



**2010
STUDENT GUIDE**



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Welcome to Capoeira UCA.

First of all, let's thank Mestre Galo, Mestra Suelly, and Akal for editing this work.

This brief and informal guide will give you some insight into general aspects of capoeira, as well as some details about our school. It is designed to help you understand our system of training, as well as how you can get the most benefit from practicing capoeira. If you are a novice and do not want to read everything at once, please read the Summary.

Capoeira is a complex art with a rich historical trajectory, a full and meaningful cultural context, and contradictory interpretations. To acquire clear and comprehensive information on capoeira requires a significant level of responsibility from both the school and student. In the early seventies, levels of proficiency were established to accommodate students with different goals and time invested in the study of capoeira. Consequently, students will progress through distinct levels in terms of physical and technical capabilities, musical skills, and theoretical knowledge. These levels help students to measure their own progress and to visualize attainable goals. This guide has specific information that we require from our novices and advanced students as well. We encourage you to learn as much as possible from it. We hope that it inspires you to learn more about capoeira outside of classes and to bring your questions to us.

During classes, we will challenge you to extend the limits of your physical possibilities, but without losing perspective of the traditional values, rituals, and other aspects inherent to capoeira. Please, feel free to voice your concerns or questions, to any of us.

Good luck and good jogos.





Abbreviated Summary

Capoeira is a four-century-old, African-Brazilian art form that involves ritualized fighting techniques, music, and practical philosophy. It is practiced as a means of self expression, self defense, and self growth in Brazil, as well as in a large and growing number of countries.

The legal name of our school is “Capoeira Arts Foundation,” a 501 (c)(3) founded by Mestre Acordeon* and his students in 1979. Mestre Acordeon is a world-renowned capoeira master who learned the art from the legendary Mestre Bimba in Bahia, Brazil and is one of the pioneers to bring Capoeira to North America (1978).*

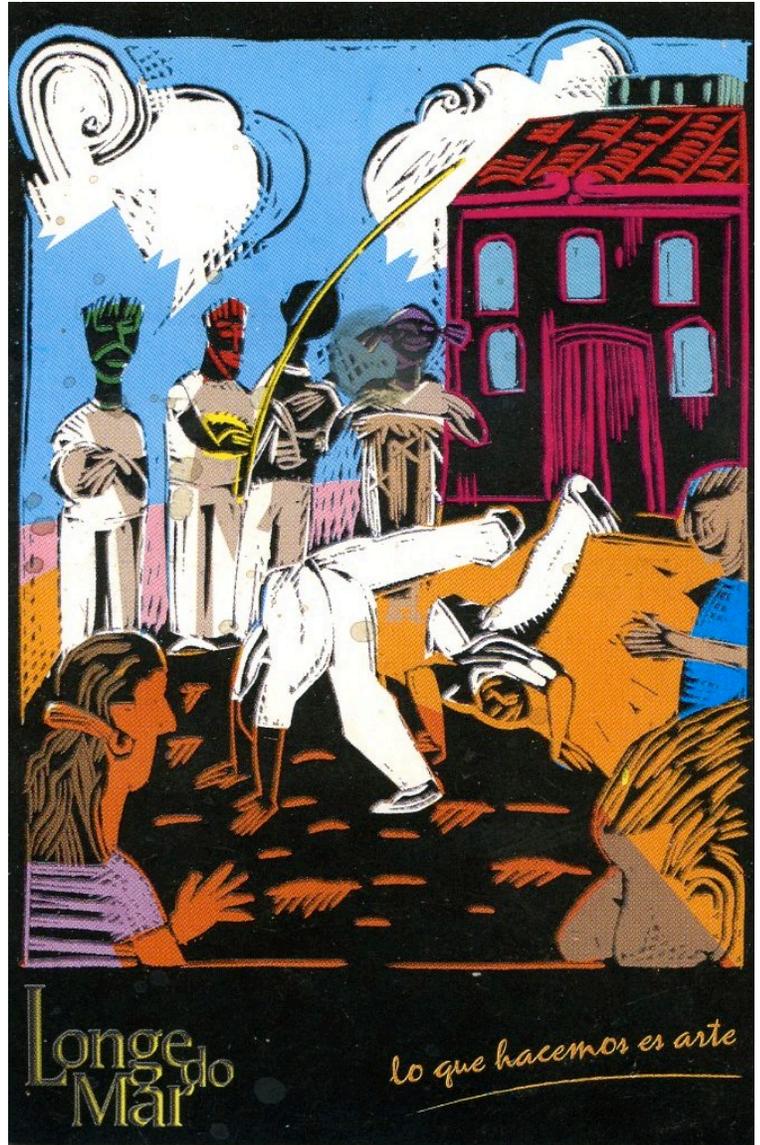
In 1992, Mestre Acordeon invited Mestre Rã to join forces in teaching together, and both founded the United Capoeira Association, an umbrella for our associated schools teaching throughout the United States. We refer to our school in Berkeley as “UCA Capoeira – Berkeley.” Other mestres of our association are: Mestre Rã, currently living in Brazil; Mestra Suelly (first American female Mestra) in Berkeley; Mestre Calango also in Berkeley; Mestre Galo in Denver; and Mestre Amunka in Ukiah, CA.

Our approach to capoeira derives from the traditional Capoeira Regional. This style of capoeira was developed by Mestre Bimba (1889-1974), who was a very charismatic, highly respected, and legendary Capoeira master. Mestre Bimba greatly contributed to the survival and growth of Capoeira in the 20th century. He opened the first legal Capoeira school in Brazil and developed an efficient method of teaching that brought respect to the practice of the art, while preserving its authenticity and main characteristics.

Like most contemporary schools, our training system runs on annual cycles that begin and end with a ceremony called “batizado.” During this ceremony, new students are welcomed into the school and the work and progress of the more advanced students are acknowledged through a promotion to a higher level. The levels are shown on the next page.

* More about Mestre Acordeon:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bira_Almeida



LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT

Comprehensive Student Program: Levels I, II, and III

This program is designed to give the student a solid foundation in capoeira in terms of physical development, historical understanding, and knowledge of capoeira music and rituals. A capoeirista may remain at the level of *cordão azul*, the highest level in the Comprehensive Student Program, as long as he or she wishes, continuing to develop their skills, knowledge, and enjoyment of capoeira.

Level I - **Calouro(a)**: Term for the novice student who has not participated in her first *batizado*. At this level, the student has no *cordão* (cord or belt).

Level II - **Batizado(a)**: is a generic term for the student who has received his first *cordão* and is in one of the following sub-levels:

Cordão verde (green cord)

Cordão verde/amarelo (green/yellow cord)

Cordão amarelo (yellow cord)

Level III - **Graduado(a)**: Term for the students who pass to a blue cord capoeirista involving the levels of:

Cordão verde/azul (green/blue cord)

Cordão amarelo/azul (yellow/blue cord)

Cordão azul (blue cord)

Level IV - **Formando(a)**: Term for a stage in which the students polish their knowledge and skills and decide whether to continue their training toward becoming a UCA-endorsed teacher.

Post-graduate levels: Levels V, VI, and VII

Level V - **Formado(a)** refers to individuals who have completed our student program and have successfully achieved the goals set for the *formandos*. They are entitled to open their own school under supervision of our association. Their *cordão* is a braid of green, yellow, and blue.

Level VI - **Contramestre(a)** refers to a *formado* who has significantly contributed to the school by teaching and assisting their *Mestre* in many different ways and who wishes to develop a career as a capoeira teacher (*mestre*).

Level VII - **Mestre(a)** is a traditional and valued title attributed to some capoeira teachers. To become a *mestre*, the capoeirista must have a long career teaching capoeira and satisfy the following requirements:

- 1) Be indicated to the title by a recognized and well-known teacher;
- 2) Gain unanimous acceptance as such by known mestres of the art; and
- 3) Achieve popular recognition within the larger capoeira community.

The four different levels of Mestre are:

Cordão verde/branco (green/white cord)

Cordão amarelo/branco (yellow/white cord)

Cordão azul/branco (blue/white cord)

Cordão branco (white cord)

Some common titles for those who teach or assist others teaching:

Monitor(a): for students at levels II and III who assist other teachers in their classes;

Instrutor(a): for students at the levels III and IV who are formally authorized to be responsible for teaching and administrating capoeira programs;

Professor(a): for students at level V (Formado) who are teaching or who may conduct their own capoeira schools.



Cover of little manual published in conjunction with the capoeira album recorded by Mestre Bimba under the label J.S. Discos JLP-101, Salvador, BA.

Required Techniques For The First Level: Cordão Verde

Old mestres used to say that capoeira had 7 movements. The rest were improvisations done in the heat of the jogo. Today, the number of techniques in capoeira has grown substantially. Students in one level may learn and practice techniques from more advanced levels. However, they must know well the ones required for his or her level.

During the examination for Cordão Verde, the *calouro* (novice) should demonstrate the following movements:

I - FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT

Ginga, including variations such as “passa pra atrás por baixo” and “por cima”

II - ATAQUES (attacks)

Usando a cabeça (using head)

Cabeçada alta (also called arpão de cabeça) and cabeçada baixa

Usando as mãos (using hands)

Asfixiante

Cutila

Galopante and galopante com *giro*

Palma (leque and sometimes "cutila")

Usando o cotovelo (using elbow)

Cotovelada

Godeme

Usando o joelho (using knees)

Joelhada

Usando os pés (using feet)

Armada

Benção

Martelo

Meia-lua de frente

Meia-lua de compasso

Pisão

Ponteira

Queixada

Derrubadas ou Quedas (take-downs)

Arrastão or boca de calças

Rasteira de chão

Tesoura de costas

Tesoura de frente

Vingativa

III - DEFESAS (defensive movements)

Au aberto, au fechado, au com rolê, and au enrolado
Cocorinha de Mestre Bimba, cocorinha na ponta dos pés (on the ball of the feet)
Esquivas (escapes): defesa 1 (um), defesa 2 (dois), and defesa 3 (três)

Movimentos de Chão (floor techniques)

Escala
Negativa de ataque
Negativa de defesa (negativa de Mestre Bimba)
Ponte
Queda de Rins
Rolê Baixo
Troca de negativas

IV - MESTRE BIMBA'S SEQUÊNCIA

In addition to knowing the individual attacks and defenses, the *calouro* needs to be able to demonstrate correctly with a partner the Sequência of Mestre Bimba, an important learning tool used in Capoeira Regional.

Sequence order:

- 01 - Capoeirista A: Two meia-luas de frente, armada, au, and rolê
Capoeirista B: Two cocorinhas, negativa, and cabeçada
- 02 - Capoeirista A: Two queixadas, cocorinha, benção, au, and rolê
Capoeirista B: Two cocorinhas, armada, negativa, and cabeçada
- 03 - Capoeirista A: Two martelos, cocorinha, benção, au, and rolê
Capoeirista B: Two esquivas and palmas, armada, negativa, and cabeçada
- 04 - Capoeirista A: Two godemes, arrastão, au, and rolê
Capoeirista B: Two esquivas and palmas, galopante, negativa, and cabeçada
- 05 - Capoeirista A: Giro, joelhada, au, and rolê
Capoeirista B: Cabeçada alta (arpão de cabeça), negativa, and cabeçada
- 06 - Capoeirista A: Meia-lua de compasso, cocorinha, joelhada, au, and rolê
Capoeirista B: Cocorinha, meia-lua de compasso, negativa, and cabeçada
- 07 - Capoeirista A: Armada, cocorinha, benção, au, and rolê
Capoeirista B: Cocorinha, armada, negativa, and cabeçada
- 08 - Capoeirista A: Benção, au, and rolê
Capoeirista B: Negativa, cabeçada

In terms of music in capoeira, the novice should be able to:

A - Identify the following berimbau rhythms:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 - São Bento Grande de Angola: | Press dobrão on the first clap and two hits open |
| 2 - Cavalaria: | Open, press, open |
| 3 - São Bento Grande de Regional: | Open, open, and pressed |
| 4 - Banguela: | Open, press, "waw" sound with the gourd |
| 5 - Angola: | Open, press, do not play the third clap |

B - Know how to hold the berimbau and play the instruments in a basic manner as shown in the following chart courtesy of Contramestre Galego from Capoeira Agua de Beber:

Instruments

This is a simple description of how to play the capoeira instruments. Played repetitively in a 4/4 rhythm.

Instrument	Count	1	2	3	4
Pandeiro		Open note (Thumb)	Smack (Hand)	Open (Thumb)	
Agogo		Low	High	Low	
Atabaque		Open (Fingers)	Bass (Palm)	Open (Fingers)	
Berimbau: Sao Bento Grande de Angola		▲	▼	▼	↑↑
Berimbau: Sao Bento Grande de Regional		▼	▼	▲	↑↑
Berimbau: Angola		▼	▲	○	↑↑

Berimbau Key:

- ▲ The high note produced by pressing the *dobrão* (rock) firmly against the *arame* (wire)
- ▼ The low note made by striking the *arame* without touching the *dobrão*
- ↑↑ The double buzz sound produced by holding the *dobrão* lightly against the *arame*
- No note or just the *caxixi* (shaker) played

Fundamental Principals of Capoeira

- Ginga is the way of the *capoeirista*.
- The senior *mestre* is in charge of the classes and *rodas*.
- The *berimbau* commands the *jogos* and dictates their character and speed.
- The *capoeiristas* exercise respect for the *mestres*, their partners, and themselves.
- All present observe the particular rules of the *academia* (physical space for the practice).

Rules and Recommendations of Our School

- As with any other form of demanding physical activity, please consult your physician before taking up capoeira classes, and let us know if you have any special conditions that we should be aware of.
- Capoeira is a vigorous art form that helps you to expand the limits of your perceived possibilities. You are your own judge during practice, and it is your responsibility to minimize the chances of getting hurt.
- Bring in only personal belongings that are necessary for class. We are not responsible for lost items left in the dressing rooms or in any other area of the school.
- Please show up 10 minutes early to class to sign in and get prepared. It is important to start on time because the beginning of the class is the warm up and explanation of the fundamental points of the lesson.
- If you arrive late, please warm up properly on the side and ask the teacher for permission to join class. Likewise, if you need to leave the mat for any reason, please let your teacher know.
- Wear your clean capoeira uniform and be sure that you are free of strong personal odor. We recommend that you train barefoot, but, if absolutely necessary, you may use a soft-soled sneaker such as ones specialized for martial arts.
- Consistency is important for your advancement, and we highly suggest that you attend as many classes as you can and that you participate in the various extra training opportunities and social activities that we promote from time to time.
- You will get the most benefit from a class in which you are fully engaged. As such, you will foster positive energy for the group as a whole.
- Always pay attention to what the teacher is saying and doing, and try every movement that you are requested to do, even if you aren't confident in your ability. Ask for assistance if you need it.
- A good athlete must avoid injuries and properly manage those that she or he cannot avoid. Take proper care of any injury you may incur in order to heal faster and to keep yourself strong. By the way, our statistics show that most of our students' injuries happen while they are involved in other activities outside of class.
- If you are injured, let your teacher know about your condition. Most of the time, even if you are not feeling well, you still may benefit from coming to class to observe or to play instruments and learn the songs. At the minimum, try to follow the lyrics of the chorus and to clap your hands with the rhythm.

- Capoeira is a vast subject with lots of information and possibilities of learning and having fun. You may participate in our informal music classes, Portuguese practice, additional workshops, and frequent events of our affiliated schools and of other capoeira groups. Also, in addition to our in-house store that carries many capoeira items, you may find articles, blogs, forums, videos, and capoeira music and lyrics on the internet. Be curious and ask questions! Take responsibility for your own learning.

- You will notice that in the capoeira world the teachers are addressed by their rank titles before their nicknames, such as Mestre, Mestra, Contramestre(a), or Professor(a). This treatment is part of the traditions of the art and is good manners.

- Last but not least, pay your dues on time and help our school to keep going strong and alive. We consider ourselves a community in which its members are involved in its maintenance and growth. So we expect you to assume responsibilities such as mopping the floor, writing grants, decorating the studio for a party, bringing friends, and volunteering in a broad range of activities the school may need. Remember, this is your *academia de capoeira*!

- To join the students' list contact: ProfessorRecruta.uca@gmail.com or go to the address below and click on "Join this group!" at the right top button:

<http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/CafeCapoeiristas/>

Our websites:

our schools: www.capoeira.bz.

our store: www.capoeiraarts.com

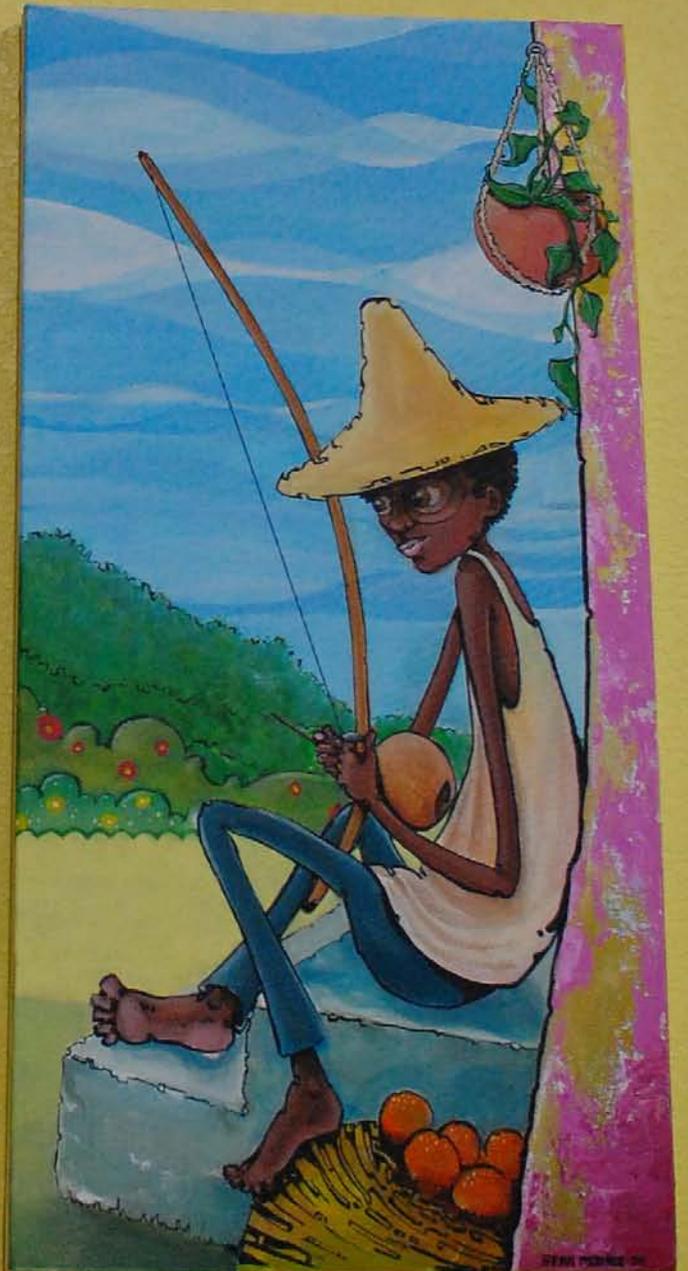
our main organization: www.capoeiraartsfoundation.org

our social project in Brazil: <http://www.projetokirimure.org/>

our partner in Berkeley: www.brasarte.com



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR ALL



The Capoeira Arts Foundation

Capoeira UCA is part of the Capoeira Arts Foundation (CAF). CAF was founded in 1981 under the name of World Capoeira Association. Its founding was a visionary leap toward the establishment of capoeira in the United States. In 2000, World Capoeira Association changed its name to Capoeira Arts Foundation, and a long-term plan was launched to continue preserving, teaching, and performing capoeira, as well as other arts related to African-Brazilian culture.

The goal of the Capoeira Arts Foundation is to create awareness of the depth and breadth of the African-Brazilian experience, with its primary focus on capoeira, a rich hybrid fight-like dance, dance-like fight, ritual, and way of life. To achieve its mission, CAF also presents artistic, social, and cultural events that aim to strengthen the community; publishes written works; produces musical recordings and documentary films; and is the primary supporter of Projeto Kirimurê, a project for disadvantaged youth in the neighborhood of Itapoã, in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. This diverse body of work attends to and supports the human and aesthetic values of our broad community. CAF welcomes similar organizations and individuals to participate in an ongoing dialogue of ideas and to develop collaborative projects that challenge and bring out the best in all of us.

The acronym UCA in our logo stands for “United Capoeira Association.” UCA was born of Mestre Acordeon's and Mestre Rã's desire to create an organization in which they could work together with similar philosophical ideals while preserving their own identities. Mestre Rã worked with Mestre Acordeon from 1992 to 2006, when he moved back to his school in Jundiai, São Paulo, Brazil. He is still an active mestre of UCA, along with Mestra Suelly, Mestre Galo, Mestre Calango, and Mestre Amunka. Today, some of their students teach capoeira in different locations under the umbrella of the United Capoeira Association. To learn more about our associated schools, go to www.capoeira.bz.

Many teachers in today's capoeira world have embraced the system of "groups" as the paradigm of capoeira organizations, a strategy which has been very positive for the growth of capoeira and for the survival of many. However, Mestre Acordeon comes from a time when the concept of group was yet to be developed. Therefore, we are not a large “group” as understood in the capoeira context, nor are we interested in many chapters. We strive to have a small community of students that appreciate the collective work we try to develop with respect for all capoeira tendencies and approaches in Brazil and abroad.

Substantial part of the Capoeira Arts Foundation revenues are dedicated to the *Instituto Mestre Acordeon* in Brazil. This non-profit organization carries on the valued social Projeto Kirimurê. Our vision regarding Projeto Kirimurê is to see young children from Itapoã, Bahia, Brazil learning about human values, social responsibility, and environmental education in order to empower them to choose a positive path in life and to influence their communities. We provide training tools to complement their limited formal education. Those kids are chosen from a neighborhood with a great number of under privileged inhabitants who suffer from lack of formal education, consequences of drug trafficking, and family violence. Our main emphasis is on the teaching of capoeira as a tool of personal transformation through discipline, self-knowledge, and mutual respect. We also offer other activities such as literacy classes, homework help, psychological follow up, and field trips to cultural events and organizations. Lastly, Projeto Kirimurê promotes an environment of beneficial cultural exchange between capoeiristas from schools in the United States and the youth of Itapoã.

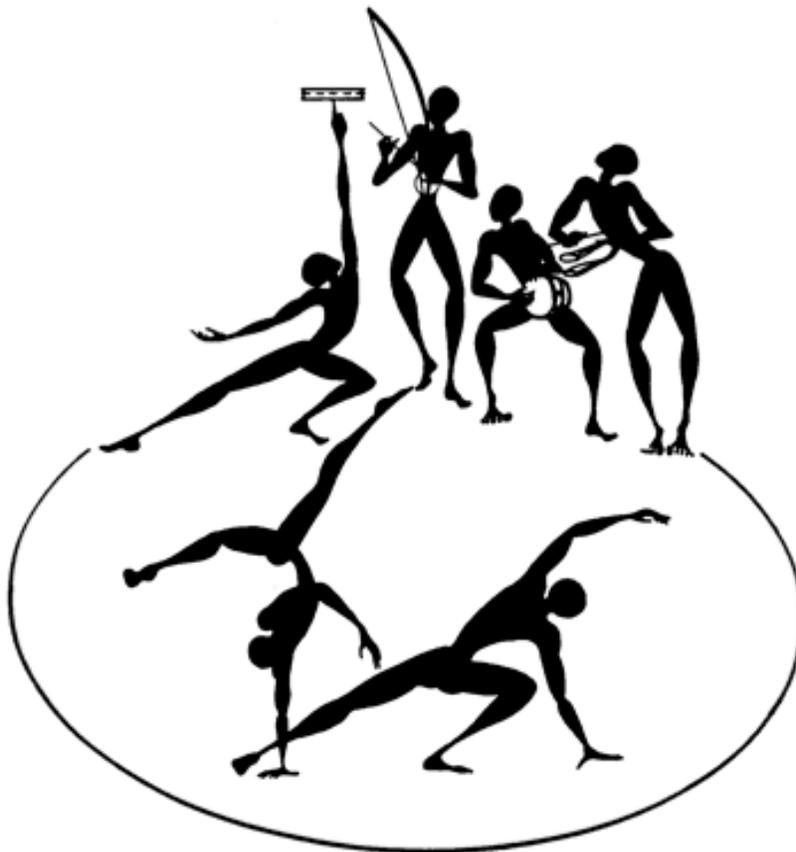
About Capoeira

(An adapted excerpt from the article "Capoeira: An Introductory History" by Mestre Acordeon)

Since 1978, when I began teaching capoeira in the United States, the number of people interested in this African-rooted art form has grown from a few curious individuals to a substantial community of thousands of Americans. Valued as an expressive and enticing art from a different cultural context, a subject of academic study, a means of physical conditioning, and a form of self-defense, capoeira has captured the imagination and the attention of many.

Capoeira is an art form that involves movement, music, and elements of practical philosophy. One experiences the essence of capoeira by playing a physical game called "jogo de capoeira" (game of capoeira) or simply "jogo." During this ritualized combat, two capoeiristas (players of capoeira) exchange movements of attack and defense in a constant flow while observing rituals and proper manners of the art. Both players attempt to control the space by confusing the opponent with feints and deceptive moves. During the jogo, the capoeiristas explore their strengths and weaknesses, fears and fatigue in a sometimes frustrating, but nevertheless enjoyable, challenging, and constant process of personal expression, self-reflection, and growth.

The speed and character of the jogo are generally determined by the many different rhythms of the berimbau, a one-string musical bow, which is considered to be the primary symbol of this art form. The berimbau is complemented by the pandeiro (tambourine), atabaque (single-headed standing drum), agogô (double bell), and reco-reco (grooved segment of bamboo scraped with a stick) to form a unique ensemble of instruments. Inspiring solos and collective singing in a call-and-response dialogue join the hypnotic percussion to complete the musical ambiance for the capoeira session. The session is called "roda de capoeira," literally "capoeira wheel," or simply "roda." The term roda, refers to the ring of participants that define the physical space for the two capoeiristas engaged in the ritualized combat.



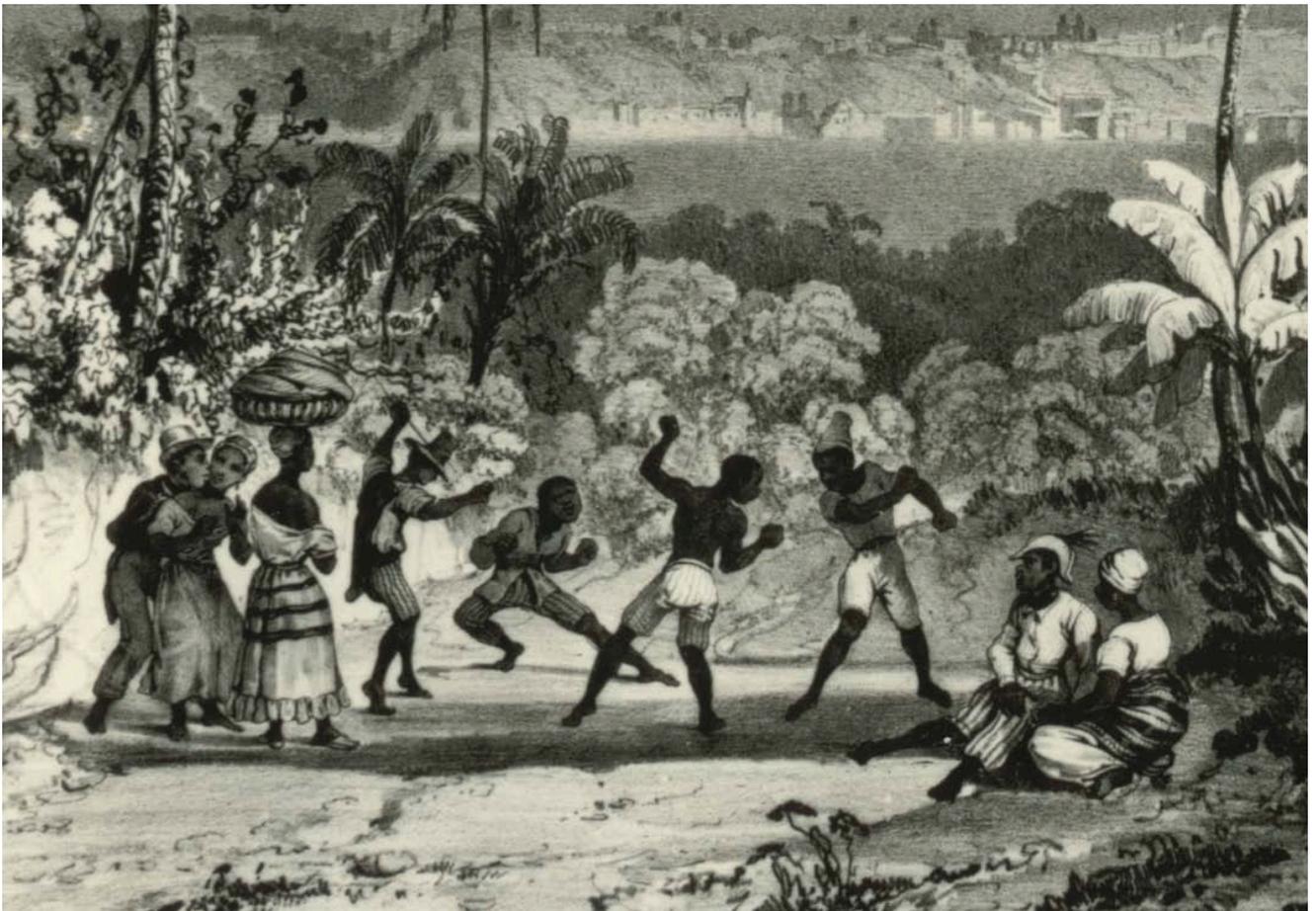
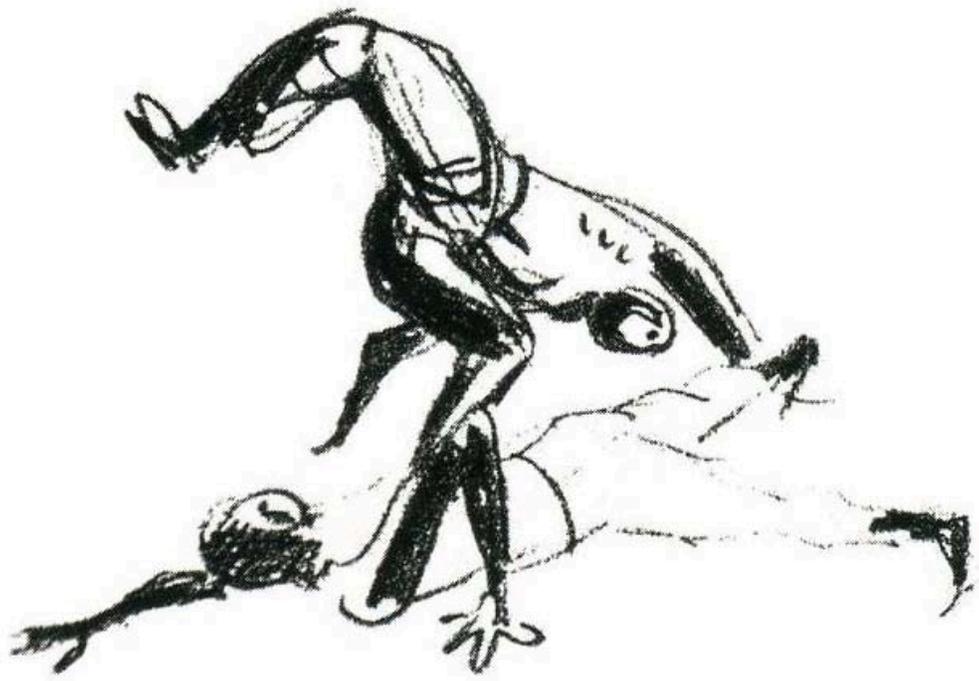
Origins

Between the years of 1500 and 1888, almost four million souls crossed the Atlantic in the disease-ridden slave ships of the Portuguese Crown. The signing of the Queiroz Law prohibiting slave traffic in 1850 was not strong enough to empty the sails of the tumbadores (slave ships) crossing the ocean. Many Africans were still forced to face the "middle passage" and were smuggled into Brazil. The ethnocultural contributions of this massive forced human migration, along with those of the native inhabitants of the colony and those of the Europeans from Portugal, shaped the people and the culture of Brazil. It is unquestionable that from the Africans, we inherited the essential elements of capoeira. This is evident in the aesthetics of movement and musical structure of the art, in its rituals and philosophical principles, as well as in historical accounts of the ethnicity of those who practiced capoeira in the past.

Three main lines of thought concerning the origins of capoeira have been introduced throughout the times: capoeira was already formed in Africa; capoeira was created by Africans and their descendants in the rural areas of colonial Brazil; and capoeira was created by Africans and their descendants in one of the major Brazilian urban centers. Arguments supporting these theories have long been discussed. It is undisputed that capoeira is an elusive "chameleonic-like" art form that has assumed many shapes throughout its existence. Change, however, has never been able to wring out capoeira's soul, or extirpate its formative seeds, the common denominator threading together all the shapes capoeira has assumed. Capoeira's spirit, its innate capacity to resist pressure through a deceptive strategy of adaptability and "non-direct" confrontation of opposing forces, is one of the essences that exudes from its African roots.

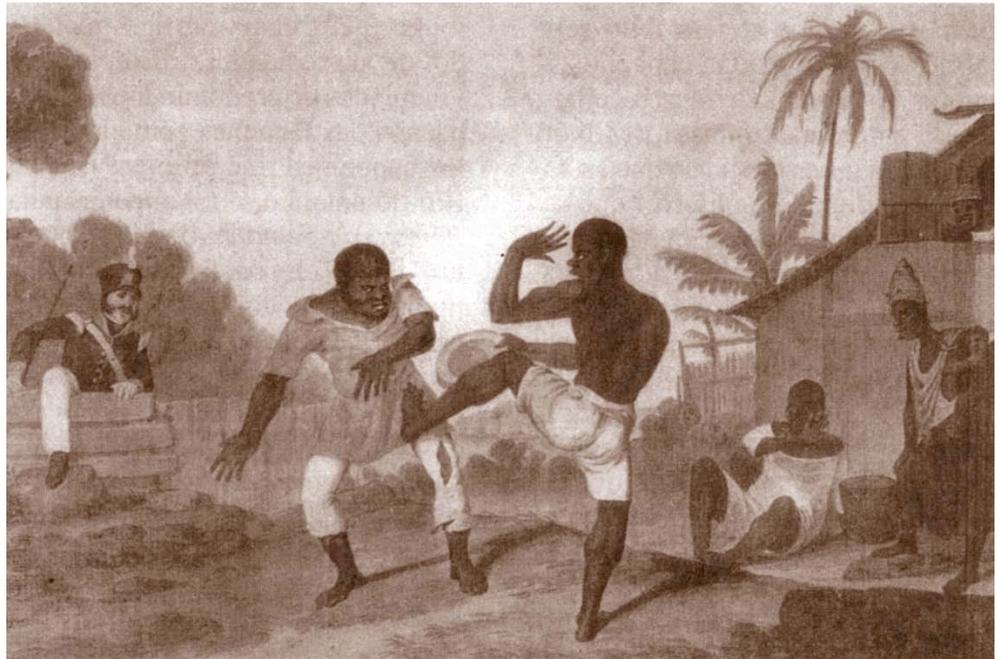
Capoeira is not the only popular expression that derived from the same formative elements. African in essence, these elements are present in other African-rooted art forms, such as the dances *mani* from Cuba and *laghya* from Martinique, or in other purely African cultural expressions, such as the ceremonial dance *n'golo* from Angola. In many ways, these arts resemble capoeira. However, common structural elements that have coalesced in different geographic and cultural environments result in different outcomes. In spite of capoeira's mutant, broad, and diffuse contours that may obfuscate those who are not experienced enough to understand the art's complexities and contradictions, capoeira remains a distinct and well-recognized popular cultural expression that has been practiced in Brazil for centuries. As the venerable capoeira teacher Mestre Pastinha said: "Capoeira is capoeira...is capoeira...is capoeira."

Some questions related to the formative period of capoeira still remain unanswered. When, how, and why did capoeira emerge in Brazil? 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 a few factors. Until the late 1970s, the scarcity of known written registers of capoeira was a big impediment for a more comprehensive understanding of capoeira history. Another obstacle to the unveiling of capoeira's past is the absence of an oral tradition that reaches as far back as the pre-dawn of the art. Fortunately, over the last decades, capoeira has been a subject of many academic studies in fields such as history, sociology, anthropology, ethnomusicology, politics, physical education, and arts. This growing process of investigations will bring up new lights on the origins and development of capoeira.



Pre-Republican Capoeira

From the 1500s until 1822 Brazil was a Portuguese colony. After a short monarchic period of sixty-seven years and immediately after the official abolition of slavery, Brazil became a republic in 1889. This last period was a time of profound socio-economic change and transformation that shook the political structure of the country. The different forms of capoeira documented through oral tradition and written accounts, which thrived from the middle of the sixteenth century through the end of the nineteenth, are grouped



under the label Pre-Republican Capoeira. This period was an era of mystery, an era of the paintings of Rugendas and Debret, the saga of the Quilombos dos Palmares and Zumbi, the era of extraordinary conflict of an enslaved people and their oppressors, an era of romantic historical accounts. Nowadays, the academic study of this period is substantial, from the *maltas* and *malandros* of Rio de Janeiro to the capoeira steps as precursors to the *frevo* dance in Recife. Since then, capoeira has been a means of self-expression, a means of connection with the ancestors, an expression of freedom, and, encompassing all of that, a weapon of survival.

In the last days of the Brazilian Empire, conflicts between Republicans and Monarchists occurred frequently. The streets of Rio de Janeiro were the stage of actual battles that involved a large number of participants, including many capoeiristas. They caused a big itch to the established society who lived in discomfort, confronting the fears of *cabeçadas*, *martelos*, club strikes, and straight razor blades, a favorite weapon of the *malandros* at the time. The police records of this time listed thousands of capoeiristas, which leads us to wonder how many *mestres* existed, how many personal styles were displayed, how many movements were able to kill enemies? The physical displays of capoeira at that time were generally called *vadiação* (a term with various meanings related to playing around, doing nothing), *malandragem* (implied in the activity of bums, deceitfulness, street smarts, cunning), *capoeiragem*, or simply, “capoeira.” Common to all manifestations of capoeira until recent years was the constant attention the art received from the social mechanisms of repression. Capoeira activities were a magnet for the police.

In capoeira songs and texts, you will find references to Quilombos, Zumbi, Nzinga, Princesa Isabel, the Guarda Negra, and so on. Wikipedia contains numerous references about this historical period.

1900s Repressed Street Capoeira

After the proclamation of the Republic of Brazil in 1889, the attempt to contain the trouble-making activities of the capoeiristas was intensified. Indeed, the capoeiristas received specific mention in the first Penal Code of the Republic of the United States of Brazil (Código Penal da República dos Estados Unidos do Brasil), instituted by decree on October 11, 1890:

Art. 402. To perform on the streets or public squares the exercise of agility and corporal 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 (Oscar Soares 1904).

The Republican police enforcement was severe, and tales of persecution are abundant. Many capoeiristas would run when the police squadron arrived. Others were put in jail or deported, and some would bribe the police to let them go. Within this struggle, which lasted until the end of the 1920s, the capoeira from Bahia began to emerge, initiating its almost mythological journey to influence the present-day shape and display of the art form. It became noticed for its soulful characteristics: songs with noticeably African melodic lines and occasional terms from different African dialects, playfulness, and theatrics. Perhaps, applying an unconscious strategy in a demanding game of survival, capoeira had changed again, disguising its fierce fighting characteristics that had been described in past written accounts.

During these troubled times, it is known that good capoeiristas hid their art far from the most visible locations. The lore of the art is full of great fighters, such as Pedro Porreta, Chico Tres Pedacos, and the famous Bezouro Mangangá, and a little later, Tiburcinho, Bilusca, Maré, Noronha, Americo Pequeno, Juvenal da Cruz, Manoel Rozendo, Delfino Teles, João Clarindo, Livino Diogo, and Francisco Sales.

Amongst those who kept capoeira alive, a giant was born in Bahia. Manuel dos Reis Machado emerged to become venerated as the most extraordinary personality in the historical trajectory of capoeira. He is recognized all over the world as Mestre Bimba, the creator of the Capoeira Regional.



Capoeira Regional



Manuel dos Reis Machado (1889-1974), nicknamed Bimba, began to learn capoeira at the age of 10 from an African called Bentinho who worked as a captain for the Bahian Company of Navigation. For many years he honed his skills, practicing the traditional capoeira from Bahia to become considered one of its great artists. In the mid 1920s he developed his innovative style that went on to influence the destiny of capoeira. His work emerged in a time of complex political and cultural circumstances. This scenario instigated an extraordinary amount of interpretations regarding his motives and methods. Unquestionably a full plate for the scholars, Mestre Bimba lived a simple life deeply rooted in his ancestors' culture. Because of his character, dignity, and wisdom, he was considered by his peers and the Bahians in general as one of the most expressive and influential African-Brazilian personalities of the time.

Early in his teaching career—according to Bimba himself—in reaction to the sloppiness of some of the capoeira displayed on the streets of

Bahia, he resolved to train his students to become powerful fighters. To demonstrate the validity of his training method, he challenged capoeiristas and fighters from other disciplines, winning these public matches. In the early 1930s, attracted by the Mestre's charismatic teaching, a large number of students joined his school, helping to generate a momentum that propelled capoeira forward in terms of general acceptance.

The growth of Mestre Bimba's style would not have been possible if he had not opened a formal and legalized school. Prior to him, capoeira had been mainly practiced as a weekend pastime, played in the street and informally learned on the spot. The “academia de Mestre Bimba” was officially registered with the Office of Education, Health and Public Assistance of Bahia in 1937. This set a precedent for greater tolerance towards the practice of other African-Brazilian popular expressions. The school was registered under the name of Centro de Cultura Física Regional (Center of Regional Physical Culture). Because of his school's name, which also offered a way around the legal prohibition of capoeira, the term Capoeira Regional was reinforced and definitively established as the denomination of Mestre Bimba's style.

Why “Regional?”

For Mestre Bimba, “Regional” was Bahia—the immediate local universe that embodied the “baiano” quality of his art; an implicit respect for its inherent African connections.

In reality “Bahia” is correctly called “Salvador,” the capital city of the large state of Bahia. Seated atop hills and surrounded by sunny beaches and green valleys, Salvador has been a fortress of African culture in Brazil, from which arises today’s capoeira. Its imaginary and mystical body has a unique significance for its sons and daughters who simply call it “Bahia.” To be “African in Bahia” and simultaneously “just Brazilian,” especially in Mestre Bimba’s time, was naturally accepted by all baianos, without needing to be explicitly voiced or displayed with some obviousness. It is the result of a state of immersion in an environment in which the sacred and profane mingle, regulated by the will of the orixás as an integral part of everyday life. “Capoeira Regional” means all that.

Mestre Bimba's approach encompassed the following: teaching in an enclosed physical space that was conducive to a more focused practice; the introduction of a systematic training method; the use of a specific musical ensemble of one berimbau and two pandeiros; and an emphasis placed on the toques de berimbau (berimbau rhythms) of São Bento grande, banguela and iuna. Those rhythms mandated jogos with specific characteristics: being more fight-oriented, more co-operative and demonstration-like, or involving movements from the cintura desprezada, respectively. The capoeira of Mestre Bimba had a medium-paced cadence that allowed the capoeiristas to ginga strategically with manha, malicia, and elegance. Following the berimbau command, the capoeiristas were guided in an intricate and dynamic display of attacks, defenses, and a tricky juke-like swing to confuse opponents. Mestre Bimba did not include in his style some movements from the capoeira at the time that he did not like and introduced other of his own and from batuque, a vigorous foot-sweeping dance that he learned from his father. It was a brilliant and subtle adaptation of a traditional artform that brought out its most fight-like capabilities inherent in the historical tradition of capoeira. Some argue that the creation of Capoeira Regional was Mestre Bimba’s intentional response to a nationalistic effort based in Rio de Janeiro to put forth a kind of an official Brazilian physical education system that was based on European models.

Mestre Bimba's most important contribution was perhaps the revolutionary achievement of turning an activity outlawed by the dominant elites and on the brink of extinction into a freely practiced popular art form that became a prestigious and potent means of cultural and self expression. On June 12, 1996, the Federal University of Bahia unanimously gave a title of Doctor Honoris Causa to Manoel dos Reis Machado, and in 2008, capoeira was proclaimed by the Brazilian Government as being a national treasure, a cultural legacy of humanity.



Capoeira Angola

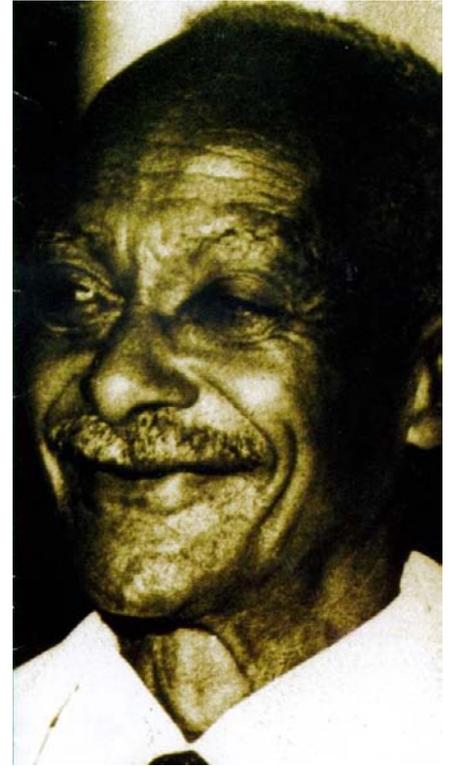
The easing of repression on popular expressions during the government of Getulio Vargas in the mid-thirties made the timing right for Mestre Bimba's concept to be realized. Other capoeiristas followed in his footsteps. Amorzinho, Aberrê, Antônio Maré, Daniel Noronha, Onça Preta, and Livino Diogo all became involved in the quest to create an organization to facilitate the practice of their capoeira in this new stage of the art's development.

From amongst those involved in this quest, Vicente Joaquim Ferreira Pastinha, Mestre Pastinha, distinguished himself by founding the second capoeira association after Mestre Bimba. In his own book Pastinha explained, "On February 23, 1941, in the Jinguibirra at the end of the neighborhood of Liberdade, this center was born. Why? It was Vicente Ferreira Pastinha who gave the name Centro Esportivo de Capoeira Angola [Sports Center of Capoeira Angola]" (In Decânio, 1994: 4a).

In his pursuit of organizing his beloved capoeira, Mestre Pastinha mobilized his students, other capoeiristas, and politically influential friends to formally establish a permanent home for his school. After years of struggle and long periods of inactivity, on October 1, 1952, the Centro de Capoeira Angola was officially installed at the Largo do Pelourinho (Pelourinho Plaza) in Salvador, Bahia.

Mestre Pastinha was an extraordinary character – innovative, wise, and open-minded. Well-deserved for his total commitment to capoeira, his work and wisdom, Vicente Pastinha, son of a Spaniard and a Brazilian woman of African descent, became the primary historical point of reference for the practitioners of today's Capoeira Angola and for those concerned with his unique philosophical approach to capoeira.

Capoeira Angola is characterized by a focus on rituals of the game, an emphasis on playfulness and theatrics of the movement, and with a high degree of combat simulation. For a long time after the turn of the twentieth century it was predominantly an amusement on weekends and in open plaza festivities. Nowadays, in the broad scope of capoeira in Brazil, Capoeira Angola has its niche, recognized as having importance within the historical and contemporary context of capoeira. As time goes by, today's Capoeira Angola gives more conscious attention to a body language and a gestural lexicon related to a selected aesthetic perceived as belonging to African dance forms and rituals.



Present Day Capoeira



Before Mestre Bimba there were many stylistic displays of capoeira in all its aspects of fight, dance, pastime, ritual, mannerisms, and different social behaviors. However, none of them gained center stage as a defined approach to capoeira.

Both Capoeira Regional and Capoeira Angola have generated new schools and styles based upon interpretations of the teachings of Mestre Bimba and Mestre Pastinha. Some of these schools have attempted to maintain the characteristics of the original styles of these great mestres, while others have embraced both, while developing their own characteristics and styles.

Mestre Acordeon was a student of Mestre Bimba, and we are predominately a school of Capoeira Regional. We also understand the need to incorporate elements of today's capoeira into our teaching and to encourage our students to interact with capoeiristas from other styles without losing the particularities of our game.



About the Music

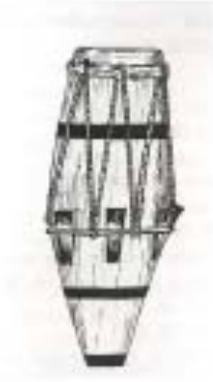
The music of capoeira has the potential to become a means for understanding the past and present universe of the art form, as well as constructing the present reality of the capoeira that is lived by a particular community. In this case, "capoeira community" does not refer to the social gathering of students that naturally occurs in all schools, but to a strong body synergistically greater than the individuals who belongs to that "particular community." The materialization of this community should be felt as a magical presence in the *terreiro* in which the capoeira practice happens.

We place great emphasis on the knowledge of the instruments, their rhythmical elements, and the performance of the capoeira music at our maximum potential. This helps to summon the soul and energy to the rodas. There is a big distinction between some physical aspects of the music such as speed and volume, and the "axé"— as a kind of constructive energy. Axé happens when the respect for the music, properly tuned berimbaus, sensitive playing of the instruments, singing in the right pitch, and concern with the maintenance of a harmonious ensemble are present.

All the multiple facets of being a capoeirista are facilitated and enhanced through the music. These facets are to sing, to play instruments, to play capoeira, to laugh, to cry, to think, to love, to care for our brothers and sisters, to care for our school, and to live as a full human being.



Instruments



Until the early twenties, there was not a defined composition for the instruments in capoeira accepted by all teachers. In Mestre Bimba's school, he used one berimbau and two pandeiros, emphasizing the idea that the berimbau is the leader of the roda, deciding the character of the game, its variations, and length. Therefore, one of the fundamentals of playing Capoeira Regional is to use exclusively one berimbau and two pandeiros. We keep this tradition when we play Capoeira Regional.

In the late sixties, a *bateria* with 3 berimbaus, 2 pandeiros, 1 atabaque, 1 agogô bell, and 1 reco-reco became predominant. We frequently use this *bateria* organizing the order of instruments as follows (left to right as one faces it): reco-reco, pandeiro, berimbau viola (treble one), berimbau de centro ou medio, berimbau gunga (bass one), atabaque, and agogô.

There are several ways to tune the berimbaus and to sing to them. One that is simple to do and that makes it easier to find the right pitch is to tune the berimbau medio and the viola one step above the gunga. In this case, the gunga plays the rhythm called Angola, the medio plays São Bento grande de Angola in a kind of inversion in the use of the dobrão, and the viola will make variations, *repicando* in a syncopated fashion and ending the rhythmical cycle with a "closed note" (when the dobrão is pressed against the string to obtain the highest note of the instrument).

Rhythms that we play during the jogos in our school:

For the Capoeira Regional: São Bento grande, banguela, and luna.

For any other style: Angola, São Bento grande de Angola, São Bento pequeno, and other variations.

Ladainhas

The *puxador* (soloist) begins alone after the cry of the "Ie" which defines who will sing next. The *ladainha* tells a story in the form of a lament. For some, the "ladainhas" are influenced perhaps by Islamic prayer, and for others, by the cry of Brazilian cattle herders while travelling long distances. Whatever its origins, the *ladainhas* set up an atmosphere of anticipation and call for attention of all the capoeiristas present. It is a moment of reflection and solemnity. Messages may be sent by the singer, from the hail of a historical character to a challenge of his or her partner; from the salute to a mestre, to the invocation of ancestral powers. Squatting beneath the *berimbau*, the capoeiristas about to play concentrate, meditate, and pray within his or her own mystical universe, psyching themselves up to the important moment of *vadiarem* (an old term for the *jogo de capoeira*).

Canto de Entrada

When the *ladainha* ends, a new song style begins. It is called *canto de entrada*, *louvação*, or sometimes *chulas*. It is a salute initiated by the *cantador* (also the soloist) or *puxador* and answered by a chorus of all the presents. The *puxador* always will begin with the salute "Ie viva meu Deus" (Ie longlive my God). The chorus will always respond with the same exclamation, adding at the end of the sentence the word "*camará*," which is a corruption of the word *camarada* (friend). This louvation extends to the mestres, cities they come from, many other subjects they want to salute, as well to the other person that the capoeirista is about to play. For instance:

Soloist: Ieh Viva Meu Mestre.
Chorus: Ieh, Viva Meu Mestre, camará.
Soloist: Ieh que me ensinou
Chorus: Ieh, que me ensinou, camará
Soloist: Ieh a capoeira
Chorus: Ieh, a capoeira, camará.

We use this song to formally end our class. It means: "Long live my teacher who taught me capoeira, comrade."

The last line in the *canto de entrada* should be "iê, volta do mundo," which means "let's go around the world." This is the signal for the *jogadores* (players) to begin the *jogo*.

Ouadras (quatrains), Corridos (free running rhymes), and Chulas

In this part is included a great variety of songs styles, from old *samba de rodas*, *batuques*, *afoxés*, and other genres of folk music to contemporary songs written specifically for capoeira. That is the moment in which the *jogo* is allowed to begin. It is common for the *puxadores* to take turns improvising and challenging each other.

Throughout time, capoeira lyrics, the poetic voice of underprivileged people, have reflected their unique perspective of the universe, including the simple mundane reality of daily life. This reality is not unique to capoeira, but is reflected in many other art forms of the Afro-Brazilian diaspora. Lyrics have been studied from socio-ethnographic, socio-political, regionalistic, spiritual/religious, and folklore perspectives. These studies began in mid 1930s, much earlier than any other academic study of capoeira as a movement form.

A CAPOEIRA SONG TO PRACTICE

Berimbau de Ouro

by Mestre Acordeon

Lead singers: Mestre Acordeon, Destino, and Professor Cravo

From the CD: Cantigas de Capoeira

O meu berimbau de ouro minha mãe eu deixei no Gantoi (2x)

É um gunga bem falante que dá gosto de tocar

Eu deixei com Menininha para ela abençoá

Amanhá as sete horas, pra Bahia eu vou voltá

Vou buscar meu berimbau, que deixei no Gantoi, ha, ha!

Iê viva meu Deus!

CHORUS: EH VIVA MEU DEUS, CAMARÁ!

Ai, ai Aidê, Joga bonito que eu quero ver

CHORUS: AI, AI, AIDÊ

Joga bonito qu'eu quero aprender

Joga bonito que eu quero ver

Como vai como passou, como vai vosmicê

Angola ê, angola, angola ê, mandigueira, angola

CHORUS: ANGOLA EH, ANGOLA, ANGOLA EHMANDIGUEIRA, ANGOLA

Angola ê, angola angola ê, mandigueira, angola

Vou m'imbora pra Bahia, amanhã eu vou pra lá,

vou jogar a capoeira no Mercado Popular

Paranauê, Paranauê, Paraná

CHORUS: PARANAUÊ, PARANAUÊ, PARANÁ

Paranauê, Paranauê, Paraná

Vou m'imbora, vou m'imbora, como já disse que vou Paraná

Paranauê, Paranauê, Paraná, Paranauê, Paranauê, Paraná

Eh vim lá da Bahia pra lhe ver

Eh vim lá da Bahia pra lhe ver

Eh vim lá da Bahia pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver

CHORUS: VIM LÁ DA BAHIA PRA LHE VER

VIM LÁ DA BAHIA PRA LHE VER

VIM LÁ DA BAHIA PRA LHE VER,

PRA LHE VER, PRA LHE VER, PRA LHE VER, PRA LHE VER

Pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver (2x)

Vim lá da Bahia pra lhe ver (2x)

Vim lá da Bahia pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver

Pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver, pra lhe ver

Vou manda lecô
CHORUS: CAJUÊ
Vou manda loiá...

O meu berimbau de ouro minha mãe, eu deixei no Gantois
O meu berimbau de ouro minha mãe, eu deixei no Gantoois
Eu saí da minha terra por ter sina viajeira
Caminhando pelo mundo, ensinando capoeira
Amanhá as sete horas p´ra Bahia vou voltar
Vou buscar meu berimbau, que deixei no Gantoi, camaradinho...
Ieh ê hora é hora...
CHORUS: IEH Ê HORA , Ê HORA, CAMARÁ...

Eh sacode a poeira, embalança, embalança, embalança, embalança
CHORUS: EH SACODE A POEIRA, EMBALANÇA, EMBALANÇA, EMBALANÇA,
EMBALANÇA.

Eh sacode a poeira, embalança, embalança, embalança, embalança
Meu berimbau é feito de berimba, uma cabaça bem maneira, Mestre Bimba quem me deu.
Entra na roda abre o peito e sai falando, toca Iuna e Banguela mostra o som que Deus lhe deu.

O meu berimbau de ouro
minha mãe, eu deixei no
Gantois
O meu berimbau de ouro
minha mãe, eu deixei no
Gantois
O sinhô amigo meu veja bem
o meu cantá
Ando muito ocupado, não sei
quando vou voltar
Pr'a buscar meu berimbau,
que deixei no Gantoi,
camaradinho
Eh da volta ao mundo
CHORUS: IE DA
VOLTA AO MUNDO,
CAMARÁ

Ai, ai, Aidê, joga bonito que
eu quero ver
CHORUS: AI, AI,
AIDÊ,
(Section of improvisation)

O meu berimbau de ouro eu
deixei no Gantois



..MESTRE BIMBA..

Músicas de Capoeira Cantadas
por Mestre Bimba



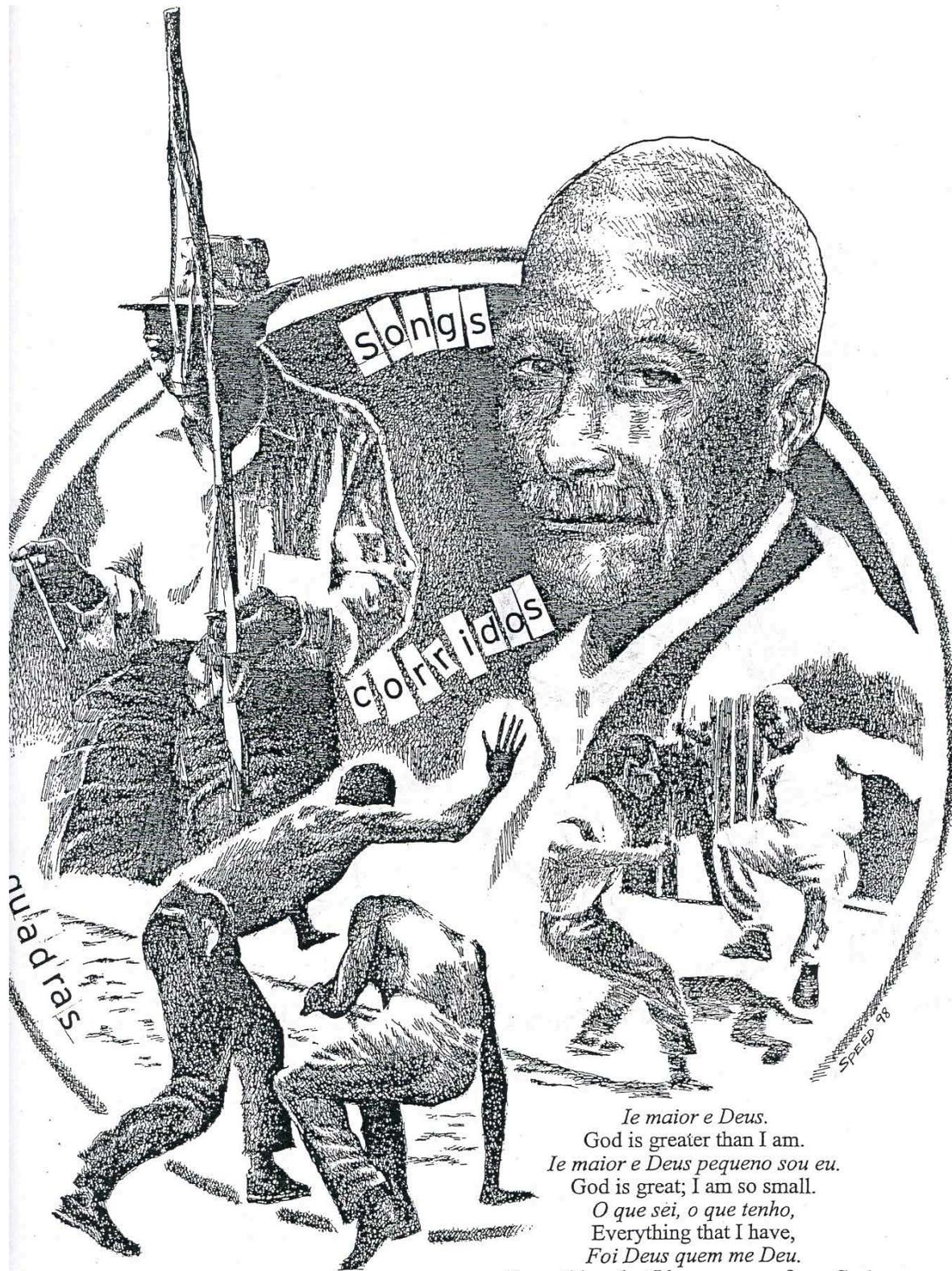
Menino quem foi seu Mestre?
Meu Mestre foi Salomão
Sou discípulo que aprendê
Sou Mestre que dou lição
O mestre que me ensinou
Tá no Engenho da Conceição
Só devo é o dinheiro ,
saúde e obrigação
o segredo de São Cosme,
Quem sabe é São Damião, camará!

Água de beber
Eh! Água de beber, camará!
Aruandê
Eh! Aruandê camará!
Galo cantô
Eh! Galo cantô, camará!
Faca de ponta
Eh! Faca de ponta, camará!
Ferro de matá
Eh! Ferro de matá, camará!
Viva meu Mestre
Eh! Viva meu Mestre, camará!
Quê me ensinou
Eh! Que me ensinou, camará!
A malandragem
Eh! A malandragem, camará!
Da capoeira
Eh! Da Capoeira, camará!
Regional
Eh! Regional, camará!
Volta do mundo
Eh! Volta do mundo, camará!

MEU BERIMBAU



* "Bimba" is the name
for little penis!



Je maior e Deus.
 God is greater than I am.
Je maior e Deus pequeno sou eu.
 God is great; I am so small.
O que sei, o que tenho,
 Everything that I have,
Foi Deus quem me deu.
 Everything that I know comes from God.
Mas na Roda da Capoeira,
 But, although I am small before God,
Grande pequeno sou eu!
 In the Roda da Capoeira,
 I discover my own greatness.

— Mestre Pastinha

* Mysterious unknown
artist - we thank you!



Moving Through the Levels of Capoeira

By Mestre Acordeon in "Capoeira: A Brazilian Art Form" by North Atlantic Books

"The career of the capoeirista begins with the batizado. From their first jogo to the point of fully understanding the art, students will spend many years constantly training and probing their weaknesses, facing the treacheries of life with open eyes. During this time, they will be physically, mentally and spiritually challenged as they strive toward a well-rounded study of the art. An isolated focus on any one of those aspects will bring limited results and shortsighted capoeiristas.

The journey through the stages of development will be continuous with no abrupt advances along the way. Students cannot jump from one plateau to the next but must climb through them slowly and carefully, following a natural process that comes from dedicated training and a feeling of well being in the art. It never should be a hasty and neurotic attempt to progress prematurely, or a plunge into unhealthy and excessive work toward unattainable goals. Capoeiristas, however, must fully commit themselves in every jogo, continuously striving to play beyond falsely perceived points that we may believe to be our limits. Seemingly limitations of knowledge, age, or even experience over opponents should not cause capoeiristas to give up striving toward their full potential, nor should the amount of toil, occasional pains, or previous failure discourage anyone from starting anew each jogo.

The goals one sets in Capoeira define the categories of discipulo (calouro, batizado, formando, and formado); contramestre, and mestre. The majority of capoeiristas are disciples who live the art as a complementary activity to the other activities in their life. They are satisfied simply to have capoeira in their hearts and to improve the quality of their lives through its practice.

Contramestres are capoeiristas who definitely have reached the maximum of their physical potential, who dedicate time to internalize the philosophy of capoeira, and who have a strong desire to pass on the tradition of the art

Mestres are those who have crossed the paths of discipulo and contramestre, who totally open themselves to an understanding of the spiritual dimension of the art, and who are totally committed to devote a lifetime helping others discover, enjoy and become initiated into capoeira."



Written words of the “Vocabulary Pronunciation”
Last track on our CD “2009 Capoeira-Bahia”

Academia	Atabaque
Academia de capoeira	Rum
Aula de capoeira	Rumpi
Uma aula de capoeira numa academia	Le
Corda	Atabaque
Ou (or)cordão	
Corda	Agogô
Cordão	
Cordões	Reco reco
Cordão verde	
Masculine in O	Capoeira regional
Feminine A	
	Cantigas de capoeira
Calouro	
Caloura	Cantiga
Formando	Puxa o côro
Formanda	O puxado da cantiga
	Puxar o côro
Formado	Ladainha
Formada	Canto de entrada
	Quadras ou corridos
Professor	
Professora	Ladainha
Professores	Louvação
Bateria	
Xaranga	
Orquestra	Toque de berimbau
Berimbau	Regional
Verga	
Madeira	São Bento grande
Biriba	Banguela
	Iuna
Arame de aço	Cavalaria
Aço	Santa Maria
	Amazonas
Dobrão	Idalina
Pedra	Hino da capoeira
Baqueta	São Bento Pequeno
Vareta	Samango
Caxixi	Miudinho
Pandeiro	São Bento grande
Couro	Banguela
Platinela or xuí	Iuna

Movimentos de ataque
Movimentos de defesa
Movimentos de floreio
Balões
Quedas
Ritual
Rituais
Mandinga
Mandigar
Mandigueiro
Mandigueira
Ginga
Gingar

Descer
Desce
Subir
Sobe
Jogue
Jogar capoeira
Jogue em baixo
Jogue no chão
Jogar dentro
Jogue dentro
Jogar solto
Jogue solto
Jogue seguro
Jogar seguro
Jogue duro

Armada
Meia lua
Meia lua de frente
Meia lua de compasso
Martelo
Ponteira
Queixada
Au
Cocorinha
Tesoura
Boca de calças
Arqueado
Asfixiante
Cotuvelada
Joelhada
Passa pra traz
Au chibata
Queda de rins
Crucifixo

Giro
Giro em pé
Escorão
Benção

Tesoura de frente
Tesoura de costas
Cintura desprezada
Cotuvelada, cotuvelo
Joelhada,joelho
Girar
Giro alto
Au enrolado
Rolê

Pastinha
Mestre Pastinha not pastina
Mestre Canjiquinha not Canjiquina
Catarina not Catarina
Idalina not Idalinha



To learn more about capoeira history and philosophy, we recommend:

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ASSUNÇÃO, Mathias Rohrig, *Capoeira: The History of An Afro-Brazilian Martial Art*; New York, NY: Taylor & Francis Inc, 2005.

CAPOEIRA, Nestor, *Capoeira: Roots of the Dance-Fight-Game*; Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2002.

On the Internet (Copy and Paste):

THE HERITAGE OF MESTRE BIMBA - AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY AND LOGIC OF CAPOEIRA
By Angelo Decânio Filho Translated to English by Shayne Mchugh
http://www.capoeira-connection.com/main/downloads/Heritage_Bimba.pdf

THE HERITAGE OF PASTINHA
By Angelo Decânio Filho Translated to English by Shayne Mchugh
http://www.capoeira-connection.com/main/downloads/Heritage_Pastinha.pdf

Berimbau Africano (Madosini Manqina)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2AORnJlUdw&feature=related>

Naná Vasconcelos Playing the Berimbau
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFbd3GLVikU&feature=related>

Berimbau Blues, Dinho Nascimento no PercPan 2007
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sFkoXyNEY8&feature=related>

A Capoeira Lyrics Website: Capoeira Connection
<http://www.capoeira-connection.com/main/content/view/162/73/>

Jogo Perigoso: Mestre Acordeon & The Capoeira Arts Café By Diallo Jeffery
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnyLuUD8iek>

Mestre Lourimbau
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qDfIdA1EjvM>

MESTRES DE CAPOEIRA: WHO ARE THEY THEY?

