the past, the meaning of resistance was different. Today, for us, resistance is to be able to live by our profession."*

As I have already mentioned, resistance is omnipresent and intrinsically related to Capoeira's history. Capoeira has been described as resistance to colonial oppression and abuse. But the teacher from that Capoeira Angola group, being part of the *"young generation"*, elaborated a more specific use of the word *"resistance"*. His preoccupation could be shared by some teachers of his generation - especially those who lived abroad or wanted to leave Bahia- and those who agreed upon the need to make a living with Capoeira. After him, Porreta was given the speech. He decided to speak about Capoeira's professionalization and on behalf of the Capitães da Areia. Neguinho, Perna and Siri were not pleased because they were left aside. In due course, it would become more obvious that Porreta was the one who would be responsible for the group in Bahia and the others would have to find a way to leave and thus, enter in a relationship of relative equality.

Seen under this perspective, the disputes that Professor had already insinuated and the conflict on who should represent the collectivity in public draw attention on the ever changing relationships among Capitães da Areia. As a matter of fact, when practitioners in Bahia argue that Capoeira today is a commerce they most likely refer to how people get involved and furthermore, what they do with Capoeira. They evaluate the expectations and objectives that can lead to commodification but *their* Capoeira, the practice as such, is left aside.

Capoeira, according to all, cannot be commodified. At least, Capitães da Areia would never admit and do not think that *their* Capoeira has been alienated. Similarly, Mestre Cobra said that Capoeira will continue no matter what people do to control or imprison it. Of course, there are groups that, according to the people I met, teach a commodified form of Capoeira. This refers to their teaching techniques that are nothing but ways to *"fool students to get their money",* to the relationships between groups' members and to the teachers' motivations and interests.

Sitting at a bar in the Historic Center, Papagaio, an Italian apprentice visiting Bahia, was talking with Neguinho about Capoeira. The way young Capitães da Areia

narrated a story resembled with that of the older ones and drew connections with their two mestres. Their stories shared an epic aspect that to my ears did not correspond to their age. Their conversations focused on topics related to Capoeira: a Capoeira *roda*, a dispute, rumors and gossips, a historic argument, a joke, an achievement. They related to masculine values or at least to what is expected from a man to be in Capoeira. Most importantly, they were stories about suffering and adversities. Now and then, they involved a magic-like element when they talked about *mandinga*, an element related to the capacity to deceive others, and the stories of Capoeira players who were victims of magic. As such, they assentuated the importance to keep the body closed and protected.

But Neguinho preferred to narrate stories about Capoeira *rodas* in Santo Amaro that, according to him, had nothing to do with what people saw in the Historic Center. There, as he said, *"things get ugly"* (o bicho pega) aiming to accentuate their more aggressive character. The following year I had the opportunity to witness myself Capoeira *rodas* in the Recôncavo Bahiano after visiting the Quilombola community of Santiago de Iguape. But while talking with Papagaio about situations when *"things get ugly"*, Neguinho also shared his experience of entering his collectivity. He focused on how he was treated at the beginning and how, later on, he became accepted by the others. He said:

> *"I used to get beaten every time I played. There was Sorriso and he was so perverse. I always used to get beaten up by him. And he enjoyed it. They wanted to intimidate me. After or before class, the mestre came to help me. He would teach me over and over again how to perform the bananeira leaning against the wall. And I trained a lot until I started to learn. Then, one day, Sorriso came again and tried to knock me down. He thought I would fall, as always, but that time, I surprised him. I hit back and since that day, they never tried this on me again and they left me alone."*

When people talk about Capoeira, they explain it as being the armor of the oppressed. Capoeira, they say, is for the small and the weak. In a *roda,* a practitioner can overpower the supposedly stronger and more experienced one and go against all odds. He/she will have to train but also use his/her mind and the arts of cunning and deception (also see Downey 2005). In Capoeira, according to Mestre Cobra, you can make a lot with the little you have. This, for him, is *mandinga.* Similarly, in another instance, when an inexperienced apprentice finally managed to strike his opponent who was showing

off, Prego changed the song. He emphatically said: *"Now it is the small one who finally got to hit."* Nonetheless, a mestre most of the times can predict his opponent's next movement due to experience. Yet, there is always the element of surprise and the possibility to subvert a position of inferiority. More importantly, as a popular theme in songs evoke the years of slavery, says: *"he who gets hit never forgets."*

Neguinho's mestre, who had just arrived with Papagaio from England, confirmed his story. He added that due to the fact Neguinho was from a different village, he was not welcomed at first. As the mestre said, they made his life difficult inside and outside the *roda*. Neguinho later on reflected:

> *"Before, I was learning Capoeira with a group near my house but I did not like it. So, I went to see the mestre [his current mestre] and asked him to let me take classes with him. He did not accept me. But I insisted. He wanted to see if I really wanted to learn. I used to walk all the way from my village to Barra Grande, over and over again and then, finally, he was convinced I wanted to learn. So, he accepted me."*

His story is not unique. According to Leão, Porreta had also *"suffered"* since his parents were foreigners. Locality, ethnicity and age played an important role. Both Porreta and Neguinho had to go through a process to become accepted by the mestre and by the other apprentices. That would allow them to enter in a relationship of mutuality with the others. For this reason, it is challenging to reconcile these stories with current reality.

As I have already mentioned, today, Capoeira is in the core of projects for social inclusion and thus, seems open, at least to children from Bahia. At the same time, various mestres complain that parents in poor communities do not encourage their children to learn Capoeira. In addition, hundreds of foreigners all over the world form part of Capoeira groups, while the value of every group is relevant to its expansion in a global level. When I asked why contrary to their personal experiences in the recent past, foreign apprentices are easily accepted, Neguinho rubbed his index finger. He implied it is because of money.

According to Parry and Bloch (1986 p.3), even if money is discussed by scholars as having intrinsic value, we should attempt to understand "the cultural matrix into which it is incorporated" and that ultimately, demonstrates significant cultural

variation. It seems quite obvious. Yet, more importantly, they invite anthropologists to shift their focus to the wider systems of production, consumption, circulation and exchange and not to money as such. Appadurai (1986) in the study of commodities and value in the *Social Life of Things* also draws attention to the scheme of production, circulation and consumption of commodities. The complexity, in the present study, lies in shifting focus from the meaning of money, to transactional systems and ideas about value in Bahian society and in Capoeira collectivities in specific. In addition, it is essential to consider the subtle differences between transactions that take place in Bahia and outside its confines and then, between agents of different ethnicity, social class or age.

In various occasions, Capoeira mestres and young teachers mention that Capoeira in the past was not as open as is today. Yet, others admit that Capoeira remains restricted. In the field, all teachers and mestres affirmed that anyone can learn to play Capoeira as long as he/she has patience and dedication. The only exception was a Catalan teacher in Barcelona who said, *"Some have it. Others don't."* But teachers in Bahia sustained that Capoeira is for everyone and one's potential does not depend on gender, age or ethnicity. There are of course some other prerequisites. They used to say: *"You have to go for it and make an effort. You have to meet other people and be there."* They also used to cite Mestre Pastinha's famous saying that *"Capoeira is everything your mouth eats."* According to Siri, that meant that *"everything is part of Capoeira."* Reflecting on her experience, Tamara, who is from Salvador and practiced Capoeira Regional for many years, said:

> *"I started when I was about ten years old. Capoeira Regional. Angola is not that open. I went to the academy every day. I cleaned the floor and prepared the space. I also made coffee for the mestre who lived upstairs. Mestres use to live in the same place where they teach. I didn't do it because I had to. I enjoyed it. I learnt a lot of things and you can see it in my attitude."*

Then, and since she was an anthropologist, she added: *"Capoeira is what Mauss called a total social fact."*[62] For Tamara, not only Capoeira defined all aspects of her life, but

[62] Greg Downey (2005) exploring foreign apprentices' transformation through learning Capoeira in Salvador, says that they do not only reshape their bodies but also incorporate in their lives qualities related to Capoeira. Among them he mentions that of being wary and "possessing a knack for getting the best of any situation" (ibid p.205).

also being there and helping the mestre was something she enjoyed doing. Similarly, Prego argued that after taking a few classes with Cachaça in Concha and then meeting Mestre Prateado at the Terreiro de Jesus, *"Capoeira took over him."* From that point on, his life would be immersed in Capoeira, in learning to play, sing and make instruments. He would establish friendships and later on, follow the same path as the others who left the island and went to Europe. That also meant that he would have to tolerate certain teaching techniques. He recalls with distress when his mestre hit his hand against the tambour when making a mistake. He also had to overcome his shyness while singing, something I thought was only experienced by foreign apprentices. As Greg Downey (2005 p.206) observes, "the art sometimes speaks almost entirely in an imperative voice, rather than a contemplative one."

According to his own experiences, Prego, like most Capitães da Areia, expected that his students would demonstrate the same disposition he did. Novices should be tested or just tolerated. Yet, their teaching techniques have definitely changed. Even their own mestres, the older ones, as they argue, have started to change. At least, in the presence of foreigners. Nonetheless, the idea that "*the teacher cannot make things too easy*" is still shared by all. Dedication, of course, means different things to different people. When Porreta started organizing his space in Bahia, he started having his own loyal apprentices. Among them, was Indio. Indio's mother and sisters lived in Salvador but he also had relatives in Concha. There, he met Porreta and decided to learn to play Capoeira. Even though he was a couple of years older than Porreta, the others used to joke by saying that he did not have a mind of his own. He was following his teacher's dictates, even concerning his private life. He went to live in Porreta's house, training everyday at the beach, helping him at home and accompanying him. His mother, a *mãe de santo*, said: *"He put the family aside and went on to play Capoeira. He was a good shoemaker. I didn't say anything."*

Cachaça, who was spending his summer holidays in Bahia accompanied by some of his students, met the new apprentice. He admitted that he was learning fast. His comment was not only referring to his bodily skills and dexterity but also to his dedication and commitment. Contrary to that, an old student I met in Barcelona was totally overpowered by a younger one. The teacher seemed to privilege and rely more on the novice one, keeping the older in the periphery. When asked, the teacher explained: *"It is not because he is not Brazilian. It is because of what he does and what he doesn't do. Everyone has to conquer his space."* Conquering your space and be

recognized as a person demands sacrifices that move beyond monetary exchanges. An apprentice has to demonstrate that he/she worths what is *"given"* to him/her by the teacher. As a matter of fact, in both cases I mentioned earlier, the two apprentices that were singled out by their teachers, did not even pay for classes due to lack of money. Therefore, conquering your space is also about how you enter intergroup relationships, as they are mainly crystallized in the relationship between teacher and students.

Several Capoeira apprentices –and to my surprise, many Brazilians- claimed that they were tired of how mestres behaved, especially in the past. They were described as *"authoritarian"* and *"demanding"* since they frequently wanted their students to run errands or *"pay things"* for them. *"You always have to help,"* they added. Interestingly enough, some teachers, to a greater extent in Barcelona than in Bahia, still have that scheme in their mind. Similarly, Leão while talking about his relationship not only with his Capoeira friends but also with the people in the island, said:

> *"They see you make some money and instantly, they think that you have to give it all to them. It is as if you owed it to them. It is as if what is yours, should also be theirs. You always have to give."*

But in Capoeira, they also expect obedience and dedication that cannot be bought with money.

Likewise, even though students may pay and "*Capoeira is commerce*", Capoeira's value is also enacted in another sphere. It is significant due to the uncertainty and difficulty to totally capture or acquire it. In another instance, while Leão was preparing his suitcases to go to Israel and was packing several instruments he had purchased earlier from Mestre Prateado, I asked him if he thought their price was high. He said:

> *"What would you think a fair price would be? These instruments have no price. You pay whatever they ask you and you say thank you. You won't find similar."*

This idea is also described by Daniel Miller (2014) as an

> incommensurable polarity between value as price, and value as priceless… [where] what value does, is precisely to create a bridge between value as price and value as inalienable.

Capoeira cannot be stripped off its value since it still resists the desire to be possessed and owned. In turn, it is Capoeira that 'possesses' people and demands sacrifices. Therefore, Capoeira is represented as having a binary 'nature'. It has a quasi-independent existence, and by being personified it remains in a sphere protected by the negative transformations of commodification. Nonetheless, there is also space for the individual to make profit.

According to Parry and Bloch (1986 p.26), there is an

> ideological space within which individual acquisition is a legitimate and even laudable goal […] consigned to a separate sphere which is ideologically articulated with, and subordinated to, a sphere of activity concerned with the cycle of long-term reproduction.

During an event Mestre Prateado organized in order to honour an old mestre from Santo Amaro, Mestre Ticum, the latter remarked: *"Back in my days, we played Capoeira out of love and out of courage. When I learnt Capoeira, I placed it in my heart."* I have already mentioned that Cachaça in his song described that his mestre, Mestre Moreno, advised him to keep Capoeira in his heart. The heart is where Capoeira should be kept. Nevertheless, Mestre Canarinho – Capitães da Areia *"grandfather"*- drew attention to something different that would justify their efforts to make profit. Thus, he noted:

> *"Everybody took from Pastinha and benefited. Pastinha was not working with his head. He was working with his heart and I don't want to make the same mistake. How did he die? I didn't see anyone helping him. When he was in need, nobody helped … He died in misery… Wherever there is a lot of money there is no much sincerity. Money speaks louder."*

Both Mestre Bimba and Mestre Pastinha died in absolute misery even though they were acknowledged as fathers of Capoeira Regional and Capoeira Angola. Suffering and being tricked and deceived by others is discussed as part of their lives and indeed, all mestres and teachers are aware of their common predicament. For this reason, Mestre Canarinho also affirms that even though he suffered a lot –and suffering also proves his value- he does not want to fall in the same trap. He cannot work with his heart because it risks the danger of being constantly exploited by others. Thus, when the younger

teachers felt that someone tried to deceive them, they said that could not happen, because they were not *fools* (*otarios*).

To avoid being perceived as *otarios* and thus impoverished, they followed specific codes of conduct. Among them are those of being cunning and *malandros.* In other words, inside and outside the *roda* it was considered legitimate to deceive and trick others. These moral codes, attitudes, comportments and ways to relate to others led them to claim that nobody can be trusted. Foreign apprentices take for granted that Bahian Capoeira teachers are *malandros* and that they will eventually try to deceive them. They may attempt to manipulate them to *"fall in their game"*, just as it happens in the *roda*. Under these circumstances, the apprentices argue that the teachers are not trustworthy since they try to deceive them in order to get money.

Simmel (1978) suggests that all forms of exchange imply some sort of calculation. But in this case, it is also a conception based on the stereotype of the *"malandro"*, on specific culturally constructed tropes and images. Prego argued that a *"malandro"* should not be confused with a *"vagabond"*. Likewise, Arraia made a joke by saying that in general, *"Bahians' malandragem is a malandragem of fools"*. According to Arraia, this is because it is so apparent, that poses no real danger. For the other subjects of study this cunning comportment was related to gendered performances and a constant preoccupation to not be taken as a *fool*. As such, by imitating their mestre, they used to say: *"I may be shameless but at least I am someone."*[63] For this reason, in Capoeira's competitive fields of relatedness and in a society that discriminates them using stereotypic images, they stated that even as such, they are still a distinguishable someone, *"o cara"*.

Yet there is always the danger to be considered *"selfish"*. When young Capoeira teachers talk about their mestres, they say that *"If you put money aside, they are all very cool."* According to Parry and Bloch (1986), both Simmel and Marx argue that monetary exchanges promote the growth of individualism and the destruction of community. In Capoeira and in Bahia, some mestres may even be considered as *"businessmen"* or *"ambitious"*. They want their name to grow and do everything to benefit themselves instead of helping others. For this reason, most tend to acknowledge

[63] The expression in Portuguese goes like this: "*Eu sou cara de pau mas pelo menos sou o cara.*"

the right to make profit as individuals as long as they keep all others in their mind. Every mestre is aware of the fact that his apprentices will grow *"ambitious"* too and will have to find a way to handle autonomy and interdependence[64]. Of course, in a changing Bahian society where people, according to a Capoeira mestre, want to *"absorb"* (*enchugar*) whatever they can from tourism, there is a conflation of ideas about the moral dangers of being ambitious and conspicuous consumption, mutuality and the importance of helping the others.

Finally, there are some exchanges that take place in Bahia and relate to what at least the *"outward looking"* Capitães da Areia mostly cherish and value: their mobility. According to Cachaça, travelling and inviting friends from Brazil to France or any other European country, does not happen because of money. He sustained:

> *"No. It is not just about the money. Not everything happens because of money; to make money. It is because they should get to know, meet other places and other people. It is a shame they can't do it. This is what Capoeira is about. Last year, Janaina came. This year, Macaco. We have to invite them. They too deserve to know."*

Mobility related knowledge is highly valued and contributes to the collectivity. Neguinho would spend several hours making instruments in the presence of his foreign Capoeira friends. He would narrate stories and get them to know people. Despite lack of materials and money, he always made good instruments and invited friends to smoke or eat at his house. His hospitality and sharing of knowledge, together with the relatively low prices, seemed disproportionately generous to me. Nevertheless, he used to say:

> *"I do this so that they will get addicted to Capoeira and they will want more. Who knows? Maybe they will ask for more instruments or maybe since they are French, they might even invite me to go back to France."*

But then he added:

[64] At the same time, according to Magalhães (2011) and Abreu (personal communication) researchers fail to address the perplexities generated with the making of academies. While on the one hand, as Abreu argues, every collectivity/group after its mestre's death breaks down, the making of official academies consolidated the loose relationship between a mestre and his apprentices. In this context, Capoeira's circulation outside Bahia added to the complexity.

"You see, the mestre said I should leave. There is nothing for me here. He said that his student, Papagaio will find a way to invite me. But, you see, they always say things like that. They always promise. But then, they leave and they forget."

His actions moved beyond immediate interactions. Yet, they were also confined by the limited time foreigners stayed in Bahia. They were neither that generous nor simply calculative. Nuncy Munn (1986) in her study about the people of Gawa, observed how spatiotemporal continuities may move beyond immediate actions. With regards to that, she argued:

> Gawans may attempt to influence others to remember them over time so that a given type of act performed by one actor may project the possibility of future hoped for acts in the immediate present and eventually yield a desired objective outcome (Munn 1986 p.270).

At this point, Schelcker's (2011) approach to Simmel's (1900) theory of value, or "theory of sacrifice" seems pertinent. Simmel argues that value is experienced in relation to "strained desires". According to him, "one's desire for an object is fulfilled by the sacrifice of some other object, which is the focus of the desire of another (Schelcker 2011 p.315)"[65] Value in this case, is an "inwardly felt tension" (Schelcker 2011 p. 316). In the exchanges between young Capoeira teachers and foreign practitioners, value also involves the desires of both sides. Sacrifices perhaps are uneven. The value of the exchanged 'objects' and the intensity of desires may differ. Thus, value is relevant to the unequal relationships that sustain or create these exchanges and the shared or not expectations and objectives. But, moreover, value is an

[65] Schelcker's (2011) aim is to answer to the anthropologists who have criticized Simmel for ethnocentrism (see Strathern 1992). According to him, they have mistakenly assumed that Simmel's theory of value referred to the exchange of objects. Contrary to that, Schelcker approaches Simmel's model as one that builds upon value as an inwardly felt tension between two emotional states. Consequently, according to the same author, exchange and the nature of what is exchanged have little relevance. The emphasis is given on subjective experiences and feelings and then, to 'externalized forms of social exchange" (ibid p.319). Strathern's criticism, though, is based on her approach concerning the person or what she calls the "dividual" (see Strathern 1992). It is relevant to her insistence not to impose what she believes are western ideas concerning the self and emotions on the societies we study.

inwardly felt tension between two emotional states. As Schelcker (2011 p. 316) observes:

> The philosophical categories of happiness and suffering correspond to the basic tension between desire and sacrifice which, for Simmel, generates the experience of value.

Similarly, it implies differences in temporalities in the experience of value. Neguinho anticipates future and uncertain outcomes and the extension and projection of these relationships into the future that will permit, once again, his mobility. On the contrary, Pierre may choose to focus on the short term exchange and transaction.

(20) Making Instruments – *"One Has to Be Inventive."*

(21) Searching for Materials at Mercado Modelo (left) and Feria de São Joaquim (right).

5.6 *Gringas* and *Caçadores de Gringas*

William was a *menino de rua*, a child that spent most of his time walking about the streets in the Historic Center or went swimming near the port. He smoked crack and asked for food or money from the tourists. He was, without doubt, the most polemic child walking about the Historic Center. Every time he saw a local and specially a man, and in most cases Capoeira players, talking to a foreign woman, he would say: *"Hey, you, gringa's hunter (caçador de gringa)"* and then, he would start cursing. There was not a single moment that someone would pass from the Terreiro de Jesus without listening to William cursing people. The phrase *"caçador de gringa"* echoed all over the place. He was so bothered by those interactions that once he went outside Mestre Prateado's atelier and threw a cockroach to his wife calling him at the same time, *"gringa's hunter."*

C*açador de gringa* is the young man who constantly pursues female tourists, especially foreign ones, engaging into sexual affairs with them. Street vendors, artisans, musicians, dancers and Capoeira players are among those who mostly interact with tourists and thus, engage in these activities. As I noted earlier, Cabelo emphasized the relationships between everyday Capoeira *"exhibitionists"* and female tourists. He had also added:

> *"They go out to theaters, bars, restaurants and the women pay everything for them. They say they are Capoeiristas but some of them are not even Capoeiristas. They are just male prostitutes. Once, one of these guys you see here, he met a girl, a tourist. When she left, she bought a ticket and she invited him to go and stay with her. But he was married and he brought his wife along. He said she was his sister and she stayed in the next room. Can you believe it?"*

Stories of infidelity and deceit imbued with fictitious elements circulate in Pelourinho with the same intensity as tourists during peak season. Similar stories also involve relationships between Bahian men and women but when they are about foreigners and locals, they are discussed differently. After all, Bahians consider the Historic Centre as place of encounter between locals and tourists and therefore, as center of sexual tourism.

The Greek equivalent to the Bahian *'hunter'* (*caçador*) is perhaps the *'spear'* (*kamaki*). They designate specific comportments especially in places frequented by

tourists. *'Spears'* do not focus exclusively on foreign tourists but neither do '*hunters*'. Like the *'beach-boys'* in Barbados (see Gmelch 2003), they are mostly men about twenty to forty years old coming from the less privileged social classes, and compared to the women with whom they relate, they all are economically deprived.[66] In Salvador, Capoeira practitioners have a prominent place among *caçadores* because of their unmediated contact and easier communication with tourists. In addition, many women approach them not only because of their physical appearance but also because they learn or play Capoeira with them. An artisan once said:

> *"These Capoeiristas! I wish I was a Capoeirista. They all get to meet tourists and everybody wants to talk to them. Why? I am going to start Capoeira myself so that they will want to interview me as well."*

It has become so common seeing Bahian Capoeira practitioners going out or getting married to foreigners, that when Artista saw a Capoeira teacher married to a black woman he was astonished. He remarked: *"What? Don't tell me he is married to a Bahian! Look, he is married to a woman from here! Did you know that?"* Later on he found out she was French, so the world came back to its 'normal' way of being. He then remarked: *"Ah, for a minute I thought… but since they all have foreign wives, I wondered! And especially him, who lives in France. And they all compete, so…"* Today, even older Capoeira practitioners and teachers, or men belonging to other social classes, though to a lesser degree, relate to foreigners. As Dona Luisa observed, while watching a *roda*:

> *"Now*, *even he* [a Capoeira Angola mestre] *has a Japanese girlfriend. You know, several years ago it was not like that. When my husband went to the island, the people there were not used to see someone with dreadlocks. They were intimidated. And he was married to a foreign woman. It seemed strange; unusual. Now, things have changed. More men wear dreadlocks and you see*

[66] Gmelch (2003) discusses intimate encounters between foreign female tourists and local beach boys in relation to questions of ethnicity and sex tourism. In Barbados these encounters were initiated during the early 1960s with the arrival of French Canadians in the Caribbean. In Greece (also see Zinovieff 1991), similar encounters began during the 1970s and even though they still take place, they have been transformed.

that even some you would not have imagined or expected, also want to have foreign girlfriends."

Dona Luisa a foreign woman herself, former Capoeira practitioner and married to a mestre, had experienced and observed all these interactions first hand.

Nonetheless, their activities provoke mixed reactions. Indeed, while in the Historic Center the existence of worlds inside other worlds, mostly apart but also connected, was noticeable. Still, it is difficult to effectively address the articulation of these multiple levels of difference and belonging –or not belonging- to different social fields. Yet, the actions of these men operate on the social and cultural premises of theirs worlds and come to build upon them, challenge or subvert them.

Shop and hotel owners in the Historic Center maintain a racist attitude towards young men they consider *"caçadores de gringas"*. Similarly, some are also hostile towards tourists who do not perform the so called 'high class tourism'. On the one hand, these attitudes resemble the ones encountered in Greek islands where those working in the tourist industry prefer "*people who spend money*". On the other, being black, playing Capoeira and hanging out with foreigners –men or women- is enough to keep someone at the margins. Likewise, in another occasion, a Bahian lawyer working at the Greek embassy engaged into a conversation with Siri. Actually, it was a nonstop offensive monologue of a white woman coming from the economic upper classes in Salvador. When she realized Siri was playing Capoeira, she became even more irritated asking whether he could help her solve a problem with her computer or the only thing he knew and could do was to play Capoeira. These attitudes do not structurally affect and condition the protagonists' lives -access to the health care system and education play a more definite role. Nonetheless, they definitely augment Bahian Capoeiras' anxiety and affect their self perceptions, when they move away from their relatively comfort zones into more hostile spaces.

At the same time, there are two points I consider interesting. First, it became apparent that racism and discrimination were not only color/phenotypically relevant. They also had to do with the fact that these men played Capoeira and they were classified as *caçadores de gringas.* Second, even though Capitães da Areia spent time at the Historic Center, played Capoeira and went out with various foreign women, they did not consider themselves as one of *"these guys in Pelourinho."* When they were

discriminated by other Bahians, they used to protest: "*They treated me bad because they thought I was one of these guys in Pelourinho."*

"These guys" existed but they were not one of them. Dona Luisa was also very cautious with the street vendors and artisans she did not know and walked about Pelourinho. Once, she told them to keep away from the atelier and warned me not to talk to "*these guys*" since they are not to be trusted. Professor and Siri added that once they broke in the atelier and robbed them and they also thought they were not to be trusted. Nonetheless, Dona Luisa never considered the Capoeira teachers and practitioners she knew as *"these guys"*, even if she was skeptical in relation to their activities.

But the young teachers' practices seemed dubious. All year round and especially during summer they used to meet foreign women and go out with them. Professor would meet someone at the atelier and if she had a friend, he would also invite Neguinho or Siri and they would all start going to the beach or visiting the island. In the island, female Capoeira apprentices would go to train and take classes with the teachers who lived there. Those teachers who returned from Europe on holidays used to come along with their girlfriends or wives but they could also get involved with tourists or local women. *"They come back to Bahia and they want to have* fun", their friends would say. Some mestres were not very pleased. "*They want to use you*", they warned them. But younger teachers desired to limit control over what they considered private life. What made their activities dubious and placed them in an awkward position was figuring out and justifying their choices. Especially in the Historic Center, they knew that others could see them and were judging those choices.

Their motivations and the interests they pursued were put under scrutiny. As Peter Wade (2009) argued, there is a political economy that links sexuality, desires, sex tourism and perceptions of beauty. In the present case, it also links them with perceptions of the self and position in a set of related fields. These fields inluded the Bahian society, where the presence of foreign others mattered, the Capoeira collectivities and the world beyond Bahia. According to Peter Wade (2009 p. 156):

> [They] are loosely linked to the notion of political economy in the sense that they all operate within a kind of 'market' of erotic, affective, economic and status values, in which people make choices about whom to marry or have sex with, what is beautiful and desirable, and how to make a living and improve

their lives. These choices shape and are shaped by hierarchies of race, gender and class and they enact the simultaneous presence of both racism and racial democracy. Both the markets and the hierarchies have national and transnational dimensions.

When I asked Professor why they insisted on going out with foreign women, he said:

> *"But women from here don't want to go out with us either and they complain we play Capoeira a lot. And besides, men also like the fact that there is no commitment."*

As with the '*beach-boys*' and the '*spears*', Capoeira teachers and practitioners seem to appeal more to foreign women. In addition, the fact that in tourist contexts encounters are mostly transitory and non-repetitive, is considered positively (Cohen 1984). Occasionally, though, as Mestra Sucuri affirmed: "*They all come back. All foreigners come back.*" Thus, there is always the possibility to return and in many cases, invite a teacher back home. According to some, this is another reason they chose to go out with foreigners in the first place.

Yet, Capoeira practitioners discuss a plethora of motivations. Pierre, a French Capoeira practitioner whose father is from Senegal implied:

> *"But it is also because it is something different. You know, it excites seeing someone different. You become curious."*

When asked whether they considered themselves or Brazil 'exotic', they seemed unsure on the meaning of the word and replied:

> *"Exotic as in what? What do you mean? As different? You are from Greece. All that mythology and history. The Trojan war, the gods, Achilles. That is exotic. All that history is exotic."*

In a more or less similar spirit and while we were going up to the Fortress, Indio observed:

> *"Look at these women! Women here drink and they don't know how to dress. They are so ignorant (ignorantes). They don't know how to talk. They know nothing."*

Indeed, as women from other parts of Brazil observed, Bahians were interested in meeting foreign women out of curiosity as it also elevated their self esteem. Similarly, they had started to become aware that even though they had *"ugly"* hair, no money and most of them had spent no more than two or three years at school, foreign women were attracted to them. Some, like Zumbi- a Capoeira apprentice from Cabula who lived for three months in Europe- realized that *"foreign women like black men."* Others, who had already lived in Europe and returned, thought that young men in the Historic Center are proud of theirs dreadlocks and looking 'afro', but have no idea that outside there is a lot of discrimination because of their looks. As a matter of fact, Mestre Prateado frequently used the word *"discrimination"* when referring to his experiences in both Europe and Bahia. He said that people with dreadlocks and those who smoke marihuana still have to deal with prejudice in Bahia. Similarly, one of the teachers lamented that he had to cut his hair while in Europe. He said:

> *"Did you hear what the mestre said? I had dreadlocks and longer hair back then. But in Europe I had to cut them. The truth is that sand was getting inside and it was more difficult to keep them clean. But they made me cut them and I didn't want it so much because I was in Europe and the guys [meaning the guys from his Capoeira group] would say that the whites dominated me."*

Black people are associated with stereotypes that involve their body, mind and dispositions. On the one hand, there is an embracement of an eroticized and exoticized image. On the other –or maybe, complementary to it- there is a supposed need to tame and control these qualities. In addition, when associated with Rastafarianism, dreadlocks and smoking marihuana, the Pentecostal churches's moralism influences pious people (*crentes*) that tend to stigmatize Capoeira teachers and practitioners even more. It is not coincidental that when the above mentioned teacher returned to Brazil, he decided not to grow his hair back.

All these contradictions in relation to their body and image are shaped and shape encounters with foreign women. In specific, female Capoeira apprentices who venture trips to Brazil meet with practitioners from their own group. Others get to know people after they arrive and take classes with them and travel all over Bahia. They all have their expectations and imageries. Hence, once I returned from Bahia and while talking with a female practitioner who had never been there, she bluntly stated:

"I want to go there. With all these biscuit and chocolate looking men. I know how they are but I don't mind. I would like to go there on holidays."

In this case, travelling to Bahia was already perceived as an encounter with *"biscuit"* and *"chocolate"* like men. Therefore, a trip would be conditioned by specific understandings and expectations on sexuality and masculinity in Bahia in general and in Capoeira, in specific.

Back in Bahia, staying at Porreta's house in the island seemed like living an eternal summer. He and his apprentice, Indio, used to wake up in the morning and train. Sometimes, they would go surfing. His house was a place of gathering behind a high fence that made it impossible to see them from the outside. Many foreign apprentices used to spend some time there, train, have lunch or smoke. They had planted pine apple trees, coconut trees and some vegetables. They spent quite some time there unless of course they had a *roda* or they were helping out different mestres. In various occasions they would attempt to validate their claim to status by talking about their success in relation to foreign women. Sometimes they would even compete and place bets.

Gossiping and parodying foreign women were part of their performances. They presented a sexual and powerful self-image that others not only approved but also constantly reinforced. Nobody wanted to be considered a *fool* (*otario*) and their sexuality was experienced and expressed through a series of emotions, practices and ideas. Being a *fool* was a state they left to foreign male apprentices even if local women used to say that *"foreign Capoeira apprentices are all nice but then they come here and they start behaving like them; going out with many women and imitating them."*

At the same time, burlesquing foreign women and displaying rudeness, as Gmelsch (2003) also observed in the case of the beach boys and Zinovieff (1991) on the spears, was a way to retaliate. As such, they hoped to subvert their position in relation to foreign women that came from socially and economically privileged social classes. In all these intergroup discussions and performances one can observe the expression of self-interest as it fuses with the collectivity's interest, however that collectivity and larger Bahian community may be defined. Jenkins (2008 p.7) underlined how interests and identifications are intrinsically related. He says:

> Identification and interests are not easily distinguished. How I identify myself has a bearing on how I identify my interests. How other people identify me has a bearing on how they define my interests, and, indeed, their own interests.

Thus, in another instance, Cachaça, emphatically said that he did not want to see his mother *"washing again clothes for the whites."* Aiming to provoke those who were present, and perhaps to cause pity and guilt, at the same time, he was reaffirming boundaries, He was expressing solidarity to his community and its values and identified his interests with his community's interests.

Peixe Espada and Cachaça, nevertheless, used to bring their wives, girlfriends and their apprentices along during their holidays in Bahia. In this case, they mediated between different worlds. Actually, as Glick-Schiller, Basch and Szanton-Blanc (1992) also argue, transnationalism means "having a foot in both worlds." Mediation entails a conscious acknowledgment of a particular role and presupposes some sort of conflict that needs to be resolved or a possible conflict that should be avoided. It implies a conscious acknowledgment of boundaries and the role of, as Prego said, the '*intermediario*'. An example of that was given when a street beggar approached us and asked from one of the teachers to give him money. When I observed that he never asks for money when I am on my own, he replied: *"He is not asking money from me. If he is asking, it is because you are here."* Thus, mediation presupposes the acknowledgement of boundaries and is potentially dangerous as the teachers might seem strange and familiar to both locals and foreigners. Hence, in more complicate –and unpleasant situations- some foreign female apprentices commented that they found themselves buying food or helping families and the friends of the Capoeira teachers they met in Bahia. Confrontations and conflicts were difficult to be avoided.

These dilemmas and confrontations bring to forth the place of women in Capoeira. According to Mestre Prateado, many foreign women who visit Bahia and play Capoeira *"have no morality."* As in Greece –especially during the 1970's but also today- and in the Barbados, female tourists are stereotypically perceived as sexually loose. The fact or myths that foreigners go out with different Capoeira practitioners even from the same group was quite commonly discussed with contempt. All these discourses entailed a moralizing element. As Heald Susan (1999 p.50-56) argues:

> There is a link between moralities with ideas about the person. These ideas also articulate with perceptions of maleness and femaleness … the standards of

> conduct expected of different members of a society differ, as do the evaluative modes that apply to their transgressions. But morality is never just a matter of double standards; it always involves multiple ones.

Apparently, it was different being a woman from Bahia, a foreign Capoeira practitioner and tourist, a student of the same group, the one to have an affair or a wife. Similarly to what Strathern (1981 p. 166) underlined, there is a "categorical denigration of females and contextual evaluation of particular women." Therefore, a wife was supposed to help in the organization of Capoeira related activities and in whatever duty her husband did not want or could not do. Mestra Rosa -one of the very few female mestres from Bahia- noted that there is a gendered division that regulates interpersonal relationships. She said that it is a sexual division of power and an affective one that involves the duties. A mestre's status depends on his wife and on how she relates to men and the community. Contra Mestra Maria, for example, is married to one of the mestres of the *old guard.* Yet, she is strictly confined to Pelourinho's territory under her husband's supervision. Contra Mestra Maria, said:

> *"I like working here. I give samba and Capoeira classes and I sell souvenirs. But you don't get enough money by doing that. If I could only travel! But the mestre does not allow me. If it were for him, he would go."*

Women -who almost in all cases are also Capoeira practitioners and former students of their husbands- gain access to status -and in some cases, in making a livelihood -only through their relationships to men that may even control their mobility. Concerning all other women and if they are apprentices, their teacher may attempt to regulate their sexuality. Moreover, he will attempt to overpower, first all male apprentices and then, teachers from other groups. If they are not his apprentices, women are, as Janaina –a female Capoeira teacher noted- the main reason for competition among men as they attempt to *"steal"* them from others[67]. Indeed, "stealing" a woman or even an apprentice- male or female- demonstrates one's ability; however that may frustrate the offended part. An Italian apprentice and friend of the Capitães da Areia, commenting on such behaviors, added: *"They have no shame. They are shameless (safados)."*

[67] Indeed, "stealing" a woman or even an apprentice- male or female- demonstrates one's ability, however that may frustrate the offended part.

Neguinho, Siri, Professor and even Capoeira mestres used to show me photos and talked about the various women they knew and with whom they were related. In these cases, as they affirmed, they were *"hunters"*, indeed. As Mestre Prateado also said: *"While in Europe, I was a hunter, too."* But, hunting –especially for younger men- never ends, even when they are married. Having a wife and children is highly valued but some argue that the only wife to whom they are willing to be faithful is Capoeira. Thus, they want to keep being mobile by relating with different women in every place and country they go. Therefore, they joke by calling one another *"gringas' hunter"*. While reflecting on the human condition, Sartre (in Judaken 2008) sustained that people interiorize the labels and essences attributed to them but the meaning they give may vary. Moreover, the Capoeira teachers explore and stipulate stereotypes on their sexuality and their motivations by making an ironic use of them (see also Pease Chock 1987).

However, at some point in their lives, both the work of irony and the evaluation of choices, become more complicate. Neguinho while talking to an old man from his neighborhood reflected on his decision and its outcome.

> *"I never thought of going to France. I mean, I knew I was going to leave one day because of Capoeira and I wanted to. But I had never really planned it. I was thinking of waiting a little longer. But, then, I met my ex-wife. She was travelling all over the world. Anyway, she left and after a few months, I also left. I had some money because I was working at the time. But, I won't lie. She also helped. Maybe, I should have never left my job because when I returned here, it was taken. Anyway, it was difficult at the beginning but I went to a school to learn to speak French and after a while, I found a job. Once there, I found out that she was coming from a very wealthy family. I had no idea because when she was here she looked very like… very hippie and you could not tell. So, they were… I was not used to it. I had never been out of Brazil before, out of Bahia. After a while, I wanted to go to Paris because the city where we lived was small and in Paris it would be easier to find a job and it's better for black people. I wouldn't feel discriminated. Now, I want to go back to the city where I was because after some time I started to get used to it. But it was like once we went out with her parents for dinner and some friends of theirs. I sat at the table. Then, I would see them, discretely, waving at me. I could not figure out what they were trying to say. They wanted me to correct the way I placed my hands on*

the table –I had my hand placed under my chin holding my head- and my posture. It was not appropriate. It was a very expensive restaurant and we ordered fish. And then, they brought us a huge fish. Very expensive. They ate very little so I wanted to ask the waiter to wrap it and take it home. Her father said 'no' but I insisted and we took it. They got upset because I embarrassed them. But I am from Brazil. People here have no food. There was no way I was going to let them throw away that big and expensive fish… Anyway, now I am back. I have to see how to get back to France. Maybe I failed. I was too young. I failed."

Neguinho's story was about making the decision not only to have sexual affairs with tourists but to leave Bahia and get married to a foreign woman. Social aspirations and affect are discussed simultaneously but, according to him, the fact that he returned without his wife meant that he had failed. Similar stories are quite common. They build upon ideas concerning success and failure. Most importantly, however, they are indicative of the perils mobility entails and the ambivalence it generates in processes of opening up and closure of boundaries.

5.7 Conclusions

In this chapter I have concentrated on a series of transformations that take place in Bahia and their evaluations. From the arrival of tourists and the awareness of the presence of others, to the interpenetration that takes place in a Capoeira play, the relationship between a teacher and his mestre, his apprentices or his fellow teachers, and finally, between Capoeira male practitioners and women, boundaries are constantly challenged, questioned or reaffirmed.

Reflecting on the concept of culture and its uses in a Bahian context, I observed that change, moral improvement, economic development and culture are discussed by a series of agents as intrinsically related. Still, Bahians are no quite sure on whether they have culture, on what culture is all about, on the historic moment they attained it or lost it, and as such, on the relationship between culture and change. In all this 'culture anxiety', changes related to commodification and the presence of foreign others play a crucial role. Considering that both social subjects and ethnographers are "praxical beings", I focused on Capoeira *rodas* and performances where what practitioners do or know is put "in a practical context of perception and action" (Ingold 2000 p.161).

Capoeira *rodas* are lessons on how to use their body as well as lessons on composure. The relationship between a mestre and his apprentice are in the center of all types of connections. An apprentice may be his mestre's continuation while a young teacher may *"mirror"* his fellow teachers. Value, here, is a relationship and changes are evaluated depending on how these relationships are bestowed with meaning and how they change. Being *"cool"* or *"ridiculous"*, being *"someone"* or being *"playful"* are qualities that relate to how young Capoeira teachers constitute themselves in relation to others (other men, teachers, Bahian and foreign women). Evaluation of changes, in this case, is also relevant to age.

The fetishization of both commodities and money affects the way I myself approached social practices and political economies in the field. It also influenced how I chose to reflect upon the subjects' evaluations, interests and motivations. Thus, there is a danger to embrace stereotypes on calculative and manipulative racialized gendered subjects and their alienated practices. Capoeira's value as *"commerce"* is tested in different fields. One such field is that of tradition and folklore. The other field is that of its legitimization as profession. The arrival of foreign apprentices and the monetary exchanges that take place challenge the quality of teaching techniques and question motivations. Is it for the love of Capoeira or for money? Do they still keep Capoeira in their heart?

On another level value is explored in relation to how it has transformed or may transform social relationships and Capoeira as such. Capoeira, here, is presented as having a binary 'nature'. It has a quasi-independent existence while at the same time, the separation between donor (mestre, teacher) and receiver (apprentice) is not complete. Likewise, by being personified, in the sense that Capoeira 'possesses' novices, it remains in a sphere protected by the negative transformations of commodification.

Making money with Capoeira is about human value even if some things are *"priceless"*. As Anthias (2001 p.378-379) argued:

> The significance of the economic lies in the production of value at the level of reproduction of human life and as a central form of exchange, and functions particularly as a primary context for all other value i.e. as their necessary condition of existence. Where Marx made that sphere the determining one, it is also possible to see it as an a priori condition of existence for all the others; a

> prerequisite for human life. Marx is acknowledging the important role of the symbolic and the cultural. The fetishism of commodities no longer gives commodities mere economic value, either as use value or exchange value, but endows them with human value and social worth.

Value is also about emotions and tensions, about *"suffering"*, which seems quintessential in Capoeira, and strained desires; the desire to be mobile or as I will later on discuss, to be happy, prevail. Sexual affairs with foreign women are also in the center of their political economies. Yet, the difficulty is in articulating how different qualities and parameters intersect. Among them is the parameter of age, gender, sexuality; of being a Capoeira, a teacher, mestre or apprentice; foreign or Bahian and eventually, being human. More importantly the challenge is not to simply aggregate them but to explore how they shape one another in different instances in the social actors' lives.

6. MOBILITIES, UNCERTAINTIES AND PROCESSES OF CLOSURE

"We are these people. We leave and then come back. One day we are here and then, we leave. That is what we do."

Up to this point, I have presented a Bahian society in flux. The interactions between researchers and *"Capoeiristas"*, foreigners and Bahians, men and foreign women and among Bahians themselves, challenge and reaffirm symbolic, geographic and social boundaries. Boundary crossing is also related to mobility and movement. As I have already mentioned, the importance of movement in Capoeira's *roda* goes beyond its physicality. It gives information about inter and intracollectivity relationships. It extends in space and time beyond the confines of the 'circle' and it is, thus, structured by other type of mobilities. Similarly, in all previous chapters, mobility has been mentioned in relation to tourism, imaginaries and processes of knowledge construction and accumulation. The initial vague and confusing ideas I had formulated in Barcelona concerning transnationalism, started to seem relevant to the social subjects' experiences. Thus, while briefly attempting to mention my interest on teachers' transnational mobility, a Capoeira practitioner interrupted me and exclaimed:

> *"Really? This is who we are. I know exactly what you mean. We are these people. We leave and then come back. One day we are here and then, we leave. That is what we do."*

It was a reassuring statement that confirmed that transnationalism was more than a research 'trend'.

In Chapter Five, in various occasions, the desire for mobility has been implied by the subjects of study. Nonetheless, the cultural meanings attributed to mobility by the people in the field should be further examined. Salazar and Smart (2011 p.v), argue that some of the questions that researchers should address concern

> "how … people envision their potential for mobility … under what conditions do they enact that perceived right, and under what conditions is that right denied to them in practice?"

The capacity of the migratory routes Capoeira opened was in the core of their discussions. In a poorly reformed civic center in Engenho Velho de Brotas a group of teenagers, both boys and girls, was training to Capoeira Regional. Because of the drainage system, the room gave an unpleasant smell. Maintaining the white color of the students' *abadas*, as they touched the wet floor, was a challenge. But they seemed used to it. The teacher dedicated a great deal of time discussing Capoeira's history and past. Still, looking somewhat frustrated by having to discipline the children, he warned them about their misbehaviors in the neighborhood. Either they would keep going to class, and thus, have the possibility to travel and meet different places and countries, or they would be expelled. Travelling and meeting new places were offered as possible alternatives in order to encourage young students and motivate them to stay away from illicit activities.

Likewise, in an event organized by a Capoeira Regional group in a nearby neighborhood, among tens of Bahians, there were also two white foreign people in the audience. Their presence was perceived as a proof of Capoeira's value and potential. While the mestre was giving a speech to families, authorities and children, he suddenly spotted us on the top of the big amphitheatre. By pointing to our direction, he said:

> *"Do you see these people there? They are foreigners. Do you know why they are here? They are here because of Capoeira. They came from very far away to meet us because of Capoeira. This is what brought them up here. If they value it, then you should value it too. One day you* [the children] *might even go to see their country.*"

Their neighborhood was not frequented by tourists or foreigners. Thus, our presence was a pleasant surprise, reinforcing hopes and desires. As such, the presence of foreigners and the imaginaries it enhances, communicate specific perceptions and constructions of value. Furthermore, according to Munn (1986) mobility itself should be understood as a value producing act.

From Engenho Velho de Brotas all the way to Rio Vermelho, Capoeira teachers and mestres present travelling as a future perspective. The idea that Capoeira opens migratory routes seemed to appeal especially to less economically privileged men. Even Principe, a former Capoeira practitioner and today homeless and crack addict, while performing bizarre acrobatic movements at the pavement near Cabelo's house, lamented on his missed opportunity:

"I was supposed to be in Italy, France or Germany. I was supposed to be playing Capoeira. I was not supposed to be here. But crack destroyed me. It destroyed me but it didn't steal my soul."

In addition, middle-age mestres quite often urge their older apprentices, as in the case of Tamara, to venture a trip outside Bahia. Consequently, considering their economic condition and their environment, as Salazar and Smart (2011 p.v) also observe

> "… there is no clear-cut separation between choice and constraint, between forced and voluntary mobility."

In addition, the interests and hopes of a Capoeira practitioner, his mestre or his collectivity, overlap, though, they may differ.

Here, Nancy Munn's (1986) ethnography on the construction of the "Gawan world" (ibid p. 6) and the creation of value, offers interesting insights. Indeed, as I have underlined in Chapter Five, the Bahians' perceptions of the self as well as the Capitães da Areia collective and individual self, are structured in relation to "external others". Despite the potential danger their activities might generate, they are nonetheless important in order to guarantee the community's viability. Mobility should be seen as a value producing act in this specific sense. As in the kula circulation, fame

> "can only be produced … only through an initial externalizing process involving the separation of internal elements … and their transaction into the world." (Munn 1986 p.6).

Therefore, the young teachers' mobility away from home and the circulation of their practices should also be considered from the above mentioned perspective.

As the chapter unfolds, the central role mobility plays in their lives, the tensions and uncertainties it creates, become main focus. Mobility is experienced by the young teachers as a necessary condition and state of being; a movement inside and outside Capoeira's circle (*roda*). Moreover, in this chapter it will be articulated as a way to expand what Munn (1986) calls "intersubjective space time", "a space time of self-other relationships formed in and through acts and practices"(ibid p.9). Their practices,

therefore, will be understood in relation to their value producing capacities and to a whole system of meanings that relates to peoples' values, their perceptions of the self, their gender and relationships.

6.1 *"Walking about This Great World"*

A small farewell committee was heading to Deputado Luis Eduardo Magalhães airport. Perna, Neguinho, Cabelo and Artista were accompanying Jorge who was flying to Switzerland. It gave the impression of an important occasion even after a while, it turned out to be their routine. For Artista, nonetheless, moving away from the working space in the corridor at the Terreiro de Jesus and enjoying the air-conditioning in the bus, was a rare and pleasant experience. Cabelo was curious. He was eager to document everything by taking photos with his new cell phone. Perna and Neguinho were from the same Capoeira collectivity as Jorge. Therefore, they wanted to accompany their friend before leaving Bahia.

Several weeks before that departure, Jorge had returned from an unsuccessful attempt to travel to France. His friends had visited him in the Island. While sitting in his small living room, the discussion inevitably came to Jorge's deportation from Europe. Even though, according to Vale de Almeida (1997), anthropologists usually ignored differentiation among men, in this context, travelling but also being successful in it, were criteria that bestowed men with value and distinguished or ridiculed them. As such, Jorge brushed off his negative experience by saying:

> *"Well, I should consider myself lucky. Things could have been worse. At least, they treated me well. They could have imprisoned me. Thus, I should think of it as something good."*

According to him, he had only lost money and that would not impede him from attempting to leave once again.

Indeed, his Ecuadorian girlfriend, who at the time lived in France, made the necessary arrangements. After finally deciding to take the others' advice, he organized every task as he was told. In fact, in today's unequally connected world, not all people are given the possibility to be mobile. According to Salazar and Smart (2012 p.iii)

> "What is different in modern times is that human mobility needs to be framed in relation to the global political system of nation-states, who set and control the parameters of (trans) national movements and prefer relative immobilized subject populations".

Therefore, Jorge gathered enough money in order to prove he was visiting France as a tourist. He also had invitations and reference letters with the addresses of the people he was supposed to visit. Sometimes, a Capoeira association used to invite. But, usually, it was a girlfriend or a friend. Finally, and since it was the Spanish authorities who did not let him pass the last time, he would fly directly to France. In France, he would find the teachers from their collectivity who lived there. Three months later, he would have to go to Switzerland to stay with another teacher from the Capitães da Areia. After that, he would be able to return to France and continue as such for as long as he could financially afford it.

The day before the flight he left his luggage –mainly, instruments to sell in Europe- at Neguinho's house near Terreiro de Jesus. The following day, they all gathered. Making a feast or at least gathering before a friend left and then, accompanying him/her, if not to the airport, at least to the bus station, was important to them. Mobility was routine and yet all these welcomings and farewells never seized to lose their importance.

Jorge's departure had a different impact upon each one of them. Perna was making his own arrangements at the time. His girlfriend was in England and it was quite likely she would help him to meet her and give Capoeira classes there. He was anxious but not as much as some of the younger ones like Neguinho. It had been quite some time he had not heard from his friends and students in France and another departure- in this case, Jorge's- left him even more frustrated. Siri and Professor were used to all these comings and goings and when they had time, they too went at the airport. Arraia was planning to leave Bahia after summer, after having sold his handmade crafts to tourists. He would then join his wife in Italy. All in all, with Jorge's departure one of them was set to *"sail"* –as in Cachaça's song- or as another song of theirs suggests, to *"walk about"*, leaving the rest behind.

"Walking about" or *"strolling around"* suggest specific ways of moving and consequently, of knowing the world. They also imply particular ways to perceive the world itself. The teachers' passports depict aspects of their experiences, their frequent

mobility and geographical expansion. While at the airport of Barcelona, Cachaça commented on the impression his passport's stamps made on the check-in attendant. He observed:

> *"The attendant was looking at the stamps from my last trip to Africa. Maybe you don't get to see people like me travelling so much… Imagine, I was the first one from the group to leave to Europe. Then, I turned into a myth for the others."*

Perhaps Cachaça did not comply with the image of a 'cosmopolitan'. Still, travelling to places yet unknown affected how others perceived him. His observation as being the *"first one to leave to Europe"* becoming, thus, a *"myth"*, reminded narratives on Mestre Pastinha's epic journey to Dakar during the Festival of Black Arts in 1966. Today, during commemorations, they still mention it as an important -at least, according to older mestres, historians and younger apprentices -moment, known as "*The Great Journey to Africa*".[68]

Likewise, Cachaça's first trip was an important moment both for him and his collectivity. He provided the rest with an example to follow, an example that older mestres before him had already given. It steered their imagination and it was also a promise. At the same time, he was the first to open the way and 'clear' the path for the others. As Tim Ingold (2011 p.154) observes, "proceeding along a path, every inhabitant lays a trail". It is not coincidental that most Capitães da Areia, though in

[68] Mestre Pastinha is often described as the first Capoeira Angola mestre to visit Africa in May 1966. Today, this movement from Brazil to Africa in order to discover Capoeira's roots and teach Capoeira, is more common. However, in the historic moment of 1966, it was Mestre Pastinha and along him, Mestre Gato Preto, Camafeu de Oxossi, and his students, Mestre João Grande, Mestre Gildo Alfinete and Mestre Roberto Satanás. That trip figured in Bahian press during the 1970's along with a photo of the mestres waving at the reporters as they were boarding on the plane. Nonetheless, several years later, a newspaper article titled: "Pastinha: The mestre who was born to fight", pointed out the contradiction of the glorious times of travelling to the sad present of abandonment and sickness the mestre was facing. His vision was blurred and his life was limited in the four walls of a dark room full of cockroaches and holes.

> Mice, cockroaches and cold … Blind, sick and without space to build a new academy since in the place of the old one there is a luxurious hotel, he lives in a tiny room filled with holes […] (A Tarde, 13/04/ 1974).

different cities, live in France. Cachaça was the first one, though, to demonstrate courage by opening new paths. In addition, it was an act towards a process of personal becoming, since "inhabitants […] know as they […] journey *through* the world a*long* paths of travel" (ibid, 2011 p.148). As such, the value of his acts would be judged by their latent capacities and in relation to all other Capitães da Areia. As Bateson (1980 p.48), though in a too broad way, argues:

> "For all objects and experiences, there is a quantity that has optimum value. Above that quantity, the variable becomes toxic."

The 'toxicity' of their practices will be further discussed. Yet, travelling was not enough to attribute mythical qualities to people. Cachaça *"became a myth"* in a constant effort to claim primacy over others. Being the first to create or bring novelties, to set an example, to be the first to lead or even, the first to follow, were highly valued. Here, people are impelled to follow or lead similar paths, while always aiming to be the first or to be more alike. Perhaps, a world of "homologies" (see Strathern 1988).

If Cachaça was the first to become a myth, then Neguinho was the second after him to arrive to France or, as he occasionally mentioned, *"the first after him to arrive to France"*. His cousins and friends, even if they were not related to Capoeira, used to admire him because of these experiences. His *"monkey like"* movements performed at the beach would make some of his neighbors laugh. Nevertheless, his family would say to his defense: *"it was because of these monkey-like movements that he managed to travel all over the world"*. Still, when his friends from economically privileged classes expressed their admiration, he would often observe that he would rather *"have what they have: go to school, return home, find my family sitting together at the table and supper together, as people in France also do"*. Indeed, their journeys and interactions with other people slowly affected the way they reflected upon their desires, expectations and identity. Therefore, young men not only have mobile aspirations, but mobility itself creates new aspirations for a different life and may have a destabilizing impact on relationships. Consequently, their travelling experiences not only create new possibilities to engage with the world but also reveal and create uncertainties.

Capoeira teachers, apprentices and mestres, directed my attention to the pervasive role mobility played in all aspects of their lives, thus furthering my observations. It was not only the organization of time that involved weekly, monthly or annual encounters, with months of travelling, visiting or staying to one place or the

other. It turned out to be more than a decision to migrate to a foreign country; from one fixed point to another. Even when that was also the case, mobility should be thought of as a key to explore processes of becoming, relationships and their specific perceptions of place and time.

Cachaca, Peixe Espada and Boa Gente wrote a song titled "*no mundão de rólê*" that belongs to the musical genre of reggae; a music they appreciate, listen to and play. It speaks of their overall experiences. In the video clip, scenes from surfing in the island, smoking marihuana, the Island, skating, their mestre and their friends –male, female, Bahians, non Bahians, musicians, Capoeira practitioners- interchange. In between argot expressions, the song goes as follows:

> Everyone has his own perception, / Everyone has his own way to reflect, / Everyone, his job and profession, / Everyone, his life and own rationality/reasoning, / Everyone, his connection, / Everyone, his world and direction, / Everyone with his drug and distraction / Everyone with his culture and miscegenation, / Everyone, from Japan to Afghanistan, / Everyone, we are brothers, / Everyone, new generation[69].

Every line briefly contains thoughts and ideas on how they inhabit the world. Had I not observed these patterns during years of research among them, they would have remained plain lyrics that might even sound commonplace. As such, the emphasis on the *"new generation"* made more sense considering their complicate relationship shaped by their age and tensions with older generations. Indeed, the geographer Yi Fu Tuan (1977 p.186) also suggests that "in relating the passage of time to the experience of place it is obviously necessary to take the human life cycle into account".

The Capitães da Areia song discusses directionality, connectivity and perception. It argues about their *"philosophy"* that is linked to leading a life by walking about *"from Japan to Afghanistan"*. As such, it is their own way to reflect upon life and the direction they follow. Capitães da Areia, claim that they too have, as Tim Ingold would say, "a particular way of being alive" (Ingold 2011 p.219). By using the idea of

[69] "Cada um tem sua percepção/ Cada um seu modo de reflexão/ Cada um seu trabalho e sua profissão/ Cada um sua vida e sua razão/ Cada um, sua conexão/ Cada um seu mundo e sua direção/Cada um sua droga e discontração/Cada um sua cultura e miscegenação/Cada um, no Japão e no Afganistão/ Cada um, somos nois irmãos/ Cada um, nova geração."

"miscegenation" as reference to their Brazilian identity, they assume that all people in one way or another are products of some mixture and miscegenation. They acknowledge distinct but equally respected ways of reasoning. For them, their rationality, as they argue, is intrinsically connected to mobility, music and surfing. It quite often involves practices that discriminate them.

Due to the use of telecommunications and the Internet, Mestre Prateado's opinion on what being a Capoeira practitioner means, reaches a much wider audience. He says:

> *"Capoeira is about friendships. It is roaming around; being on the road. We are 'andarilho'. We do go everywhere. It's not because of 1000 euros or reals. It doesn't matter. Capoeira goes for free."*

What the *"new generation"* describes as *"walking about"*, he calls a state of *"being on the road"* while making *"friendships"*. At the same time, his comments entail an evaluative tone differentiating past, when things, according to him, did not involve money, and present. *"Walking about"* embraces a perhaps more relaxed way of getting to know a world that opens up to them. "*Being on the road*" involves some sort of hardship. Indeed, according to Mestre Prateado, it is not an effortless way of living. For Tamara, though, reflecting about Capoeira practitioners' life in general, their life is *"bohemian"*. She further argued, that this is another reason they are being discriminated by other Bahians.

Mestre Prateado introduces the figure of the *"andarilho"*. According to a Bahian friend, *"andarilho"* refers to the person who *"lives in the street without having a fixed place; without any specific direction or a home"*. Consequently, it also refers to practices that seem to challenge notions of stability and these may include the construction of fixed family ties. Indeed, mobility is also about how people relate to one another. Nonetheless, Camarão was quite specific when he observed that *"Capoeira is just a small world"* and my perspective was formed due to having lived in the confinements of that world.

Returning to the question of mobility, according to Mestre Prateado, Capoeira practitioners are or should be, mobile. Mobility is, thus, presented as inherent to Capoeira. As I have already pointed out in Chapter Five, in Capoeira people are their movements. People grow as they connect with others. Thus, as they learn with and from

others, they improve or *"modify"* their movements and way of playing. Their way of knowing the world is related to movements in different levels, inside and outside Capoeira's *roda*. Knowledge is an objective; knowing new places, people, new movements. According to them, inviting someone from the island to Europe is for that person *"to learn"*. As Cachaça, in another instance, observed: *"they, too, deserve to learn"*.

These processual understandings of movement and knowledge, of moving as a way of knowing, bring to mind Ingold's (2011) analysis on "wayfares" and "wayfaring". "Wayfaring", to him, is a way of knowing and of moving from place to place. He says:

> My contention is that wayfaring is the fundamental mode by which living beings inhabit the earth. Every such being has, accordingly, to be imagined as the line of its own movement or – more realistically – as a bundle of lines […] The knowledge they acquire […] is integrated […] *along* paths of movement, and people grow into it by following trails through a meshwork. I call this trail-following *wayfaring*, and conclude that it is through wayfaring and not transmission that knowledge is carried on (Ingold 2011 p.143).

I find his reflections pertinent to the ones suggested by the people in the field. The use of the metaphor of *"sailing"*, encountered in a previous chapter, is characteristic. Nonetheless, as I will further on discuss, tensions arise because of the possibility of two different ways of knowing. As a result, conflicts may be triggered when knowledge is constructed and perceived as "wayfaring" on the one hand, and as transmission, on the other. In a way, it also depends on where emphasis is given each time.

Nevertheless, the idea that mobility and movement are in the core of a continuous process of becoming is quintessential. It is essentially the idea that, as Ingold (2011 p.168) observes:

> […] every person would come into being as an enfoldment of the experience of the places they have inhabited, and of the journeys between them.

Their propensity is to travel looking outwards and towards distant destinations. But different places inside Bahia and Brazil are also considered important. Each place, thus, receives a different meaning. The last couple of years, Porreta's travelling, for example, takes place mostly in Brazil. The friendships he establishes, nonetheless, are important

and his constant mobility along with his improving Capoeira abilities and skills, compensate for not leaving Bahia. Moreover, participating and organizing events next to renowned old Bahian mestres may be evaluated more positively. As Nancy Munn (1986 p.11-12) observes in the case of the people of Gawa:

> Practices that constitute the Gawan actor in terms of inter-island relations form a greater 'extension of self' and of the actor's spatiotemporal control than those involving intra-island relationships.

Whether inside or outside Bahia, being constant and keep learning by moving inside and outside Capoeira's circle is a cherished –if not mandatory- way of being. *"You always learn"*; *"You cannot stop"*, is what they repeat to their own students. Similarly, you may *"take a walk around the world"* while playing Capoeira just as you may *"walk about this great world"* in life.[70] As Ingold (2011 p.159-160) argues:

> Like life itself, it does not begin here or end there, but is *continually going on*. It is equivalent to the very movement – the *processing* – of the whole person, indivisibly body and mind, through the lifeworld. The point that processing involves movement is critical […] It implies that knowledge is integrated not by fitting isolated particulars encountered here and there into categorical frameworks of ever wider generality, but by going around in an environment.

Thus, so far, constant movement has been embraced and celebrated as imperative in a process of becoming. This process involves the whole person as body and mind, his/her collectivity and the *"friendships"* made on the way. However, the first time I actually started reflecting on the implications of mobility, was when I encountered its alleged opposite: the state of being *"stagnant"* (parado). As Salazar and Smart (2011), mobility and immobility are not only relational, but, furthermore,

> The very processes that produce movement and global linkages also promote immobility, exclusion and disconnection (ibid p.iv).

[70] *"Dar volta ao mundo",* is the moment when a Capoeira player decides to take a round walk inside Capoeira's ring circle during a game. This walk is anti-clock wise. It aims to keep the tension down, to build momentum once again while observing the other player. Capoeira's circle, in this sense, is a world in itself.

6.2 And Then, *"He Remained Stagnant"* (parado)

On the way to Concha, the beach near Hotel Paraiso was crowded. There were mainly foreign tourists and people from the island who after having crossed over the other side and passed the mangrove trees, sold their handcrafts. Some beaches, like in the peninsula of Camamu, as Siri told me, were frequented mostly by white people. After reflecting for a while, he added:

> *"They only come over here to serve white people. I think they don't like seeing me here."*

As in many other instances, young Capoeira teachers in Bahia seemed to be preoccupied by how people in their society perceived them. Their activities seemed to challenge or made them aware of the existence of boundaries. Nonetheless, in the Island, foreign tourists and islanders both spend a lot of time at the beach together. The latter, inhabit the place by fishing, surfing or meeting with neighbors. Small children with their mothers go swimming and young men, late at noon, play football. These activities gave the impression of a continuous movement that fluctuated according to the season, the time of the day and the tide.

In a small bar near the beach Cachaça was having a beer with his friends. He had just arrived from France on holidays. Therefore, he spent most of his days hanging out on the streets with his male friends from the island, visiting Salvador to play Capoeira and travelling throughout Bahia with his foreign students. Very few questioned him, at least to his face. *"He knows what he wants. He lives in France and then, he comes here to enjoy himself"*. As always, with the carnival's end, he returned to Europe. Nonetheless, Cachaça reflected on how the younger ones from their collectivity lived in Bahia. He suggested they were introverted and *"closed to themselves"*. They spent most of their time watching TV at home. According to him, they *"isolated"* themselves and remained *"closed"*, confined to the limits of their house yard where they trained; a subtle acknowledgement of the relationship between being mobile and being socially open and the need for both. Their seclusion preoccupied him. It was a signal of future undesired and negative, for the collectivity, outcomes.

Later that night in Salvador, Arraia met Perna and Siri on their way to Santo Antonio. Arraia observed that Neguinho had remained *"stagnant"* (parado). Perna confessed he had also been *"stagnant"* for quite some time, aiming to defend his friend since a peculiar solidarity had begun to form between those who remained in Bahia.

Yet, if mobility was a necessary and desired condition, then being *"stagnant"* seemed to be quite the opposite. Perhaps, defining what "*stagnant*" means, seems obvious. Nonetheless, their great *"small world"* bears its particularities.

As Ingold (2011 p.152) observes, "travelling is an experience of movement". Yet, Neguinho's and Perna's mobility and movement had been limited since they were not travelling. Moreover, and due to the fact Mestre Moreno was away and they did not have space in Salvador, Professor, Neguinho and Siri were not training a lot. Neguinho's daily trajectory was limited to the Historic Center. He walked from his house near Terreiro de Jesus to his mestre's *"shop"*. During summer, he met with foreign friends or tourists and played Capoeira at home or in *rodas* in Rio Vermelho and Cabula. Occasionally, he strolled around visiting Bahian markets, like Feria de São Joaquim. The other trajectory he ocassionaly followed was the one linking the city to the island by boat. But even tourists' mobility had an impact on how he perceived his own mobility. As he used to observe, *"before, there was more movement"*. He too acknowledged his stagnancy but, furthermore, linked it with the idea of *"failure"*.

Perna was older and as I have already mentioned, his trajectory involved comings and goings in between the island, where he resided, and the city. He lived in a small two flat house. The house itself was a project in process, but at least it was almost finished comparing to Indio's plans for starting to build a house from scratch on a small piece of woodland. Perna's house was part of a constellation of small houses next to his mother, his father and other relatives, with whom he shared a common yard. He used to go fishing or up to his small plantation. Nonetheless, as Salazar and Smart (2011 p.v) point out,

> People are moving all the time but not all movements are equally meaningful and life-shaping.

Nonetheless, Perna, as I have mentioned earlier, had the possibility to travel once again to Europe. The point was that he maintained relative distance from the others and had become skeptical towards counting on them to venture a trip.

Siri was younger and his mestre insisted he should leave Bahia. He was still indecisive, but their mestre saw potential in him. The question was when and how to define his goal. Yet, defining a goal was a movement forward. According to the geographer Yi - Fu Tuan (1977 p.181):

> Goal is the stable world to be attained […] is also a place in space, the promised land on the other side of the ocean or mountain.

Marisco, on the contrary, did not want to leave and therefore, he stayed in the group's 'periphery', while, Camarão did not think of himself as *"stagnant"*. According to him, he had simply *"withdrawn"*. He went fishing and surfing with the others or looking after small gardens. The sea, for him, guaranteed his continuous mobility. He also participated in a project they maintained in the island teaching children how to surf. He also maintained links with those who returned from Europe and with most of their common friends on the island. But for him, Capoeira was *"a small world"*. Moreover, the others' mobility was evaluated with ambivalence. It entailed the possibility to make them seem as 'less men', since they depended on the people who invited them outside Bahia.

Nonetheless, at least in the confines of their *"small world"*, mobility is embraced as innate propensity. Yet, what counts as mobility and what it stands for, should not be assumed (Salazar and Smart 2011). They, indeed, invite for further exploration. By grappling with the specifics of their past and present mobile experiences, their particular and individual stories and perceptions, larger social processes and vague concepts are understood in their multiple dimensions. As Ingold (2010 p.167) points out,

> […] to recover the particularity of things is not to connect but to divide, focusing on difference rather than similarity.

6.3 Finding One's Place: Dislocations and Remoteness

"It is going to work... It isn't..."

Setting to *sail* is a promising but also challenging and full of unforeseen risks endeavor. Even if the paths have been trailed and those about to leave have been encouraged by their collectivity, there are no guarantees for the outcomes. It is more of a hopeful bet. This uncertainty is eloquently expressed in the music one of the young teachers composed when he first arrived in Europe.[71] Since the author has not published the song

[71] Most apprentices suggested I paid attention to the songs performed during Capoeira *rodas.* Tamara pointed out that their lyrics communicate messages on what goes on in the game. There are songs that are popular and the author is unknown. These are *dominio publico*. As such, they

yet, I will only use this single line, *"It is going to work ... It isn't"*, as a starting point. Choosing on which familiar patterns he would build upon, he used a particular vocabulary to express and communicate very personal experiences and feelings. This song is a lyrical improvisation and reflection on his experiences away from home and his preoccupations. As Ingold (2008 p.17) says:

> To improvise is to follow the ways of the world, as they unfold […] The artist – as also the artisan – is an itinerant, and his work is consubstantial with the trajectory of his or her own life.

All in all, for the young teacher in *"the foreign land"*, it was uncertain whether things were going to work out or not. Even Mestre Prateado today, as he narrates his experiences, admits:

> *"It was difficult… a year here; a year back in Brazil; two years here and then, back to Brazil… and then, came my wife who helped me the most."*

Comparing narratives on their first experiences away from Brazil, they all emphasized the important role foreign apprentices -friends or partners- played. After all, once in another country, as they said, these people *"know better how the system works"*. Thus, other people's help is a factor that defines whether things are going to work out or not. On the contrary, if they do not get proper help -the help they need- things can become increasingly more difficult.

Leão observed that *"the most important thing is to have contacts"*. If you know the right people, you might get invited in more than one place during events or workshops and reach a point that having a weekend off travelling becomes a rare occasion. Of course, this also depends on someone's personal social skills and experience, as well as on how he returns the favor by inviting people back from other collectivities. Yet, at least at the beginning, a young teacher counts more on the people

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are sung by almost all Capoeira groups with minor alterations. Spontaneous changes may happen during a game and result in new songs. Of course, every Capoeira practitioner can compose his/her own songs, get the copyright and produce his/her cd. The themes also vary. For further reading, see Downey (2002) and Lowell Lewis (1992), who both successfully address the issues of history, musicality and perception in Capoeira.

with whom he maintains close affective relationships and these are people from his own collectivity or his partner.

Perna recalled his first trips to England before meeting his fiancé. He remembered how he arrived to help out his mestre and spent days with little food in a cold house knowing nobody. Eventually, they would all end up affirming:

> *"The guys invite you. But I know what they want. They want me to go there and do all the work. Then, they will get to travel around and they won't even give me money."*

Or, they would bluntly state:

> *"I don't want to go to be enslaved to nobody".*

Having someone taking credit over your work is something that in moments of frustration several Capoeira practitioners admitted. For example, even in Bahia, a female Capoeira teacher expressed her frustration due to the fact that she worked a lot and had very little time for herself but her name was never mentioned. All the fame was given to her husband who was the group's mestre. In the case of a young teacher leaving Bahia, after being invited by someone from his collectivity, things may complicate. The awareness that the invitation and his life next to *"one of the guys"* might entail his *"enslavement"*, makes the desire for autonomy grow. It was the felt and moral tension between an "outward transformation of the self and its negation" (Munn 1986 p.6) Above all, their trust is shaken. Ingold (2000 p.69-70) exploring issues of companionship among hunter – gatherer communities, argues on trust:

> The essence of trust is a peculiar combination of *autonomy* and *dependency*. To trust someone is to act with that person in mind, in the hope and expectation that she will do likewise – responding in ways favorable to you – so long as you do nothing to curb her autonomy to act otherwise. Although you depend on a favorable response, that response comes entirely on the initiative and volition of the other party.

Of course, the story can be told differently from the perspective of the persons who invite. From their point of view, the young teachers become *"overly ambitious"*. In addition, there is no fixed and permanent distinction between those who invite and the ones who are invited; those who are called *"overly ambitious"*, and those who *"stick*

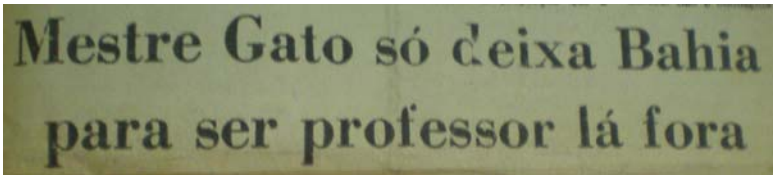
around" and become demanding. The circle of invitations and exchanges is ongoing and the one who is invited will eventually be asked or trusted to invite all others once he establishes his own space. It is also a matter of perception, of each one's scope and current condition. More importantly, though, as Ingold (2000 p.69-70) further elaborates:

> Any attempt to *impose* a response, to lay down conditions or obligations that the other is bound to follow, would represent a betrayal of trust and a negation of the relations.

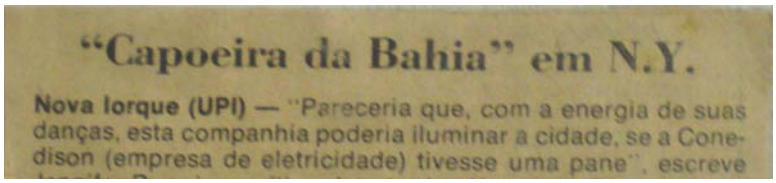
It is this negation of relationship or of the possibility of its negation that puzzles them, for different reasons and in varying ways. When their expectations begin to fail, the questions on the nature of their relationship, on who they can count on, become more urgent and difficult to answer. It is a continuous effort to understand it and explore its potentials. Geographic distance plays a critical role. It is worth mentioning that the story wants Mestre Bimba to have died away from Bahia disappointed, after having been tricked with false promises by the person who invited him.

Na época de fastígio da capoeira Pastinha (o primeiro ao alto) chegou a ir à África, com sua Academia, representando o Brasil num festival de cultura negra.

(22) Capoeira Mestres visit Dakar – *'The Great Trip to Africa,'* A Tarde, 13 April. 1974.



Mestre Gato só deixa Bahia para ser professor lá fora



"Capoeira da Bahia" em N.Y.

Nova Iorque (UPI) — "Pareceria que, com a energia de suas danças, esta companhia poderia iluminar a cidade, se a Conedison (empresa de eletricidade) tivesse uma pane", escreve

(23) Capoeira Leaves Bahia – *'Mestre Gato Leaves Bahia to Become a Professor Abroad,'* Diario de Noticias, 18 Feb. 1974; '*"Capoeira from Bahia" to NY,'* A Tarde 5 Sept. 1980.

Pastinha morre no abandono

Mestre Pastinha, o mais famoso professor de capoeira de Angola da Bahia, tombou ante o golpe mortal daquele que foi o seu mais traiçoeiro e ferrenho adversário: o destino. Cego e abandonado por amigos e autoridades, ele morreu ontem no Abrigo Dom Pedro II, onde vivia ultimamente. Vicente Ferreira Pastinha era a própria incorporação do estilo angolano da capoeira, um misto de dança e luta com o qual os escravos divertiam-se nas senzalas e defendiam-se das agressões dos policiais e feitores. Do seu corpo franzino precipitavam-se golpes rápidos e certeiros. Sua fala humilde deixava escorrer palavras sábias e experientes. Mas, a ginga do mestre não foi suficiente para livrá-lo do traiçoeiro golpe da ingratidão. Velho, cego e despejado do prédio onde formou gerações de capoeiristas, restou a Pastinha um abrigo de idosos, apesar dos apelos que fez às autoridades. O jornalista Reynivaldo Brito, amigo de Pastinha, conta algumas das coisas que sabe sobre o mestre (Pág. 2).

A MORTE DISTANTE DO MESTRE BIMBA

"O que me derem agora na Bahia já não me fará ficar. Não me interessa mais. O que não tiver em Goiânia, terei no cemitério. A Bahia só pra passear. Os governos daqui nunca me deram um palito. Eu precisava ter um centro pra ensinar, no entanto fiz uma escola no Nordeste de Amarelina à força do meu braço. Ninguém me ajudou. E eu conheço o folclore como ninguém. Ir para Goiás é uma necessidade financeira". (Mestre Bimba, em entrevista à TRIBUNA, em 18 de novembro de 1972, dois meses antes de deixar a Bahia para sempre).

Bimba: ninguém me ajudou.

Ontem, longe daqui, a Bahia perdeu uma das suas mais autênticas expressões em cultura popular: Mestre Bimba, criador da capoeira regional que morreu em Goiânia, no Hospital das Clínicas da

convite. Depois, como disse o repórter Luiz Coelho, numa matéria publicada pela TRIBUNA em 22 de novembro de 1972, deve ter refletido "sobre o maior capoeirista que é. O que mais entende

(24) The Sad End of Capoeira's Fathers; *'Pastinha Dies Abandoned,'* A Tarde, 14 Nov. 1981; *'The Distant Death of Mestre Bimba,'* Tribuna da Bahia, 6 Feb. 1974.

6.4 Domesticating, Adapting and Distancing

"A Capoeira is like a bird. Can you imprison a bird?"

One day at the island, Siri and Daniel said they were going to visit an old friend of theirs, Mangue. He had been teacher to a few of them in the past and a good friend. They said he was one of the best and most flexible Capoeira players among them. Yet, he had returned in a very bad condition from Europe. On our way, together with Daniel, they recalled past games.

When we arrived at the small house, two relatives or neighbors were coming out. Going up the small stairs, on the left, Mangue's mother was standing by the door. Next to the entrance, there was a cage with a big bird jumping restlessly from one perch to another. When we entered the house, we found Mangue sitting on the sofa. He had a difficult time the night before, another crisis.We were told not to upset him. But he seemed calm or rather, apathetic. Due to medication, his perception was altered. He remained still during the visit, trapped in the sofa. His friends tried to entertain him in vain. They then invited him to play Capoeira. His expression –if there was one- changed and he refused. They suggested: *"maybe another day"* but he refused again and replied: *"No. Forget about it. I am not going to play Capoeira again"*.

On our way out, his mother confessed she was happy to see his friends visiting him. He had just started taking medication and seeing a doctor. What turned out to be bizarre, more than the acknowledgment of his condition, was my own surprise. Perhaps unwarily, I had never considered the fact that there was absolutely no reason for not encountering people who experienced mental health issues among them. Contrary to those who reduced economically disadvantaged people from former colonies into collective pathologies, I realized that for some reason I could be enlisted among those who thought that certain psychological states had class and nationality.

After leaving, the others reflected on his condition. Not having the right people to understand and help him was among the things they mentioned. They also recalled how beautiful his Capoeira was and, for some reason, insisted on how his appearance was transformed after having cut his long dreadlocks. Mangue's body was modified and his mobility was severely conditioned. He had confined himself in his house, in the living room, and as his mother said, he refused to play Capoeira. As a matter of fact, his

insistence to never play Capoeira again was among the things his mother repeated several times. I reflected on his negation and remembered a song they used to sing:

> Without Capoeira, I cannot live. / I'm a fish out of water, / A little bird that does not fly, / Day, without night. / I can stay without food. / I won't even drink water./ But I won't stay without Capoeira. / Because, I'll die. / A fish out of the water dies. / And I, without Capoeira, / I don't know what to do. / Little bird flies away. / But I remained in sadness[72].

Life without Capoeira is described as impossible. These powerful lyrics are telling of how Capoeira shapes and transforms their lives' core. The voice is always imperative and all encompassing. I therefore recalled the rumors about a Capoeira teacher who hung himself in Barcelona using his Capoeira belt. Their friends accompany them playing the *berimbau* when they die, they play Capoeira when they get married, and they offer flowers or the seeds from their *caxixi* to Yemanja the day of her celebration in Bahia.

At the same time, as in many other songs or everyday expressions, people belonging to different Capoeira collectivities frequently use metaphors and analogies drawn from nature. They, thus, find ways to express complicate sentiments and states or modes of being. Indeed, one should consider that most Capoeira movements are named after an animal or plant, like, for example, the *"rabo de arraia"*, the ray's tail. Besides obvious historical patterns, Capoeira lyrics eloquently contain the idea of movement by making reference to the elements of nature, the sea and its movements, the waves and the tide; the wisdom and movement of the birds and their freedom or their desire to be free; the maliciousness of the serpent. Greg Downey (2005) underlined that foreign apprentices are also able to relate themselves to emotions and ideas expressed in Capoeira songs even if they do not involve patterns from their immediate experiences.

Nature, as it is lived, perceived and narrated from generation to generation, is their source of inspiration and a template to explain social phenomena. Therefore, when a young teacher reflected on his experiences in Europe, he said: *"A Capoeira is like a*

[72] "Sem Capoeira não posso viver/ Sou peixe for a do mar/ Passarinho sem voar/ Dia sem escurecer/ Posso ficar sem comer/ Nem agua eu beberei/ Mas sem Capoeira, não fico/ Porque se não, eu morrerei/ Peixe for a da agua more/ E eu sem Capoeira/ Não sei o que fazer/ Passarinho bate aja/ Eu fiquei nessa tristeza."

bird. Can you imprison a bird?" These metaphors and analogies also entail the idea of the untamed; a longing for freedom and thus refer to ways of relatedness and of engaging with the world and the environment through constant movement. As Tim Ingold (2011 p.81) observes, *"While on the trail one is always somewhere. But every 'somewhere' is on the way to somewhere else"*, and this is how place relates to movement. Otherwise, it would be like living like a bird in a cage.

Mestre Guerreiro, known for his political ideas, used the word "*domestication*" to describe how foreigners aim to change Capoeira practitioners by taming them. Indeed, domestication is about making fit, overcoming wilderness. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, "domesticate" means:

> To make, or settle as, a member of a household; to cause to be at home; […] To make to be or to feel 'at home'; To make domestic; to attach to home and its duties […] to tame or bring under control; transf. to civilize.

During an anthropological conference in Manchester, "self-exoticization" was suggested as a plausible explanation concerning Mestre Guerreiro's discursive practices. Nonetheless, I believe that his political aim was to express defiance. For this reason, he points out the impossibility to control them by imposing undesired and external to them, changes. That, apparently, according to him, would be against their untamable nature. "Self-naturalization" or selectively combining culture with nature forms an altogether more powerful argument.

In this specific context, it is interesting to observe how biological discourses affect the way people talk and think about life. A year later, in Barcelona, Prego was eager to know more about Mangue. It had been quite some time he had not been to Brazil. Reflecting on Mangue's situation, he came to the conclusion that *"some do not adapt"* eventhough he too had a difficult life in Barcelona. Yet, when I mentioned that other younger teachers were having a difficult time and those who returned to Bahia perhaps needed help, the answer was: *"They had their opportunity"*.

I found it contradictory suggesting that *"some just do not adapt"* and others, those from *"the third base"*, as he called them, *"had their opportunity"* but they missed it. I believe that, in their view, adapting and making the best of an opportunity are two interconnected ideas. If someone manages to adapt, obviously, it is because he did not waste his opportunity and listened to the others. Thus, it is necessary to clarify how they

define and understand *"opportunity"* and its contrary, expressed in Neguinho's case, as *"failure"*.

Neguinho's missed opportunity, for them, had to do with the fact that contrary to the others, he left Bahia, got married and divorced before getting the residence permit. Thus, he was deported. They all, including himself, said he could have waited three more months. Instead, he decided to separate ignoring the others' advice. His motives, his age, whether he could *"adapt"* or not, nor any other particularities mattered. Particularities were not an issue in anybody else's story, either. As such, even adaptation ends up being a personal matter and responsibility. Yet, ultimately, this responsibility is translated and perceived as responsibility towards the collectivity. Neguinho unless he gained the others' respect - something that, as we shall see, would probably happen a few years later- was not excluded yet but he was running that risk.

The American philosopher and psychologist William James (1983) laid an interesting argument concerning exclusion and the individual that I consider pertinent to a Capoeira collectivity. He suggested that contrary to processes of expansion and inclusion, exclusion is about retracting and rendering someone into a state of non-existence. He pointed out that:

> People who don't resemble them, or who treat them with indifference, people over whom they gain no influence, are people on whose existence, however meritorious it may intrinsically be, they look with chill negation, if not with positive hate. Who will not be mine I will exclude from existence altogether; that is, as far as I can make it so, such people shall be as if they were not […]

Moreover, there are no universal definitions to a meritorious life, failure and success. They are rather context specific. In Neguinho's case, as in the case of others who had returned, the possibility to be acknowledged once again as respectable persons would be achieved by a complete and active immersion in the collectivity's social life and relationships. This immersion would be initiated by travelling once again. Acceptance would mean gaining back respect after having successfully participated in the cycle of exchanges and invitations and by leading a life following familiar patterns. As Marilyn Strathern (1988 p.14) underlines:

> Thus a group of men or a group of women will conceive of their individual members as replicating in singular form ('one man', 'one woman') what they

have created in collective form ('one men's house', 'one matrilineage'). In other words, a plurality of individuals as individuals ('many') is equal to their unity ('one').

Indeed, when they travel, they travel as part of a collectivity. On their t-shirts, they print their collectivity's name, their mestre's name and then, their own Capoeira name. Yet, Mestre Grande, while polishing a *berimbau* and watching his wife giving classes in his academy in Bahia, emphasized:

> *"Well, they leave. Then, we do not know what they do. If they continue our work, I mean. We hope they do. So, we have to keep an eye on them but it is not always easy."*

Distance, in its geographical, symbolic and practical dimensions, is a factor that should be considered. Moving away from Bahia and engaging in affective relationships with others, has a potentially antisocial character and for this reason, it entails dangers (also see Strathern 1988 p.13).

The least they can do is to be successful in their endeavor. An association or group has to invite teachers from their own collectivity. They also invite people from other groups and associations in the city where they intend to live or from other countries, if they can afford it. Usually, if they invite people from the same collectivity, they pay their ticket and they offer food and a place to stay during a workshop. If they are from other collectivities and live in the same city, they probably have met during a first encounter and then, initiate and exchange invitations. In this case, if they can afford it, they offer some money. Otherwise, just food and drinks. Yet, they always have to invite or be present in their collectivity's encounters all over the world. Moreover, as in the case of the group in Paris, they also gather money or school material and send them to the island to reinforce their collectivity's projects there. This is an act of solidarity and also a way to test and reaffirm relationships challenged by distance. Maurice Bloch (2005 p.56) discussing commensality among the Zafimaniry says that "this means that every invitation given and accepted is not only an act of solidarity; it is also a test […] The question that lies: Will you dare to eat with me and become one?"

While Prego complained the younger ones always expected from others and never did things on their own, he himself had at the time a difficult relationship with his mestre because of his own expectations. The mestre used to claim that he "*gave them*

Capoeira" and from that point on they were on their own. Contrary to that and even if Prego preached against the attitude of expecting from others, he insisted in finding out whether their mestre went to visit Mangue at the island. *"But did he go to see him? That's what I want to know"*. His insistence speaks volumes of his own expectations and lingering dissatisfaction. Yet, the mestre too expected, as all mestres, to be invited by his apprentices. They too have to return the favor of having received Capoeira. But even the mestre himself had a complicate relationship with his own mestre, their *"grandfather"*, as the younger ones called him. He pointed out that the old mestre was quite demanding. At least, Mestre Moreno –the younger one- said he never interfered in his apprentices' personal life, an observation that depicts the complicate relationship between mestres and apprentices. Yet, the younger mestre had now his own collectivity and his apprentices were teachers who used his own name all over the world.

Nonetheless, Prego was still a teacher and not a mestre. When Cachaça came to Barcelona he observed that Prego had *"distanced"* himself (se afastou). He had stopped going to their encounters. As a matter of fact, after many years, it was the first time he invited someone from their collectivity to Barcelona; the person who had taught him Capoeira, Cachaça. Thus, he initiated a new circle of invitations once again. Up to that moment, communication has been conditioned and distance had a role to play. Yet, as Antony Cohen (1985 p.35) observes:

> Isolation is not always a matter of geography […] It may also be the product of seclusion behind communal boundaries, such as those which communities contrive through symbolic means.

Prego was isolating himself behind his own group's boundaries in Barcelona. He was not present during their encounters and he did not want them to be present either. He had established a new circle of alliances in Barcelona.

Someone would expect that the fact he was teaching Capoeira in a European country would be considered a success. Nonetheless, Prego himself felt "*stagnant*". His stagnancy was intrinsically related to the fact he had distanced himself. Thus, his mobility, though in quite a different way, had also been conditioned. After class, while drinking a beer and watching people passing by, he started singing a Capoeira song saying, *"I walked around the world* (dei volta ao mundo)*; I played my berimbau and time never stops"*. But then, he reflected: "*but time has stopped*". As a matter of fact, as Salazar and Smart (2011 p.v) put it:

… mobility explicitly privileges the notion of movement and process rather than … fixity across both space and time.

Quite often Prego evoked his activities and his past life in the island. Before starting to play Capoeira he was a fisherman. He used to go diving and his mother was waiting for him to return from the sea. He said he was different back then and he had changed a lot since. The fact he had not been in Brazil for a long time aggravated his longing. The sea for some, like Camarrão, guaranteed mobility. According to the latter, Professor was a *"great stagnant"*. He used to say: *"He is a great stagnant. He is not a person of the sea. He does not even surf"*. For Marisco, too, the sea was a boundary but also part of the people's life in the island; in constant flux. He did not want to leave Bahia even if his mestre insisted. He claimed: *"I don't want to leave. I like the sea. I cannot live away from the beach"*.

Contrary to that, Prego was away from the sea and his family and mobility was not about cutting off people, but rather about making relationships. Yet, Prego had remained away from the *"fountain"*, as he used to call Bahia. But Capoeira teachers who lived in Europe had to return quite often to *"learn something new and bring it back to Europe"*. He was tired of the old songs but every novelty, according to him, came from Bahia and Bahia was too far away. But even if he would ever return, he was also preoccupied for the changes that had taken place in his life. The prominent one was alcohol consumption. He was worried about how people would see him, as having succeeded or as a failure? His marital status was also a preoccupation since most mestres had a wife making all the arrangements for them, and he did not.

After finally deciding to attend an encounter in Paris, he returned somewhat concerned. He observed that more people had come to take a prominent place next to his *"friend in Capoeira and friend in surfing"*, as he used to present Cachaça. He said: *"This guy imitates him. He imitates his movements. Everything he does"*. Prego preferred fewer people in the group, since "*like this people know each other better*". He was among the ones who used a more rigid discourse in order to describe relationships and eventually, he would realize that people may be replaced by others. Time had stopped for him but the younger ones were ready to travel claiming *"Capoeira is present. After a certain age a Capoeira is over"*. But Prego denied it and eventually invited Cachaça to Barcelona. From that time on, the invitations never seized. Yet, his

mobility was also conditioned since he could not go to Bahia. A great deal of time would pass until he could finally achieve his goal.

In the mean time, in Bahia, life was an ongoing project following different rhythms. The others from their collectivity, as well as from the wider Capoeira community, complained. When Cachaça arrived, they were annoyed by the fact he wanted to sell them clothes. They perceived it as an offensive gesture. *"They come here and they think we have to put up with everything"*. If one of the younger ones got tired of constantly having to offer hospitality, those visiting would return the accusation: *"You are not a brother. You do not let us sleep in your house and eat. Who do you think you are?"*. Similar to what (Bloch 1999) observes on the Zafimaniry, not offering hospitality in their case could also be perceived as "one of the clearest markers of distance and enmity" (ibid p.133). Then, the mestre would call from Europe to resolve conflicts. Porreta used to say to the rest: *"That is how things are. And we are here, in Bahia, and we have to do what we can do here"*.

During the carnival those who returned from Europe travelled all over Bahia having foreign students covering their expenses. According to the ones who remained in Bahia, they had forgotten their friends and they were showing off. *"Where are they?"*, they used to post on Facebook to remind them of their duty. They were the *"absentees who called themselves present"*. They were *"airplane mestres"*. Indeed, in the celebration of Mestre Barão's birthday, the mestre talked a lot about this annoying, to them, phenomenon. He underlined:

> *"Now, he travels and it is the airplane that makes someone mestre. Today there are more mestres than students. I don't want a mestres' factory. It is the people that form and make a mestre and not the airplane."*

In relation to this, during an interview, Mestre Chapeu explained:

> *"At some point, a mestre must have his certificate. But a mestre's greatest certificate comes from the community. The community has to accept him. It is not enough to say he is a mestre. He receives his title in the academy but then, he has to prove he deserves it so that the community will give him the title too ... And this is the true title. The people, the community has to aprove you. If you want to be respected by the other mestres, it is a very humble work. And you always have to listen to the old mestres. This is what gives you experience*

because the old mestre has many things to teach. There is Mestre Bigodinho, Mestre João Pequeno, João Grande, Brandão, so many mestres. If you go and look for the old mestres, the living legends, I believe it is not difficult to reach the higher level of recognition and fame."

Here, the mestre addresses three important issues. The first, is the need to define which is the community that will ultimately *"truly"* recognize the new mestre. The second, the improtance of the experience, of a learning process near the *"living legends"*, the older ones. Third, in order to get to the higher level of fame (*patamar*), one has to be humble. Consequently, there are clear discrepancies in the perspectives of the younger ones who claim that *"Capoeira is present"* and those who emphasize experience and time, *"Capoeira comes in time"*. That of course does not mean that they do not appreciate the older mestres or their experience or they overlook –and for different reasons- the need to stay in touch with them. As a matter of fact, they still invite them to Europe. Mestre Chapeu explains his apprentice's motives who invited him to Italy:

"That idea came from an old student of mine. He has an important work in Italy so he could attend. So, his students wanted to get to know his own mestre. That would be a proof he had studied Capoeira in Brazil. Because there are many people who leave Brazil and say they are Capoeira mestres and the truth is they have never been Capoeira mestres. So, by demonstrating he had a mestre that would also be a proof."

The need to prove a teacher's value is always present. Hence, the issue of the *"airplane mestres"* is reccurent. These mestres are not literally made mestres in the airplane. As I realized in Barcelona, they are made *"mestres"* by a newly formed Capoeira community. In my research, that was the community of Barcelona whose members had started to call one another *"mestre"*, even if they had not received the title from their own collectivity let alone the Capoeira community in Bahia. At the same time and since there are now more mestres in Europe, there is no need to invite the old ones from Bahia. It is certainly less expensive. Despite all that and in relation to that, in the *"fountain"*, from the city of Salvador to the Bahian Recôncavo, I had already observed a world in motion, defending and redefining its own community; claiming and stating its own rights over Capoeira and the world.

6.5 "They Have to Return and Plant Here"

During three months, together with the Historic Centre's residents, I observed the preparation of an event that would take place in Pelourinho's square Terreiro de Jesus in February. Every day, the square and the surrounding buildings were going through processes of transformation. According to the event's organizers, the show "Sound and Light: Terreiro d' Yesu" would dramaturgically articulate, using visual effects, topics such as the abandonment of the Historic Center, the processes of revitalization and the sociopolitical difficulties faced by black people in Bahia.

After several weeks, the show finally began. It was late in the afternoon and all lights went down. A stark voice started narrating the history of Bahia. Point of departure is the present moment: *"2009: Terreiro de Jesus. Here, the city of Salvador created its history. Terreiro de Jesus: Bahia's history begun here"*. The Cathedral lit and its surface became a canvas where images of Portuguese caravels were projected. Several people gathered at the square and carefully reached for their cameras to film the event. The whole show was a dialogue between a figure, Nego da Carrinha, a street vendor selling herbs and medicinal plants, who represented Pelourinho's residents; and the old buildings, the historic monuments surrounding the square: the Basilica, São Domingos, São Pedro dos Clérigos, the Faculty of Medicine and Cantina da Lua. The buildings with their authoritarian voices expressed the narratives and discourses of the church and religion, of science and history. Nego da Carrinha in a humorous yet somewhat stereotypical way claimed his place in history causing sarcastic remarks and eventually, the buildings' rage. The voices changed frequently from authoritarian to solemn and pious.

At some point, everything went dark. A tensed atmosphere predominated as the music changed once again. The voice of a woman searching for *"neguinho"*, her son, was heard: *"Neguinho, where are you, my son?"* The figure of a child moved fast across every wall searching for his mother while answering: *"I don't know. Please, mother, save me"*. Then, the scenery changed and Nego da Carrinha, appeared. He addressed the buildings: *"You all try and listen to me."* All the buildings lit up: *"Have you lost your mind? Put yourself in your place!"* But Nego da Carrinha continued:

> *"I always put me in my place. And you know why? Because my place has always been here. Every stone in this soil was placed and stepped by me. I am all this you see here."*

Indignant, the Faculty of Medicine interrupted him in an attempt to emphasize the contribution of the Portuguese. But Nego da Carrinha said: *"The Portuguese? What books narrate, life denies …"* The sound of the berimbau filled the place and the street vendor brought the discussion to current sociopolitical problems:

> *"All this has to change … for the better; for me and for all my people. Enough with Pelourinho. I am tired of this strategy of invisibilization… I walk the streets with my little trolley and I see the others' cars. The drivers with their sunglasses inside them. It's easy. Isn't it?…"*

The Faculty of Medicine exclaimed: *"Sad Bahia. Black!"* Nego da Carrinha laughed and then observed:

> *"Black Bahia! Black, according to whom? According to those who believe that for a black person it is enough to play berimbau and the tambor? And where is it black?"*

It was a clear reference to racism. It is not coincidental that comments concerning Bahian's lower IQ and their identification as people who play *"easier"* instruments, such as the *berimbau*, was also –yet not only- expressed by a Professor of the Faculty of Medicine.

The buildings answered back: *"What are you trying to say?"* and with a solemn voice: *"Stay in your corner. We come from the earth and to the earth we shall return. Amen."* Every building's surface was suddenly covered in flames. The music expressed tension and whispers echoed over Terreiro de Jesus. Candomble symbols moved on the walls, followed by images of slave Anastasia, other slaves being tortured, and finally the image of Jesus on a red wall and the symbol of crucifixion on fire. After that, everything stopped. A woman's steady and calm voice, a voice of reconciliation and pacification came from the Fountain of Oxum -the Candoble deity- in the middle of the square: *"My son, it is enough for today. You have already proved that this place is yours. This ile (house) belongs to everyone."* Neguinho da Carrinha claimed his place: *"I always put me in my place because my place has always been here"*; followed by Oxum in the voice of the Bahian singer Margareth Menezes:

> *"I'm from here / I'm from this place / I came from over there / From over the sea / I arrived here to stay / But I didn't want to / I only wanted to hear Oya / So,*

I stayed / I didn't leave / But what I did was to create / I gave food/I gave dreams to my Ile / I'm from here / I'm from this place.[73]*"*

And then the music stopped. The voice of a small child was heard. This time it said: *"Mother, mother, I'm all this… I'm never going to lose you again!"* The end of the story, according to the organizers, communicated the *"possibility of a new future to come"* as the Fountain of Oxum *"purifies"* both past and present. The show ended in a joyful way with the lyrics echoing all over the Historic Center: *"I am from here; I'm from this place."* It celebrated the mixture of people and the eventual reconciliation concluding that this place belongs to everyone. The small child –*"neguinho"* - will never lose his mother again.

The show was impressive due to the visual effects, but also carefully structured. It went on during the summer. Bahians and tourists stopped to watch for a while. Yet, Pelourinho is not a place where tourists stay for long. It is a passage. Others found the show a great opportunity to steal a wallet or a camera and disappear running in one of the narrow, poorly lit streets around Pelourinho. Yet, the people I knew did not share my enthusiasm. There was something disturbing in the idea of binding, rooting people in their place – symbolically or not. It objectified, naturalized and homogenized people, by "staking claims of identity and cultural belonging on strong notions of place and locality" (Salazar 2013 p.582). Moreover, it implies that:

> a person is his or her place in the overall picture, as is appropriate to his or her categorization, for example by gender or class (Miller 2009 p.5)

Linda did not like the performance either. She could not verbalize why, though. I considered her religiosity, though. When I met Siri, Professor and Neguinho they had paid little attention to the impressive visual performance. *"How come and you don't want to watch it? It is about you"*, I asked. Neguinho replied:

> *"If you want to know, I don't even like it. I am tired of this show. Every day, all day long. They don't even ask for our permission. Disturbing people, the residents, with all that noise. So, maybe I don't want that here every day."*

[73] "Eu sou daqui/ Desse lugar/ Eu vim de la/ De la do mar/ Eu cheguei pra aqui ficar/ Mas não quería/ Queria só ouvir Oya/ Mas eu fiquei/ Fiquei de ir/ O que fazei/ Foi construir/ Dar de comer/ Dar de sonhar/ Pro meu Ile/ Eu sou daqui/ Desse lugar."

The performance did not seem to concern them, even if Nego da Carrinha allegedly represented black Bahians. In his narrative, place and people became one while reconciliation was finally accomplished and celebrated. Reconciliation brought closure; there would be no more conflicts or a need for future struggles for change. Similarly, the film on the life of the legendary Capoeira Besouro ended by suggesting that's his struggle was completed. His mission was fulfilled and justified with Capoeira's nomination as Brazilian Immaterial Heritage in 2009.

In one of the rare late night occasions that Mestre Prateado passed by Terreiro de Jesus and was willing to talk, he confessed he did not like the film. He had his own thoughts on how the story was. Before seeing the film he believed that Besouro was older and not *"a little kid"*. According to him:

> *"He was a justice seeker. He wanted a more equitable society. This film was all about visual effects… jumping on trees… flying… It did not seem real… Exu* [the Candomble deity] *with red eyes… I don't understand."*

Mestre Prateado remained perplexed and uncertain. But Besouro was and remains a cherished legendary figure among Capoeira practitioners. Thus, his representations trigger conflicts. It was an opportunity to discuss on black Bahians' representations in general. He reflected:

> *"I don't know. What is the point in showing all these images of the slaves? The torture… Like in the exhibition during the month of Black Consiousness. I don't want to go to see it. I don't go. It's a sad thing. It was a long time ago. Why do we always have to remember that? Can't we just let go?"*

The mestre's skepticism reflects a genuine concern with representations of the past and with control of both past and present. In reality, what the show "Sound and Light: Terreiro d' Yesu" and the film "Besouro" have in common is that they are visual representations of the people and their past; representations made by 'others'. Moreover, they articulate arguments on the relationship between these people and places by appropriating and creating potent images and symbols: Besouro, Nego da Carrinha, and neguinho.

In the film, Besouro spends most of his time in introspection. In the idyllic and touristic landscapes of Chapada Diamantina, he wonders among big trees and ruins, symbols of a time long gone. Nego da Carrinha finds his place in Pelourinho's urban

setting. After all, he knows how to put himself into his place. Whether by appropriating what should be his or by always knowing what is appropriate –the appropriate place to be- he is eventually fixed into his place. Neguinho finds his mother and will never leave her again. The soil, the stones and the people become one and Terreiro de Jesus is celebrated as Bahia's birthplace. Consequently and taking all the above into consideration, I will explore now the pervasive idea that connects people with places. The aim is to explore how it relates to the lives, choices and desires of the people in the field, to their perceptions of mobility and immobility, and communal relations.

During the second projection of the show, Siri, Professor and Neguinho rushed to a gathering of mestres and apprentices in the Brazilian Association of Capoeira Angola. Mestre Prateado had organized a tribute to honor an old mestre from the Recôncavo. For this reason, the apprentices had neither time or interest for the show. Besides, at least at that particular moment, their constant anxiety and preoccupation with leaving Bahia contrasted the praises to roots and the implicit idea that fixated people to specific places.

Inside the association, several Capoeira mestres had gathered to honor Mestre Pequeno. At some point, it was Mestre Prateado's turn to speak. His discourse invited them to reflect on their current situation and evaluate Capoeira's expansion. The first part revolved around the ambiguous relationship with foreign researchers and foreigners in general, affirming, *"if they could, they would take everything"*. Then, he acknowledged that Capoeira had indeed been valued and Capoeira teachers from Bahia were all over the world. Yet, he observed:

> *"[…] they want to manipulate us… I know that young people do not have many options... They cannot find a job here. So, they leave, with the help of a girlfriend, a relative, a friend… But what do they think they will find there? More discrimination. I don't say that they shouldn't leave... but they should come back and plant here… Capoeira players from other places come and say that there is no Capoeira in Bahia. How come? If there wasn't any Capoeira, then why are they coming here in the first place? The state claims it acknowledges us. Then why don't they give us a pension? Our only solution is not to expect anything from the state, but to be united."*

Here, Mestre Prateado addresses several issues. Even if *"unity"* among Bahian Capoeira practitioners sounds as wishful thinking during every encounter, nonetheless,

a common 'we' is acknowledged. It is defined in relation to potentially dangerous others that aim to manipulate them and *"take away everything"*. These "others" may include the state as well as foreigners. He also shifts attention to another puzzling issue that relates directly to the choices and responsibilities of the young teachers.

The context in which he articulates his arguments is indeed defined by the young teachers', tourists' and researchers' constant mobility, as I have already pointed out. Even though he acknowledges its importance and inevitability, there is a need to evaluate it. Munn (1986) points out on the evaluation of practices related to Gawans' sociotemporal expansion:

Although the acts and capacities […] involve desirable outcomes in Gawan terms, the same act could also have more latent capacities that Gawans view as undesirable. Furthermore, when considered in terms of the general process of creating the value essential to community viability, certain key types of act are felt to have positive outcomes, whereas others have negative outcomes […]

The argument that tourists"*take culture away*" is expressed from within different communities (see Kirtsoglou and Theodossopoulos 2004). In this case, however, the teachers themselves leave Bahia and take Capoeira with them. In a sense, of course, they are also *"taken away"*. According to Mestre Prateado, foreigners –friends but especially women – *"come to take away everything"* including young Bahian men. Therefore, he touches upon deeper issues of affective relationships permeated by the complexities of the question of ethnicity in Bahia.[74]

[74] According to Livio Sansone (2003), what he calls "black community" in Bahia involves a small part of the population and specially, political activists, priests and priestesses of the famous Candomble houses and certain intellectuals. Yet, he argues that:

> the new black Bahian culture […] is centered on color and the use of the black body rather than on the symbolic universe of the Afrobahian religious system; it has a much more closer connection with youth culture and the music/leisure industry together with the tourist industry [and] is much more internationally oriented (ibid p.79).

Hence, in this context, he underlines the emergence of a new black ethnicity intrinsically related to the "aesthethisization" of black culture and conspicuous consumption. However, I believe, that the question of ethnicity, as far as it concerns perception of the self and communal relationships in Bahia, is extremely perplexing. Therefore, it should be discussed in relation to the very specific social collectivities to which the subjects of study belong. Thus, their

Nonetheless, what I would like to underline here is the use of the metaphor of planting and how it exemplifies their ideas regarding how transactions and circulation should take place and consequently, on how communal relationships are perceived and handled. As Mestre Cobra argues, not only it is impossible for them to *"imprison"* movement, but in most cases, as we have already seen, they encourage and desire it. Mestre Prateado acknowledges that the young teachers are agents of transformation. After all, they are the ones who take Capoeira around the world. *"Taking away"* brings to forth questions of knowledge ownership. Nevertheless, the mestre's argument takes us a step further.

The metaphor of planting aims to remind to the young teachers their responsibility towards people and places. The teachers have the obligation to nurture, nourish and grow what they have learnt in Bahia and have taken away from their mestres and their place. At the same time, they also have the obligation to give back. As Nuncy Munn (1986 p.58) says concerning the kula shells's circulation, "transactions have to be renewed with further transactions, in order to generate continuity". Therefore, the fruits of their experiences and the 'wealth' accumulated in their expeditions around the world –that is not necessarily restricted to Capoeira- should return back home and contribute to the growth of their community. Bahia is where they should plant. As a matter of fact, an expression that expresses their preoccupation is that Bahia,*"the fountain has gone dry"*. In this spirit, the following conversation between Perna and a tourist from Minas Gerais captures the challenges competing locations pose to Bahian Capoeiras. The latter saw Perna holding a *berimbau* and defiantly remarked:

> *"They say that Capoeira comes from Bahia but this is the first berimbau I see. There are more people playing berimbau in Minas Gerais."*

Perna rebutted: *"Here, berimbau is what you can find the most."*

Mestre Prateado as well as other mestres and younger teachers, acknowledge the fact that discontinuities may take place during "transient partnerships" (see Munn 1992 p.59). Nonetheless, there must be some sort of regulation that will guarantee continuity. Similar to the travels of kula shells, Capoeira's circulation and the teachers'

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particularities, the parameter of age and the fact that social actors may belong to or draw their ideas and and construct their perceptions from their involvement in different social and cultural spheres, should also be considered and clarified.

travels “create an emergent spacetime of their own that transcends that of specific immediate transactions ” (ibid p.58). Yet, closure and debt renewal are both important even if the time of renewal remains undefined. According to Mestre Prateado, their responsibility is towards Bahia. And while some sustain that *“the fountain has gone dry”*, Mestre Prateado engages in the creation of a spacetime that includes a variety of emerging places and people inside Bahia. Thus, he organizes a series of events described as *“practices of resistance and solidarity”* towards other Bahian mestres, especially the older ones. Indeed, during the events, he makes tributes to old mestres. The aim is to gather money that will allow them to build their own Capoeira spaces, like Mestre Querido’s *barracão,* improve their homes and provide them with food or medication. The events are realized in places such as the Island or Santo Amaro, as well as other localities in the Recôncavo.

During such an event in November, the mestre decided to pay tribute to an old mestre from Santo Amaro, Mestre Ticum. The event lasted three days. The first day the children from the Island were taken to the city of Salvador. There, they had the opportunity to watch a documentary on Mestre Prateado’s life and relation to Capoeira. Then, a street parade took place in Salvador’s Historic Center followed by a Capoeira *roda* at the Terreiro de Jesus. The next day, we moved to Santo Amaro, described as *“Mestre Ticum’s land”* but also land of Mestre Popó, Besouro Manganga and other Capoeira legendary figures long gone. The event took place in the square Praça da Matriz in Santo Amaro. The children sat around the old mestre while other mestres from Santo Amaro and the village of Acupe, sat next to him. The organizers’ emphasized Capoeira’s educative character. The children, *“Capoeira’s future”*, were free to ask Mestre Ticum questions concerning his life and his Capoeira related experiences. After that, a *roda* took place, and while the older mestres started playing music, the younger teachers, apprentices, and children performed inside the Capoeira ring. The r*oda* ended and the Secretary of Culture honored Mestre Ticum with a medal. Later in the afternoon, we arrived at Mestre Amado’s *barracão,* a construction built with palm tree branches with the help of some of the young Capitães da Areia. The old mestres gathered and begun narrating stories on renowned –or less known, at least to me- Capoeira practitioners from the Recôncavo. In their narratives, incidents, historic events and legendary figures came back into life. As Mestre Ticum sung:

> *“I didn’t see Capoeira born / I heard the old ones talk / Capoeira was born in Bahia / In the city of Santo Amaro.”*

The organizers' aim was to produce knowledge on Capoeira, to film and document that knowledge while attributing value to places and people. Tradition and *"ancestrality"* (ancestralidade) were discussed together since old mestres were thought to embody both. But for Mestre Prateado it was also a moment to reflect on the past and as he said: *"question"* it. Pertinent to that and in relation to his ideas on *"demystification"*, it seems contradictory that while his Capoeira is considered as *"closer to tradition"*, it is also perceived as *"more spontaneous"*.

The last day we moved even further in the Recôncavo and arrived to Santiago de Iguape, an old *quilombola* fishing community. We met with the Capoeira practitioners from the community. There, the organizers and guests in Santiago de Iguape explained their motivations: *"Our intension is to integrate the Capoeira from the Recôncavo to our Capoeira; the urban Capoeira"*. Nonetheless, the *roda* was tense, even if Mestre Ticum intervened several times to advert that *"there is no reason to provoke a fight"*. One of the Capoeira practitioners from Santiago objected: *"This is our Capoeira; making friendships"*. The *roda* ended, and then we moved near the church and another one took place without the people from the community. Late that night we returned to Salvador. An event aiming to bring together the urban and rural Capoeira through performances and narrations of past times, moving through different places, came to an end.

Organizers and participants constructed a cultural geography. In the meantime, new localities emerged as culturally significant, establishing further connections between people and places. According to Tim Ingold (2011 p.161-162):

> Making their way from place to place in the company of others more knowledgeable than themselves, and hearing their stories, novices learn to connect the events and experiences of their own lives to the lives of predecessors, recursively picking up the strands of these past lives in the process of spinning out their own. But rather as in looping or knitting, the strand being spun now and the strand picked up from the past are both of the same yarn.

Consequently and contrary to those who say that "*the fountain has gone dry*", the Bahian Capoeira community seems to thrive. Mestre Prateado together with other Bahian mestres constructs Capoeira's geography in the confines of Bahia. Through their transactions and inward mobility, they connect places and people who embody both knowledge and place. This circle of exchanges may expand or even better extend,

encompassing more places and people. And even if Capoeira is all over the world, primacy is given to Bahia. Therefore, the young Bahian teachers acknowledge the need to keep returning since *"every novelty comes from Bahia"* and to redefine their relationship with the Bahian Capoeira community by *"planting"* there.

(25) Capoeira's Barracão in Santo Amaro.

(26) Capoeira Event in the Recôncavo – *"Capoeira Was Born in Bahia, in the City of Santo Amaro."*

(27) Celebrating São Simão's Feast Day on the Island – Procession to Protect the Forest.

(28) Celebrating São Simão's Feast Day on the Island – Bumba Meu Boi.

(29) Handmade Instruments Used in the Feast – Samba de Roda.

(30) Handmade Instruments Used in the Feast – Capoeira Angola Berimbaus.

6.6 "*We Are Barefoot Natives*"

As I have discussed in various instances, Capitães da Areia always return home -at least, when they can afford it. During 2010, after six months of travelling outside Bahia, their mestre, Mestre Moreno returned to the Island. He spent time with his children, but also visited friends and relatives. In addition, he had to keep an eye on the construction of his hostel on the second floor of the house. The furniture –beds and wardrobes-were made of bricks and concrete, while the back yard was dedicated to Capoeira training. They did not need much space since Capitães da Areia were known for practicing Capoeira at the beach. The mestre arrived in Bahia with some of his European apprentices who stayed at his house. He also frequented several Capoeira *rodas* in Salvador. His presence for those who had remained in Bahia, though, was altogether important since they *"finally had a mestre"*.

The mestre visited Perna's house on the island and Neguinho's in the city. He was happy to see his apprentices. He invited them to the Sunday *roda* on the island. The *roda* took place under a small pavilion next to the beach. Some of his foreign students did not show up. They were visiting Chapada Diamantina at the moment and the mestre intended to meet them later on. In the afternoon and after the *roda* ended, they gathered at his home together with some neighbors. It was a time to reminisce the past. Mestre Moreno wanted to demonstrate affinity and affect towards his Bahian apprentices, and at the same time narrate their story to the European ones. He said:

> *"They used to wait outside the fence. My wife would give a sandwich to Siri because he helped her at home. Sometimes, Neguinho would come and he would eat too. But the other ones wanted to eat as well. My wife did not want to give food to all of them. So they used to hide outside waiting for Neguinho or Siri. Then, they would make them return and ask for more. My wife asked them if they wanted it for themselves or for the others. They could not tell the truth. She would give them one more sandwich and they would leave running. I was upstairs and I could see all their little heads behind the fence waiting for Siri or Neguinho. How could a sandwich be enough for all of them?"*

Food, or the lack of it, is central to their narratives. In fact, remembering how they had shared food in the past is an act that brings them together. Of course, sharing food is something they still do. Nonetheless, reflecting on past hardships reinforces their ties. At the same time, being able to recall and narrate these moments is a practice

confined only to those who know their story. Only a person who is attuned with his companions, who knows, can tell a story. Thus, knowing and telling form ways to relate to others (Ingold 2010 p.162). Moreover, these narratives define the nature of their relationship. Neguinho in another instance had mentioned how sharing food with Perna brought them together, while Prego, in the presence of his European apprentices in Barcelona, affirmed his special bond with Cachaça in a similar way. He explained that their friendship is rooted in a time when he used to go to Cachaça's house and share a plate of food; *"a plate of rice split in half"*.

Narrating memories that defined their companionship publically is a powerful statement on the nature and endurance of their friendship. Even if they compete over fame, women and status, they do not acknowledge inherent differences. On the contrary, they reaffirm these qualities that differentiate them from non Bahian Capoeiras and even from Capoeiras who do not come from the Island. Despite their travels and migrations; or their interactions with tourists and foreign apprentices or even with people from other Bahian collectivities, there are always things that differentiate them from others. In this spirit, Jorge remarked that the island makes him *"more black"* (mais preto) and *"stronger"*. These two qualities relate to the life of a fisherman on the island. Yet, the black color has racial connotations. It makes reference to a black or at least, to a non- white identity, redefining, thus, specific boundaries.[75] Yet, one should wonder what happens to those who stay away for too long; do they become less black and weak?

Their economic and social condition; their past and their color; their relationship with the sea as fishermen or surfers, their gender and, of course, Capoeira, are what they share. The people with whom they come in contact or with whom they share affinities, the closest ones, are part of their history. The Capoeira names that have substituted their christian names are an acute example. Given by their mestre, they bear on each one's personal traits, dispositions and particularities, and compared to members of other Capoeira collectivities, they are unique. Acquiring fame and establishing their names in

[75] I prefer the use of the term *"black"* rather than Afrobrazilian since they never use the later to define their identity. Indeed, as Osmundo Pinho (2008) affirms, race remains a polemic category and part of several popular and academic debates. In the case of the Capitães da Areia, I think that *"black"*, as Prego also claimed, is constructed in opposition to non white. Yet, *"white"* in this context is perceived as someone belonging to economically privileged social groups.

the Capoeira community is an ongoing process that depends on their personal actions. However, their names also have an "affective echo". They establish a sense of continuity and co –presence with the namers (see Pina Cabral 2010).

Capitães da Areia are *"made by those with whom they are in contact"*. As Bloch (2012 p.33) puts is:

> This total process is the product of the multitude of contacts which extend in time ever further back. Thus it is better to say we are in part made by history. This history is somewhat different for each one of us since our contacts and the contacts of our contacts are never identical. It is even more different for people who are more distant from each other in space or time […]

In this light, Capitães da Areia should be seen as historic beings and not as mere *"culture carriers"* (also see Pinho 2008 p.13). They are made by history and are able to transform it. Their history, though, is made up through contact and communication. It is the product of social and cultural processes that handle distance and proximity.

In a previous section, I mentioned that Mestre Guerreiro identified an attempt to domesticate them referring to the state and non Bahian Capoeiras. His political statement is telling of how they perceive and present themselves and how they aim to assert control over their practices. Capitães da Areia embrace the idea of the untamed. They call themselves *"barefoot natives"* drawing on a common identity built around suffering and economic deprivation. The hardships of an islander's life, where people do not use any shoes, have transformed their body. Their feet have become dried and cracked and are markers of their identity. But this, for them, means *"being in resistance"* (estar na resistencia). They endure and resist all adversities.

According to a Bahian friend, a *"barefoot native"* is a *"real native"*. As they commented in various occasions, this way they come closer to the roots. *"Here, we are roots"*, they used to say. Indeed, the word *"roots"* bears a host of interrelated meanings. It means being closer to tradition, since their Capoeira is also defined as *"roots"*. Still, this is a language they have developed to communicate naturality and simplicity. It makes reference to a life closer to nature with little comfort or material wealth. It also refers to a more straightforward and unrefined way during interactions with others. Jorge, those who return to the island for a longer period of time, the ones who are not able to leave or the teachers who come back on holidays, often reflect and define the

'stuff' from which their very essence, their core is constituted. By defining their substance, the things that make them who they are, the "*barefoot natives*" reach to the elements of their existence; to the essence they all share.

6.7 Conclusions

In this chapter, I explored the central role mobility plays in Capoeira teachers lives and the idea of movement inside and outside Capoeira's *roda.* Therefore, I discussed processes of becoming and examined the idea of *"walking about this world"* in relation to its alleged opposite; *"stagnancy"*. Mobility refers to ways of engaging and connecting with the world and with Capoeira. Yet, while it expands the collectivity's spacetime and it is embraced and encouraged, it also creates uncertainties. It tests the trust, the expectations and the relationships between the members of Capitães da Areia, as well as among the wider Capoeira community in Bahia. In this context, I reflected on how *"failure"* and *"success"* are measured and defined.

The delicate balance between autonomy and exclusion, and the ideas of companionship and solidarity as they are shaped by both proximity and distance became the focus of my research. On the one hand, Capoeira and the young teachers circulate around the world opening up their collectivity. On the other, processes of boundary fixation and restraint take place. As Glick Schiller and Salazar (2013 p.186) also argue, "both fixity and motion are relative and interrelated". The obligation to "*return and plant*" in Bahia; to renew the debt and not forget those who are back is ever present. At the same time, contrary to those who say that the *"fountain"* –Bahia- *"has gone dry"*, new places and localities emerge in its confines. The *"barefoot natives"* keep returning to the island. Each time they meet, they narrate affective stories on their shared experiences reaffirming their collective identity. By defining the 'substance' of their existence they set and fixate their own boundaries.

7. CONCLUSIONS

> *"A Capoeira* [practitioner] *is malandro, but he is not a vagabond. He is malandro because he knows the power he has in his hands. And this power is Capoeira. It is a great power. But this Capoeira* [practitioner] *is also a philosopher; an artist; a singer ..."* (From an interview with Prego)

Research in Salvador started as an inquiry into the social and cultural implications of Capoeira's transnational circulation. The concept of transnationalism seemed pertinent as it shifts attention to social realities and situations that are not and cannot be confined within national boundaries and borders. Therefore, it has been an experiment into thinking beyond and writing without using the local/global binary. At the same time, the other important point transnationalism makes is that of connectivity. People may cross boundaries, but as they do so, they also connect with one another and mutually constitute each other. From this perspective, history can be perceived as a process related to changes that also take place slowly through communication and interactions. Ingold (2011 p.89) takes a step further; instead of talking about connectivity through networks, he introduces the idea of the "meshwork". According to this view, people move along or through multiple pathways and cannot be separated by the relationships and all things that constitute them. Therefore, people are

> not so much nodes in a network as knots in a tissue of knots whose constituent strands, as they become tied up with other strands, in other knots, comprise the meshwork (Ingold 2011 p.89).

Defining a "meshwork" and exploring how people find their way through is not an easy task. Wesolowksi (2007) moved to Rio de Janeiro and discussed "hard play" in a context of violence. Therefore, she attempted to see how Capoeira is shaped by the particularities of a specific neighborhood in Rio. Miller Griffith (2010) moved as an apprentice to Salvador. Accordingly, she examined how foreign apprentices relate to Capoeira in that place and conquer what she calls "experiential authenticity". In Barcelona, I had the opportunity to see how Capoeira teachers from Brazil influence social realities and socialities *'away from home'*. However, fieldwork in Salvador revealed a series of places that shape and articulate the teachers' experiences and consequently, what Capoeira is and *"feels"* to them. Santo Amaro, Acupe, Santiago de Iguape, Pelourinho, Terreiro de Jesus, the Island, Paris, Rennes, Japan, Lille, Barcelona, Mexico, Concha, Mangue Azul, Rio, the Internet, all are places that structure the

teachers' experiences. Accordingly, in the case of the Capitães da Areia, the relation between people and different places – symbolic or geographic ones – is accentuated. Furthermore, it is intrinsically related with how they engage with the world. By that, I mean how they perceive movement inside and outside Capoeira's *roda*, how they constitute their sociality and how they relate to one another as well as to various others.

In light of the above, trasnationalism served as a point of departure despite its own limitations. As research advanced and by focusing on different instances in the lives of the young Capoeira teachers – on "instances of human becoming", as João Biehl (2013 p.591) would put it – new areas for exploration opened up. Yet even if the concept of transnationalism eventually loses its centrality as others, such as that of translocality, come into vogue (see for example, Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013), it remains important for scrutinizing the very idea of boundaries and the relationship between people and places. Therefore, what I aimed to point out throughout the dissertation is that the agents implicated – the young teachers, mestres and apprentices of the Capitães da Areia, as well as tourists, Bahians and researchers – cross and challenge or reaffirm boundaries in different social and geographic scales. These may also involve the boundaries of their own body when they talk about *"mirroring"*, *"modifying"* or *"giving continuity"* through *"their Capoeira"*. After all, playing Capoeira is also about coming in and out of the each others' body and mind.

As I have already discussed, according to the people in the field, a Capoeira apprentice has to *"conquer his space"*. A teacher aspires to establish his own *roda* giving his name to it. Likewise, one has to be *"on the road"* or *"walking about this great world"* following the paths opened by his fellow teachers or opening new ones. Despite geographic distance, the other teachers, his mestre and his relationship to them, are always present and eventually, their paths meet again. A teacher has to keep returning home. In the mean time, he also has to establish new relationships without forgetting the old ones. In the process, and as he moves through a "meshwork", or the extended "spacetime" he has created with his collectivity (Munn 1986), he interacts with different people, new students and other collectivities, partners, friends, researchers, Bahians and foreigners. In this meshwork of people, places and experiences, Capoeira teachers grow. Indeed, as I discussed in the thesis, their aspirations, their way of thinking and how they play and embody Capoeira, all reflect and express these mobile trajectories and interactions.

Capoeira teachers are encouraged by their collectivity to be *"adventurous"*. That means they have to eventually learn to navigate and overcome *"stagnancy"*. Similarly to the people of Gawa, they should know how to "engage in acts both of closure and […] debt renewal" (Munn 1986 p.59). At the same time, the fact that their mestre *"gave"* them Capoeira means that the mestre is acknowledged as both *"captain"* and *"father"*. Therefore, these circulatory travels presuppose some kind of trust towards others even if trusting nobody is what they preach. At least, they can trust that their mestre knows more, including, as they say, the things he keeps to himself. Bloch elaborated on what he calls "distributed cognition" where

> each individual does his job as best as he can in the light of his own knowledge, but in doing so relies on other individuals who have other bits of knowledge necessary to navigate the ship that he does not and does not need to have (Bloch 2013 p.9).

For this reason, especially a novice or a younger teacher should listen to others and follow their example. Listening is also another way to be subordinate. Consequently, when Neguinho found himself into a *'*grey*'* zone, he knew, and they all knew, that it was his fault. He did not listen and therefore, he should not expect much help from the others.

While they are anxious to leave or are already travelling around the world, official discourses remind Bahians that one has to *"put himself into his place"* and as such, to know what their place is in the world. Eventually, Capitães da Areia come to define Capoeira's place. Sometimes, it is Bahia; the *"fountain"*. Indeed, for them, Bahia is the place from where all novelties come. It is from Bahia and due to the teachers' mobility – complemented by other mobilities such as the tourists' and foreign apprentices' mobility – that these novelties are disseminated around the world. For this reason, the teachers have to return and contribute to the Bahian Capoeira community in order to learn from there once again and venture another journey. Mestre Prateado insisted several times on the need and their obligation to return and *"plant"* in Bahia emphasizing the dangers when allowing different agents to *"take away everything",* including both people and practices. Yet, Capoeira is ultimately located in the heart, as in the words of Mestre Ticum (see Chapter Five) and in Cachaça's song (see Chapter Four). From the heart, it circulates like blood through their veins and provides them with the means and the material to express themselves, to interpret and understand the

world that surrounds them. The metaphors they use – of which various examples have been given in the thesis – are characteristic.

Prego said that a Capoeira player is also a *"philosopher",* while Neguinho insisted that I should change my perspective and start thinking differently about Capoeira. At least, in a context where culture anxiety both in the academy and in popular discourses predominates, according to him, I should not think of Capoeira as *"culture".* Researchers relate the difficulty to define Capoeira with questions of politics (see Vassallo 2003). As such, Capoeira practitioners aim to create a sense of mystery and authenticity in order to gain legitimization. Others (see Wesolowski 2007), suggest that the plethora of definitions is characteristic of Capoeira's capacity to adapt and demonstrate resilience over time. Capitães da Areia call themselves *"group"* and *"cultural centre",* and I presented the process of making academies, cultural centers and Capoeira schools in various moments since the 1930s. Nonetheless, Capoeira to them is something you *"feel and incorporate"*. It is *"automatic"*. Together with Gato's observation that *"people come and impose stories"*, they insinuate that there are different ways to understand what they do and they eventually come to question all discourses on Capoeira. There are the stories that people impose and then, there is Capoeira and a host of possibilities to experience and thus, capture it. Among them, suffering is essential and suffering also includes the common hardships of their lives in the island, as well as the difficulties in learning to play Capoeira.

Among the points I aimed to make in relation to definitions is not whether they use a "language of reification" or not, as suggested by various scholars (see Wesolowski 2007), but rather how Capoeira practitioners insinuated different ways to engage with the subject of study and anthropology. An example of that was when they insisted on the importance of *"feeling Brazil in your skin"* in order to capture complex social realities. Therefore, to understand their point of view and open a dialogue with them, one has to at least acknowledge "equality of intelligences" (Biehl 2013 p.533). Wesolowski argues that Capoeira apprentices are trained to acquire "intelligent bodies" (2007 p.212) and Herzfeld (2004 p.52) observes that the selves of the artisans' apprentices in Crete are "locally defined as intelligent but in the 'low' sense of cunning". The stereotype of the *"malandro"*, the cunning person, in Brazil bears resemblances. Nonetheless, I preferred to pay attention to both intelligent minds and bodies, to "alternative styles of reasoning" (Biehl 2013 p.583) acknowledging that "epistemological breakthroughs do not belong only to experts and analysts". As such, I

focused on "the thinking and acting person" (also see Bloch 2012 p.162). In Chapter Five, for example, they reflected upon their interests and motivations and introduced the idea of *"demystification"*. In other words, they articulated the possibility to doubt and *"question certain things"*; to constantly create by being *"playful"*.

I, therefore, remained attentive to open-ended processes, transformations and uncertainties (see Biehl 2013). Paying attention to the implicit, to gestures, to ideas and concepts that cannot be verbalized is what Capitães da Areia suggested I should do since the very beginning of fieldwork in Bahia. It is through attunement (Ingold 2000 p.166-167) that not only the subjects of study learn from one another but anthropologists also come to learn from them. Attunement or "continuity between individuals" is realized when information is passed on from one individual to another (Bloch 2012 p.165). Moreover, as Bloch (2012 p.165-166) argues, there is not a "cultural grid" by which we come to understand the world. The transmission of information and knowledge involves social relations "since the content of what is transmitted cannot be grasped independently of the social relation which makes it possible" (2012 p.176-177). For this reason, an important theme addressed is the relationships between the subjects of study and all different agents implicated: other Bahians, families and neighbors, co-surfers and fishermen, researchers, tourists, foreign male and female apprentices and other Capoeira practitioners.

Emphasis has been given, though, on how Capitães da Areia relate to one another and especially, the younger teachers and the two mestres: Mestre Moreno, who taught them how to play Capoeira and Mestre Prateado, who taught them how to make instruments and *"that other aspect of Capoeira"*. These questions finally led to the constitution of the social person and perceptions of the self. Their gender, perceptions of gendered relations in Bahia and ethnicity have also been considered. In fact, when they talk about companionship and bonding, they rather use the term *"brother"* even when they refer to female practitioners. Consequently, as Strathern wrote concerning Melanesian societies, "enduring sociality is traditionally symbolized in things to do with men" (1988 p.80).

At the same time, inquiry into the specificities of their socialities invites us to reflect on the different spheres where people mutually constitute one another and do not necessarily have to be inscribed in the *'*strict*'* confines of kinship. Indio's mother complained that her son *"washed away his family and went on to play Capoeira"*.

Indeed, Indio moved out of his house, left his job and went to the Island to live in Porreta's house and learn Capoeira with him. Still, these collectivities may show continuities or discontinuities with kinship systems, and therefore enrich and perhaps be enriched by anthropological studies on kinship. To this point, certain skepticism and the *'tyranny of kinship'* in anthropological research have kept researchers on Capoeira and anthropologists apart. Some thoughts for further consideration involve understanding relationships constructed around something different, a different dimension of human experience that is taken as "given" (also see Viveiros de Castro 2009). To them what is taken as given is Capoeira. From that point on, spiritual kinship and marriages between people from different or the same Capoeira collectivity come to reinforce these relationships.

"Giving continuity", reflecting one another through playing, embracing common ways of livelihood, ways of being 'alike', have all been brought together in the thesis. Yet, as Bloch citing Dennett (1991 p.429) puts it, "even a lobster who relishes claws must know not to eat its own" (Bloch 2012 p.126). Therefore, and without minimizing "important differences", his critique to anthropological approaches of other societies and in specific, to Strathern's approach of the Melanesian dividual goes as follows:

> Such data does seem to produce a view of people as merely points in social systems while their internal states, their intentions, their absolute individuality and personal desires are irrelevant. This dichotomous contrast between the west and these 'other' societies is often exaggerated (1988 p.122).

Throughout the thesis, I seriously considered desires and aspirations. Aspirations were expressed as a need to not be *"enslaved"* to others. Distancing, as in Camarão's case, was related to the tensions and contradictions between a premise of equality that underlined their perceptions of one another and the "unequal relations of domination" (Viveiros de Castro 2009 p.250) that were also related with how Capoeira was *"given"* to them. In fact, they all had learnt Capoeira not only from their mestre, but each generation usually taught the new ones. Thus, their mestre was not the only person that *"gave"* them Capoeira. As such, I attempted to explore the tensions between autonomy and interdependence considering conflicts between generations. Understanding Capoeira as *"present"* or as something that *"comes in time"* when a practitioner grows old, also articulates these tensions.

Lowell Lewis (1992 p.2) suggests that Capoeira is a way to metaphorically liberate yourself from the constraints of the body and Wesolowski (2007) argues that liberation is literally possible during the moments Capoeira practitioners execute and perform particular acrobatic movements, the *"floreios"*. Yet, Camarão brought into the discussion another aspect. He argued that *"Capoeira is a small world"* and he wanted to be *"free"* from its constraints, while Neguinho wanted to leave Bahia once again contrary to Mestre Prateado's opinion. They both did not want to be *"enslaved"* to *"the guys"*. I, therefore, attempted to explore their desires in an unequally connected world where "freedom is … situated and conditioned by the individual's perceived situation … one's *place* in the world, their *past*, their *environment,* and all *others* that shape their context" (Judaken 2008 p.26). I came to embrace the idea that changing values and "the work … done to think otherwise, to do something else, to become other than what one is [also] is philosophy" (Foucault 1997 p.327). For this reason, the thesis has been an exploration on the interplay between constraints and efforts to subvert them and of their perceptions of freedom in what they called as their *"pursuit of happiness"*[76].

While Bahia is described in official discourses as a *"place of happiness and joy"*, economic deprivation and lack of opportunities condition the lives of the people in the field. The young teachers' aspirations to cross or define their own boundaries – and mobility was discussed as a possible way to achieve it – were challenged by racist discourses that legitimize poverty and social inequalities claiming that Bahians are satisfied with *"a pair of flip flops and coconut milk"*. Likewise, national borders that do not easily open to immigrants, as well as Capoeira *mestres*, older practitioners, family members and neighbors, further constrain and question their hopes and desires. Mestre Prateado, as I have already mentioned in the thesis, criticized them for having become *"overly ambitious"*. In fact, desires and satisfactions depend on the situations that create them, while they are conditioned, limited and enhanced by specific ways of

[76] The expression was taken from the title of one of their favorite movies: "The Pursuit Of Happiness". The film narrated the extreme difficulties of the American Chris Gardener's life, based on his true story. The main character, who was played by Will Smith, the renowned African American actor, in the end, managed to subvert all obstacles and from divorced, jobless, discriminated and homeless, he became a millionaire owning his own investment firm. It was an American film that resonated what Thomas Jefferson proclaimed in 1776. Namely, that "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" are among mankind's inalienable rights (see Potkay 2010 p.526).

belonging (see Moore 2011). In the case of young capoeira teachers, I explored how their *"pursuit of happiness"* relates to ideas concerning their place both in their collectivity and in the world and, indeed, their world is not confined in their collectivity's boundaries.

Neguinho communicated several times his frustration and his desire to leave Bahia. He, furthermore, articulated his own definition of happiness. Thus, he said:

> *"What made me happy ... In France, I used to get up at 6 o' clock in the morning. I put on my jacket and went out to work. It was freezing but I enjoyed it. I did not mind. I went to the bakery and bought warm bread and things you cannot find in the bakery here. Then, I went to work. I cleaned the streets. Sometimes at night I listened to jazz and had a glass of wine with my friends. Mestre Prateado says that I should not leave. That I should find a job here. But why? Why shouldn't I leave? He left. I know that he suffered a lot in Europe but that was in the past. I am being more discriminated here. Black people themselves discriminate here. I want to leave. I have my friends there. I have nothing here. I need to organize myself"*

Neguinho wanted to leave Bahia in spite of the uncertainties he had faced in the past. He defined happiness by recalling moments from his life in France and questioned the limitations his community, family and Mestre Prateado brought into forth. Even if among Bahians there is the idea that moving away from the community entails the risk of a different kind of dependency, a dependency to foreigners and especially, to foreign women, Neguinho believed that he would be able to gain control over his life and *"organize himself"* without being *"enslaved"* to others.

Since then many things have changed. Neguinho finally managed to return to France. When I had the chance to ask him whether he was finally happy, he observed in amazement: *"Now, they respect me"*. Eventually, I realized that while in Bahia, he never wanted to cut all ties and leave his collectivity. His perception of the self was defined in relation to his fellow teachers, accentuating once again the importance of the collectivity in his self definitions. Gaining respect and finding his place in the world was a way to balance between equality and domination. Yet, he admitted that in the process and during his second stay in France, he too had changed and perhaps, his perspective as well. According to him, he was no longer *"the merry person"* he once was. Yet, as Moore (2011 p.29) argues:

Hopes, desires and satisfactions are not necessarily liberatory, but they are human possibility.

Contrary to that, Porreta after receiving the title of *"contramestre"*, approached Mestre Prateado and left Capitães da Areia. It was a definite and absolute rupture since he formed his own collectivity. Indio, his student, followed him and as such, he did not go to Switzerland. Cachaça rushed to advert him on Facebook about the dangers of his actions and his vanity. He, thus, warned him on the possibility to *"sink"* in his new expedition. He further attempted to minimize the potential threat of rupture and independence using once again their common genealogy and descent. *"We all come from the same tree",* he concluded. Mestre Moreno and Cachaça returned to the Island. They visited the families of all Capitães da Areia, who now live in Europe, took photos with them and posted them on Facebook. This gesture reinforced bonds and demonstrated affect on another level, by inscribing relatives to the collectivity. In the mean time, as new apprenctices come along and are encouraged to follow similar paths, the collectivity's viability is guaranteed. By initiating new transactions, the tensions between autonomy and interdependency, mobility and stagnancy, remain an open – ended project.

Close attention to Capitães da Areia gives perspective on the nature and complexities of human relations as they are shaped in different spheres and fields of interaction. Freedom, the possibility to think and act differently, the constitution of the social person and perceptions of the self, are themes that appeared throughout the thesis and become important pointers for future research. The *"pursuit of happiness"* accentuates the need to show empathy, and understand not only "what it means to be human, in all the variations and convergences" (Wolf 1994 p.11), but also to consider human beings in their full complexity, acknowledging similarities and differences, desires and aspirations. Focusing not only on the particularities of the specific collectivity but also on the individual teachers and their personal trajectories, I have discussed the difficulty in articulating the intersection of different qualities and parameters. Among them, I distinguished the parameter of age, gender and sexuality; of being a Capoeira, a teacher, mestre or apprentice; foreign or Bahian and eventually, being human. More importantly, the challenge has been not to simply aggregate these parameters but to explore how they shape one another in different instances in the social actors' lives.

Reflecting on the overall project, all people involved have mutually influenced and transformed one another. More than learning *from* them, I would like to think that we have learnt *together.* At least, we have made some discoveries. At the same time, as Ingold (2011 p.162) says,

> […] there is no point at which the story ends and life begins. Stories should not end for the same reason that life should not. And in the story, as in life, it is in the movement from place to place – or from topic to topic – that knowledge is integrated.

As such, the "echoes" of our encounters will not be confined in the limited time of fieldwork (see Pina Cabral 2011). They will rather keep on being transformed in different spaces and places critically engaging with more people.

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