

Considering Culture in Development:
the Art of Capoeira as a vehicle for community mobilization,
empowerment and non-formal education in Recife, Brazil

by

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Abstract

Literature on Recife suggests that the various NGO's, CBO's and grassroots organizations of Recife constitute one of the strongest popular movements of any city of Brazil. Thus, the challenge to planners is to facilitate and encourage such groups in fostering citizen participation so that individuals of all classes, races and gender can have a voice and gain more control in decisions that affect their livelihood and their futures. Current literature defines 'empowerment' as a continuous process that enables people to better understand, upgrade and use their capacity to better control and gain power over their own lives. At the centre of empowerment are social learning and community mobilization, processes that can provide alternatives to the top-down practice of technocratic planning. Social learning and community mobilization focus on dialogue as a means to individual and group empowerment. Paulo Freire explores the importance of dialogue to education in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and *Education for Critical Consciousness*. He proposes that education is a mutual process and that no one person has the answer, rather each person has knowledge based on his/her own experience and reflection.

This thesis explores the role of popular arts in such processes, using as an example the Afro-Brazilian art of capoeira. The research, set in the context of Recife, attempts to illustrate the role capoeira plays as a vehicle for empowerment, social learning, community mobilization and non-formal education. It also intends to demonstrate the importance of culture and local knowledge to development and planning processes.

The purpose of the research has been:

- To explore links between the above mentioned processes and the art of capoeira.
- To introduce a general study of two organizations in Recife which have applied the art of capoeira for the purpose of social betterment.
- To present an in-depth study of the organization ASSOCAPE (Association of Capoeiras of Pernambuco) and the role it has taken in organizing the capoeira community in Recife.
- To link the role of popular arts to planning practice.

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Glossary of non-English terms

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Agogo | An instrument made of 2 iron bells. Used in the capoeira roda and also in African-Brazilian religious ceremonies. |
| Aluno | Refers to a student of capoeira. |
| Atabaque | A large drum similar to a conga, used in capoeira and considered sacred for the religious ceremonies of macumba and candomble. |
| Birimbau | An instrument made with a bow, wire and gourd. It is the most important instrument in the musical ensemble of the roda, considered sacred to capoeiristas. |
| Brincadeira | Play (similar to a child's sense of play). |
| Candomble | An African-Brazilian Religion. |
| Capao | A rooster or a chicken coop. |
| Capoeirista | A individual who has been baptized as student of capoeira. |
| Chamada | A 'hand call'. Refers to an inner game of capoeira where the two players engage in a ritualized walk. |
| Chula | The songs sung by the chorus in response to the ladainha. |
| Corrido | The songs that follow the ladainha/chula sequence in the game of capoeira. |
| Favela | Informal settlements. |
| Graduacao | Refers to the level of 'graduation' of a student of capoeira. |
| Grupo | Refers to a group or school of capoeira. |
| Jogo | Refers to the game of capoeira. |

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Ladainha | A traditional solo (litany) sung at the beginning of a roda of Capoeira Angola |
| Mandinguiro | Refers to qualities of a trickster or sorcerer. Originating from a name for the Mande or Mandinka people of Africa. |
| Mangue | Mangrove. |
| Mestre | Refers to a Master of capoeira. |
| Mocambo | An informal settlement. |
| Morro | A hill. Favelas are typically located on the morros in urban Brazil. |
| Orixas | Deities in Afro-Brazilian religions, they are the intermediaries between Olodun, the supreme god of the Yoruba, and the mortals. |
| Quiroz Law | The law instituted in 1850 that officially abolished the trafficking of slaves. |
| Quilombo | A fugitive slave settlement. |
| Quilombola | Residents of the quilombos. |
| Patua | Fetishes employed by capoeiristas for protection. |
| Reconcavo Baiano | Refers to the surrounding area of the Bay of All Saints in Salvador, Bahia. |
| Roda | Refers to the play space of the game of capoeira and also to the game itself. |
| Saida | 'Exit', refers to the entrance of two capoeiristas to the game of capoeira. |

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Dedication

I dedicate this to my daughter, Zaya Isabel, whom has entered my life during these years that I have been writing this thesis. She is the joy of my world.

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction and Motivation of Study

According to Von Schelling (1992:248), culture has come to be seen as an essential element of development studies. It is essential to recognize culture and, by extension, the relationship between dominant culture and popular culture (and their respective modes of communication) in development work in order to acknowledge the differential access of individuals and groups to equitable development. "In a time where people are seeking a more equitable distribution of the benefits of production or, in other words, acknowledge the importance of transforming those who have been marginalized by development processes into participatory citizens, it is essential to recognize and validate the modes of communication utilized by marginalized groups" (Luyten, 1988:56).

The objective of this thesis has been to explore and validate the role of popular arts in development processes. I have focused on the art of capoeira, an Afro-Brazilian art form, in order to illustrate the potential inherent within popular expressions for facilitating positive social change. Between October of 1997 and March of 1998 I carried out research in Northeastern Brazil in the city of Recife primarily with ASSOCAPE (Association of Capoeiras of Pernambuco). I also visited two other organizations/programs, Centro de Cultura e Educacao Darue Malungo (Centre of Culture and Education Darue Maluno) and Projeto Dancas Populares (Popular Dance Project).

1.2 Research Problem and Questions

The intent of this study has been to explore the following proposition: The practice of activities connected to popular culture (capoeira) favors the establishment of positive development processes, including increased empowerment, social learning, non-formal education and community mobilization.

In the course of the research I explored the following questions central to this study:

- What is the relationship of popular culture to development processes?
- What qualities specific to popular art (as a manifestation of popular culture) facilitate the development processes listed above?
- What are the results for communities and individuals?
- What are the implications for development studies and planning practice?

The fundamental motive for this research an interest in the importance of popular culture and its manifestations in processes of development and planning.

1.3 Methodology and Organization

The research began with a review of literature that reflected theoretical issues central to the study. This included attempting to define and understand development processes and approaches such as community development, community participation, participatory development, empowerment, community mobilization, social learning and non-formal education. I present several perspectives in order to create a framework within which to present and understand the field research.

For my case study, I chose to focus primarily on one organization that acted as an umbrella organization for several capoeira groups in Recife. I also introduce two other organizations in order to illustrate the different approaches and contexts within which popular arts can be applied as development tools.

The research methods applied were:

- **Interviews** that were unstructured in nature allowing space for dialogue. Participants in this process were primarily mestres, all members of ASSOCAPE (see Appendix B for the interview guide).
- **Participation** was of fundamental importance to the research. As a capoeira student, I had the opportunity to become a visiting student as well as researcher. This allowed for deeper understandings of the workings of the association as well as deeper relationships with individuals.
- **Informal dialogue** was also very relevant to qualitative analysis. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to dialogue with mestres, staff and students/participants.
- **Observation** was a fieldwork technique consistent throughout the process. This was particularly useful in the monthly reunions of ASSOCAPE as well as with Centro de Educacao e Cultura Darue Malungo and Projeto Dancas Populares at Colegio Dom Bosco. Observation allowed for insight into the interactions between various parties in all three organizations.

I used a journal for documenting interviews, dialogue and observation. All communication took place in Portuguese and was later transcribed into English. I reviewed my notes with the people I spoke with in order to present their stories accurately. This allowed for clarification and for individuals to make choices regarding what they would and would not like included.

Of course there are always limitations to field research. There is the constraint of time, as 6 months in the field was not sufficient for a conclusive study. Also, there are the challenges of conducting research outside of one's own cultural milieu. Though I had the advantage of language, I was still in a culture very different from my own. I tried to be conscious of where my biases might come into play and aware of the dynamics of the relationships that I was building.

1.4 Relevance of the Study

As a planning student who intends to work in the field of 'development', this process has been an invaluable component of my personal and professional education. The time that I spent in Recife with ASSOCAPE, Centro de Educacao e Cultura Darue Malungo and Projeto Dancas Populares at Dom Bosco was an opportunity to learn directly from the experiences of participants and staff. It was an opportunity to see the role of a popular art form, capoeira, as a tool for development and positive change in people's lives.

As so much of development work happens in countries (like Brazil), where a significant percentage of the population is not equally sharing in the benefits of development, it is crucial that we explore new and creative approaches that seek to include marginalized populations. Expressions of popular culture are one place to begin. For example, in the case of Brazil, Samba schools, churches, terreiros de Candomble and other cultural sites operate as centres for political mobilization. Referring to the Black Movement in Brazil, Ivanir dos Santos, a non-governmental advocate for street children, explains that they are not disorganized, they are just a sector that have a different form of organization (Hanchard, 1999:8).

It is essential for development workers, scholars, planners and students of planning to look at paradigms outside of dominant culture when thinking about 'development for all'.

2. Theoretical Issues: Development Processes and Approaches

2.1 Introduction

The concepts and theories behind social organization and change are both numerous and complex. Each section in this chapter attempts to offer an understanding of the concepts I have deemed relevant to this study. Throughout the remainder of the thesis, I will be referring to, or elaborating on these concepts as they directly apply to the case study. It is necessary to acknowledge that the theories this chapter presents have multiple meanings and implications as, historically, they have been defined and applied in various contexts. I have attempted to emphasize definitions that are relevant to this discussion.

This thesis explores the significance of culture in 'development'. The term 'development' has been used in such a wide range of contexts that it is necessary to present some definitions, which are relevant to this discussion.

According to Esteva, the meaning of development post WW2 has come about due to the universally accepted condition of 'underdevelopment'. "Since then, development has connoted at least one thing: to escape from the undignified condition of underdevelopment" (1995:7). 'Development studies' which was almost exclusively concerned with economic issues is now paying far more attention to the social dimensions of development (Midgley et al.1986:2). "Social development is said to result in the fulfillment of people's aspirations for personal achievement and happiness, to promote a proper adjustment between individuals and their communities, to foster freedom and security and to engender a sense of belonging and social purpose" (Ibid.).

Midgley et al. (1986:3) identify the material objectives of social development as improvements in income, health, education, housing and other social services".

Others have provided alternative definitions. "Nyerere proposed that development be the political mobilization of a people for attaining their own objectives. Rodolfo Stavenhagen proposed ethnodevelopment or development with self-confidence, conscious that we need to 'look within' and 'search for one's own culture' instead of using borrowed and foreign views" (Esteva, 1995:7).

Esteva (1995:20) calls for recognition of a 'new commons'; common man/woman creatively reconstituting new forms of social interaction. According to Esteva, the people of these new spaces are the heirs of new forms of communities and whole cultures destroyed by the industrial, economic form of social interaction. He suggests that by re-embedding learning in culture, the 'new commons' have the affluence of constantly enriching their knowledge (Ibid.). "Even those still convinced that development goals are pertinent ideas for the so-called underdeveloped should honestly recognize the present structural impossibilities for the universal materialization of such goals" (Esteva, 1995:22).

2.2 Community Development

Numerous definitions have been applied to the concept of 'community development' in both planning and development literature. Before elaborating on the various themes inherent to community development, let us first address the concept of community'. Perhaps the most widely accepted and applied definition of community can be illustrated by the following quote, "Community...refers to people who live in some spatial relationship to one another and who share interests and values" (Cary, 1970:2). However, this definition is perhaps too narrow in today's increasingly complex urban settings and alternative systems of organization are also being defined as community. "There has been a decline of the locality as focus of association and the growth of other

foci of association, such as employment in the same company or membership in the same union, or religious organization, or interest group..." (Cary, 1970:35). In any discussion of 'community' throughout this thesis, the latter definition applies.

One of the principal characteristics of community development is its potential as an agent of change. By some it is interpreted as the local counterpart of national development planning and can even be incorporated into a national plan in order to achieve specific results (Cary, 1970:34). From this perspective, community development faces some limitations. "Either it operates at the level of the organization and the super-organization, failing to engage the vast majority of the people in any meaningful way, or it restricts its field of operations to an extremely narrow segment of the total community picture..." (Cary, 1970:41). Cary (1970:19) provides a more optimistic definition in his discussion of community development as a process,

"...community development moves by stages from one condition or state to the next; it involves a progression of changes in terms of specified criteria. It is, in this view, a neutral, scientific term, subject to fairly precise definition and measurement expressed chiefly in social relations: change from a state where one or two people or a small elite within or without the local community make decisions for the rest of the people to a state where people themselves make these decisions about matters of common concern; change from a state where few participate to one where many participate; change from a state where all resources and specialists come from outside to one where local people devise methods for maximal use of their own resources".

When community development is presented as a process, those involved work without a detailed program, permitting each community to move ahead with its own felt needs (Ibid.). In discussing the psychological implications of the community development process, Cary (1970:54) cites Haggstrom and his discussion of the 'object community' and the 'acting community',

"As an object, the community is made up of an interdependent system of neighborhoods, interest groups and other subsystems. As an acting community, it engages in collective action and community decision-making. People and groups of the object community have differential access to the acting community. In

fact, not all marginal groups that seek to enter the acting community are allowed to do so”.

According to Haggstrom (1970:54) “helping marginal people has been primarily a process of planning for them”. This is because of the “presumed inability of marginal populations to effect significant social change on their own behalf” (Ibid). The key word here is *presumed*. Later in his discussion of marginal populations, Cary (1970:105) provides an insightful conclusion to the above dialogue, “They (marginal people) have been objects to the acting community, defined as inferior, and these definitions control the situation of poverty and enter into the image that marginal people have of themselves”.

I would like to briefly present one final perspective which is central to this thesis and which will be elaborated on in proceeding chapters, Paulo Freire’s concept of, “community development through cultural critical consciousness” (in O’Gorman, 1998:95). “Development among the impoverished is often seen as only social and economic improvement; for example, health, housing, production, schooling, training and marketing. Yet it is really culture, expressed through choices, aspirations and value judgments, that holds all these together” (O’Gorman, 1998:98).

2.3 Community Participation

According to Midgley et al. (1986:19), community participation theory developed, in part, as a reaction to the community development movement which had proven its inadequacies because of its “bureaucratic administration and superimposed direction”. Central to community participation theory is the belief that ordinary citizens have been excluded from the development process. Consequently, “community participation advocates have sought to formulate a more politicized and people-centered approach” (Ibid.). Midgley et al. suggest that the notion of mobilizing the poor and oppressed to participate in decision making for social development reveals the inspiration of democratic ideals (Ibid.).

True community participation has the potential to be an instrument of empowerment. According to Arnstein (1969:216) citizen participation should actually be citizen power. "It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future, it is the means by which they can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society". Paul (1987:3) expresses a similar view, "development should lead to an equitable sharing of power and to a higher level of people's, in particular the weaker groups', political awareness and strengths".

Community participation has become a legitimate theme for all those concerned with equitable development. However, the challenge lies in encouraging genuine participation and in the ability to recognize 'non-participation' masked as 'community participation'. I will conclude this section with Arnstein's (1969:216) typology of eight levels of participation:

(1) *Manipulation* and (2) *Therapy*. The real objective here is not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programs, but to enable powerholders to "educate" or "cure" the participants.

(3) *Informing* and (4) *Consultation*. These represent levels of tokenism that allow the have-nots to hear and to have a voice. Under these conditions they lack the power to insure that their views will be heeded by the powerful. When participation is restricted to these levels, there is no follow-through, no "muscle," hence no assurance of changing the status quo.

(5) *Placation*. Simply a higher level of tokenism because the ground rules allow have-nots to advise, but retain for the powerholders the continued right to decide. The next levels represent citizen power with increasing degrees of decision making clout.

(6) *Partnership*. Enables them to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with traditional powerholders.

(7) *Delegated Power* and (8) *Citizen Control*. Have-not citizens obtain the majority of decision-making seats, or full managerial power.

"The ideology of community participation is sustained by the belief that the power of the state has extended too far, diminishing the freedoms of ordinary people and their rights to control their own affairs" (Midgley et al. 1986:4).

2.4 Participatory Development

The failure of conventional development efforts led by state agencies to combat mass poverty has led civil development agencies (N.G.O.'s) to launch programs funded mostly by foreign donors to promote people's collective initiatives to improve their economic and social status. This has progressively grown into a new world wide culture of development action termed 'popular participation in development' or simply 'participatory development' (Rahman, 1993:25). According to Uhrik (1995:14), participatory development is "an evolving philosophy of human development and liberation based on shared central ideas: that all people have the capacity to learn, grow and manage their affairs competently; that people can achieve high levels of wellbeing and freedom as part of a community; and that communities can create the power needed to overcome obstacles to liberation (such as poverty, hunger, disunity, addiction, dependency, isolation, ignorance) through a collective process of learning and action".

The acknowledgement of the importance of applying participatory development theories and strategies to development action has led to the emergence of a research approach known as 'participatory (action) research (or PAR). Rahman (1993:83) presents the distinctive viewpoint of PAR as recognizing that, "domination of masses by elites is rooted not only in the polarization of control over the means of material production but also over the means of knowledge production including the social power to determine what is valid and useful". Practitioners of PAR acknowledge that people cannot be liberated by a consciousness and knowledge other than their own. Therefore, it is crucial that people develop their own process of consciousness raising and knowledge generation, and "that this process acquires the social power to assert itself vis-a-vis all elite consciousness and knowledge" (Ibid.). PAR is a reaction against more traditional research practices in which external researchers with a subject-object relationship assume and assert the myth of incapability of the people to participate in the research as equals. Consequently, such research "humiliates the people, and alienates them from their own power of generating knowledge relevant for transforming their environment by their own initiative" (Rahman, 1993:89). Returning to the people the legitimacy of the knowledge

they are capable of producing and their right to use this knowledge is considered by PAR to be fundamental in the promotion of its ideology of social transformation (Rahman, 1993:92).

The above notions put emphasis on education and communication as important instruments for development. As this theme will be prevalent throughout this thesis, I wish here only to introduce it as part of this discussion. When media is used in participatory projects, its purpose is to initiate and facilitate communication. "Influenced by the politically-oriented thoughts of Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal for the liberation and development of the poor, many development workers in the world came to see the role of communication as being to stimulate critical analysis, and to develop self-confidence, participation, awareness and the organization of groups and communities" (Boeren, 1992:260).

2.5 Community Mobilization

In its most general sense, community mobilization refers to the engagement of large masses of people in activities that have a predominantly social or collective objective. Mobilization as a development strategy and as a way of life has arisen historically from the failure of the individualist (pursuit of private gains) ethic to alleviate human misery and bring fulfillment to wo/man throughout the world (Rahman, 1993:17). In viewing the problem of human fulfillment at the mass level, the solution may be in mass mobilization, in stimulating people in collective creative activity for collective achievements, in the very process of which wo/men may be fulfilled emotionally while economic progress is also being made (Ibid.). Mobilization viewed as an expression of inner urges in a society is integrally connected with self-reliance, which in turn implies de-alienation of wo/man from her/his economic and social environment (Rahman, 1993:18). According to Rahman (1993:19), if mobilization is to rest on the inner urges of the people and not be externally imposed it requires the following:

1. Subjective internalization of factors of creativity objectively external to individuals (for example, means of production) through institutions, knowledge and culture, social interactions and so on.
2. A sense of (positive) purpose in the exercise of ownership and decision making.
3. Above all, self-reliance, for it is from reliance on one's own resources, including those objectively external but subjectively internalized that an inner urge for creative work may be generated.

In its fundamental sense self-reliance is defined as "a state of mind that regards one's own mental and material resources as the primary stock to draw on in the pursuit of one's own objectives, and finds emotional fulfillment not only in achieving the objectives as such but also in the very fact of having achieved them primarily by using one's own resources" (Ibid.). For oppressed people to be mobilized for economic and social development they have to be mobilized for resistance against exploitation that thrives predominantly on dominance-dependence relations. Negating the dominance-dependence relations may be a difficult task as it can initially increase material hardship. Rahman (1993:21) suggests that mental staying power is needed in order to be successful and presents two examples of how this can be achieved:

1. Cultivation: cultural or political education, practice (experience) of self-reliance in specific tasks, exposure to examples of self-reliance under difficult conditions by other groups, communities and so on.
2. Energisation: generating an impulse of self-reliance through inspiring leadership, examples, invocations and, perhaps most effectively, through liberation struggles. The relation between self-reliance and liberation struggles may be seen as a dialectical one. Self-reliance must be one of the qualities that a liberation struggle seeks to liberate, and for this the quality must be present in the consciousness (active); for it is not logically possible to liberate something that either does not exist, or exists only in the unconscious (dormant).

If mobilization implies serving a collective purpose as suggested above, let us then define 'collective'. A collective can be defined as an association of individuals who possess a sense of identity with the association, so that the collective interest registers emotionally in the consciousness of its members as part of their 'individual' interest (Rahman, 1993:21). Some of the factors that seem to contribute generally to collective consciousness in different degrees are the sharing of everyday lives, a common heritage

and culture, the sharing of common problems, involvement in common purpose activities (Rahman, 1993:23).

Freire (1970:32) summarizes community mobilization as a process where reflection, knowledge and critical consciousness are transformed into action. He goes on to describe this as "transformative action with the goal of humanization in order to counteract negative forces of dehumanization which, through oppressive manipulation and control, compromise human values for personal gain and power" (Ibid.).

I would like to conclude this section with a brief discussion of Rahmans' concept of self-development that is intricately linked to theories of community mobilization. Rahman (1993:178) proposes a 'creativist view of development'; assuming that achieving one's creative potential is a basic human need, the development of human beings as creative beings must be part of the accepted basic human needs equation. The creativist view of development is contrasted with the consumerist view of the liberal trend in development thinking which seeks to eradicate poverty in material terms (Ibid.). The problem of poverty in this sense is a consumer's rather than a creator's problem, focused on the poor not being able to consume the things desired (or biologically required) rather than not having the opportunity to produce (or command) them through their creative acts (Rahman, 1993:186). 'Poverty' in terms of lack of entitlement to develop as a creative being is not expressed as a concern. Rahman suggests that in dependent development planning "we had not learnt how to plan the mobilization of the human energy of the people, to plan to develop with what we have, not with what we do not have" (Ibid.).

Furthermore, according to Freire (1970:143) "in order to determine whether a society is developing, one must go beyond criteria based on indices of 'per capita' income (which, expressed in statistical form, are misleading) as well as those which concentrate on the study of base income. The basic, elementary criterion is whether or not the society is a 'being for itself'. If it is not, the other criteria indicate modernization rather than development". Freire (1970:142) explains that if wo/men are submitted to concrete conditions of oppression in which they become alienated 'beings for another', they are not

able to develop authentically. Deprived of their own power of decision, which is located in the oppressor, they follow the prescriptions of the latter (Ibid.).

People's self-development implies changing the relations of knowledge, to restore popular knowledge to a status of equality with professional knowledge. "Only with a liberated mind (of the people), which is free to inquire and then conceive and plan what is to be created, can structural change release the creative potentials of the people. The liberation of the mind is the primary task, both *before* and *after* structural change" (Rahman, 1993:195). Again, this implies breaking the monopoly of knowledge in the hands of the elites, giving the people their right to assert their existing knowledge; giving them the opportunity and assistance, if needed, to advance their self-knowledge through self-inquiry as the basis of their action, and to review their actions in order to further advance their self knowledge (Ibid.).

1.6 Empowerment

The concept of 'empowerment' has come to be regarded as essential in a development process that seeks to promote people-centered development, equal opportunities and social justice. As the term empowerment is used in various contexts, its meaning can be somewhat obscured. This section will attempt to define empowerment as it applies to the development processes this thesis has presented thus far.

Power is the central concept in the definition of empowerment. It means bringing people to a sense of their own power to act to achieve their goals, usually in the face of opposition. Empowerment requires, "a convergence of capacity, which implies the ability to exercise power, to access institutions, and to nurture; and equity, which involves a sense of getting back what one invests and the idea of 'fair shares' of available resources (Biegel in Hanna & Robinson, 1994:xiii). Personal empowerment, through collaborative, cooperative, or reciprocal processes, is generally viewed as constituting a

step on the way to collective empowerment of a social group or organized community with more clearly defined goals (Ibid.).

According to Wilson, "the embrace of empowerment across the political spectrum coincides with the decline in faith in formal hierarchical institutions, whether governmental or corporate, to address the needs of the poor and the middle class" (1996:619). Consequently, strategies to promote empowerment have been more particularly associated with the voluntary, or non-governmental, organization sectors and with community organization and peoples movements (Clark in Mayo & Craig ed., 1995:2). Empowerment is not an outcome of a single event; it is a continuous process that enables people to understand, upgrade and use their capacity to better control and gain power over their lives. It provides people with choices and the ability to choose, as well as to gain more control over resources they need to improve their condition (Shuftan, 1996:260).

Rahman (1993:206) presents a discussion of both the quantitative and qualitative elements of empowerment. He describes the quantitative element of empowerment as "control over economic resources; but progress in this matter is by itself no indication of enhanced social power of the under privileged to assert their developmental aspirations and their freedom to take initiatives for their self-development". Rahman (1993:207) then highlights what he considers the three most important qualitative elements of empowerment:

1. *Organization* under the control of the disadvantaged and underprivileged people, with sufficient strength derived from direct numerical size and/or linking with other organizations of similarly situated people.
2. *Social awareness* of the disadvantaged, in terms of understanding derived from collective self-inquiry and reflection, of the social environment of their lives and the working of its processes. The knowledge itself, and the feeling of knowing from self inquiry, are both important in giving the disadvantaged a sense of equality with the formally 'educated' classes of society, rather than a sense of intellectual inferiority which is often a powerful force inhibiting the generation of confidence in the disadvantaged to rely on and assert their own thinking and take their own initiatives for development.

3. *Self-reliance*: people's power comes ultimately from self-reliance. Self-reliance is not autarky, but a combination of material and mental strength by which one can deal with others as an equal, and assert one's self-determination. Once more, any degree of control over material resources is by itself no indication of self-reliance, which is an attitudinal quality, inborn in some and acquired by others through social experience, social awareness and reflection. Self-reliance is strengthened by a collective identity, deriving not only from material but also mental strength from solidarity, sharing and caring for each other and from thinking and acting together to move forward and to resist domination.

In Freire's view, empowerment is the consequence of liberatory learning. In this sense, power is not given, it is created within an exchange between co-learners and its expression is collective action on mutually agreed upon goals. It is possible to acquire social knowledge without literacy, through methods of verbal inquiry and communication (Rahman, 1993:207). Empowerment is essentially one's access to entitlements, both material and non-material including decision-making power. Once again, empowerment is intricately linked with knowledge, and the assertion of the validity of all types of knowledge, not exclusively 'elite' knowledge. Finally, on a more personal level, empowerment means feeling trust, acceptance and respect.

1.7 Social Learning and Freireian Pedagogy

Social Learning is an area of planning theory with great relevance for empowerment practice at both an individual and a community level. Social learning discourse is positioned as an alternative to the top-down practice of technocratic planning. Central to social learning theory and practice is 'dialogue', which is presented as the means to individual and group empowerment (Forester, 1989 in Wilson, 1996:625). Dialogue is seen as the route to self-reflection, self-knowledge, liberation from disempowering beliefs, mutual learning, acceptance of diversity, trust and understanding (Habermas, 1984; Gronemeyer, 1993 in Wilson, 1996:625). In this discourse, communication becomes a means to reach understanding among the individuals in a group, rather than an instrument for transmitting or manipulating information (Habermas, 1984 in Wilson, 1996:625).

According to Freire (1970:148), dialogical theory of action does not involve a subject who dominates, and a dominated object. Rather, it involves subjects who meet to name the world in order to transform it. Cooperation is considered an indispensable characteristic of dialogical action. Dialogue, as essential to communication, must underlie any cooperation. Cooperation leads dialogical subjects to focus their attention on the reality, which mediates them and which, posed as a problem, challenges them (Ibid). As Freire testifies, no one can unveil the world for another. Although one subject may initiate the unveiling on behalf of others, the others must also become subjects of this act (Freire, 1970:150).

In the theory of anti-dialogical action, manipulation is indispensable to conquest and domination; in the dialogical theory of action the organization of the people presents the antagonistic opposite of manipulation (Freire: 1970:156). Cultural action is always a systematic and deliberate form of action which operates upon the social structure, either with the objective of preserving that structure or of transforming it (Freire: 1970:160). Dialogical cultural action aims at surmounting the antagonistic contradictions of the social structure, thereby achieving the liberation of human beings (Ibid.).

According to Freire, reflection is also essential to action. Freire uses the term 'praxis' to describe this process. Praxis meaning "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (1970:33). Praxis is the unity between what one does (practice) and what one thinks about what one does (theory) (Gadotti, 1994:166). In order to achieve this praxis, it is necessary to trust in the oppressed or disadvantaged and in their ability to reason, "whoever lacks this trust will fail to initiate (or will abandon) dialogue, reflection and communication, and will fall into using slogans, communiqués, monologues and instructions (Freire, 1970:48). Another important concept presented by Freire is that of 'conscientizacao', "learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality"(Freire, 1970:49). It is through this process of conscientizacao that the oppressed can fight for their liberation (Ibid.).

One of the basic elements of the relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed (those who have power and those who do not) is prescription, "every prescription represents the imposition of one individual's choice upon another, transforming the consciousness of the person prescribed to into one that conforms with the prescriber's consciousness" (Freire, 1970:29). According to Freire, in order to surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognize its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation (Ibid.). "In order for the oppressed to be able to wage the struggle for their liberation, they must perceive the reality of oppression not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation which they can transform" (Freire, 1970:31). No pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own examples in this struggle (Freire, 1970:36). "Pedagogy which begins with the egoistic interests of the oppressors (an egoism cloaked in the false generosity of paternalism) and makes of the oppressed the objects of its humanitarianism, itself maintains and embodies oppression" (Ibid.).

Another definition of oppression presented by Freire (1970:37) is any situation where 'A' objectively exploits 'B' or hinders his or her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression". Self-depreciation is presented as another characteristic of the oppressed, deriving from their internalization of the opinion the oppressed have of them. For the oppressors, it is always the oppressed who are "disaffected, who are 'violent', 'barbaric', 'wicked' or 'ferocious' when they react to the violence of the oppressors" (Freire, 1970:38).

Education and participation are central concepts in Freireian pedagogy. Freire presents a detailed criticism of institutional education in his discourse of social transformation. He refers to this as the 'banking' concept of education, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher, the depositor (Freire, 1970:53). "In this concept, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (Ibid.). By projecting ignorance onto

others, a characteristic of oppression, education and knowledge as processes of inquiry are negated, "the capability of banking education to minimize or annul the students' creative power and to stimulate their credulity serves the interests of the oppressors, who care neither to have the world revealed nor see it transformed" (Freire, 1970:54). In this view, the educated individual is the adapted person, because s/he is better fit for the world and is discouraged from questioning it (Ibid.).

According to Freire (1970:51), in a humanizing pedagogy the method ceases to be an instrument by which the teachers can manipulate the students (or the oppressed), because it expresses the consciousness of the students themselves. In this view, education should be co-intentional; teachers and students (leadership and people), co-intent on reality, are both subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge. As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover themselves as permanent re-creators, "in this way, the presence of the oppressed in the struggle for their liberation will be what it should be: not pseudo-participation, but committed involvement" (Ibid.). Education must be of such a quality that it will train students in intellectual self-reliance and make them independent thinkers (Bhave in Hern, 1996:16).

If one is truly committed to liberation, the goal of deposit-making must be abandoned and replaced with the posing of the problems of human beings in relation to the world. Freire (1970:64) calls this 'problem-posing' education, where "people develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation". Banking education resists dialogue whereas problem-posing education regards dialogue as indispensable to the act of cognition which unveils reality (Ibid.). Libertarian education starts with the conviction that it cannot present its own program but must search for this program dialogically with the people. "Because liberating action is dialogical in nature, dialogue cannot be a posteriori to that action, but must be concomitant with it. And since liberation must be a permanent condition, dialogue becomes a continuing aspect of liberating action" (Freire, 1970:120).

Because references to Paulo Freire's theories are found throughout this thesis and because of his connection to Recife, it is useful to briefly discuss some aspects of his life. Paulo Freire was born in the city of Recife in 1921. His schooling began with his parents with whom he learned to read and write. Like the majority of Brazilians from the Northeast, he knew the meaning of hunger and misery at an early age (Gadotti, 1994:3). Paulo Freire was thirteen when his father died. His situation became such that his studies had to be put off. He only entered the ginasio (high school) when he was sixteen. All his classmates were eleven or twelve (Ibid). "Paulo Freire recounts that almost all his classmates were well-dressed, well-fed and came from homes which had a certain culture" (Ibid.). However, in his neighborhood he had contact with children and teenagers from poor families, "My experiences with them helped me to get used to a different way of thinking and expressing myself. This was the grammar of the people, the language of the people, and as an educator of the people I devote myself today to the rigorous understanding of this language" (Freire in Gadotti, 1994:3).

Paulo Freire's first profession was as a lawyer, however, this was short lived and he soon began to follow his real passion, education. In 1946 Paulo Freire began working at SESI (Social Service of Industry) an employer's institution in Recife, where he stayed for 8 years (Gadotti, 1994:5). These years are said to have been the formative years of Paulo Freire, the educator (Ibid.). It was here that Paulo Freire learned to talk with the working class and to understand their way of learning about the world through their language (Ibid.).

1.8 The Concept of Non-formal Education

This section continues from Freire's discourse of education and social transformation of the previous section. The concept of non-formal education is based on the recognition of the limitations of formal or institutionalized education. Non-formal education is advanced as an alternative method, which seeks to include the oppressed (the disadvantaged, the poor) in the process of social transformation. It is acknowledged that

half of the people in our world have never set foot in school, yet in most countries of the world the educational standards of N. America have become expected. "In many countries the majority is already hooked on school, that is, they are schooled in the sense of inferiority to the better schooled. Their fanaticism in favor of school makes it possible to exploit them doubly: it permits increasing allocation of public funds for the education of a few and increasing acceptance of social control by the many" (Illich, 1971:7). Illich (1971:9) suggests that obligatory schooling inevitably polarizes a society, "it grades the nations of the world according to an international caste system - countries are rated like castes whose educational dignity is determined by the average years of schooling of its citizens, a rating which is closely related to per capita gross national product, and much more painful".

According to Illich (1971:23), we permit the state to ascertain the universal educational deficiencies of its citizens and establish one specialized agency to treat them. He proposes that there is in fact a hidden curriculum to the institutional education system, that it is a ritual of initiation into a growth-oriented consumer society, "under the impact of urbanization, children became a natural resource to be molded by the schools (Illich, 1971:33). The fact that this system is exclusionary makes the poor increasingly socially powerless.

"Education, with its supporting system of compulsory and competitive schooling, all its carrots and sticks, its grades, diplomas, and credentials, now seems to me perhaps the most authoritarian and dangerous of all the social inventions of mankind. It is the deepest foundation of the modern and worldwide slave state, in which most people feel themselves to be nothing but producers, consumers, spectators, and "fans", driven more and more, in all parts of their lives, by greed, envy, and fear" (Holt in Hern, 1996:28).

Within such a system, other types of learning and knowledge are not given credibility. "School enslaves profoundly and systematically, since only school is credited with the principal function of forming critical judgement, and, paradoxically, tries to do so by making learning about oneself, about others, and about nature depend on a prepackaged process" (Illich, 1971:47). In fact, most learning is not the result of instruction; it is

rather the result of unhampered participation in a meaningful setting. Although teaching may contribute to certain kinds of learning under certain circumstances, most people acquire most of their knowledge outside of school.

Illich (1971:19) suggests that education relies on the relationship between partners who already have some of the keys, which give access to memories stored in and by the community. People should be able to meet around a problem chosen and defined by their own initiative, and creative, exploratory learning requires peers currently puzzled about the same terms or problems (Illich, 1971:19). Education for all means education by all - not the draft into a specialized institution but only the mobilization of the whole population can lead to popular culture (Ibid). Education is "a compulsory, forcible action of one person upon another for the purpose of forming a wo/man as will appear to us to be good; but culture is the free relation of people, having for its basis the need of one wo/man to acquire knowledge, and of the other to impart that which he has acquired" (Tolstoy in Hern, 1996:15). Illich (1971:75) proposes that a good educational system should have three purposes, "It should provide all who want to learn with access to available resources at any time in their lives; empower all who want to share what they know to find those who want to learn it from them, and, finally, furnish all who want to present an issue to the public with the opportunity to make their challenge known".

2.9 Summary

This chapter has explored several 'development' processes in order to frame the discussion of popular culture in development that follows in the proceeding chapters. Chapter 3 will begin by presenting several perspectives on the concept of 'culture' leading to a discussion of the 'art of capoeira' as a manifestation of popular culture in Brazil. Chapter 4 will explore links between community mobilization, empowerment and non-formal education to the game of capoeira as well as provide specific examples from field research in Recife. The concluding chapter will re-visit definitions presented in this chapter and relate them to popular culture (in general) and capoeira (specifically).

3. Context: Capoeira as a Manifestation of Popular Culture

3.1 Introduction

Culture can be defined as customs, tradition, artifacts, language, products of intellectual activity, products of artists and artisans, music and theatre. Culture is also a shared set of meanings, values, behaviors and experiences of a society or social group. Passed on from generation to generation, culture helps one to adapt to his or her environment and maintains the continuity of the society or group. Culture can be a transforming force as it embodies the human capacity to create, explore and reflect both individually and as a group. Human beings do not survive merely by adapting to their environment, but also by transforming it through the use of tools and new forms of knowledge (Von Schelling, 1992:250).

Popular culture is often a means of resistance against dominant culture. Thus, popular art, as a manifestation of popular culture, can be a vital tool as an agent of social change. This chapter will set the context for the discussion of the art of capoeira as a manifestation of popular culture and the analysis of its role within Brazilian society.

3.2 The Dominant Culture / Popular Culture Dialectic

If one is to speak generally about society and social organization, it can be said that society is divided into dominant groups and subordinate groups (or 'popular' groups). These two broad categories are marked by unequal economic and political power expressed in social class, gender, ethnic and religious divides. In the sphere of culture,

dominant culture refers to the control and ownership of the means of production and communication (of the media, educational institutions, religious organizations and so on). These are the groups with access to books, whose economic situation privileges them to formal education including university, actively participating in the process of development, involved in the debate of ideas and projects that maintain and protect their power and privilege (Beltrao, 1980:2). Popular culture refers to production and communication that occur outside of the realms of the dominant groups. These groups lack conditions to participate in the above context, and are characterized by their lack of access to books and formal education, some illiterate, preoccupied with substituting their lack of economic resources, remaining marginalized to the erudite (Beltrao, 1980:2). Recognizing that the prevailing interpretation of reality is that of the dominant groups, popular culture is marked by a struggle to define the framework through which to interpret our world and one's place in it (Von Schelling, 1992:251).

Communication is a fundamental problem of contemporary society, composed of an immense variety of groups that exist separate from one another due to heterogeneity of culture, difference in ethnic origin, and by social and spatial distance (Beltrao, 1980:3). "The modes of communication promoted by science and technology, with the ideal of integrating systems, make apparent in contemporary social reality these opposing groups: the organized elite who exert cultural domination and political power, and the masses, excluded from dominant culture and political activities" (Ibid.). Beltrao (1980:3) suggests, however, that all groups have one common interest, to acquire knowledge and experience in order to survive. This is sought through communication. The possible modes of communication are various; the process can be written, oral, graphic, corporeal, plastic etc., the function being to exchange ideas, information and sentiments.

In contemporary society dominant culture limits the effects of more direct, personal communication that is sensitive or aware of the personality of the organized group, the socio-economic and cultural situation of the community, the elites political influence and the overall psychology of the overall reality (Beltrao, 1980:6). Because the literature, arts, beliefs, medicine and customs of the popular classes are generally ignored

by dominant culture, these classes utilize their own vehicles of communication such as art, leaflets, music, oral history, graphics and theatre to name a few. These informal methods of popular communication reflect the ideas, reality and experiences of the popular classes.

Von Schelling (1992:248) asserts that culture is not a residual factor to be tacked on after the more important work of economic and social analysis. Though the concept of culture has entered into development debates, issues of cultural dominance and subordination need to be addressed. It is essential that popular culture (including popular modes of communication) be given the same validity as dominant culture. Marginalized populations often have limited access to forms of dominant communication and consequently remain less informed. This lack of acknowledgement by the dominant classes inhibits equitable development and preserves existing power structures.

Von Schelling (1992:251) suggests that broad processes of social change are accompanied by struggles for cultural power between various social groups, which have a fundamental role in changing, or maintaining that structure. Some forms of resistance are capable of being contained within the limits set by the dominant culture while others constitute a more fundamental challenge to the way that social relationships are ordered. "Every act of communication is, in reality, an attempt by an individual or group to act on another person or group, an attempt to change something in the mental structure of those who receive the message. This is the fundamental purpose of communication" (Luyten, 1988:10).

3.2.1 Popular Culture in the Northeast of Brazil

Proponents of popular culture in Brazil look towards popular culture and the people as the bearers of an authentic national identity. Popular culture, in their view, expresses the genuine history and experience of the country through customs and traditions. In the 1960's the concern with popular culture led to a search for new forms

through which to reach 'the people', a large proportion of whom were illiterate (Von Schelling, 1992:253). In the poverty stricken Northeast, a powerful and broadly based popular culture movement emerged with the purpose of mobilizing 'the people' to question their subordination through grassroots education, adult literacy and the promotion of popular culture.

The MCP (Movement for Popular Culture) was founded in the state of Pernambuco during the administration of Joao Goulart (1961-1964). It had as its principal objective to promote an education program that elevated the cultural level of the people so that they could better participate in social and political processes (Mauricio, 1978:17). "The Movement for Popular Culture was born in Recife. In the mocambos (favelas) of the morros (hills) and the mangues (mangroves). The Recife of natives, of abolition, of revolution. It was created for the liberation of the people, through education and culture" (Prefeitura da Cidade do Recife, 1986:10). The MCP was an example of avoiding vertical models of education. Its mandate was to take into account the needs, values, culture, ethnic, social, economic and political realities of the people as educational references (Ibid.).

The local political climate must be mentioned in this discussion, as it was one of the factors that allowed for the creation of such a movement. Miguel Arraes, who had been the Mayor of Recife in 1959 and Governor of the State of Pernambuco in 1963, approved and supported the creation of the MCP (Prefeitura da Cidade do Recife, 1986:21). Arraes had as one of his objectives to support and promote an administration with popular tendencies - open to all forces acting at the community level whether organized or not (Ibid). This was met with a positive response by intellectuals; artists and professors who wanted to see more inclusive participation in processes of change (Ibid). The MCP was intended to be "an informal laboratory, where new processes could be applied, with less bureaucratic intervention and where local or popular methods of education also had a place" (Prefeitura do Recife, 1986: 23). Schools were set up 'for the people' in rooms belonging to neighborhood associations, sports clubs and religious buildings. During this period, Paulo Freire, the Educational Director at SESI, became

involved in the MCP. It was in this context that Freire's pedagogy was elaborated and applied.

The MCP came to an abrupt end at the beginning of Brazil's military regime (as did most popular culture organizations), where it met severe repression. During this period, which lasted until 1985, mass communication took over. With such a high illiteracy rate, television became the predominant vehicle for state controlled publicity.

With the end of the military regime in 1985, Brazil entered into a period of re-democratization. In the early 1980's there had been nation wide demonstrations demanding direct elections to choose a new president and there had been a wave of strikes in the advanced sectors of industry which gave rise to two events of importance to the democratization process. The first was the formation of a single labor confederation, Central Unica de Trabalhadores, and the second, the rise of a political party from the grassroots, Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers Party). The 1980's are said to have been marked by the process of political liberalization in Brazil leading to the election of Tancredo de Almeida Neves in 1985. It was not until 1989, after 28 years of indirect elections, that the President of the Republic, Fernando Collor de Mello, was elected by direct suffrage.

One of the objectives of this period was the formation of local, regional and national leaders. There was also a rise in the numbers of residents associations, community centres, small farmers associations and centres for the protection of human rights. However, some of the social movements were co-opted by political and governmental sectors that desired to enhance their credibility in order to obtain votes. The early 1990's were marked by high rates of unemployment, a squeeze on wages and salaries and the disintegration of public service expenditure under the neo-liberal policies of Collor's government. Despite this reality, or perhaps in response to it, the social movements continued to expand and grow stronger. Collor was removed from office in 1992 due to allegations of corruption within his government. His vice-president, Itmar

Franco served the remainder of Collar's term and was replaced in the election of 1995 by the Senator and sociologist Fernando Henrique Cordoso.

3.3 Capoeira - A Discussion of Origins: Slave Culture in Brazil

There is much debate over the precise origins of capoeira, most commonly beginning with the question is it African or Brazilian? The question of origin is a crucial question for most adepts as it is central to the self-understanding of many players; it is a fundamental question about identity. Most adepts accept that the essential elements of capoeira were inherited from the Africans. This is evident in the aesthetics of the movement and musical structure of the art, in its rituals and philosophical principles, as well as in historical accounts of the ethnicity of practitioners of the art in the past (Almeida, Capoeira Arts, 2000). However, most questions related to the formative period of capoeira are still ambiguous, "From what specific cultural groups did it come, and from which original art forms did it derive? The difficulty in answering these questions resides in the lack of written registers of capoeira and in the absence of an oral tradition that reaches as far back as the pre-dawn of the art" (Ibid.). Also, the Europeans' uncertainty of cultural and geographic boundaries of the African territories at the beginning of Portugal's colonial enterprises, as well as the mixing of Africans from different tribes in Brazil, increase uncertainties (Ibid).

One certainty, however, is that the art of capoeira was borne in the context of slave culture in Brazil, and that without the African slave trade to Brazil, it would not exist. The experience of slavery in Brazil is of central importance to understanding the art of capoeira. Therefore, it is essential to present, at least briefly, some of the recorded historical information of this period in order to explore some of the fundamental values of capoeira.

Africans arrived in Brazil soon after the territory's so called 'discovery' by Pedro Alves Cabral in 1500 (Nascimento, 1992:88). When the explorers landed in Brazil they

found that there was no gold, precious stones or spices from which to make their riches. Rather, they found immense virgin lands to be cleared for farming or forests to be exploited for the Campeachy or Brazil wood which was valuable in Europe (Mattoso, 1985:9). In order to exploit these new territories, an abundant source of labor was required. The Portuguese began transporting Africans to supply the labour for their new colony. By 1535, the African slave trade was a normal, organized activity (Nascimento, 1992:88). This venture quickly grew into one of the largest enforced migrations in human history.

There exist discrepancies in statistical figures of the African slave trade to Brazil. "This fact is due not only to the vagueness and unreliability of statistics, when available, but particularly to Finance Minister Rui Barbosa's infamous decree of 13 May 1891, which ordered the destruction, by fire, of all historical documents and accounts" (Nascimento, 1992:89). Estimates of the number of Africans transported to Brazil range from 3.5 million (Mattoso, 1985:40) to at least 16 million (Nascimento, 1992:89). Estimates may or may not include the mortality rate on slave ships, which is said to average between 10 - 40% (Lewis, 1992:21).

The following table presenting the figures of five slave ships sent from Angola to Brazil in 1625 supports the above estimation.

Table 1. Mortality Rate on Slave Ships

| Number of Captives | Number who died | Percentage who died |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 220 | 126 | 57.2 |
| 357 | 157 | 43.9 |
| 142 | 51 | 35.2 |
| 297 | 163 | 54.8 |

(Source: Mattoso, 1985:35)

There are four recorded major cycles of slave imports to Brazil (Mattoso, 1985:13):

1. The Guinea cycle during the second half of the sixteenth century (*west coast of Africa above equator*)
2. The Angola cycle of the seventeenth century
3. The Mina Coast cycle during the first 3/4 of the eighteenth century (*Ghana Bantu*)
4. The Bight of Benin cycle between 1770 and 1851

Initially the slave trade came to be closely associated with the growing of sugar cane, a crop that required year round labor by many hands as it depletes the soil quite quickly. The growing of sugar cane made it necessary to import slaves in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the mining of gold heightened the demand for slaves in the eighteenth century (Mattoso, 1985:13). After 1830, when England imposed restrictions on slave traffic, an illicit trade began to develop (Ibid.). In the nineteenth century, coffee, the new king of Brazilian agriculture, helped to keep slave trading a profitable activity until beyond the 1850's (Ibid.). The traffic of slaves was officially abolished in 1850 by the Queiroz Law; however, African people were smuggled into Brazil almost until the abolition of slavery in 1889 (Almeida, 1986:14).

For three centuries the slave trade brought together Africans from different ethnic groups, tribes, and clans and from all social categories. Bahia, Pernambuco and Rio de Janeiro were the three major slave-importing centres (Mattoso, 1985:25).

By the time the African slave trade had been organized extensively, the practice of hunting and capturing men, women and children for sale had almost disappeared. Instead, Europeans purchased slaves from African Kings and merchants (Mattoso, 1985:18). It is said to have taken approximately 35 days to sail from Angola to Pernambuco in good conditions, however, sailings that lasted 3-5 months have been recorded (Mattoso, 1985:40). The following is a quote describing this journey (Mattoso, 1985:35):

Men were piled in the bottom of the hold; chained for fear that they would rise up and kill all the whites aboard. Women were held in the second steerage compartment, and those who were pregnant were grouped in the rear cabin. Children were crowded in the first steerage like herring in a barrel. If they tried to sleep they fell on top of one another. There were bilges for natural needs, but

since many were afraid losing their place, they relieved themselves wherever they happened to be, especially the men who were cruelly cramped. The heat and stench became unbearable.

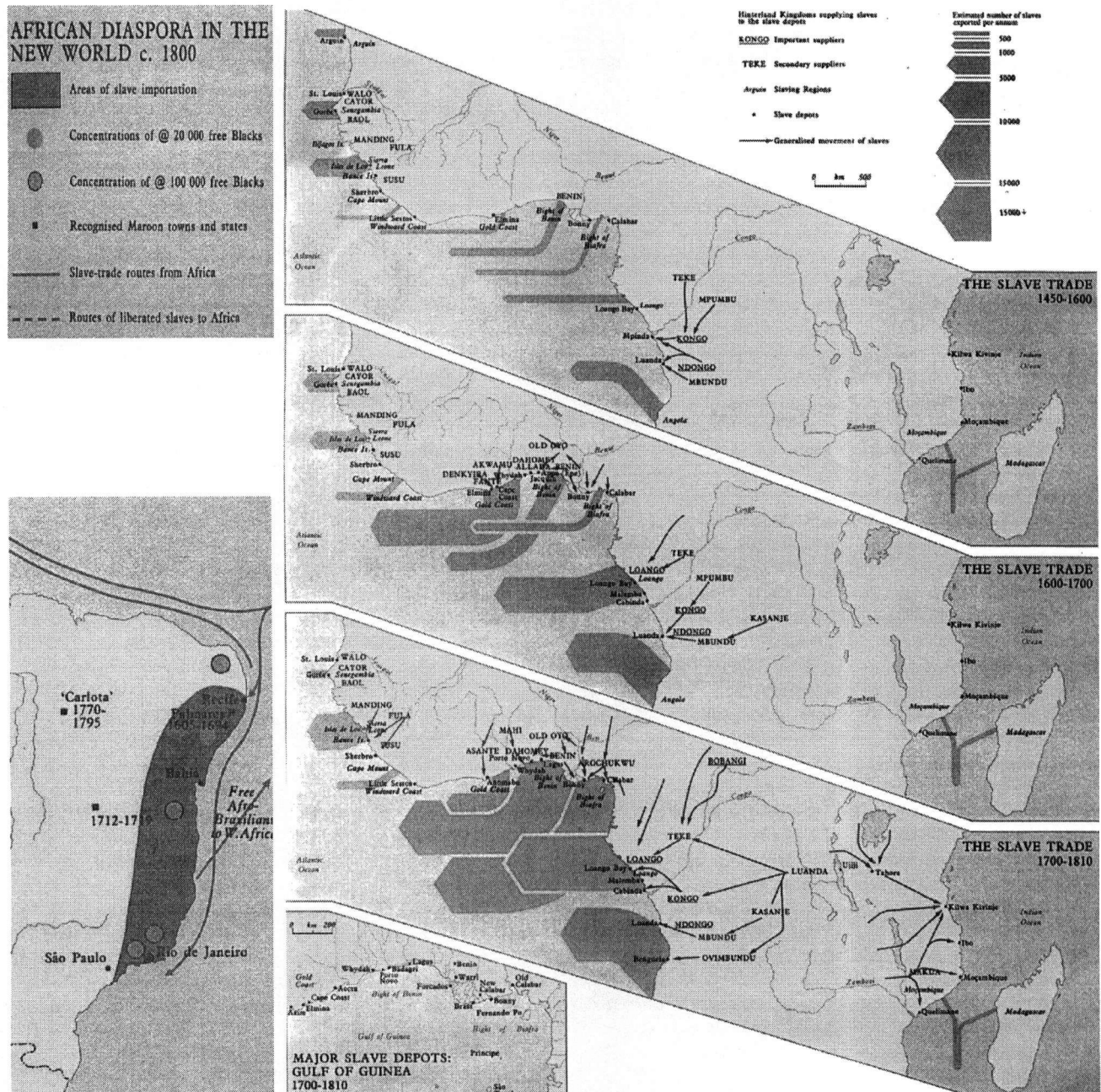
The institution of slavery nullified not only the individual's possessions but also his/her being. The slave became 'private property' a 'thing' in the minds of the Europeans and was denied any legal or civic status.

There was more than one route to freedom for the African in Brazil: flight, certain special provisions of the law (in the nineteenth century) and manumission, a costly and inconsistent process (Mattoso, 1985:155). The law in Brazil, consistent with other slave regimes, stated that a child of a slave mother was born a slave, even if the father was a free man. The one exception to this law was for children engendered by a master. In these cases the child could become free after the death of the father but only if the latter had recognized him/her as his child.

In the decades prior to the abolition of slavery in Brazil, some changes were made to legally manumit certain categories of slaves; primarily, the law of 1885 freeing sexagenarians and the law of the 'free womb' of 1871 (Mattoso, 1985:156). The law of the free womb, promulgated by the Imperial Princess Isabelle, granted freedom to children born in Brazil to a female slave. The thought behind this law was that since it was by then illegal to import slaves from Africa, slavery would eventually vanish since there would be no new incoming slaves. However, this liberty granted to newborns had many restrictions, such as the stipulation that the minor child remained under the joint custody of the master and its mother until the age of 8. When the child reached 8, the mother's owner could either accept an indemnity of 600 000 reias from the government until the child reached the age of 21 or he could keep the child (which was the most common choice) (Ibid.). In the former case, the child would be placed in a charitable institution and put to work until the age of 21 and in the latter case, the child would continue working for the master (also until the age of 21). This resulted in a new form of slavery, as the new law did not specify the maximum workday or minimum health and dietary criteria to which the 'free slave' should be subject (Ibid.).

The following maps indicate suppliers, slave depots, generalized movement of slaves and the estimated number of slaves exported per annum (Historical Atlas of Africa, 1985):

Figures 1 and 2. Historical Maps of the African Slave Trade



3.3.1 Quilombos: Rebel Slave Communities

Unlike the US with its free northern states, there was little legal refuge for Brazilian slaves (as mentioned above, various laws and provisions for manumission were established including the option to buy one's freedom, which the majority could not afford). There was, however, a vast hinterland that was either uninhabited or populated by indigenous groups. It is suggested that there were three basic forms of active slave resistance; fugitive slave settlements called quilombos, attempts at seizures of power, and outright rebellion (Kent in Price, 1979:170). The latter two were extremely dangerous options, but they did occur and increased in frequency by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The most popular tactic of resistance was escape to the bush, commonly practiced from the beginning to the end of the slave regime (Lewis, 1992:37). Groups of fugitive slaves formed quilombos (sometimes also called mocambos) which varied in size from a dozen members to thousands (Ibid.). Quilombo comes from the Kimbundu word *kilombo*, denoting a concept traditionally linked to anti-colonial resistance (Nascimento, 1992:124). These communities were found all over Brazil from the sixteenth century on (Mattoso, 1995:138).

Quilombos were a product of the instability of the slave system, of injustice and mistreatment. They reflected a reaction against the slave system, a return to African ways of life far from the master's rule and protest against the conditions of the slave system (Ibid.). The inhabitants of quilombos were referred to as quilombolas. Quilombos appeared in large numbers in areas where blacks were the majority rendering the police incapable of preventing the establishment of these marginal communities (Mattoso, 1995:139). According to Hanchard (1999:3), "Brazil had the single largest outlaw slave community in the world, the Quilombo dos Palmares, and among the greatest number of outlaw slave societies of any slaveholding system in the hemisphere".

The exact year of the formation of Quilombo dos Palmares is not known, however, the first organized expedition against Palmares occurred in 1602 (Carneiro, 1966:19). In 1643 the population of Palmares was estimated at 6000 (Ibid.). Like other

large Quilombos, it had its own self-contained social organization with its own economic and political activities. Some refer to Palmares as the first free nation of the Americas after the European invasion, as it resisted colonial wars of aggression waged by the Portuguese, Dutch and Brazilian colonial forces for over a century (Nascimento, 1992:123). "Brazilian Native Americans and anti-colonialist whites joined in the building of Palmares, a fact that makes it a symbol of truly multiracial collaboration and conviviality" (Ibid.).

There is a persistent oral tradition connecting capoeira with the Quilombo dos Palmares though, there is no written historical evidence of capoeira in Palmares. There are, however, several elements inherent to Palmares that help to explain this association. Both rebellion and flight involve total non-cooperation with the slave system and thus are regarded as the noblest responses to it. Palmares has become the symbol of total and successful resistance to oppression (Lewis, 1992:39). This strikes a meaningful cord with capoeiristas who consistently affirm that capoeira (historical and contemporary) represents the spirit of rebellion, of non-cooperation with oppression and of liberation. Flight and aggression are lessons taught by capoeira play, but they are often transmuted to become indirect aggression and mock flight, "...most, if not all, responses to domination are encoded in the capoeira interaction and a great number of them involve accommodations with and adaptations to that domination. These compromises still involve resistance" (Ibid.). This is linked to the idea that the general response to slavery was not to rebel directly but to pretend to cooperate. References to Quilombo dos Palmares and Rei Zumbi are common in contemporary capoeira music, below are two examples:

E Zumbi se fez rei dos Palmares
 Numa luta marcada de sangue
 No negro um olhar veronil
 Uma lenda cantada por nos
 Da historia do nosso Brasil

Hoje Palmares e um monumento
 patrimonio da humanidade
 E a simplicidade e o amor

Zumbi became the King of Palmares
 In a battle marked with blood
 In him a look (of)
 A legend sung by us
 About the history of our Brazil

Today Palmares is a monument
 patrimony of humanity
 It is simplicity and love

E tudo que Deus ensinou
E o simbolo da liberdade.
(Henrique & Roberto; Clube de Capoeira)

It is everything taught by God
It is the symbol of freedom.

Mas la um dia para o quilombo eu fugi
Com muita luta e muita garra
Tornei um guerreiro de Zumbi

Then one day I fled to the quilombo
With a lot of fighting and much guts
I became a warrior of Zumbi

Sou guerreiro do quilombo quilombola
Lei lei lei o (Mestre Barrao:1999)

I am a warrior from quilombo
Lei lei lei o

3.3.2 Capoeira, Urbanism and Persecution

The origin of the word capoeira is not all together certain, however there are popular oral traditions that help to explain how this word became attached to the art form. We do know that the association of the word *capoeira* with the *jogo de capoeira* came about approximately 200 years after the beginning of the slave trade in Brazil (Almeida, 1986:17). The word 'capoeira' has been around since the seventeenth century in its Latinate, Portuguese derivation of 'capao' a rooster or a cage for cocks and chickens (Lewis, 1992:43). Popular stories explain this association to the art of capoeira; in the city of Rio de Janeiro, an old poultry market became a meeting point where slaves would play the game of capoeira. In the state of Pernambuco is a small port town, Porto de Galinhas (Port of the Chickens). Oral traditions maintain that this town got its name for the reason that after Abolition, slaves were illegally imported through this town and the boats were reported to be carrying chickens (Mestre Duwalli, Recife; 1998). A third popular oral tradition links the art capoeira to the capoeira meaning a secondary growth (usually grasses) that appears after virgin forest has been cut down. This meaning is derived from the Guarany, the indigenous mother tongue of the native Brazilian Indian dialects (Almeida, 1986:17). The story connecting the two *capoeiras* here is based on slaves escaping into this second-growth bush in their flight from captivity as well as slaves practicing the art in these grasslands near the plantations but hidden from the masters and overseers (Lewis, 1992:42). These are only a few of the stories that speculate the association of the word capoeira to the art form.

Sometime in the eighteenth century, a large percentage of the total Brazilian population began concentrating in cities. This trend accelerated after the declaration of the republic in 1889, and a significant percentage of these new urbanites were ex-slaves leaving the plantations to look for new opportunities in the cities (Lewis, 1992:42). It is generally suggested that the development of capoeira in the urban setting was associated with the aggregation of a substantial group of, mostly dark, habitually impoverished people in the cities of Brazil (especially Recife, Rio de Janeiro and Salvador) (Ibid.). The creation of large neighborhoods of people of African and mixed descent facilitated the next step in the evolution of capoeira into a fully mature art form. After the proclamation of the republic, the attempt to contain the activities of capoeiristas intensified.

In the early 1800's various accounts of capoeira began to appear in police archives. Capoeiristas received specific mention in the first *Codigo Penal da Republica dos Estados Unidos do Brasil* (Penal Code of the Republic of the United States of Brazil), instituted by decree on the 11th of October, 1890 (Almeida, 2001). Article 402 stipulated "To perform on the streets or public squares the exercise of agility and corporeal dexterity known by the name 'capoeiragem'; to run with weapons or instruments capable of inflicting bodily injuries, provoke turmoil, threaten certain or uncertain persons, or incite fear of bad actions; Sentence - prison cell for two to six months" (Soares in Almeida, 2001). During this period, any activity connected with African culture could be viewed as subversive at the whim of the authorities. As capoeira became a prominent expressive channel of slave resistance, it also became victim of constant violence from both *senhores* (slave owners or former slave owners) and police (Soares, 1999:8). Documentation from this period confirms that individuals from various African Nations were charged as 'capoeiristas' at one time or another (Soares, 1999:25). The following are excerpts of two registered police charges for the offense of capoeira (translated from Portuguese):

"On the seventeenth day of the current month escaped a slave by the name of Manoel of Nation Cabinda, ordinary in stature, slightly round face, full lips, small eyes, dark in color, with thick ankles and with scars from shackles on both legs. Often seen frequenting Da Vale street with others 'capoeirando' (involved in

capoeira), whoever finds him and brings him to Direita 16 street shall be well rewarded." *Diario do Rio de Janeiro*, 24 of February 1826. (Soares, 1999:24).

"Manoel Mojumbe, slave of Manuel Gomes de Oliveira Couto, was jailed for capoeira, and for attempting to fight with a guard, assaulting him with words." (Soares, 1999:31).

During the period of the Brazilian Empire (1808-1889) there were running battles between police and capoeiristas on the streets of Recife, Rio and Bahia (Salvador) (Lewis, 1992:45). The development of capoeira in the urban setting was associated with criminality in the minds of the police and the upper classes. Chronically unemployed blacks living in cities had to evolve new strategies for survival, strategies much like those known as 'hustling' in the US (Lewis, 1992:47). Capoeira became closely associated with the label of 'malandro' (hoodlum) and the two words became interchangeable (this label is still given to capoeiristas by some in Brazil today). However, for the capoeirista, the practice of 'malandragem' could be a positive cultural value representing ones ability to survive in adverse circumstances by using one's wit and physical skill (Lewis, 1992:49).

Another synonym for a capoeirista is 'mandingueiro', originating from a name for the African groups generally called the Mande or Mandinka people (Ibid.). Mandingueiro became synonymous with anyone of African origin thought to have esoteric knowledge. The 'mandingueiro' came to be seen as a trickster or a sorcerer. Capoeira adepts were frequently known for this kind of knowledge. They often employed fetishes, known as 'patua', to protect them in the dangerous games. Yet another label which came to be closely associated with capoeira was that of 'vadiacao' (roughly 'bum'). This perceived image of capoeiristas after slavery is said to have been related to the kind of 'leisure' time produced by chronic unemployment.

As a result of extensive police repression, capoeira became all but extinct in Recife, Rio and Bahia by the first decades of the twentieth century. However, many of the older Masters that I had the opportunity to meet testified to the fact that capoeiristas continued to develop their art in more obscure localities. This type of capoeira came to

be known as 'capoeira do fundo do quintal' (capoeira of the back yard). Unquestionably, capoeira has changed and evolved gradually over the course of many generations, and part of this process is intimately linked with urbanization.

3.3.3 From the World of Crime to the World of Culture

In 1930 when a military revolution put Getulio Vargas in power, repression of popular cultural expressions, including capoeira, began to ease (Almeida, 1986:32). It is believed that Vargas' governmental approach facilitated the work of Mestre Bimba (Manoel dos Reis Machado) of Salvador, Bahia who played a significant role in restoring dignity in the art of capoeira (Ibid.). "The importance of Mestre Bimba in the history of capoeira was definitively established when he became the first mestre to open a formal school of Capoeira in 1932. On July 9, 1937, the course of capoeira history changed with the official recognition of his school by the government through the Office of Education and Public Assistance" (Ibid.).

Mestre Bimba named his first formal academy the Centro de Cultura Fisica e Capoeira Regional. He was concerned with legitimizing capoeira and creating a respectable image for the sport to counteract the old malandro stereotype (Lewis, 1992:60). His approach was to create a more organized and disciplined method of teaching. In 1972, capoeira was officially declared a Brazilian national sport under the jurisdiction of the Federecao Brasileira de Pugilismo (Brazilian Boxing Federation), and local and national tournaments were organized (Lewis, 1992:61). By the mid 1970's there were capoeira academies throughout Brazil and the first Masters had begun teaching in the US and in Europe.

Prior to Mestre Bimba, capoeira existed in many displays throughout Brazil and had many denominations, including: vadiacao, capoeiragem and brincadeira de Angola to name a few (Almeida, 2001). Mestre Bimba's style came to be known as Capoeira Regional. "The characteristics of his capoeira were the training of the art in enclosed

school facilities, the implementation of a course curriculum, the introduction of a systematic training method, a defined musical ensemble of one birimbau and two pandeiros, and an emphasis on the rhythms of Sao Bento Grande, Benguela and Iuna which mandated specific jogos" (Ibid.). According to Almeida (2001), "Mestre Bimba's most important contribution was perhaps the revolutionary concept that an activity outlawed by the dominant elites could become a prestigious art form freely practiced and taught as a means of subsistence in legally established organizations".

With the new institutional approach to capoeira, there were many innovations and changes. The senior mestre, who had previously been in charge of local outdoor games, also took on the role of chief administrator, responsible for organizing financial and operational aspects of the school (Lewis, 1992:63). This meant taking on more responsibility and learning how to delegate his authority (I refer only to the mestre as male in this context as there were no recognized female mestres and the art was primarily male-centered at this point).

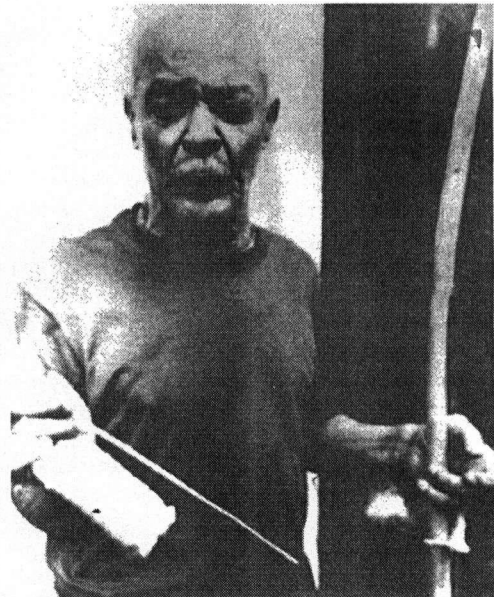
Another important figure in the history of capoeira was a contemporary of Mestre Bimba's, Mestre Pastinha (Vicente Ferreira Pastinha). Mestre Pastinha is considered the paradigm of Capoeira Angola, a particular approach influenced by the capoeiragem practiced in the Recôncavo Baiano. "Capoeira Angola was characterized by a high degree of combat simulation in which the mere suggestion of an attack should be acknowledged; a focus on rituals, strategy and tactics of the game; and an emphasis on playfulness and theatrics of movement" (Ibid.). Mestre Pastinha officially created his school in 1942.

Figure 3. Mestre Bimba



(Source: Almeida, 1986)

Figure 4. Mestre Pastinha



(Source: Almeida, 1986)

More recently both Capoeira Angola and Capoeira Regional have generated new schools and styles based on interpretations of the teachings of Mestre Pastinha and Mestre Bimba. Almeida names some of these new styles 'Contemporary Capoeira Angola', 'Contemporary Capoeira Regional' and 'Contemporary Capoeira' (Ibid).

3.4 Summary

This chapter has attempted to introduce various ideas around the origins of the art of capoeira in order to contextualize the more specific and detailed discussion that follows in the proceeding chapter. My aim has been to illustrate the journey that capoeira has taken from being perceived as part of the 'world of crime' to being perceived as part of the 'world of culture'. As this chapter testifies and as the following will elaborate, one

cannot separate any part of capoeira from the experience of slavery in Brazil. "Of crucial importance is the idea that capoeira is an invention by slaves, that is, created in Brazil, in the particular conditions of slavery, and mostly by those of African origin" (Soares, 1999:25).

4. Case Study: Capoeira in Recife

4.1 Introduction

Standing in the corridor of what used to be Recife's penitentiary, now the Casa da Cultura (House of Culture), I could hear the music of the birimbau. My first roda in Recife, the history and presence of the art was clear. As a visiting researcher and student of capoeira I was invited to participate. There were close to forty capoeiristas, three birimbaus, one atabaque, one pandeiro and one agogo. The first game was about to begin. Two mestres were squatted at the foot of the birimbau. The rhythm being played was that of "Angola" and Mestre Duwalle, the host of this roda, began to sing a ladainha,

O negro resava pedindo a Deus do ceu
E na presi ele chorava dizendo que a vida era cruel
Acrorentado na senzala se ajuela no chau
Muintas veses lamentava
ele nao entendia a rasao
De tudo aquele sofrimento ai meu Deus
de tanta judiacao,

The negro prayed to God above
He cried saying that life was cruel
Chained in the senzala on the ground
Many times he lamented
without knowing why
From all the suffering, oh God
from so much suffering

The chorus of capoeiristas responded:

O povo de Luanda um dia luto
e venceu
Por que custo a liberdade
mas aos negros sempre pertenceu

One day the people of Luanda fought
and won
A high price for freedom
which always belonged to us

Figure 5. Mestre Duwalle



The main birimbau was lowered to signal that the physical play could begin. The two mestres gestured to the sky, to the birimbau and to the ground, each with his own signs of reverence to all great capoeiraistas, to God, or to the Orixas (or to whomever he chose to show reverence) clasped hands and entered the roda. The game had begun.

Capoeira is an art of Afro-Brazilian origin that expresses its pedagogy through oral history, music, philosophy, self-defense and elements of dance. In this chapter I will present my argument for the assertion that the art of capoeira, as a manifestation of popular culture, has the potential of being a vehicle for social change. This chapter will draw upon the theories of social processes presented in the previous chapters in order to illustrate that upon a critical analysis of the art, examples of such processes are found at work. I will also draw upon literature, interviews with capoeiristas of various levels, as well as my own understanding of the art.

The case study is organized simply by beginning with the general and working towards the more specific. Section 4.2 will localize the study with some general information about Recife. Section 4.3 will present a general discussion of some of the

interpretations of the art of capoeira, and sections 4.4 and 4.5 will present more detailed studies of organizations involved with capoeira in Recife. The latter has been organized into two sections, reflecting my approach in the field. The first of these attempts to provide a more general illustration of 2 organizations in Recife which utilize capoeira as a vehicle for social betterment. The second attempts to provide a more detailed discussion through the experience of ASSOCAPE.

4.2 The Place: Recife

Recife, capital of the state of Pernambuco, was 'founded' by the Dutch in approximately the middle of 17th century.

Figure 6. Geographical Location of Recife



(Source: Washington D.C.: C.I.A., 1981)

Pernambuco was one of the main centres of sugar cane production. Old residential neighborhoods that arose from abandoned sugar mills in the early 19th century are found around the edges of the old city centre (no longer the centre of retail and business). Along Recife's southern beaches is the 'copacabana -style' district of apartments (Boa Viagem) that developed in the 1960's and which now houses the upper classes of the city. However, the other half of the city is the city of favelas. Historically, many of the favelas were located close to the formal city. Though some favelas remain in these areas, most are now located in the suburbs, or more descriptively they are found sprawling over the hills that surround the central city. There are approximately 500 favelas in Recife's metropolitan area and it is estimated that close to 42% of the population live in these settlements (Prefeitura, 1991).

Table 2. Population of Pernambuco and Recife.

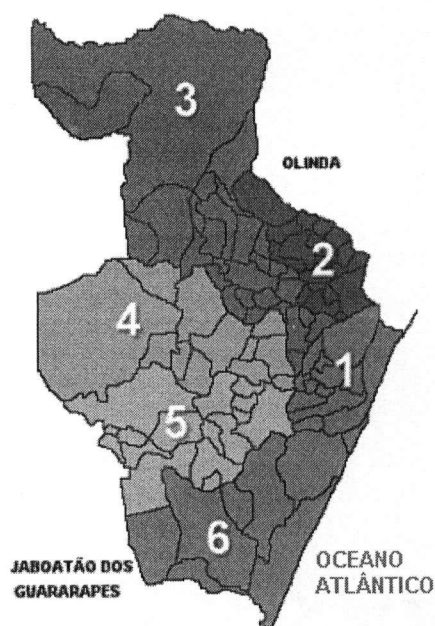
| State/City | Resident Population | | | | | | Annual Growth Rate % |
|------------|---------------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------|
| | 01/08/96 | 01/08/00 | | | | | |
| | Total | Total | Men | Women | Urban | Rural | |
| Pernambuco | 7399071 | 7910992 | 3821442 | 4089550 | 6052141 | 1858850 | 1.69 |
| Recife | 1346045 | 1421947 | 661092 | 760855 | 1421947 | | 1.38 |

(Source: <http://www.igbe.gov.br/cidadesat/index2.htm>)

Historically, Recife was a commercial, administrative and educational centre with some involvement in the manufacturing of textiles, leather and food processing. However, this was not sufficient to absorb the influx of rural migrants from the coastal regions declining sugarcane industry. In the 1960's, federal and state initiatives to promote industrial development in Brazil's Northeast led to the creation of hundreds of new manufacturing firms employing tens of thousands of workers. However, these capital-intensive enterprises were incapable of providing stable jobs. Currently, it is estimated that over 40% of Recife's employable population are unemployed or working in the informal sector (Cabral and Moura, 1996).

Jarbes Vasconcelos has been mayor of Recife since he was elected in 1993. The city of Recife is divided into six RPA's (Regiao Politica Administrativa - political administrative regions) and is further divided in bairros (micro regions and neighborhoods):

Figure 7. Map of RPA's of Recife



RPA 1 - Boa Vista, Cabanga, Coelhos, Ilha Joana Bezerra, Ilha do Leite, Paissandu, Recife, Santo Amaro, Santo Antônio, São José e Soledade

RPA 2 - Água Fria, Alto Santa Terezinha, Arruda, Beberibe, Bomba do Hemetério, Cajueiro, **Campina do Barreto**, Campo Grande, Dois Unidos, Encruzilhada, Fundão, Hipódromo, Linha do Tiro, Peixinhos, Ponto de Parada, Porto da Madeira, Rosarinho e Torreão.

RPA 3 - Afritos, Alto do Mandu, Alto José Bonifácio, Alto José do Pinho, Apipucos, Brejo da Guabiraba, Brejo de Beberibe, Casa Amarela, Casa Forte, Córrego do Jenipapo, Derby, Dois Irmãos, Espinheiro, Graças, Guabiraba, Jaqueira, Macaxeira, Mangabeira, Monteiro, Morro da Conceição, Nova Descoberta, Parnamirim, Passarinho, Pau Ferro, Poço, Santana, Sítio dos Pintos, Tamarineira e Vasco da Gama

RPA 4 - Caxangá, Cidade Universitária, Cordeiro, Engenho do Meio, Ilha do Retiro, Iputinga, Madalena, Prado, Torre, Torrões, Várzea e Zumbi.

RPA 5 - Afogados, Areias, Barro, Bongü, Caçote, Coqueiral, Curado, Estância, **Jardim São Paulo**, Jiquiá, Mangueira, Mustardinha, San Martin, Sancho, Tejiapió e Totó.

RPA 6 - Boa Viagem, Brasília Teimosa, COHAB, Ibura, Imbiribeira, IPSEP, Jordão e Pina.

(Source: Prefeitura do Recife, 1991)

Recife's neighborhood associations are said to constitute one of the strongest popular movements in all of Brazil. Many of these organizations are born within the favelas. They are politically independent and democratically controlled. Various parties compete for influence in the associations, including the Partido dos Trabalhadores. Many have established ties with the Catholic Church's community based human rights movement and have gained legal and organizational support from such ties. The neighborhood associations have also gained support from many of the NGO's in Recife (Cabral and Moura, 1996).

In any discussion of Brazil, it is essential to address racial politics, particularly in the Northeast, where a large percentage of the population is non-white.

Table 3. Percent of Population African Origin by Area

| Metropolitan Area | Percent African Origin |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Sao Paulo | 26 |
| Rio de Janeiro | 39 |
| Recife | 67 |
| Salvador | 76 |

Source: (Hanchard, 1999:92)

Scholarship of the 1940's, particularly by Gilberto Freyre, promoted the conceptualization of Brazil as a 'racial democracy'. This was primarily based in the relatively easy acceptance by the Portuguese of African religion, cuisine, cultural practices, and particularly an openness to miscegenation. Freyrean Luso-tropicalism became the ideological cornerstone for a common belief in Brazilian racial exceptionalism: the idea that Brazil, unlike other multiracial polities, was not a land of racial inequalities (Hanchard, 1999:5). Brazil's self-image as a racially unbiased nation was so pervasive that, by the 1950's it was known throughout the world as a 'racial democracy' (Ibid). By the 1970's, scholars and activists began to openly question the racial democracy myth. Scholars such as Nelson do Valle Silva and Carlos Hasenbalg sought not only to debunk the racial democracy myth, but also to treat racial discrimination as a feature of social life, an ever-present reality in Brazilian society (Hanchard, 1999:7). "This research occurred within the context, during the dictatorship, of a reemergence of black movements in Brazil, along with other modes of protest,

organization, and mobilization that did not fit into the existing models of political parties, trade unions, and interest groups" (Hanchard, 1999:8).

After 1986, scholars began to debate once again the difficulties of racial classification in Brazil (Ibid). The major difference between Brazil and other multiracial societies like the United States seem to be that Brazilian society emphasized 'phenotypic' rather than 'racial' distinction. However, one of the phenomena related to racial identification in Brazil is the changing content of phenotypic categories (Ibid).

Table 4. Racial Inequality in Brazil, 1987 (in Percentages):

| | White | Black | Brown | Non-white |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|-----------|
| Illiterate ten years | 18 | 35 | 36.5 | 36.3 |
| Completed elementary school | 29.5 | 11.5 | 14 | 13.6 |
| Average years of study | 4.1 | 2.2 | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| Social security registration | 57.3 | 43.1 | 37.4 | 38.2 |
| Non-manual labor | 26.9 | 6.7 | 12.6 | 11.6 |
| Average monthly salary (Cz\$) | 10,615 | 4,326 | 4,984 | 4,888 |

(Source: Hanchard, 1999:156)

4.3 Capoeira Through a Critical Lens

This section attempts to present some of the more apparent as well as subtle meanings inherent in the game of capoeira. Analysis is based on existing literature as well as observation and informal dialogue with various capoeiristas.

4.3.1 The Game and its Meanings

Beginning with the basics, participants of the art of capoeira are referred to as capoeiristas. The game itself is referred to as a jogo, which translates as both game and play. The game can also be referred to as a 'brincadeira', which alludes to a sense of 'playing as a child'. Sebeok (in Lewis, 1992:3) presents the idea that the experience of play is often associated with the idea of freedom, "The only ordinance that applies to pure play is the law of liberty". The game of capoeira is always played in what is referred to as a roda (a circle) which is either marked on the ground in some schools or formed by the participants of the roda and/or by spectators (the game itself can also be referred to as a roda). During the course of my fieldwork I observed (and often participated in) over one hundred rodas in Recife. As an observer and participant I was fortunate to begin to understand some of the subtleties as well as the more apparent aspects of the game. A roda cannot take place without at least one birimbau (a bow, wire and gourd instrument). Most rodas will have between one and three birimbaus, one atabaque (conga like drum) one pandeiro (tamborine) and one agogo (two attached bells - similar to cow bells).

The game is played two players at a time. The two contestants about to enter the roda squat at the foot of the birimbau and only enter the roda to commence play once the birimbau has been lowered in a signaling gesture. In the game of Capoeira Regional, this signal is not applied, however, in the game of Capoeira Angola, this ritual is consistently observed. The corporeal expression of capoeira incorporates ataques (attacks), defesas (defenses), posicionamento (positioning), floreio's (flourishes for the embellishment of the game) and movements for attending to the Capoeira rituals (Almeida, 1986:155). The game is essentially one of improvisation, where each player creates his/her own combination of movements expressed in his/her own particular style. The element of improvisation in capoeira is crucial and is related to the ethic of freedom and liberation that is central to the game. In observing two players in play one begins to see the importance of a corporeal and sign-based dialogue. Each player is responding and/or reacting to the expression of the other player, therefore wit and knowledge ('sabedoria') are highly revered qualities. "The movements of the capoeiristas are chosen from a large

number of defined techniques combined during the heat of the game and according to the tactics of each player. These techniques are like words and the combinations are sentences used by the players to express their own creativity and personality" (Almeida, 1986:153).

Capoeira is rich in metaphors of slavery. Even the role of the mestre in capoeira has been discussed at times as embodying the role of slave master for a moment in order to teach a lesson to a student. For example, the mestre/aluno (student) relationship is that of friend, of teacher but also of adversary primarily to teach the lessons of malicia. Malicia translates as maliciousness but its meaning in capoeira is more complex than this. Malicia refers to trickery, to being cunning, smart, knowing how to read a person or situation and knowing how to subtly maneuver in that situation.

The ambivalent relations between master and slave are perhaps even more common in contemporary patron/client relations as gratitude for favors wars with resentment against an intransigent system. "The mestre/aluno relationship can and does serve as a kind of template, an icon available for rehearsing several key relations in the Brazilian social system. Especially important are power relations, both past (master/slave) and present (patron/client) for which strategies of domination and liberation developed in the game has special relevance" (Lewis, 1992:101). An example of this can be illustrated by describing a common strategy used within the game. Two players are in the roda, one decides it is time to end the bout, s/he extends his/her hand to the opponent, when the other reaches out to shake his/her hand, the first follows with a mock attack. This is but one example where the lesson is not only to deceive, but also to learn to unmask deception, to always be aware of potential actions and reactions. In the context of Brazil, the value of malicia represents a strategy that is useful not only inside the ring, but also outside of the ring, especially in the invasoes and favelas (Lewis, 1992:78).

Another key value to capoeira is that of comradeship. The emotional bonds between a student and mestre are strong as well as between fellow students. There is an

ethos of equality within the ring, where ideally all social boundaries of class; race, age and gender are transcended. Comradeship is seen as an overarching principle, although the values of malicia and solidarity might seem to conflict, in practice they serve to complement each other, to aid in maintaining the central creative tension between aggression and harmony.

In the game of capoeira the roda (or play space) is an essential and acknowledged part of the esthetic of the game. The physically formed roda intentionally limits the play space. Therefore, players are forced to resolve their bout in very close proximity to one another. This is one example of how capoeira links play space with society at large, as space (or lack of it) correlates with class. Another example, when one player in the roda is tired and needs a breather, s/he stops the play to walk in a circle counter clockwise within the ring, this is referred to as 'da volta ao mundo' (to take a stroll around the world).

Figure 8. The roda (play space)



Also, when the two players at the foot of the birimbau enter the ring the term is 'saida', which translates as exit, this is explained as the players going out into the world. Literally entering the capoeira world and figuratively going out into the social world, since they are also training for its challenges. "As in all metaphors, capoeira is both like and unlike its object, society. Where it is similar it can comment by imitation and iconic representation. Where it is dissimilar, it can unmask and critique, and ultimately express an entirely different order" (Lewis, 1992:201).

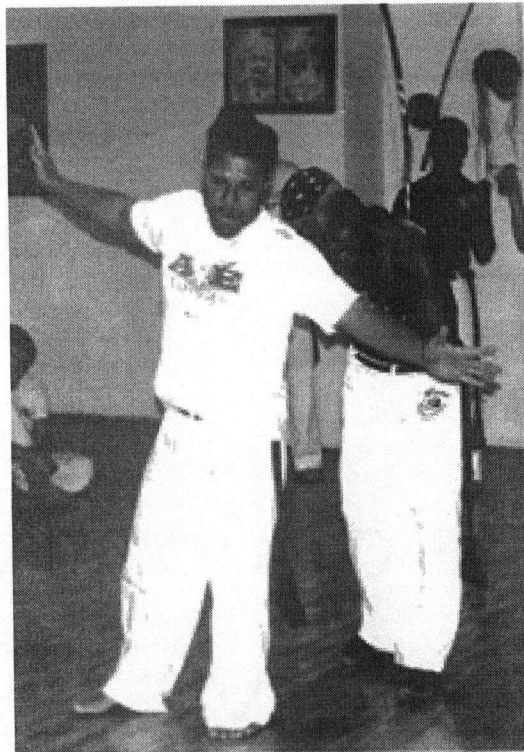
Figure 9. Saida



Within the game of capoeira 'inner games' occur. The inner games can be described and recognized as breaks in the normal play. One such inner game is the 'chamada' (meaning a 'hand call' when two capoeiristas engage in a ritualized walk touching one or two hands - or not) (Almeida, Capoeira Arts, 2000). The chamada can occur at any point in the game of Capoeira Angola. One player stops, places his/her arms in one of the chamada positions and awaits the other player to make his or her way over. This can be an acknowledgment that an attack has reached or could have reached the

target or it can be a trick movement to take the other person out of their guard (Ibid). The chamada can also represent a truce, where both players move together with their bodies in contact in what appears to be cooperation. This truce in fact presents the players with an opportunity to explore many of the dynamics of oppressor/oppressed relations. The chamada has been referred to by some mestres as mimicking master/slave relations (Mestre Piu, Recife, PE, Brazil). In this interpretation, the two players are going back and forth between cooperation, the role of the dominant and the role of the dominated.

Figure 10. Chamada



This section has attempted to illustrate only a fraction of the symbolism inherent to capoeira in order to link the game to social realities. "Capoeira is not just for the players, it also opens out towards a wider social field: on the streets or in the field, in academies or stage productions, adepts play to the audience and not just for each other. Therefore, it is productive to view capoeira as a kind of drama, a theatre of liberation and domination" (Lewis, 1992:94).

4.3.2 Oral Traditions: Stories and Music

In the previous section, I had mentioned that the game of Capoeira Angola always begins with a 'ladainha' (litany) which is a traditional solo. The ladainhas contain some of the most profound capoeira philosophy and history. The ladainha is followed by a call and response sequence referred to as the 'chula'. The chula acts as a kind of ritual invocation, often among these calls are lines praising God, praising one's master and praising the game of capoeira. The songs also frequently refer to both the spirit world including the 'pretos velhos' (literally 'old black men', referring to the spirit of deceased slaves). The introductory ladainha presents an opportunity for the capoeirista to salute the opponent, the musicians and members of the orchestra (Almeida, Capoeira Arts, 2000). The ladainha also invokes ideas and values central to the game. The songs that follow after the initial ladainha/chula sequence are referred to as 'corridos'. The corrido's are often chosen to reflect or provoke certain events in the game.

Figure 11. Musical Ensemble of the Roda



The music in the art of capoeira becomes an important vehicle not only to express the continuity of African traditions and beliefs, but also a vehicle for teaching the history and philosophy of the art. It is in this context that I believe it is relevant to assert that one of the roles that the art fulfills is that of social learning and non-formal education. Within the song texts of capoeira continuities between the game and society at large can be made explicit, with specific references to gender relations, economic facts, historical reality, religious beliefs or any aspect of social reality that the players choose to comment on (Lewis, 1992:162).

Historically, capoeira music was borrowed from other art forms such as literatura de cordel and samba; it reflected the universe of the capoeirista, his/her everyday life. Recent lyrics often reflect what Mestre Acordeon (Almeida, Capoeira Arts, 2000) refers to as a contemporary mythology that has been pushed centre stage in contemporary capoeira discourse.

The following excerpts were chosen to illustrate popular themes in contemporary capoeira music:

Eu tive pae, tive mae, tive filha
Mas perdi toda familia, a liberdade
e o amor
E oigo em dia eu so tenho dor e calo
Trabalhando no embalo com o chicote
do feitor

Corta cana, corta cana, corta cana
Corta cana no canavial (G. Senzala)

Solidao
Um coracao que chora
Longe da familia
Longe dos filhos
Longe de casa
Angola

Mas o coracao

I had a father, a mother, a daughter
But I lost my family, my freedom
and love
And today all I have is pain
Working under the whip of
the superintendent

Cut the cane (sugarcane)....
Cut the cane on the plantation

Solitude
A heart that cries
Far from family
Far from my children
Far from home
Angola

But the heart

Nao se pode escravizar
Nem sua mente
Que vaga no tempo
Pensando no sonho
De se libertar

Can not be enslaved
Nor can the mind
That spends time
Thinking of the dream
of liberation

Negro de hoje
Nao tem pe no chau
Tem dignidade
A bem da verdade
Es um vencedor
Te estendo a mao
(P. Daniel; Clube do Capoeira Santos).

Negro of today
Doesn't have feet on the ground
Has dignity
Truth
You are a victor
I hold out my hand to you

A capoeira, o birimbau
Derrubou o preconceito
Hoje e luta nacional
(M. Suino, Grupo Candeias:2000).

Capoeira, birimbau
Eliminated discrimination
Today it's a national fight

Recently there has been a self-conscious change in image influencing the creation of new songs in the capoeira repertoire. For example, new songs have been added to reflect such changes as the increasing participation of women as well as the increasing participation of people from various ethnic groups and classes. The following excerpts from two corridos illustrate these changes:

A capoeira e homen, menino e mulher

Capoeira is man, child and woman

Capoeira nao tem raca
Capoeira nao tem cor
Capoeira e amor

Capoeira does not have race
Capoeira does not have color
Capoeira is love

It is also in the musical aspects of capoeira where religion and spirituality are most commonly reflected. The dominant Afro-Brazilian cults in contemporary northeastern Brazil are those linked to the Orixas. The common reference to this type of spiritism in the northeast is Candomble. Predominantly, reference is made to both African derived beliefs mixed with beliefs from Catholicism, reflecting the religious syncretism in the northeast. This syncretism is reflected in capoeira in that the ethos of

freedom extends to the spiritual domain as well, allowing each player to find his or her own sense of the sacred within the ring.

Ie viva meu Deus
Eh viva meu mestre,
Ele e mandingueiro
Eh toma sentido
Eh e hora, e hora
Eh, vamos' imbora
Eh volta do mundo

Eh long live my God
Long live my mestre
He is a powerful mandingueiro
Be alert and careful
It is time to go around the world,

Eh Xango, capoeira protetor
(M.Acordeon; Capoeira-Bahia:1996)

Hail Xango, protector of capoeira

The musical discourse within capoeira, which tends to express cooperative and communal values, is often interpreted as balancing the competitive and combative side of the physical dialogue. Capoeira is a way of life to those dedicated to it, not a diversion from it thus it reflects and critically examines society in all of its aspects.

Com muita raca vai quebrando barreiras
Sempre ensinando a arte da capoeira
Uma cultura maxima de um pove
Que um dia serviu para o negro libertar

With much origin it breaks barriers
Always teaching the art of capoeira
A true culture of a people
Which one day served to free slaves

Capoeira cantava
Enquanto a chibata batia
Na senzala um lamento
Pedia a sua alforria

Capoeira sang
While the whip hit
In the senzala, a lamenting
Asking for freedom

Aruanda e aruanda a
Hoje eu sou guerreiro
Filho de aruanda

Aruanda e Aruanda a
Today I am a warrior
Son of Aruanda

4.4 Applying Capoeira for Social Betterment: A look at two organizations

This section will present my observations from a study of two organizations in Recife, which incorporate the art of capoeira as one activity in their varied mandates for social betterment. The objective of this component of my fieldwork has not been to present a conclusive study by any means. Rather, the intent has been to provide a general analysis of the role popular arts can have in processes of community development. Due to limitations of time, my methodology or approach with these organizations was primarily based in observation and informal dialogue with staff and participants.

4.4.1 "Projeto Dancas Populares" at Colegio Dom Bosco

"Projeto Dancas Populares" (Popular Dance Project) is an initiative of The City of Recife's Department of Education. The mandate of the project is to expose students to popular culture of the Northeast so as to validate popular culture as an important aspect of learning. One of the principal objectives being to "steer youth away from marginal activities" (transcribed from conversation with Professor Gordo, 1997).

Escola (school) Dom Bosco is one of four public schools in the Regiao Metropolitana de Recife (Metropolitan Region of Recife) participating in the project. Dom Bosco is located in Bairro (district) Jardim Sao Paulo, one of the 16 bairros of RPA 5.

The focus of the project at Dom Bosco is on teaching the art of capoeira to students at the elementary level, between the ages of 5 and 12. The project at Dom Bosco commenced in November of 1997 and is currently still running.

During my stay in Recife, I visited Dom Bosco approximately once every two weeks. I would like to acknowledge that though this is not much time, both staff and

students were very open in sharing their experiences with me. Perhaps another limitation was that the project had just begun, therefore the only experience for both staff and students to draw upon was the present one. Dialogue between myself and project staff was based primarily around objectives and process. Dialogue with the students was much more personal in nature, sharing the experience of the moment as well as sharing parts of themselves and in turn my sharing part of myself.

The school itself was modest in its facilities with 8 classrooms, a kitchen and 2 bathrooms. The staff consisted of the Diretora (principal), approximately 7 teachers and Capoeira instructor Professor Gordo. However, only Diretora Matilde and Professor Gordo were directly involved in the project. Professor Gordo was hired by the Department of Education for the Projeto Dancas Populares. His primary responsibility was teaching capoeira twice a week. The public school system in Recife divides the school day into 2 or 3 sessions. Some students have classes in the morning, some in the afternoon and some in the evening. Dom Bosco had two groups, the morning and the afternoon. A hot lunch donated by a local restaurant was provided for both groups daily.

The project was set up so that both groups had the option to participate. Professor Gordo went to Dom Bosco for approximately three hours (including the lunch hour) twice a week, once for the morning session and once for the afternoon session. Participation in the project can be described as mandatory with the option not to participate. The class was integrated into the curriculum, but if a student did not want to participate their choice was respected and they would do another activity. I began my visits to Colegio Dom Bosco at the end of November of 1997. In the first classes that I observed there were 7 students participating in the morning session and 8 in the afternoon session. By the end of March of 1998 participation had increased to 16 students in the morning and 19 in the afternoon.

Many of the students at Dom Bosco resided in a nearby favela, Roda de Fogo. Many of them were facing social problems, primarily poverty, and some alcoholism in the family and abuse. Most of the students who participated in the capoeira classes were

male. Both the Diretora and Prof. Gordo attributed this to either resistance from a parent and/or to the art still being perceived as 'masculine'. The majority of participants were non-white (see appendix A for profile of students).

Attitudes towards the project from the students who participated were very positive. There was a sense of enjoyment in the physical activity and interest in Professor Gordo's stories of the history, practice and social relevance of capoeira. It was easy to see that the children liked Gordo and he was good at keeping them interested by his ability to tell interesting stories. One of the principle goals expressed by both the Diretora and Prof. Gordo was of empowerment for the children. The hope was that through learning capoeira the children would come to feel a sense of accomplishment and increased self-worth. The idea was that this was to be achieved not only by a sense of physical accomplishment but also in learning about an art form that played an important part in the history and psychology of their social reality.

As Rahman (1993:207) and others have suggested one of the essential elements for achieving empowerment is affinity with a situation or a sense of collective identity. In observing the classes and the students' responses, there seemed to have been an affinity for several students to capoeira as an Afro-Brazilian art form. Diretora Matilde expressed her point of view as introducing capoeira "as a potential for the children to explore their sense of selves by learning about their culture with a positive role model" (Diretora Matilde, *Colegio Dom Bosco, Recife: 1997*).

In terms of the project objectives, the program was too young at that time for the staff to evaluate its accomplishments in the longer term. Both staff members (here I refer to the Diretora and Professor) agreed that the project was having a positive short-term effect, their prediction being that the longer term would yield increasingly positive results. One of the goals for the longer term was to give the participants opportunities to perform as a group in local events and festivals.

Below is a list of the qualitative results of the project as expressed by Diretora Matilde in March of 1998:

- Empowerment
- An overall improvement in psychological well being
- Increased positive attitude toward school
- Pride in abilities / Desire to share new skills with others

4.4.2 Centro de Educacao e Cultura Darue Malungo

The 'Centre of Education and Culture Darue Malungo' was established in 1988 under the original name of Centro de Apoio a Comunidade Carente Darue Malungo (Centre of Assistance to the Destitute Community Darue Malungo). It is located in the favela known as Chao de Estrelas in bairro Campina do Barreto.

Darue Malungo was borne as an initiative of the community itself. The centre was started by local residents Mestre Meia Noite and Vilma (the current Director/co-ordinator) in an abandoned plot in Chao de Estrelas. The construction of the centre was a community-based effort. The building itself has been significantly improved over the years according to staff. It now has a kitchen, television room, 4 classrooms, 2 bathrooms, small woodworking shop, a patio and a garden.

Mestre Meia Noite described Darue Malungo as "a focus of cultural resistance acting as a centre of popular education and conscientizacao of Afro-Pernambucano cultural expressions" (Mestre Meia Noite, Darue Malungo;1997). Darue Malungo is open to children and youth between the ages of 3 and 18 Monday to Saturday 7am to 5pm. Co-ordinator of Darue Malungo, Vilma, quoted that on average 100 children and youth come through the centre daily (Darue Malungo; 1997).

The following is a list of the main services offered by Darue Malungo:

- Meals
- Various educational activities (including reading, writing, arithmetic)

- Bumba -meu-boi
- Capoeira
- Frevo
- Ciranda
- Reggae
- Maracatu
- Remunerative activities (such as building instruments for sale, performances)

Mestre Meia Noite expressed that their hope when creating Darue Malungo was that it would provide a positive experience of education through a popular approach that focuses on cultural expressions that the community would identify with. The centre was not created to take the place of the state's formal system, but to augment it (Mestre Meia Noite, Recife:1997).

I visited Darue Malungo approximately once every two weeks for a period of 5 months. During my first visit to Darue Malungo, I met Mestre Meia Noite, discussed my research with him and requested to visit and watch his capoeira class on the days of my visits. As this was acceptable to him, I made a point of going during his class time. In the classes that I visited there were usually between 15 and 20 children and youth participating, with a mix of male and female ranging in age between 5 and 18. Mestre Meia Noite co-ordinates all of the 'cultural' classes and taught many of them. There were various volunteers at Darue Malungo who contributed to all aspects of the centre; all were local residents.

An important element expressed by Mestre Meia Noite was that Darue Malungo be conceived of as a 'movimento negro' (black movement). As is the case in many favelas in Recife, most of the residents of Chao de Estrelas were of Afro-Brazilian classification. Generally speaking, 'Afro-Brazilian' signifies people of color including all phenotypic categories such as moreno, pardo, negro, mulatto, caboclo, sarara - excluding white. Mestre Meia Noite expressed that as a movimento negro. Darue Malungo was to be a space of positive values of Afro-Brazilian identity where positive self-image and a sense

of collective identity would be nurtured. Mestre Meia Noite had a painting of a tree with its roots exposed on the wall of the terrace where he taught his classes, he often made reference to the importance of this image during his classes. He expressed this image as signifying the need to nourish everything that grows with food, with love and with knowledge of the origins of all things. He applied this to capoeira, discussing the importance of learning about all aspects of the art and exploring the relevance it has in the lives of those who are a part of it both past and present.

Darue Malungo has been very successful in fulfilling many of its objectives. In the decade that the centre has been open, Mestre Meia Noite and Vilma articulated that they have witnessed positive changes in many children and youth and suggest that there has been a positive effect on the community as a whole. Some of the qualitative results for individual participants being (Darue Malungo: 1998):

- Empowerment
- Positive identification as Afro-Brazilians
- Community mobilization (as a 'movemento negro')
- An increase in commitment to the concept of education
- A decreased tendency of the children and youth toward marginal activities
- Opportunities for 'employment' as performers and crafts-people

The centre itself has also been very successful in receiving recognition for its work including the abilities of the children and youth. Darue Malungo is frequently contracted by both public and private agencies for cultural performances and workshops and is also renowned for producing quality instruments that are sold to some very well known local artists. These aspects are also very significant in the successes of Darue Malungo, encouraging the children and youth to learn skills that are valued by the broader community.

4.5 A Focus on ASSOCAPE - Association of Capoeiras of Pernambuco

The organization ASSOCAPE was my primary focus during my stay in Recife. Mestre Duwalle, the President of ASSOCAPE, accepted me as both his student and as researcher. My methodology was primarily participant observation, dialogue, and informal interviews.

4.5.1 ASSOCAPE: Background

ASSOCAPE was established in 1993 as an initiative of various mestres of Recife to unite capoeira groups acting independently. The association's first President was Mestre Piraja (Macondes Luis), who today is one of Recife's oldest and most respected Mestres. ASSOCAPE is located in the Casa da Cultura de Pernambuco, in the bairro of Sao Jose. According to Mestre Piraja, he and others conceived the idea as a new instrument of 'battle' against racial and social discrimination with the objective of education and community building (Mestre Piraja, Recife: 1997).

Figure 12. Mestre Piraja (holding microphone)



(To the right of Mestre Piraja is Mestre Carasco)

ASSOCAPE is a non-profit association whose mandate is as follows, "To maintain and teach theories, philosophy, history and practice of the art of capoeira. To publish texts, books, to conduct seminars, discuss potential governmental and non-governmental projects related to the art of capoeira, and to continue to promote discussions of the cultural and social importance of the practice of capoeira in the State, the Country and the World" (Estatuto ASSOCAPE, 1993). The financial maintenance of the association as described in Article 5 of the Statute is as follows (Ibid):

- Membership fees
- Presentations by the association
- Classes and workshops
- Donations

The administrative bodies and their roles are listed below (Estatuto: ASSOCAPE, 1993):

- Executive Council (see below)
- Director of Events - coordinate and promote all events
- Accessory to Culture and Political Culture- discuss cultural and political-cultural projects, create partnerships with government or non-government organizations
- Fiscal Council - to verify budgets and balances to present to the general assembly
- General Assembly - (made up of all 'graduated' members, meaning from 'professor' to 'mestrisimo') meets every month on the first Friday of the month to discuss projects and issues of the association.

The administration of the association is as follows (Estatuto: ASSOCAPE, 1993):

- President (all positions elected by members)
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

The term of administration is two years. In 1997/1998 the acting President was Mestre Duwalle, the Vice President was Mestre Rubinho, the Secretary was Petronio and the Treasurer was Mestre Carasco.

All decisions are made based on the highest number of votes. Remuneration is for the sole purpose of the Association and not for personal gain. Any capoeira group or individual can become a member of ASSOCAPE. There is a monthly membership fee, however a sliding scale is applied ranging from R\$0 - R\$20 with an honor system. All members are expected to participate in as many events of the association as possible.

In 1997/98 there were 14 capoeira groups affiliated with ASSOCAPE with a total membership of approximately 250. The following is an approximate profile of the association's members.

Table 5. ASSOCAPE Membership

| Age % | | | Gender % | | Afro-Brazilian |
|-------|-------|----------|----------|--------|----------------|
| 0-10 | 10-30 | Above 30 | Male | Female | Origin % |
| 10 | 65. | 25 | 70 | 30 | 80 |

(Secretary-Petronio, ASSOCAPE, 1998)

As members were from different groups and from various localities, Mestre Duwalle hosted an open Roda (game) every Friday for members as well as visitors. The location of ASSOCAPE was ideal for exposure of the association. As previously mentioned it is located in the Casa de Cultura (House of Culture) in the centre of Recife. The Casa da Cultura was well visited by both locals and tourists. On Friday evenings, during the open rodas, there were usually between 20 and 50 spectators.

Figure 13. Friday Roda at Casa da Cultura



At the end of each roda on the Fridays, Mestre Duwalle would also talk about the philosophy and upcoming events of ASSOCAPE. Following this was a question and discussion period, where members or spectators could enter into a dialogue around all aspects of the art. As well as his role as President of ASSOCAPE, Mestre Duwalle also had his capoeira group, Capoeira Brasileira (one of the 14 member groups of ASSOCAPE). His classes were held at the same location, the Casa da Cultura on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

4.5.2 Observations from the field

As I mentioned previously, Mestre Duwalle gave me the opportunity to be a visiting student of capoeira during the course of my field research. Mestre Duwalle had 19 committed students at the time, 4 who were "graduados" (level of instructor and higher). All 4 graduados were male. 11 of his students were male and 8 were female. Mestre Duwalle, the secretary Petronio (who was present at every class and event), and the students were extremely welcoming which allowed for the formation of friendships. I

believe that by participating in the classes (and not relying solely on observation and a more formal type of dialogue) that I was able to get to know some of the more personal experiences of some of the other students in relation to capoeira and various aspects of their social reality.

For some of the students, capoeira was primarily a sport, albeit chosen over others for being 'an Afro-Brazilian expression'. For others it was a way of life, particularly for those at higher levels of 'graduacao'. The following table provides a brief profile of the 4 aluno's (student's) graduado's of Grupo Capoeira Brasileira:

Table 6. Profile of Graduados of Grupo Capoeira Brasileira

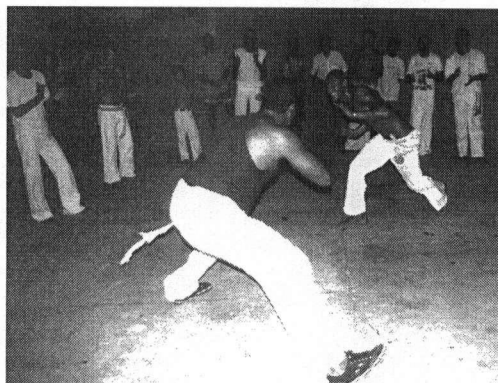
| Classification and name of graduado | Age | Years of formal education | Bairro | Afro-Brazilian Origin |
|-------------------------------------|-----|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Contra Mestre Indio | 26 | 4 | Piedade* | Yes |
| Professor Capado | 23 | 5 | Campina do Barreto* | Yes |
| Professor Trilha | 24 | 7 | Imbura | Yes |
| Instrutor Choro | 20 | 3 | Brigadeira* | Yes |

* indicates residence in a favela

Some commonalities between the 4 graduado's were:

- Described capoeira (and ASSOCAPE) as a movimento negro
- Described capoeira as a tool for examining the world critically (with an Afro-Brazilian perspective)
- Described capoeira as having significantly changed their lives
- Described capoeira as a way of life (and defined themselves by capoeira)
- Referred to capoeira as their 'education'

Figure 14. Mestre Duwalle and Professor Capado



My interviews and dialogue with students was primarily with those who were of the group Capoeira Brasileira. However, the mestres that I interviewed and dialogued with were from various groups, all members of ASSOCAPE. There were no female graduadas in ASSOCAPE to date. The following table provides a brief profile of the 9 mestres interviewed:

Table 7. Profile of the 9 Mestres Interviewed

| Mestre | Group | Bairro | Age | Years of Capoeira | Afro-Brazilian Origin |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Mestre Piraja | (no longer teaching) | Morro da Conceicao | 58 | 40 | Yes |
| Mestre Duwalle | Capoeira Brasileira | Campina do Barreto | 39 | 29 | Yes |
| Mestre Coloral | Birimbao Dorado | Maranguape | 27 | 17 | Yes |
| Mestre Russo | | Casa Amarela | 33 | 21 | |
| Mestre Carasco | Capoeira Vale Tudo | Paulista | 28 | 15 | Yes |
| Mestre Cancao | Senzala | Macaxeira | 41 | 22 | |
| Mestre Piu | Quilombo | Apipocos | 32 | 21 | Yes |
| Mestre Spinella | Leao do Norte | Peixinhos | 38 | 26 | Yes |
| Mestre Rubinho | C. Brasileira | Mustardinha | 43 | 28 | Yes |

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of any field research is presenting the stories of those involved. In this section I attempt to present the stories of these individuals in a manner that reflects their voices as much as possible. Rather than presenting every individual's answer to every posed question, I have decided to present quotes and stories organized around themes valid to this research. Also, due to the nature of my approach, I learned as much, if not more, from spending time with these members of ASSOCAPE, engaging in informal dialogue and participating in the association's events.

Capoeira and Socialization

"Capoeira teaches you to live inside and outside of the ring, to express confrontation and resolution – in order to survive in society one has to be clever, mandingueiro, sensitive, perceptive and self-aware " (transcribed from a conversation with Mestre Piraja of Recife, 1997). The notion of linking the world of capoeira to social reality was expressed by many members. Firstly, was the notion that an exchange exists between learning and experience that occurs inside the ring with that outside of the ring. This link seemed to be partly about exploring strategies for survival in both contexts. For example, some of the strategies discussed were, learning to critically examine situations and people and knowing how to respond and act. I believe that this reflects Paulo Freire's concept of conscientization, the above quote is but one illustration.

Secondly, were the many stories of how capoeira became an agent for positive change in individual's lives. "When I was growing up, my father abandoned the family while I was still a baby and so my mother raised myself and two brothers in a shack in Campina. There were a lot of drugs and other problems I could have explored. I saw M. Duwalle teaching capoeira for the first time when I was 8 years old and I wanted to join right away. We didn't have any money to pay him, but he let me train with him anyway. Learning capoeira as a child gave me confidence and made me value my body and my mind. Capoeira has taken me on a very positive path, it has given me a community of friends and has helped me to understand myself as an Afro-Brazilian. It is one of the most important things in my life." (Professor Capado, 1998).

Capoeira and Afro-Brazilian Identity

"Capoeira is the manifestation of Afro-Brazilian culture, it is an instrument of protest against racism and all discrimination. As capoeiristas we are proud of our arts history, for us it is a celebration of liberation." (Mestre Duwalle, 1997). Many of the capoeiristas that I spoke with described capoeira as a movimento negro. Defining capoeira as 'Afro-Brazilian' is almost always the first and most important characteristic cited in any discussion of the art by its practitioners. As the quote above illustrates, there is a strong sense of community between capoeiristas, a sense of a shared experience and struggle - two important aspects of any social movement. "When I started capoeira I was 13 years old. I was getting to that age where you start to understand the world around you a little more. I started to really see the discrimination towards black people. I think that I found capoeira (or it found me) at the perfect time. I was proud to be learning an art that was created by African slaves." (Mestre Carasco, 1998).

Capoeira as Non-formal Education

"Capoeira is discipline. You learn to lose your arrogance, to be humble and to respect others." (Mestre Piu, 1998). All members that I spoke with described capoeira as a form of education. The most common reference being the role it plays in passing on the history of a people and the place that this history has in contemporary social reality. "The capoeira master is an educator. He or she has to have life experience and has to be reflective and responsible so as not to lead his students in the wrong direction" (Mestre Cancao, 1998). "The capoeira master is like a father (mother), he has to take responsibility for his actions and his students, he has to know how to resolve problems and he has to always be there for his students" (Mestre Barrao, 2000).

ASSOCAPE has also participated in many public events including demonstrations, workshops and lectures. One such event that I was able to attend was a

public roda followed by a talk by Mestre Duwalle on the 20th of November, National Day of Black Consciousness (the anniversary of the death of Rei Zumbi).

Figures 15, 16 and 17. Roda on the National Day of Black Consciousness



In the same week, Mestre Duwalle was asked to be a panelist in a discussion sponsored by a local newspaper "Djumbay - Informativo da comunidade negra pernambucana" on "Black Realities". Such events are very important to the members of ASSOCAPE. Several members expressed the need to increase participation in public events, thus increasing exposure of the work of ASSOCAPE to the broader community.

Capoeira and Community Processes

According to Hanchard, "Afro-Brazilians increasingly identify the need to use cultural practice and production as organizing principles against racial oppression, and as tools for constructing and enacting Afro-Brazilian identities. In many cases, these organizations are successful attempts at creating both spaces for and values of Afro-Brazilian identity and community" (Hanchard, 1999:76).

"ASSOCAPE has been successful in uniting capoeiristas in Recife. It is important for us to organize and unite to be a stronger force in claiming a positive space in our society. Believe it or not some still refer to us, capoeiristas, as malandros (Mestre Coloral, 1997).

"Capoeira is an excellent tool for working with youth from 'comunidades carentes' (destitute communities). My academy is in Casa Amarela in an invasao (invasion). The community is poor as are most of my students. My role is not only as a 'sports' teacher, it is much more than that. Capoeira not only gives my students exercise, they learn to feel good about themselves, they learn to be respectful of each other, they learn about our history, and they feel they belong to something" (Mestre Russo, 1998).

ASSOCAPE has been successful in facilitating acceptance of capoeira as a 'valid' art form. In turn, this has validated the role of teachers of the art. Many of the graduados expressed the need for increasing the possibilities of 'making their living' as capoeiristas

(as teachers, performers and leaders). Some mestres expressed that the opportunity to do so is becoming more of a reality and that ASSOCAPE has been a part of this process.

4.6 Summary

Table 8. Summary of Projeto Dancas Populares, Centro de Educacao e Cultura Darue Malungo and ASSOCAPE

| Organization | Popular Culture | Movimento Negro | Type of Institution | Target group |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Projeto Dancas Populares | Yes | No | Government | Local school children |
| Centro de Educacao e Cultura Darue Malungo | Yes | Yes | C.B.O. | Local Community |
| Associacao de Capoeiras de Pernambuco | Yes | Yes | Grassroots | Various Communities |

| Qualitative Results | | |
|---|--|---|
| Projeto Dancas Populares | Centro de Educacao e Cultura Darue Malungo | Associacao de Capoeiras de Pernambuco |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment • An overall improvement in psychological well being • Increased positive attitude toward school • Pride in abilities / Desire to share new skills with others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment • Positive identification as Afro-Brazilians • Community mobilization (as a 'movimento negro') • An increase in commitment to the concept of education • A decreased tendency of the children and youth toward marginal activities • Fosters employment opportunities for youth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowerment • Positive identification as Afro Brazilians • Qualitative life changes of individuals • Non-formal education • Social Learning • Community mobilization |

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This section draws conclusions regarding the relationship of the art of capoeira to development processes and approaches including community mobilization, empowerment, social learning and non-formal education. The research has drawn on the experience of three separate organizations and their diverse approaches in order to examine qualitative changes in participant's lives. Statements of participants, staff, organizers and leaders of the three organizations, as well as my own observations indicate there is a basis from which to view the art of capoeira as a useful tool of 'development'. The following sections will summarize this premise and will also explore areas for further research.

5.2 Capoeira in Recife: Achievements and Alternatives

Overall, participants of the three organizations expressed that their organization was successfully in achieving their respective mandates. However, areas for improvement were also discussed. This section will summarize achievements and alternatives as expressed in each context, followed by a brief discussion of the links between the theoretical concepts presented in this thesis and popular arts (capoeira).

Projeto Dancas Populares is an example of a government agency recognizing the validity of popular culture as a tool for learning and for positive socialization. From the perspective of the two staff directly involved in the project, Projeto Dancas Populares

was having a positive overall effect on the school and on individual participants. One concern was the low level of participation by girls compared to that of boys. There was expressed interest by both staff members in exploring ways in which to encourage the participation of girls. Another area of interest expressed by Professor Gordo was further integration of capoeira and other popular expressions into school curriculum.

Centro de Educacao e Cultura Darue Malungo is an example of a community based initiative to offer educational and cultural programs to children and youth of the local community. Darue Malungo has been very successful in the delivery of its programs. It has also succeeded in establishing links with government agencies, N.G.O.'s and other C.B.O.'s. Such linkages have created opportunities for the children and youth to share their skills, talents and knowledge. According to staff, this further contributes to empowerment of the participants and in some cases has created new productive avenues for the youth. Regarding future directions of their organization, staff expressed the importance of maintaining and creating new linkages with other organizations, stressing the importance of opportunities to share resources and experience with other organizations working in similar situations. At the time that this research was carried out, Darue Malungo had established ties with two N.G.O.'s (Centro de Articulacao Retome sua Vida and Projeto Pe no Chau) as well as with the government agency Conselho Estadual de Crianca e Adolescent (State Council of Children and Adolescents).

Associacao de Capoeiras de Pernambuco is an example of successful organization at the grassroots. In Mestre Duwalle's words, "ASSOCAPE has been successful in developing its work in various areas. In elevating the theory of education and learning of capoeira as a valuable pedagogical, artistic and cultural resource. In validating the Mestre of Capoeira as a transmitter and teacher of culture and knowledge. We, ASSOCAPE, believe that we are contributing to the cultivation of values and ethics based in respect and freedom for all members of society. ASSOCAPE also encourages the capoeirista in the development of his/her character, dignity and personal valorization" (Mestre Duwalle, Recife:1998).

Some areas that were expressed by members of ASSOCAPE as areas of interest for future directions were:

- To become more involved in working with 'comunidades carentes' (destitute communities)
- Create linkages with different organizations such as universities, schools, government organizations and N.G.O.'s.
- Expand the Association to include more groups in Recife in order to create more unity within the capoeira community, and to have a stronger political position.
- Continually explore new avenues through which to make their work known to the broader community.
- Encourage participation by women, and encourage female members in their journeys to higher levels of 'graduacao'.

Popular Arts and Community Mobilization:

In the second chapter, the definition of community mobilization was presented as people engaged in activities that have a predominantly social or collective objective. Of the three organizations presented in chapter 4, ASSOCAPE, in particular, fits this definition. Rahman suggests that for marginalized (oppressed) people to be mobilized for economic and social development, they have to be mobilized for resistance of exploitation (1993:21). ASSOCAPE can be seen as an example of the political force of capoeiristas, organizing with a collective objective.

As discussed in chapter 4, ASSOCAPE seeks to elevate the social, economic and psychological well being of its members. The association facilitates changing the (historically negative) perception of capoeira in the broader community. Also, one of its principal objectives is to combat discrimination and encourage values of acceptance and respect. Centro de Cultura e Educacao Darue Malungo is another example of 'mobilizing for resistance against exploitation'. Darue Malungo identifies itself as a 'movimento negro' and as a focus of 'cultural resistance'.

Empowerment

Empowerment was expressed as a qualitative outcome in all three organizations studied. In Projeto Dancas Populares, empowerment was witnessed at the level of the individual. In Centro de Cultura e Educacao Darue Malungo and ASSOCAPE, both individual and collective empowerment were identified. Rahman presents three qualitative elements of empowerment which are relevant to all three organizations: organization under the control of the underprivileged, self-awareness of the disadvantaged derived from collective self-inquiry and reflection of one's social environment, and self-reliance, which is strengthened by collective identity (1993:207).

Social Learning and Non-Formal Education

Central to social learning theory is dialogue, Paulo Freire's 'dialogical theory of action' involves subjects who meet to name the world in order to transform it. Chapter 4 presented the notion of the game of capoeira as a 'dialogue' where each player expresses his/her own creativity and personality (Almeida, 186:153). More specifically, ASSOCAPE exposes discrimination in the social context of its members (thereby 'naming the world') and attempts to reach the broader community (through public demonstrations, lectures etc), thus attempting to validate popular communication and local knowledge.

Furthermore, according to Freire, in order to surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognize its causes (1970:29). The art of capoeira tells stories of slave culture in Brazil, making reference to social, economic and psychological implications in the context of the past and present. Also, in the game of capoeira, the players explore strategies of domination and liberation. For many players, capoeira represents the spirit of non-cooperation with oppression and of liberation.

In making a case for the importance of non-formal education, Illich suggests that most learning is the result of unhampered participation in a meaningful setting. The art

of capoeira presents many examples of non-formal learning. The oral traditions of capoeira are particularly significant. The songs of capoeira are an important vehicle for transmitting history, philosophy and social criticism.

Finally, as suggested by Beltrao (1980:6), dominant culture limits the effects of more direct communication and it does not consider the socio-economic or cultural situation of the community. Therefore it is essential to validate vehicles of communication of the popular classes as this is where their ideas, reality and experiences are expressed. Capoeira is but one example.

5.3 Popular Arts: Significance for Development

Often in development work, one of the initial challenges lies in defining the 'community' and organizing individuals around the need or needs not met. As history and experience have shown, there are many legitimate strategies that have been explored for this purpose. However, in some cases one could say that there have been lost opportunities. When culture is recognized as a fundamental consideration of development processes, development workers and planners are able to discover new modes of communication with marginalized groups. As this study has illustrated, modes of organization may already exist outside of conventional or dominant paradigms and they need to be recognized as 'communities'.

The concept of local knowledge is also fundamental to this discussion. In validating such modes of organization, one is also validating local experience, knowledge and communication. As Rahman (1993:92) articulates in his discussion of participatory action research, returning to the people the legitimacy of the knowledge they are capable of producing and their right to use this knowledge is considered by PAR to be fundamental in the promotion of its ideology of social transformation. This study has attempted to illustrate that associations and organizations based in culture and created around a popular art (such as capoeira) can act as a link between popular groups and dominant groups. In this context such groups have successfully fulfilled the initial stages of the community development process; they have organized themselves. According to Professor Luis De La Mora (Recife, 1997), of UFPE (Federal University of Pernambuco) there are three principles common to social movements:

- The principle of Identity (solidarity/unity)
- The principle of Opposition (a need not met)
- The principle of Viability

This study has shown that popular arts can be a medium where such organization occurs organically and at the grassroots. It has also shown that popular arts may hold some of the keys to access local knowledge, becoming effective tools for 'education' and 'communication' in development.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

The experience of the three organizations discussed illustrates the effective role that cultural manifestations can play in organizing individuals and in facilitating change at the level of the individual, the local community and at the broader community. A qualitative analysis has shown that empowerment is a key outcome of all three organizations and that they encourage several of the development processes that this thesis has explored.

Perhaps the biggest gap in this research is the question of gender. The question of women's role in capoeira was addressed by all three organizations to different extents. It was voiced as a significant concern by ASSOCAPE in particular. Historically, capoeira was strictly male. I have found no research that has studied when or in what context women started to emerge as capoeiristas, and though there are women mestres today, they were not to be found in Recife. From my dialogue with women students and my observations, the 'female capoeirista' does not yet seem to have a clearly defined space in the world of capoeira (I am speaking in the context of Recife only). Within capoeira there exist characteristics of machismo which make it a more challenging and complex environment for women. This is an area that should draw much attention in the future as participation by women is increasing.

Another area for further exploration is suggested by the expressed interest in creating linkages with other organizations. It would be useful to investigate how such linkages work and what role they could fulfill in each organization. There were several other organizations that use the art of capoeira in Recife which merit further study:

- FUNDAC (Foundation of the Child and the Adolescent)
- Mirim Brasil
- Centro de Articulacao Retome sua Vida
- Grupo Ruas e Pracas
- Movimento Nacional de Meninos e Meninas
- Desafio Jovem

This is only a partial list from which one could begin to explore the different approaches, target groups, qualitative results and the potential for future linkages.

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Appendix A: Profile of Participants of Projeto Dancas Populares

| Participants Group A | Sex | Age | Years of School | Bairro |
|----------------------|-----|-----|-----------------|--------|
| Jackson | M | 7 | 2 | r.f |
| Ana | F | 6 | 1 | Rf |
| Andre | M | 9 | 3 | Rf |
| Mauro | M | 11 | 2 | Rf |
| Christian | M | 11 | 4 | Jsp |
| Jane | F | 10 | 3 | Rf |
| Hugo | M | 9 | 2 | Rf |
| Fernanda | F | 10 | 4 | Rf |
| Davide | M | 9 | 2 | Rf |
| Nivaldo | M | 9 | 2 | Jsp |
| Romulo | M | 9 | 2 | Rf |
| Andrea | F | 11 | 4 | Rf |
| Luis | M | 12 | 6 | Rf |
| Teresa | F | 8 | 3 | Jsp |
| Marquinho | M | 6 | 1 | Rf |
| Daniel | M | 7 | 2 | Rf |

*Rf: Roda de Fogo

Jsp: Jardim Sao Paulo

| Participants Group B | Sex | Age | Years of School | Bairro |
|----------------------|-----|-----|-----------------|--------|
| Sandro | M | 6 | 1 | Rf |
| George | M | 11 | 5 | Rf |
| Louisa | F | 7 | 2 | Jsp |
| Valdinho | M | 12 | 6 | Rf |
| Patricia | F | 12 | 5 | Jsp |
| Jeffinho | M | 6 | 1 | Rf |
| Paula | F | 8 | 2 | Rf |
| Mario | M | 9 | 2 | Rf |
| Marcos | M | 8 | 2 | Rf |
| Joao | M | 10 | 4 | Rf |
| Lourdes | F | 6 | 1 | Jsp |
| Pedro | M | 9 | 3 | Rf |
| Isabel | F | 8 | 2 | Rf |
| Marcos | M | 11 | 4 | Rf |
| Janaina | F | 10 | 4 | Rf |
| Martin | M | 7 | 2 | Rf |
| Petruncio | M | 9 | 4 | Rf |
| Romualdo | M | 11 | 5 | Jsp |
| Cezinho | M | 7 | 3 | Jsp |

Appendix B: Interview Guide for Unstructured Interviews

When and how did you first become involved with capoeira?

What is your current level?

Are you teaching presently? If so, where?

(If you are teaching) could you talk about the community that you teach in?

What role do you see capoeira having in your community?

Have you applied capoeira to 'community' type of work? If so, how? And what were/are the results?

How long have you been a member of ASSOCAPE?

What is your vision of the role and mandate of ASSOCAPE?

How successful do you feel ASSOCAPE has been in fulfilling this mandate?

Can you describe the role capoeira has in your life?

Is there a relationship between what happens in the roda and life outside of the roda? If so, how would you describe this relationship?

What role does capoeira have in Brazilian society?