CULTURAL RESISTANCE AND SECURITY FROM BELOW

POWER AND ESCAPE THROUGH CAPOEIRA

Zoë Marriage

Routledge

Cultural Resistance and Security from Below

This book uses the Afro-Brazilian art of capoeira to examine how security has been pursued from below and what significance this has for security analysis and policy. Illegal at the beginning of the twentieth century, capoeira is now a cultural institution and export that is protected by the Brazilian state and recognised by UNESCO, with capoeira players protecting and promoting their interests through the practice and development of their art. The book brings the musical and corporeal narrative from capoeira into conversation with debates on security; these have typically been dominated by northern, white, military voices, and as a result, the perspective of the weaker player is routinely overlooked in security literature and policy making.

Bringing the perspective of the weaker party, *Cultural Resistance and Security from Below* examines the distribution of security from two angles. First, it presents the history of the interaction between capoeira players and the Brazilian society and state that resulted in political and legal acceptance of capoeira. Second, it explores how the practice of capoeira generates knowledge of identities, explanations and values, and how this knowledge empowers communities of players and is communicated to society more broadly. The book then turns to consider how capoeira resists within Brazil's contemporary context of insecurity, and what significance the knowledge and power, along with capoeira's core move of escape, have to security analysis and policy. The book concludes by taking the lessons from capoeira to inform understanding of other cultural activities and ways of life as potential sites and forms of resistance.

Conceptually and methodologically original, this book will be of interest to scholars and students in the fields of security studies, development studies, political science and international studies. It will also be of interest to those scholars interested in the changing interaction between politics and the arts.

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1   'I left Congo and passed by Angola'

The lyric 'I left Congo and passed by Angola' is the only reference I have found to an African country other than Angola in capoeira music. Looking out over the beautiful Atlantic seafront of Praia da Paciencia in Salvador, Bahia in north-eastern Brazil, I was struck by the question: how did I get here? The tranquillity of the beach, the imposing skyline of the tourist developments, and the incessant stream of glistening white cars along the coast road were a far cry from the Democratic Republic of Congo (henceforth Congo), where my research on security had focused for the last ten years.

There are various reasons for my choice to research the Afro-Brazilian art of capoeira and, while there are differences in the sites, the reasons for the change of focus derived from my experiences in Congo. For this reason, Congo remains a touchstone for reflection throughout this book. I had chosen to study Congo as a country where forms of insecurity are extreme; violence from military and militia predation combines with destitution and a crippling lack of services or protection. One of the concerns that came out of my work in Congo was that the 'dominant account and explanation of historical and contemporary events are being written by the UN and northern donors, not by the Congolese' (Marriage 2013, 132). Not writing one's own account means that priorities and the significance of events and people are determined by others; Congolese perspective and interests are being excluded not only from history but from the formulation of security, which is dominated by International Relations scholars and development policy makers. Inequality of knowledge production has dominated Congolese-European relations and largely obscured the traumatic experiences of the slave trade, the invasive nature of colonialism and the promotion of regressive power structures through aid.

A second motivation for moving my research interests from Congo to capoeira was that I had noted a fascination in the development industry with stories of failure: failed states, failed peace processes, failure to reach the Millennium Development Goals, and failure captured by development indicators. These definitions of failure prompt corresponding corrective interventions through neoliberal development and security policy. On account of the patterns of power that direct the way that knowledge is produced, these phenomena – concentrated on the African continent, and played out through the politics and

practice of intervention – take on a racial dimension of black failure and white assistance. Combining the imbalance of knowledge–power and the discourse of failure–assistance, I decided to investigate a black discourse that recounted its own history, identity and causative explanations, and was not characterised by a need for intervention.

I had already been training capoeira for a few years in London, and had noted the significance of history to capoeira, the discourse of resistance and the primacy of Afro-Brazilian identity in the art's expression. Accessing and understanding this history is fraught: the written or material history of Brazil is bounded by the interests and power structures of colonisation, and even within capoeira, 'old' songs and teachers date from the twentieth century. Further back is a much vaguer history that is highly contentious, diverse and passed primarily through practice. Capoeira is a game between two players who demonstrate skilful kicks and acrobatics and try to trick each other and bring each other down with leg sweeps and head-butts. Musicians and singers surround the two players and provide the game – which is also a dance and a fight – with rhythm and pace. Capoeira is a discourse – a physical dialogue – between players, within the groups and with the wider public who observe it. I wanted to examine this discourse alongside the more conventional discourse of security to see how this artistic expression, born of adversity and embodying a narrative of struggle, complements or critiques contemporary security analysis and policy. This approach accepts Lederach's assertion that, 'conflict is connected to meaning, meaning to knowledge, and knowledge is rooted in culture' (Lederach 2005, 34).

Capoeira derives from the perspective of the weaker party: it was developed in slave communities and then among people who were politically and economically marginalised as Brazil moved to a capitalist economy. There are no definitive rules; Lowell Lewis discusses pragmatic rules and normative rules (Lowell Lewis 1992, 92), but there is nothing that results in a foul, penalty or some advantage being given to one player. There are no numeric scores, and there is a wide variety of styles. Nestor Capoeira, a pre-eminent teacher and author, describes capoeira in the following way:

> Capoeira is the culture of the oppressed! … Facing a stronger opponent who controlled the power and made the laws, capoeira had to learn to be flexible and avoid confrontations … Capoeira learned the guerrilla way of fighting … It learned the value of lies and deceit, of ambush, surprise and treason …
>
> One does not block a kick in capoeira; on the contrary, one goes along with it, thus avoiding the blow, and then counterattacking.
>
> Life is much more than just winning or surviving – it involves the joy of being alive.
>
> (Capoeira 2003, 36–7)

I decided to move from the work I was doing in Congo and explore the security story less-told: the story that is one of celebration, agency and completeness rather than failure. Approaching the study of capoeira with a view to relating it to security debates provides a longitudinal study of the agency of practitioners in building identities, histories and communities, resisting or evading state control, and above all, staying in the game. The research involved two conceptual leaps from conventional Security Studies: one of eschewing the strategic perspective defined by power and investigating the perspective from 'below'. The second of taking seriously the notion that resistance can be mounted through cultural activity, rather than being defined by the concepts and practices of strategy, power and oppression.

Security Studies has been transformed since the end of the Cold War to be broader in its consideration of threats, and understandings and experiences of security are in constant evolution. Despite a broadening of the category of security, the dominance of northern voices has been maintained as the shape of the global political economy has strong continuities with the Cold War era. In recent years, the security agenda globally has been driven by Northern concern over disorder, migration and terrorism. The increased currency of notions of commonality of interests and common security, and the heightened levels of control that are possible with technological advances of surveillance have largely reinforced the existing patterns of security and power. The policy and practice of security is still being defined and implemented by the militarily powerful of the Global North who command the security discourse as it is developed within the ideology and technology of neoliberalism.

This study opens up discussions on the politics of security by including the perspective of those who are threatened by dominant forms of power and agendas, and who resist in non-conventional ways, namely cultural or artistic practice. The import of the fact that the Congolese are not informing their security agendas is compounded by two inter-connecting factors. First, development and security have become intertwined in northern donor policy, intensifying the nature of intervention through aid and other channels. Second, the twenty-first century has seen massively heightened stakes in terms of information and knowledge generation. Engaging with security debates in a world that is ordered by neoliberal governance, surveillance, and economic inequality involves exploring new ways of thinking about how security is experienced and pursued. The questions for our time for populations across the globe are concern how to resist overwhelming surveillance and power, and how to make security progressive.

The aim of the research is to identify how security has been distributed through capoeira and to analyse what implications can be drawn for security analysis and policy. The incorporation of capoeira into the security discussion pushes the boundaries of discourses and how they are presented. Despite the abundant violence in the history of capoeira, its accomplishments have not been achieved through force, and have not involved diminishing the opposition. There are counter-intuitive elements to the history: people continued to

play capoeira when it was violently punished, its discourse of resistance intensified when the legal battle was over, and players find it meaningful even if they have no known ancestry in populations who were enslaved. The book avoids the popular narratives on capoeira as a physical defence against slave masters, and instead examines other mechanisms by which security has been distributed. It finds that despite the changes in capoeira practice and constituency, there are notable continuities in these mechanisms over time.

It is worth mentioning, too, what the book does not endeavour to do. It does not provide an exhaustive history of capoeira; excellent histories have been written about the origins and developments of the game, and these are accompanied by biographies of illustrious players. It also does not compile an account of the politics of capoeira academies, their internal dynamics and their interactions, a task that would require a different approach and that would focus on individuals' agendas and personalities as, for example, has been undertaken by Sergio González Varela (Varela 2017). The book also does not engage with a normative perspective on capoeira; it does not deal with the multiple and competing claims of authenticity or legitimacy. Extrapolating from Small's observation about music that, 'music is not a thing at all but an activity, something that people do' (Small 1998, 2), it accepts that capoeira is a breadth of practice and an activity, rather than being defined by regulations or gate-keepers.

The book traces two intertwining security histories, one *of* capoeira, and the other told *through* capoeira, which records a broader history. This approach provides an original case study in the subject of security that promises to be of analytical and practical significance for understanding and addressing dynamic and profound forms of insecurity. In that capoeira is a complex and encompassing art, it provides a rich set of data for theorising cultural resistance. Its significance for Security Studies is heightened by its origins among enslaved and marginalised classes and its discourse of struggle; early practitioners were perceived by the state to present threats of violence and indecency. Through the continuation of play, capoeira players have reduced the threat posed by the state against them and their art; hence the book's discussion on cultural resistance from below.

Previous to this investigation, I had relied on conducting interviews for research, and the approach to converting data to argument has always been, broadly, linear. Social science tends to share something with natural science, based around the sequence of describing methods, results and conclusions. Capoeira challenged that as a starting point for research. Through the training, my relationships with teachers, fellow students, and with the music and movement, I experienced the complexity of knowledge production and communication. Immersion in capoeira heightened my awareness of how we are professionally, personally – even physically – part of these processes. The question of what and whose knowledge was involved, how they – or I – knew anything, became the everyday of research and analysis.

Devoting several years to gaining understanding of a history by being part of a community of lived experience, learning new languages (not just the spoken

languages of Portuguese, but the languages of music and movement), and communicating through ritualised codes naturally made me question what I had been doing research before. How should I think about research that involved talking to bureaucrats in interview settings; and how did the information that they gave me relate to ordinary people's lived experience of insecurity? Examining the state – in my case the Congolese state – was helping me explain why things stay the same – including tracking continuities in violence and exploitation over 400 years of history – but was generally uninspiring about the potential for change. The litany of violence, mismanagement, inequality and lack of capacity was self-reinforcing; it became intellectually wearing as one form of disaster led inexorably to the next. It also ultimately signalled the parameters that are placed on the kinds of comment political science can make; the fascination with failure in development discourse is often about apparently trying to change things while at the same time keeping power structures, knowledge systems and geopolitics in place.

Capoeira changed that; from its swaying base movement to its continual questioning and answering, and its adaptation to context, risk, dynamism and opportunity, it is – despite the conservatism of some capoeira academies – nothing to do with how things stay the same. This is perhaps its most important insight for security; the notion of potential generated through negotiation and co-creation. Potentiality, like security, is about the future. Having a *different* future by escaping the inevitability of structural violence and creating alternatives, is important for the powerless and victims of oppression.

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2 Capoeira
From marginalisation to cultural icon

This book examines how security has been distributed through capoeira by examining how players, known first as capoeiras and later as capoeiristas protected themselves and gained political influence that ensured the survival and development of the game, and their identity and way of life. Since the early twentieth century, capoeira players have decreased the threats against them and increased their protection by convincing others, including other parts of Brazilian society and the state, of the art's value and significance, and these changes have been generated principally through capoeira – by practising the art itself.

Capoeira developed in slave and ex-slave communities and is, among other things, a representation of a history of oppression and liberation (Lowell Lewis 1992; Röhrig Assunção 2007). As such – changes in practice notwithstanding – it represents a perspective that is scarcely recorded in other forms. One biography exists that is written by a man who suffered slavery in Brazil (Baquaqua 1854), but consolidated accounts from people who were enslaved are rare. Capoeira was illegal or violently repressed for most of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century as its use of violence and the disreputable nature of its practitioners was perceived by the state to threaten authority and public decency. More broadly, Afro-Brazilian cultures were considered by the ruling elite to be unbecoming to the modernising European-style state and were suppressed.

Over time, starting in the early 1930s capoeira became institutionalised and legalised, and it is now celebrated as a cultural icon in Brazil and internationally. From vagrant and violent beginnings, it has become a base for activism, social projects and self-improvement, and is a cultural export that showcases Brazil's ethnic diversity and Afro-Brazilian history. Historically, capoeira adepts were a marginalised and non-organised group, and they have renegotiated their relationship with the Brazilian state. They are no longer considered a threat to state or society, and are not threatened with legal censure; but more than that, they have made their identity and history influential and valued.

Through the transformations of debate in Security Studies from the realist International Relations theories of the Cold War to the contemporary discourses of human security and terror, there is a marked continuity: security theorising has taken place in the North, excluding experiences and voices from the

Global South where the most diverse and severe forms of insecurity occur (Buzan and Hansen 2009, 19–20; Croft 2010). (I use the term South and North not in a strictly geographical sense, but to acknowledge the relational aspect with the power, principally between the USA and Europe, described as the Global North, and many of the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, described as the South.) This bias in authorship systematically privileges voices from powerful nations in defining security theory and generates what Pinar Bilgin calls 'historical absences'. These absences are not random: by prioritising particular sets of interests in the security agenda they are constitutive of what security means (Bilgin 2010). At national and international levels, security policy and practice feed off and feed into the way that security is conceptualised and theorised.

Laura Lima, examining Brazilian International Relations scholarship, finds two consistent elements in her reading: first the enduring assumption that national development would resolve the problems facing Brazil, and would be driven primarily by revenue from mineral extraction and sales. The second consistency was the conceptual dominance of the military, to the extent that she found that 'the end of the military regime had virtually no impact on the discipline' (Lima 2015, 30). Harnessing the concept of 'worlding' (Tickner and Waever 2009), Lima argues that the way that intellectuals have represented Brazil has affected the country's politics. Excavating and addressing the historical absences involves not simply telling the story from another perspective but analysing the power relations that reproduce patterns of insecurity (Dannreuther 2007; Christie 2010). This book contributes to security debate by investigating the perspective from below – that framed by the marginalised population of capoeira players in Bahia whose lives and cultural activity were severely constrained. It tracks how, in diverse ways, capoeira has survived legal, political and social prejudice, resulting in outcomes that were not planned or foreseen.

Capoeira is a minority concern – although there are several million players worldwide – but the implications of such a study are extensive as they indicate how cultural practice poses challenges to established power relations that reproduce patterns of security to privilege dominant interests. Capoeira provides insights into various forms of resistance and response to unremitting and ubiquitous violence. Artistic and cultural activities take on heightened significance when other forms of expression and participation – such as political and economic engagement – are not accessible to parts of the population and this is a largely untapped area for empirical and analytical work on how societies negotiate power. Just as the interests of slaves and their descendants were marginalised by the modernising Brazilian state, the vast majority of the world's population do not share the interests of powerful states and do not have the power to pursue their own interests.

This study of capoeira opens up some ways of conceptualising and researching different perspectives on security. In a sense it takes art as 'the mere continuation of politics by other means' (Clausewitz 1832 [1989]), but the means are important. It builds a narrative by informing the text through examples and

unpacks skills of social navigation that are required within the security environment. This book is focused on security and how it is played out at the sub-state level, and how these versions of security interact with the state-based forms of security. It is concept-building in investigating emic and aesthetic approaches to security, as well as notions of security on the corporeal dimension. Capoeira's means, which are cultural, artistic, ludic and spiritual, provide a lens on a host of human activities and expressions that are part of the human will towards a meaningful and safe – secure – life.

Reducing threat, asserting worth

The book explores two lines of analysis on capoeira's security history. First, there is a story about the practice of capoeira and its interaction with the state: capoeira players were persecuted by the Brazilian state, and over time, they renegotiated this position and capoeira moved from marginalisation to cultural icon. The second story is that told through the practice of capoeira, and the forms of knowledge it produces and communicates, and how these processes are rational in that they achieve progressive security outcomes.

Capoeira adepts overcame unequal force in preserving and developing their art: capoeira developed among people who had extremely little control over their environment. It was practised during the era of slavery when the bodies of players were, according to the dominant legal discourse that described patterns of violent control, owned by other people. Achille Mbembe's reflections on the condition of slavery offer insight into the force of corporeal expression for people who were legally classed as property. He writes,

> In spite of the terror and the symbolic sealing off of the slave, he or she maintains alternative perspectives toward time, work, and self … Treated as if he or she no longer existed except as a mere tool and instrument of production, the slave nevertheless is able to draw almost any object, instrument, language, or gesture into a performance and then stylize it. Breaking with uprootedness and the pure world of things of which he or she is but a fragment, the slave is able to demonstrate the protean capabilities of the human bond through music and the very body that was supposedly possessed by another.
>
> (Mbembe 2003, 22)

The centrality of the body as the site of experience and expression is a crucial continuity in capoeira in a history characterised by change. A framework for marking key moments of this change is given by Nestor Capoeira's identification of three episodes: the street period, the academy, and the global era (Capoeira 2003). These episodes are presented here to map out the history of capoeira, its relationship with the state and some of the key figures who have been influential in promoting and developing the art.

Street period

Capoeira's origins are unknown and a source of controversy; researchers have explored the hypothesis that capoeira has roots in the southern African country of Angola, as many people were brought to Bahia as slaves from the Congo-Angola region (Pakleppa *et al.* 2013). Capoeira in Brazil probably started in late eighteenth century, though some claim a century earlier (Soares 1994, 17), and was known by name in the early nineteenth century (Holloway 2012, 644). It was played in rural Bahia in north-eastern Brazil in the nineteenth century among the slave communities and their descendants (de Abreu 2005). Early records are provided by Johann Moritz Rugendas, an Austrian artist who travelled around Brazil and sketched capoeira games in the 1820s. His works, entitled 'The game of capoeira' and 'São Salvador' show black men confronting each other in an upright stance. There are spectators but no ring of players and there is a drum in 'The game of capoeira' but no other instruments; the ring (roda) and musical ensemble (batería) would become crucial in later versions of the game. Capoeira is presented as a past-time, rather than combat or self-defence. Apart from these few sources, there is practically nothing known about capoeira in Bahia during the Brazilian Empire, which lasted from 1822 to 1889.

A more consolidated literature brings evidence from Rio de Janeiro where, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, capoeira was associated with violence as bands of young men formed gangs and fought each other, and these activities fell under the name of capoeira (Soares 1994). There was a generalised fear among whites of the black population, dating from the uprising of slaves in Haiti, in the late 1700s. The earliest police records relating to capoeira date from 1808, this being when Rio de Janeiro was established as the capital of Brazil. The first arrest for capoeira was recorded in 1810 by the Royal Police Guard, and there is evidence that slaves were punished in 1817 for carrying knives; some of these people were also capoeiras (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 72).

Capoeira was not included in the 1830 Criminal Code during the Empire, but capoeiras were arrested for the violence and disturbance that they caused, and edicts from local police chiefs amounted to repression (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 10). Capoeira was associated with blood-letting and apparently random attacks, particularly on blacks, and in the mid-nineteenth century violence was considerable, involving fighting with knives, stones in hats, and guns (Holloway 2012, 530). Punishments were severe and violently inflicted: during the era of slavery, capoeiras risked being whipped, incarcerated or transported to island penal colonies. The infliction of physical punishment stemmed from the brutality of the regime and the violent control it exerted. This included the fact that slaves had no property that could be confiscated and were already performing hard labour; in addition, the violent punishment meted out by state agents was determined to exceed the physical damage sustained by playing capoeira.

While capoeira posed some threats to state authority, capoeiras were also useful to political factions as hired hands, so repression was uneven as some enjoyed protection from the police. This meant that while capoeira was practised in defiance

of the law, there was also complicity with state agents and their political projects (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 93; Talmon-Chvaicer 2008, 71). Numerous capoeiras avoided police persecution by enlisting to the National Guard, essentially a paramilitary force for the aristocracy, and had 'the ability to participate in power relations with a good deal of flexibility and independence' (Lingo 1996, 21). Capoeiras were involved in the military but when not deployed generally caused havoc within the barracks, threatening military hierarchy (Soares 1994).

The 1870s saw an expansion of capoeira activity in the wake of the War of Paraguay, in which capoeiras enlisted or were conscripted. Coalitions between capoeiras, who had no specific or uniting ideological affiliation, and politically powerful groups influenced the emerging systems of democracy as political opponents could be intimidated with violence (Downey 2014). Alliances were formed between *maltas* (gangs) and various political factions. At the end of the empire, monarchists used the 'Black Guard' composed in 1888 largely of men who had been freed from slavery, including capoeiras, to fight the republicans. Capoeiras provided 'market violence' to political elites, extending their power by selling violence to highest bidder. As well as being played by blacks, capoeira was popular among the Portuguese working classes and the ruling classes with some 'restless young aristocrats looking for ways to prove their manhood trained in capoeira' (Talmon-Chvaicer 2008, 74). The police records from Rio de Janeiro show that, by 1889, of the capoeiras who were arrested, nearly a third were white, a third mixed race and a third black (Talmon-Chvaicer 2008, 73).

The support that capoeiras had shown to the monarchy resulted in their persecution during the republic. When the republicans came to power in 1889 they retaliated against the capoeiras with punitive laws and oppression: a forceful campaign imprisoned capoeiras on the island of Fernando de Noronha. Laws concerning capoeira were formalised in the 18th chapter of the Brazilian Penal Code of 1890, which dealt with 'Vagabonds and Capoeiras', tying capoeira to vagrancy. The decree linked capoeira to a host of other forms of aggression and violence, including homicides, bodily harm, outrages to public decency, disturbing the public peace or being caught with weapons. Over the decade of the 1890s capoeira was practically eliminated from the streets of Rio de Janeiro (Lingo 1996, 22). Some court cases relating to capoeiras were heard after the purge, suggesting that capoeira activity remained, but it was minimal and had ceased to play a significant role in supporting political factions.

There is evidence that a form of capoeira was also practised in the northeastern city of Recife in the second half of the nineteenth century. Instead of the violent, gang-related violence of Rio de Janeiro, capoeiras in Recife were recorded as accompanying military marching bands, throwing acrobatic flips and ridiculing the sobriety of state occasions, to the chagrin of the authorities and the delight of the masses (Chvaicer 2002, 542).

Salvador presented a different context. The *maltas* that had attracted police attention in Rio de Janeiro did not operate there, but Albert Dias notes that in Salvador, as in Rio de Janeiro, 'capoeiras and police officers were not always in opposition, but that capoeiras lived between order and disorder' (Albert Dias

2004, 13). Unlike in Rio de Janeiro, no arrests were made for capoeira in Salvador; people were arrested for 'disorderly behaviour' and for inflicting physical injuries, but not as a result of playing the game. Post-abolition, the rationale for oppressing capoeira could not be attached to a fear of slave revolt, and derived more from the desire to eradicate street-fighting and what was presented by the state as African 'barbarism'. A character named Pedro Gordilho held various posts within the police in Salvador and broke up some rodas, but there is no evidence that court cases ensued (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 120–2).

Capoeira was associated in law with vagrancy and violent gangs, these being two key threats to domestic security and the state's monopoly on the legitimate use of force. Freire notes, that the dominant social class

> must preserve at all costs the social 'order' in which they are dominant. They cannot permit any basic changes which would affect their control over decision-making. So from their point of view, every effort to supersede such an order means to subvert it criminally.
>
> (Freire 2008, 11)

The prohibition of capoeira for parts of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was indicative of the state's efforts to extend its reach over the street. Capoeiras operated in the ungoverned public spaces, threatening the state's ability to provide a minimum level of protection for its population.

The street and the home are opposing realms in Brazilian social history, and the street is more than a physical location, it is a way of life. The 1890 Penal Code catalogued capoeira alongside vagrancy and the term for vagrancy – '*vadiação*' – is still used by players to refer to capoeira. Instead of adopting the combative stance of a boxer, attention is paid in capoeira to being streetwise and suave. Songs celebrate, 'no wrong step, no move in vain', acknowledging that care is needed when operating in a dangerous environment. As a corrido puts it, 'Give me my money, tough guy. I'll give you a rasteira [leg sweep] and put you on the ground!' The street is where carnivals and religious parades are held, including Afro-Brazilian religious festivals. Hecht comments, 'life in the street is defined by action, by movement, by gesticulation' (Hecht 1998, 41–2). The street life offends the rich who become concerned with their vulnerability and barricade themselves in their private property (Hecht 1998, 84). Hyde makes a complementary observation in his book subtitled, 'how disruptive imagination creates culture'; he writes, 'all tricksters are "on the road". They are the lords of in-between' (Hyde 1998, 6).

The extension of state power over the street was manifest in the processes of urbanisation in first three decades of the twentieth century. This involved the state addressing itself to the large number of unemployed labourers, many of whom had been released over time from slavery or were born into penury. In most cities this involved the state claiming central districts and clearing the poorer, blacker populations to the geographical margins. In Salvador, conversely, it was the white elites who inhabited the coastal areas, while the labouring classes

populated the centre. Statistics from 1890 record that of the 174,412 residents of Salvador, 32 per cent were white, with the other 68 per cent classified as non-white (Simões Pires 2004, 24). The city's character, therefore, was largely defined by the activities of the black and mixed-race population living, working and playing in its central areas.

Academy

The beginning of the academy era was a key moment in the renegotiation of the relationship between capoeira players and the state. Core to negotiations on security is the contractual relationship between the state and the population, theorised by Hobbes as the Leviathan (Hobbes 1660), according to which the population relinquishes some of its freedoms in return for protection by the state. In similar vein, with the establishment of the capoeira academy, players forfeited some of their freedoms in return for a reduction in threat from state forces. Capoeira was taken off the streets and played indoors, and initially only with police surveillance. The establishment of the academy also placed parameters on the violence, distinguishing it from street fighting or gang warfare.

The formation of the capoeira academy came at a time of rapid change in Brazilian politics. In the post-abolition period in Brazil, from 1888 to 1920, the state-led ambition for the country was a project of miscegenation. In the 1930s, Gilberto Freyre developed a notion of 'racial democracy', based on the false claims that generations of racial mixing in Brazil had created a society in which race was not a barrier to social mobility. Inspired by such discussions, Getúlio Vargas, president from 1930 to 1945, adopted a policy of integrationism, which proposed the gradual whitening of the population, into the New State. By 1937, the populist Bahian governorship of Juracy Magalhães endorsed Afro-Brazilian cultures including carnival, samba, Candomblé (an Afro-Brazilian religion practised in northern Brazil) and capoeira (Talmon-Chvaicer 2008, 152). Integrationism was a political system that ostensibly opposed the Nazism of Germany at the time but, in prioritising the integration of blacks into a white society, it maintained the notion of white superiority, and was ideologically aligned to the far right.

The establishment of the academy is significant, too, in being the first era of capoeira history that is systematically recorded through memoirs, biographies and contemporary news articles. In 1932, a player known as Mestre Bimba (Manuel dos Reis Machado) established an academy in which to train. Five years later, he performed capoeira for the Governor of Bahia and received a certificate recognising his directorship of the Centre for Regional Physical Culture. This, in 1937, effectively marked the decriminalisation of capoeira – although it was still illegal to play in the street – and the following year Bimba started teaching reserve army officers. His teaching emphasised the sporting and martial arts elements of capoeira. By removing capoeira from the street, the academy instituted a more delineated style of capoeira, and the hierarchy of the teacher. The formation of the academy revived and developed capoeira and tied the continuation of the art to Bahia. Brazil was transitioning from a slave economy to a

capitalist economy, and the formation of academies reflected this in the privatisation of space and time. One of the regulations set out by Bimba was 'Do not talk during training. You are paying for the time that you spend in the academy'.

The establishment of the academy was a key moment in the history of capoeira, but it did not come from nowhere. A *Handbook of Capoeira and Brazilian Gymnastics* had been published in 1907 (in Rio de Janeiro), and *National Gymnastics (capoeiragem)* published in 1928 ('Capoeiragem' was an alternative name for capoeira, used mainly in Rio de Janeiro) (Talmon-Chvaicer 2008, 158). These publications indicated an easing in the illegality of capoeira and increasing acceptance of it, when practised as a sport and when it suited the state's interests. Bimba presented capoeira as a martial art, raising his profile, and that of capoeira.

In a parallel development, and influenced by the changes instituted by the Regional academy, older players who wanted to preserve the folkloric style of capoeira also gained more public recognition. Among the men who are now recognised as the 'Old Mestres' are Waldemar, Caiçara, Bobó, Cobrinha Verde and Espinho Remoso. Mestre Pastinha, who had started training capoeira as a child, in order to defend himself from a bully, and taught during his teenage years, returned to the art in the early 1940s and started to formalise the composition and academy of capoeira Angola, accentuating the theatrical and dance elements of the art.

Styles of capoeira

The name 'capoeira' covers a wide range of activities with no single author or set of parameters; capoeira is a folk tradition and has characteristics in common with other folk traditions, including creativity within limits, multiple authorship and versions, and a communal context. Despite its diversity and mutations over time, 'capoeira' is a word with meaning, and four relatively distinct strands can be identified.

Regional

The 'Regional Fight of Bahia' known simply as Capoeira Regional was established by Mestre Bimba in 1928. In Bimba's opinion, capoeira had become ineffective as a fight due to the legislation against it and the generalised decline in the practice (Decânio Filho 1997a, 130). Bimba established his academy, the Centre for Regional Physical Culture, and it was the first to be legally acknowledged. Bimba prohibited his students from fighting in the street, wanting to restore 'the efficiency, dignity, and historical perspective of the decadent honky-tonk capoeira of his time' (Almeida 1986, 32). Bimba was a young man, 19 years old, when he started teaching, and had an established reputation for fighting in the streets. Among the sayings attributed to him is, 'gouge out their eyes, but don't get beaten'.

Initially testing beginners with a choke hold to see if they yelped (on the basis he wanted only tough students), Bimba later introduced a sequence with eight parts, designed to train the beginner in the fundamentals of capoeira, and allowing students to reach proficiency in six months. While Regional students still learn this sequence, the *arrastão* (by which one player picks up and tips over the other by grabbing beneath the knee), and the *joelhada* (kick with the knee) are rarely used in games now. Bimba codified more than 50 kicks and composed and recorded rhythms for the berimbau, the five-foot long, one-stringed musical bow from central and southern Africa. These included the 'Capoeira Regional Anthem', that is played with reverence at the end of rodas in academies dedicated to Bimba's lineage.

Bimba institutionalised capoeira in two ways: he defined what was included and what excluded, and he taught in an academy. The name he chose, 'The Regional Fight of Bahia' set out the geographical origins and function of what he was instructing; it did not include the word capoeira, which was still illegal at the time. Within a short time, and apparently under pressure, Bimba accepted the first of many white students, a man named José Cisnando Lima, from the north-eastern state of Ceará (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 140). His acceptance of whites from middle class backgrounds gained him allies in powerful places, and according to his own reckoning he had among his students 'doctors, judges, engineers, people from industry and commerce' (Bimba 2002, 3). Bimba insisted that his students were in education or employment, thus breaking the association of capoeira with vagrancy. He added some movements from *batuque*, an Afro-Brazilian art that was practised by his father and introduced students to other elements of Afro-Brazilian culture, including music, dance and the religion Candomblé.

Course in Capoeira Regional, a recording made in the late 1950 or early 1960s (it is not dated), is accompanied by a list of academy rules and other instructions. These include directives such as: do not smoke during class, do not drink, and do not chat during training. Its capoeira orientation goes in a few pages, mainly of illustrations, from explaining the ginga base movement to inflicting mortal blows and defending oneself against a knife or revolver, offering the advice that, 'the capoeirista should apply immediately whichever of the kicks learned, according to the situation' (Bimba 2002). This serves as a reminder that Regional was taught as self-defence as well as being an art.

Bimba's style of capoeira embraced notions of progress and modernity. Bimba introduced 'baptisms' and graduations, innovations that promoted individual attainment and hierarchy within the community, and he formalised the playing ring with concentric blue, red and yellow circles on the floor. Accounts of his academy underscore elements of combat: initiates would be given a nickname, a practice common in Afro-Brazilian communities, but also recalling heroic past when capoeiristas hid from the oppressive state. He instituted a series of neckerchiefs, coloured blue, red and yellow to denote proficiency. For the advanced students, there were tests of fighting capacity and self-defence: Bimba introduced *emboscadas* – ambushes in which students would fend off attacks from several others in the forest, recalling trials of fugitive slaves.

Negotiation with society and the state was negotiated through public performances of capoeira Regional. In a series of matches in 1935–6 Bimba earned the nickname *Três Pancadas*, meaning 'Three Blows' and referring to the fact he needed to hit his opponents just three times to take them out. Bimba would routinely play capoeira for crowds, pitting his skill against practitioners of other martial arts – particularly jiu-jitsu and boxing – to prove the merit and efficiency of Regional. It was in this public space that the definition of capoeira was debated as players would use movements considered by others to be illegitimate (de Almeida 2006). Bimba was a showman and attracted media coverage for his fights, building his fame and raising the public profile of capoeira.

Following the success of Regional in Salvador, Bimba took his capoeira further afield, travelling round Brazil in the 1940s, and internationally in the 1970s. His style proved popular and was taken up and developed as other academies were established, becoming the base of a strand called capoeira Contemporânea, which is discussed below. Towards the end of life Bimba moved to Goiás, on the invitation of a student – falsely – promising financial assistance. He died there in 1973, in poverty and frustrated by the Brazilian state's lack of support for capoeira.

The legacy of Bimba is carried by his son, Mestre Nenel, who heads the *Filhos de Bimba* (Bimba's Children) capoeira school, established in 1986 in Salvador. The school is based in the Pelourinho, the heart of the old city and tourist district. Formerly the whipping post for punishing slaves, the space of the Pelourinho has been claimed by capoeira players, dancers, and marching bands as the Afro-Brazilian cultural centre of Salvador. The Filhos de Bimba school's mission is to retain the method, rituals and principles of Bimba, in the face of the improvisation that has taken place since the establishment of the academy, and often under the banner of Regional. According to Nenel – 'If we analyse only what my father [Bimba] did within what is nowadays called Regional, it would be 1%' (Nenel 2010, 9).

Angola

The first academy of capoeira Angola was opened by Mestre Noronha in the Liberdade area of Salvador in 1936, and the following year some Angola players performed in the second Afro-Brazilian Congress, an event that indicates that the style had public visibility. There were several players in Salvador, but most of them did not have academies and did not make a living through capoeira. Around ten years after Bimba opened his capoeira Regional academy, Mestre Pastinha began teaching in the Sports Centre of Capoeira Angola, although it was only at the end of the 1940s that his work started to gain popularity and recognition. Pastinha had made a reputation as a young fighter, teaching in his teenage years, but had left capoeira at the age of 23 in 1912.

He returned in 1941 when the constraints of illegality had been lifted. A group of players in an area called Gengibirra were still hosting rodas, and invited Pastinha to take on responsibility for the recently founded Sports Centre of

Capoeira Angola (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 154). Capoeira Angola is not codified in the way that Regional was, but Pastinha recorded his version of it through his instruction and writing. The institutionalisation of capoeira Angola was a reaction to the creation of Regional, and its practitioners sought to preserve a folk-loric form, although Pastinha, like Bimba, believed that capoeira had been in decline (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 157). A ladainha on Mestre Pastinha's CD includes the lines, 'If you want to learn, come to Salvador and get in touch with Mestre Pastinha, he is the best teacher'. Pastinha put on performances in other parts of Brazil, but Capoeira Angola did not match Regional's appeal.

Regional and Angola were defined relative to each other, and as time went by they became more clearly distinct. A newspaper article by Anisio Felix published on 1 July 1962 compared Bimba and Pastinha's approaches, referring to 'a duel of ideas about capoeira' (de Almeida 2006). Initially there was considerable overlap of style. Mestre Cabecinha's recording from 1940, for example, celebrates capoeira Angola with a fast São Bento Grande rhythm on the berimbau, a rhythm later associated more strongly with Regional or Contemporânea. Mestre Juvenal, another Angola player, also made a recording the same year, using the same rhythm. Aside from the bouts with practitioners of other martial arts, there was similarity in the movement used by the two styles too: a video of Mestre Waldemar and Mestre Caiçara playing in 1955 does not show the close or low play that now defines capoeira Angola, and the accompanying musical ensemble has only berimbaus and pandeiros, a line-up characteristic of Regional. Pastinha said, 'Bimba is as much Angoleiro as I am' (Araújo 2004, 128), the most likely interpretation of this being 'Bimba is as much a capoeirista as I am', given that the words capoeira and Angola were used interchangeably at this time ('Angoleiro' meaning a practitioner of capoeira Angola).

Pastinha was one of a handful of folkloric players of his era, but his command of the academy, and the fact that he recorded an album, wrote a short book and introduced the iconic black and yellow uniform granted him pole position in the genealogy of the style. Júnior writes that Regional players were typified as 'doctors in beatings' while the Angoleiros were 'saviours of tradition' (Júnior 2010, 113). Despite the claims of capoeira Angola being a more traditional form than Regional, many of its traditions of the ritual and aesthetics were established in the 1950s or later at a time when there were very few Angola players teaching (Decânio Filho 1997b, 6). By the 1960s Angola was played across all sectors of society (Downey 2005, 184; Röhrig Assunção 2005, 164), but its popularity faltered in the 1970s when many of the older players died, rodas stopped and academies were shut down. Of the few remaining Angola teachers, practically all were in Salvador and Rio de Janeiro.

Pastinha died old, blind and in poverty in 1981, and the continuation of capoeira Angola looked uncertain as his pre-eminent student, João Grande, stopped playing. Mestre Moraes, a student of João Grande, was living in Rio de Janeiro and he stepped into the breach, establishing his group in 1980, and returning to Salvador to open his academy in St Anthony's Fort in 1983. He organised events that drew together the older generation of players, including

João Grande. João Pequeno, another student of Pastinha and one of the few practising players, also developed his style, and within one generation of players the two schools bore little resemblance to each other in terms of music, movement or philosophy. More of Pastinha's students, including Bola Sete and Curió, opened academies in St Anthony's Fort, although they operated independently of each other.

Moraes opened a new chapter in the history of capoeira Angola, and his group the Capoeira Angola Group of the Pelourinho (known by its Portuguese acronym of GCAP) was the largest and most influential group in the 1980s. Moraes used training as a forum for political debate, incorporating a discourse of black consciousness into his teaching, and he led the spread of capoeira Angola to different parts of Brazil. Moraes prioritised discussions on the origins of capoeira as an African art and, in countering the modernity of Regional, he developed a conservative identity for Angola. A GCAP publication states,

> Our principal goal is to preserve the spirit of the game in the roda de capoeira: the game of wits, the unexpected and playful, where the martial becomes the artistic. We are not concerned with winning but with creating. We don't want merely to arrive at our goal, but to get there in style.
>
> (Lingo 1996, 34)

In the 1980s, the struggle for Angola academies was not against the state but against the perceived 'massification' of Regional (Araújo 2004, 25): it was an artistic struggle that was mirrored by the struggle of Regional in retaining its form amidst the burgeoning practice of Contemporânea. The intensity of identity building, history-writing and crystallisation of ritual observed in Angola academies at this time, and particularly in GCAP and the groups formed by GCAP students, indicates that this struggle was existential. For group members the struggle concerned the preservation of the style and its associated way of life and the interests of its practitioners, even if the struggle was not carried out under the threat from the state of incarceration or flogging.

The International Foundation of Capoeira Angola (FICA) was formed by former GCAP members in the mid-1990s when internal politics forced a number of senior students from the group: Nzinga and Zimba, two other groups of the same generation were also founded in Salvador by former students of Moraes. FICA marks the age of globalisation of capoeira Angola; although the three founding teachers work in Brazil, it has groups across Latin and North America and elsewhere. There are several groups in the USA, where one of FICA's founders, Mestre Cobra Mansa, spent many years. FICA developed artistic distinctiveness from GCAP while maintaining core elements of Pastinha's innovations, including the composition of the batería, ritual of the roda, and the use of yellow and black uniforms.

Contemporânea

The most popular style of capoeira in terms of numbers of practitioners is Contemporânea, meaning 'contemporary'. It was inspired largely by the popularity of Bimba's innovations, and its development in Bahia is attributed largely to Mestre Canjiquinha, who maintained that there was no distinction between Angola and Regional. An early and defining feature of Contemporânea, though, was of its popularity beyond Bahia and later the formation of mega-groups with international reach. Contemporânea players improvised freely with the music and movement of capoeira. In that Contemporânea did not tie itself to the modernist project of Regional or the conservatism of Angola – and was, by definition, contemporary – it was readily adaptable to different contexts.

Contemporânea emerged in the 1960s; in 1963, three brothers – Paulo, Rafael and Gilberto Flores – who had been training in Bahia with Bimba and Pastinha, moved to Rio de Janeiro and established their group, which would later adopt the name Senzala, a word that refers to the slave houses of the rural North-east. The brothers were white, middle class young men and Senzala became the most influential group in the late 1960s and for the next 20 years (Rosenthal 2007, 263). Senzala players were spectacular to watch, and practitioners of the newly innovated form started to travel to the USA and Europe with folkloric groups.

A second influential and hugely popular Contemporânea group, Cordão de Ouro, meaning Golden Belt, was founded in 1967 by Mestre Suassuna, a Bahian living in São Paulo who had Regional training and Mestre Brasília, who played Angola. The founding teachers chose the name Cordão de Ouro to reference Besouro Cordão de Ouro (also known as Besouro Mangangá), a famed capoeira who lived before the split between Regional and Angola; they taught Regional and Angola in the same training space, although Brasilia soon left to form his own group. This group was accompanied by a more defined pedagogy and refined philosophy about the social benefits of capoeira. It proved extremely popular and Suassuna's 1975 music recording sold more than 10,000 copies. An increasing number of young players were given titles and there were signs of aggression in the way that the game was played. Responding to these changes, Suassuna returned to his capoeira training in the late 1950s and developed the *muidinho* style, when players play close to each other with the body tightly closed. This became a characteristic of Cordão de Ouro game for a generation of teachers; its physical similarity to the Angola style inspired the mocking song from Angola players, 'be careful *muidinho*, this Angola game is about trickery'. Cordão de Ouro initiated capoeira competitions in the 1970s under the banner 'the ground is the limit'.

In 1988, Mestre Camisa, who had trained with Bimba and Senzala, formed his group, ABADÁ-Capoeira (a Portuguese acronym for the Brazilian Association for the Support and Development of the Art of Capoeira). This was a third mega-group with international reach, and nuclei opened in more than 60 countries, with a 40,000-strong membership. ABADÁ-Capoeira, like the other

Contemporânea groups, developed an explicit philosophy about the contributions of capoeira to society. Intent on innovation and creativity, the ideology of ABADÁ-Capoeira promoted the development, rather than the preservation of capoeira. The expansion of the group saw an elaboration of the central governance, with the adoption of an 18-colour system of belts.

It was through these groups and hundreds of other smaller groups that capoeira expanded massively in the 1960s to the 1980s in Brazil, and players started to teach regularly in schools and universities. The capoeira that Contemporânea groups developed is characterised by acrobatics and fast-paced games accompanied by short pulsating songs. Players use high and fast kicks and regularly perform somersaults, walkovers and backflips as part of the game. As a result, the interaction between the players is less intricate and less focused on take-downs, and players often give each other the space to perform. The aim is to produce the best game possible between two players rather than competing to be the better of the two. As such there is a strong element of collaboration in the game and group organisation.

Street capoeira

A fourth strand of capoeira exists, which is not institutionalised or globalised. Street capoeira defies definition beyond being movement and music that goes by the name of capoeira and is played on the streets, on beaches and in parks. It includes hanging around playing games and practising acrobatics. In town centres – especially Salvador – street capoeira is played to attract money from tourists. Street capoeira retains and embodies much of capoeira's history in being unregulated (it has little in the way of ritual or convention), working class and opportunistic.

Street capoeira was influenced by parallel processes to that of the formation of the academy. It entered the logic of the market as it became less associated with a relaxation and socialising and more akin to busking. Even without entering the formal economy, street players were subject to forces of capitalism as capoeira became a performance and means of income: they were institutionalised by the constraints and opportunities of the economy, not legislation. Players became more acrobatic in order to impress crowds, and capoeira as a way of life involved street players in the design of a tourist product. In the Pelourinho, groups of muscular young men dress in brightly coloured sports pants and sing, perform tricks or take photographs with tourists. Elsewhere children train capoeira kicks or acrobatics but without the discipline or ritual of the roda. Street capoeira is largely overlooked by academies, and many trained capoeiristas do not credit street activity with the name of capoeira. This is ironic, given the history of capoeira, and the denial by European Brazilians that Afro-Brazilian music and movement was fitting culture.

There are exceptions in Salvador to the generalised scorn of street capoeira. The Modelo Market has been a site for capoeira since the early twentieth century, and as such has played a constant role in capoeira's history, and illustrious

players have been formed there. Saputi leads a roda every Sunday night in the Praça da Dinha, tracing his legitimacy to Mestre Lua Rasta's long-standing roda in the Pelourinho. Rejecting the usual excitement attached to lineage, Saputi notes at his rodas that many groups claim lineage to Pastinha, but when Pastinha was old, he was poor and blind and his wife had to sell acarajé (a Bahian shrimp snack) to pay for his funeral; where – asks Saputi in song – were Pastinha's disciples then? (roda, 29 July 2012). Some respected teachers, including Mestre Claudio from Feira de Santana, a regular visitor at Saputi's rodas, started capoeira as children in the street and later trained in the academy in Salvador.

There are overlaps between the styles, but also significant differences between them. Angola and Regional occupy parallel universes of capoeira, with scarcely any acknowledgement of each other in the music or teaching. There are some Angola songs that reference Mestre Bimba as one of the great capoeiristas of Bahia, but one song proposes, 'everything is different in Angola', which seems to be an implicit comparison to Regional: the details – given in the verses – are, 'the viola responds to the gunga; the berimbau is tuned; the game is low'. Within Regional music, a response can be found in the lyric 'it's not [from] Angola'. Mestre Acordeon sings, 'there's a time for playing around, but play with a claw and deceit – that game is tough and it is not Angola, it's Bimba's capoeira'. Contemporânea capoeira tends to acknowledge both styles and founding fathers in its songs.

Despite derision for Bimba's adaptations among many Angola players, the majority of the innovations undertaken in Regional were copied by Angola academies such as the use of uniforms, the authority of the teacher, the hierarchy (including the use of titles), the practice of playing indoors and the regulation in the use of violence. Both the Regional and the Angola branches of capoeira have universalising discourses: Regional, and later Contemporânea, popularised capoeira, for the first time training whites and people from across social classes, and arguably saving capoeira from obscurity. Pastinha also insisted that anyone could learn – asserting 'capoeira is for men, women and children'. He was specifically inclusive: one of his ladainhas states that generals and doctors can learn, but they need to submit to capoeira's conventions. As capoeira became institutionalised, increasing store was put in its origins. By the 1980s, ancestry was celebrated in itself; without a written history, continuity relied on oral tradition, and lineage became a marker of authenticity for many groups. Júnior writes that ancestry cannot answer all questions arising in capoeira, but that it acts as a 'different logic for the production and transmission of knowledge' (Júnior 2010, 183).

Globalisation

The World Capoeira Association was formed in 1979 and there was a surge of interest in capoeira in the 1980s and 1990s, which led to its expansion across Brazil and to other countries. There is a particularly dense network of capoeira in the Americas, Europe, Japan, Israel and the Antipodes, several groups in Asia

and some groups on the African continent. The globalisation of capoeira was not simply an expansion; it changed the processes of capoeira – of teaching and learning – through ease of travel, and the communications revolution. These factors have influenced the way that knowledge of the art was transmitted and deployed through social media and digital recordings. With globalisation came the professionalisation of capoeira, which altered the relationship between practitioner and art. Previously a past-time, the specialisation of groups made possible through globalisation enabled top-flight capoeira players to train full-time, a development that altered the shapes and dynamics of the game. The professionalisation of capoeira, though, has not been accompanied by bouts or betting (as, for example, has happened with Thai boxing).

The export of Brazilian culture, including capoeira, is has accompanied the migration of Brazilians overseas – and particularly to wealthier countries – and, in response, there has been an influx of foreigners through an invigorated tourist trade, including of practitioners who visit Brazil to train. When Gilberto Gil took up his post as Minister of Culture in 2003, in then-President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's government, capoeira was recognised as key aspect of culture. Gil appeared on stage at the UN in Geneva with some capoeira players, using their diversity and the adversity of their backgrounds as a message to promote the message of 'peace in the world'. Capoeira had gained a reputation as being artistic, beautiful and peaceful.

The history of capoeira as it relates to security can be told in terms of the state extending its reach over previously unruly cultural and artistic activity, and this activity being partially co-opted for its survival. The adaptations tell part of the story, but they have been shaped by decisions taken by players, and further questions arise about the continuities of capoeira. Its corporeality and aesthetics were developed among marginalised communities and there is political significance in the persistence of practice, its development and growth and the sites of resistance it has maintained to the state and the cultural mainstream. One of the ideas that arises from contact with artists experiencing conflict is the possibility that there is something intense about strife that prompts or nourishes creativity as the message and community become urgent, and channels for expression are often limited; it is a sentiment captured in the lyric, 'if it wasn't for the slavery there would be no capoeira'. The notion of cultural resistance entertains this possibility – that people find ways to make their lives meaningful through cultural or artistic expression and that this has security consequences in denying and negating the inevitability of the violence that they face.

Outline of the book

The history of capoeira demonstrates a transformation of capoeira from political, social and legal margins to an iconic status that contributes to Brazil's cultural and national identity domestically and internationally. Previously perceived by the state as a threat to life, property and civilisation, it was subjected to police oppression. In 2008, capoeira teachers and the roda were

recognised by the Brazilian state as a Cultural Heritage, and in 2015 capoeira gained status as a UNESCO site of Intangible Cultural Heritage. In security terms, this was a moment when an international body acknowledged the heritage embodied in capoeira and the need to protect it.

The cultural gains are evident, and the research questions aim to uncover how they constitute cultural resistance by affecting people's experience of security. This book investigates what knowledge is generated through capoeira, and how communicating this knowledge has distributed security by changing configurations of protection and threat. Conclusions are drawn about what implications there are for security analysis and policy by bringing the perspective of capoeira to mainstream security concerns. The central argument is that capoeira presents the perspective of the weaker through a conceptually independent discourse, and that in doing so it critiques dominant formulations of security and creates alternatives that can inform a progressive security agenda.

The excavation takes the following direction: the question referring to knowledge creation is addressed over Chapters 3 to 6. Chapter 3 presents the security literature and the gaps and contradictions that arise, noting that security has been defined and pursued predominantly by the powerful and that its conceptualisation is inconsistent and at times self-defeating. Chapter 4 presents the literature and practice of capoeira, including an account of its movement, music and ritual, and the chapter ends with a presentation of the duality of the game with life. Chapters 5 and 6 examine the knowledge generated by the game and how it frames the perspective from below. Examining this perspective brings into focus a historically and geographically specific identity and an array of unconventional causal explanations. Chapter 7 addresses the second research question of how security has been and continues to be distributed through capoeira. It examines the rationality of the communication that takes place within and beyond the game. Chapter 8 places these findings in the context of contemporary insecurity in Brazil, characterised by issues of gang violence, inequality and a crisis of democracy. Chapter 9 addresses the third question, assessing how the findings from capoeira contribute to security analysis and policy, and draws conclusions for theory. Chapter 10 reflects on structural violence and the implications of capoeira to cultural resistance as artistic practice and as a way of life.

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3 Security
Blind-spots, rejection and failure to conform

Security is a word that means different things to different people at different times. It has psychological, as well as physical, political and economic aspects and its opposites are diverse, including insecurity, vulnerability and terror. Conventionally, Security Studies has focused on realist national interests and state's ability to pursue or defend them militarily, but in the last 30 years, the scope of Security Studies has expanded to include non-military threats and to address itself to the protection of human populations as well as states.

Substantive or definitive renditions of the meaning of security are problematic as the concept is in constant evolution with debate, although interests and power are core issues to many discussions. An alternative approach is taken by Karen Fierke who distances her definition from a categorisation of content in favour of an approach arising from how security functions. Fierke argues that security 'assumes a field of relationships, including a threatener, the threatened, the protector or means of protection, and the protected' (Fierke 2007, 46). According to this definition, security is relational, in that it deals with interactions and is fluid, as these interactions can change. Investigating how capoeira distributes security involves monitoring how these relationships of threat and protection are challenged or changed through the practice of the art.

Security's historical absences

Throughout its history, Security Studies has been dominated by literature from the USA and UK, and has centred on the question of how to pursue security from a position of strength (Croft 2010, 196): how to promote one's own security priorities and agenda strategically, including by inflicting offensive or defensive violence. During the Cold War, definitions of security were circumscribed by discussion on nuclear arms as the threat of nuclear disaster overwhelmed other political debate.

The dominance of the security agenda by those with nuclear capability was not without critique. Through the 1970s and 1980s there were alternatives to this state-centric account posited from post-colonial authors and also gender perspectives that brought women's experiences to critique the predominantly male construction of international order and its institutions (Enloe 1990;

Tickner 1992). Feminist theory, though, was concerned largely with issues of peace and disarmament and did not produce a coherent causal explanation of war (Sjoberg and Tickner 2013, 3). Security Studies was underwritten by the assumption that states acted rationally with strategic calculation, and the notion of nuclear deterrent became contradictory when defence risked total annihilation. The framing rendered states that did not have nuclear weapons – and therefore did not pose a threat – irrelevant to debate on security, except with regard to how they affected the central balance of power (Buzan and Hansen 2009, 87); overlooking these states or populations opened up what Bilgin calls 'historical absences' (Bilgin 2010). Most people's experience of security and their ability to pursue their interests were not captured by the dominant perspective and the interests of many were compromised by it.

The end of the Cold War triggered a surge of interest in security theory. Critical Security Studies scholars mounted a reinvigorated critique of realist approaches. Rejecting the conventional problem-solving approach to security issues, critical security theorists aimed to problematise security: to uncover the power structures that maintain and reproduce patterns of security and insecurity through policy and practice. At the same time, the reduction in the likelihood of nuclear war meant that attention turned to other sources of threat. Consequently there was a widening and deepening the conceptualisation of insecurity to include a range of threats, among them disease and environmental damage, and to consider security over a longer period of time.

As the debate expanded, a crucial intervention was made that security was an 'essentially contested concept' (Buzan [1983] 1991). The proposal was that the meaning of security was not fixed and could not be proved by appeal to evidence; rather, it was through debate that people arrived at constantly evolving understandings of security. A key concept was that of 'securitisation' devised by Ole Wæver of the Copenhagen School in 1995, and referring to security as a speech act. He defined the process of securitisation as 'who securitizes (securitizing actor), on what issues (threat), for whom (referent object), why, with what results, and not least, under what conditions' (Buzan *et al.* 1998, 32). According to this intervention, events and phenomena were security issues if they were treated as such in discourse and policy.

The concept of securitisation set parameters on the widening and deepening of the post-Cold War definition of security as assertions of security threats were required to be convincing. It also drew attention to the process, including which actors were dominant in identifying threats. Securitisation met with critiques, including from Lene Hansen, also from the Copenhagen School, who argued that, depending on indicators of power such as economic or social status, it is easier for some people than others to draw attention to – and therefore securitise – the threats they face; some, indeed, would make themselves more vulnerable by drawing attention to their insecurity (Hansen 2000). The example Hansen cites, of Pakistani women bringing charges of rape, who risked being prosecuted for extra-marital sex, highlights the intertwining of security with social and political factors including law and gender.

The argument that security is constructed in discourse, rather than being a measure of an objective threat, does not suggest that there are no dangers unless people talk about them, but that the way that threats are framed and addressed depends on, and interacts with, social and political factors. In practice national and international security agendas and policies are directed by politicians who are sufficiently powerful to persuade others that particular interests are being threatened. Prising open the enquiry to critique the politics of security (what security does politically) and the ethics of security (what progressive practices look like) (Browning and McDonald 2011, 235), facilitates analysis of how power is exercised, and which interests are threatened and which are protected in security policy and practice. In doing so it includes non-state actors as agents with interests and sometimes power. It frames the question of who, in practice, is able to bring their interests to the table and protect or pursue them?

Critical Security Studies contributes an invaluable dimension to the debate, but it remains conceptually dependent on the realism of conventional Security Studies in that its purpose is to critique realism's concepts and assumptions. Neither the realist nor the critical security literature grants space for investigating the agency and perspective of those suffering the effects of dominant security policy on unequal conflict, that is to say the priorities or the pursuit of security from below. These lacunae can be compared to the lack of gender analysis in conventional international relations: 'the very mechanisms through which security knowledge is generated and put into use are gendered *and* produce gendered insecurities' (Bilgin 2010, 617). Despite a greatly increased scope of Security Studies, including debates from post-colonial studies, gender, cultural studies, a strong bias remains in the primacy of interests of the USA and Europe in shaping what security consists in and how it is pursued.

Neoliberalism, human security and terror

Since the end of the Cold War, the dominant ideology of neoliberalism – that 'governments exist in order to create the optimal conditions for private investments to maximise their profits' (Klein 2017, 80) – has produced two defining moments in security debate and orientation. The first occurred when acknowledging both a diverse set of threats and the interaction between the state and other agents led to the formulation of human security. The realist assumption, widely held by Security Studies scholars during the Cold War (despite the evidence available), that the state and the population held interests in common, was irreparably punctured by the early 1990s. Security policy had bolstered dictatorial structures, particularly in Africa, and with the declining strategic significance of these regions in the aftermath of the Cold War, attention was focused on the kinds of power that had been funded through development programming and facilitated through political alliance. The dictatorships supported by the USA and Europe had not showcased capitalism with any finesse, and decades of aid had not resulted in institutional or market development. Instead, there were several military and quasi-military regimes that were expensive to maintain

and that routinely neglected or attacked their populations to pillage or suppress them.

The post-Cold War era saw Northern donor discontent with these regimes and their use of development funds. Donors moved to circumvent the African state, with a view to working directly with populations, including through international NGOs and national civil society. This approach floated the political possibility of protecting the human population irrespective of – or even contrary to – the interests of the state. The move was marked by the UNDP's 1994 definition of human security as freedom from fear and freedom from want (UNDP 1994). This formulation and its subsequent elaboration (Paris 2001; King and Murray 2001–2, among others) made four major contributions to security thinking: it implicitly concurred with the Critical Security Studies position in recognising the state's role in generating insecurity (Fierke 2015, 159), it acknowledged diverse threats beyond the military and territorial, it proposed that security could be achieved through development, and it mooted the possibility of an empowerment agenda by making the population the referent object of security. While the notion of human security differed in content from the concerns of the Cold War, like other forms of security, it was dominated by voices from the Global North, and as such aligned with the policy and aims of what was termed sustainable development. The neoliberal victory brought with it the optimism that security and freedom (from the abstract threats of fear and want) could be united; according to the conventional theorisation of the Leviathan, these two were conceptualised as mutually compromising.

The second key moment of neoliberal security formulation came at the beginning of the twenty-first century, following the attacks on New York and Washington in 2001. The adoption of terror as the defining security issue was the culmination of a concern that those excluded from the returns of neoliberalism, and particularly those defined as poor, could pose a threat. The notion that the poor could be a threat was a logical corollary of human security and had been elaborated through the merging of development and security policy in the 1990s: if sustainable development led to security, a lack of sustainable development (which was the more widely experienced outcome of development programming) would lead to insecurity. As development policy was increasingly pitched as international and interdependent, and development was rendered intertwined with security, the implication was that those threats could spread, disrupting security arrangements elsewhere. Confronting underdevelopment and terrorism required responses that addressed an unlimited array of threats. Acknowledging the intimacy of interventions demanded by this perspective, critical scholars have noted that neoliberalism involves a radical agenda for transforming societies (Fierke 2015, 156).

The expansive and dominating nature of the neoliberal order links national (in donor and recipient countries) with international security through the politics of the market and surveillance. William Finnegan observed of the 1989 Washington Consensus setting out free trade, floating exchange rates and macroeconomic stability, that 'while we make the world safe for multinational

corporations, it is by no means clear that they intend to return the favour' (Nixon 2011, 36). The threats from multinational corporations are multiplied in the era of the internet and artificial intelligence. Revelations by Julian Assange and Ed Snowden, and inquiries into Facebook and Cambridge Analytica in 2018 illuminated the interface between corporate activity and the politics and ethics of security.

The historical absences generated by the dominance of powerful voices play out in contemporary security policy and practice, and compromise not only the interests of populations but constrain governments' ability to respond to a diverse array of threats. Despite their powerful manipulation of the agenda, Rogers assesses that in the twenty-first century, the threats of environmental catastrophe and anti-elite insurgency are profound; according to his analysis, these are the areas over which dominant powers are 'losing control' (Rogers 2000). Even among realist security theorists there is discontent with the perspective of neoliberal security and its capacity to protect its authors let alone those without strategic leverage. Mearsheimer identifies the inability of states to cooperate to confront these threats as the 'Tragedy of Great Power Politics'. The reason, he argues is that 'it pays to be selfish in a self-help world' – both in the short and the long term, as losing in the short term means there is no long term (Mearsheimer 2002, 33).

In that this inability to confront threats risks catastrophic insecurity for all, it has become an illogic of the contemporary era, taking over from the illogic of mutually assured destruction during the Cold War. The 'tragedy' as far as great powers is concerned, is of their security strategy leading to political stalemate and environmental collapse. Its drama is maintained through what Mark Lacy refers to as, 'networks of realism' – the prioritising of realist concerns that use fear and terror to limit how we can think about security. In a context of multiple forms of interlocking and pervasive terror, fear is used as a biopolitical technology of control and discipline (Lacy 2003). The upshot is that the dominant discourse of security ties in governments and populations to a perspective that is destructive to everyone, through what Naomi Klein refers to as 'ecocidal capitalism', that is reproduced because abandoning it involves abandoning neoliberalism and the apparent successes it has registered (Klein 2017, 228 and 81).

Non-conformity and rejection of neoliberal order

The networks of realism present existential difficulties for the powerful states that have devised the discourse of security in their favour. For less powerful states and populations, the dangers are even more immediate and further outside of their control; for them the 'tragedy' of great power politics is of political, cultural or physical obliteration. For much of the world's population, neoliberalism is not a world order to aspire to joining, but a source of political domination and threat: for them, the neoliberal project and its associated security agenda have brought few returns or have proved dangerous. Despite the force of the neoliberal

paradigm, there are expressions of discontent; across the world, the assumptions of security as defined by the Global North are rejected or refuted by less powerful states and non-state actors, whether through spectacular means of attacks on northern interests, or more in mundane means of stealing, contravening or ignoring interventions. The use of disruption for survival is all that is left to many marginalised people and is demonstrable in strikes, anarchist movements, and – in other ways – in migration patterns as people are forced from their homes through war, destitution or environmental calamity.

Disruption rejects the order that is imposed, and signals how limited choices are deployed to maximum effect even if a concerted strategy is impossible. With the war in Syria and the millions of people displaced to Europe, the security of borders and of people has become defined by disruption. International relations are affected through the processes of search and rescue in the Sahara and Mediterranean, humanitarian provision and asylum applications. In a parallel political development, President Trump has made the USA's border with Mexico an issue of national security, leading to the longest government Shutdown in US history between 22 December 2018 and 25 January 2019, and a declaration of a national emergency the following month. While dominant discourses of European states and the USA construct a national interest based on exclusion, new arrivals have differing sets of interests, and face insecurities and a lack of state or international protection. The war in Syria, conflicts and gang violence in Central America, and the generalised crisis that leads thousands from Africa, the Middle East and beyond to cross the Mediterranean are kept in the public attention through claims made about national security.

The intertwined discourses of development and security that were manifested in the formulation of human security in the 1990s distinguish the compliant and capable from those in need of further punitive or incentivising intervention and containment. The discourse that airbrushes the configurations of power that maintain systemic inequality returns to the realist perspective of problem-solving; swathes of the human population become problematic, presented as the poor, migrant, redundant or the source of some future threat. Framing groups in this way renders them superfluous or useless to the form of development and security that is being promoted.

Duffield identifies an irony at the core of liberalism, that being that northern governments claim a partnership approach but when this falters are either forced into accommodation with Southern governments with whom they have differing values or they move to liberal war in order to enforce their political agenda (Duffield 2001, 261). This irony is played out in various ways through the neoliberal agenda as the expansive and inclusive ideology has no way of dealing with dissent or difference. Contradictions arise with the merging of the development and security agendas in contexts where difference of interest exists, so despite the terminology of partnership and common interest, development interventions are formulated and delivered through the unequal power relations of aid. Instead of including people in the returns of the neoliberal agenda, non-compliant states or populations are presented as a threat. This

threat is ideological in exposing the exclusive and exploitative nature of neo-liberalism, and political in embodying the risk of uprising, epidemic disease, social breakdown or migration. There are also contradictions in the formulation of hard security, which has involved extending surveillance, clearly illiberal in its violation of privacy, over the life patterns of populations at home and abroad as a technology of liberal governance.

Security vs culture

There is something intuitive about the suggestion that neoliberal order is the antithesis of culture, that culture is crowded out by money and competition and that 'cultural activity' is subsumed into neoliberal machinations to provide self-care, which prepares the individual for more contributions to the market. There are reasons to be wary of this suggestion, though. What appears at first sight as an ideology that reduces everything to the objectivity of market value and technology is in fact deeply invested with aesthetics. The cultures of memes, brands, reality TV and social media are markers of our times, identities and ways of relaxing, reflecting and interacting.

The aspiration to one's own objective rationality in contrast to the cultural fuzz of others is enshrined in dominant versions of security. In Security Studies, the assumed rationality of realism means that culture has been theorised as an explanation as to why states do not act rationally (Barnett 2018, 163). Different attitudes to the use of violence or willingness to incur risks or costs were explained with reference to cultural differences between different countries or regions. Severine Autesserre helps to shift the analytical lens by acknowledging the influence of culture in mainstream security interventions in contexts of development. She refers to a culture of peacebuilding in Congo, and her findings are worth quoting at length:

> International peacebuilders have their own world, with its own rituals, its own customs, its own beliefs, its own roles, its own stars, its own villains, its own rules, its own taboos, its own meeting places – in brief, its own culture. This peacebuilding culture shaped the intervention strategy in the Congo … Ultimately this peacebuilding culture enabled foreign actors to pursue an intervention strategy that permitted, and at times even exacerbated, fighting, massacres, and massive human rights violations during and after the transition [2003–6]. And it made it possible for these actors to view their intervention as a success until war resumed in 2008.
>
> (Autesserre 2010, 1 and 12)

Autesserre reproduces the dichotomy between security and culture, and implies that the culture of peacebuilders is irrational in producing interventions that failed to build peace. She presents the culture as something that covers its mistakes and becomes impermeable to critique and change. Interventions such as peacekeeping can pass as ethical and efficient in the international purview

because they take place in situations of extreme inequality and there are few means or channels for people affected by peacekeeping to challenge its policy or implementation. Nonetheless, the analytical step has been taken: analysing peacekeeping in this light opens the debate in acknowledging that interventions and the neoliberalism that informs them do not constitute a definitive rationality but a culture. The implication of Autesserre's work is that there is some more rational perspective that could act as a corrective, were it not for the culture of peacebuilding. There is another interpretation, though, and that is that all politics is imbued with culture of some sort.

This is a possibility that has been explored by Mary Kaldor in her book, *Global Security Cultures*, in which she defines a security culture as,

> a specific pattern of behaviour, or constellation of socially meaningful practices, that expresses or is the expression of norms and standards embodied in a particular interpretation of security and that is deeply imbricated in a specific form of political authority or set of power relations.
>
> (Kaldor 2018, 1–2)

Kaldor makes the case that there are different, 'combinations of ideas, rules, people, tools, tactics and infrastructure, linked to different types of political authority that come together to address or engage in large-scale violence', and trap governments in 'particular pathways to security' (Kaldor 2018, 1–2). Kaldor defines four main types of security cultures: geo-politics, new wars, the liberal peace, and the war on terror. While the scope and analysis are different she echoes elements of Autesserre's conclusions in suggesting that if the contradictions of cultures were exposed, a different quality of peace could be achieved.

There is ample evidence of the cultural nature of neoliberalism, manifested in the difficulties of disabusing the neoliberal faithful, and these difficulties are exacerbated by their propensity to invent facts. Following the UK's Brexit referendum, led by then-Prime Minister David Cameron, and Donald Trump's presidential campaign in the USA, 'post-truth' was the Oxford English Dictionary's word of the year in 2016. It was defined as 'relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping political debate or public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief'. The same year, Lord Chalcot, chairing the investigation into the processes that led to the UK's involvement in the Iraq War in 2003, assessed that then-Prime Minister Tony Blair was 'emotionally truthful' but acted on the basis of beliefs, rather than facts (Kuenssberg 2017).

What united the three events was the ability of a white, male politician from a powerful country to represent a set of interests that was culturally determined and stood in contrast to a broad base of perspectives and political interpretations. In all three cases, though, the personal ambitions of the politicians involved were largely fulfilled. Culture provides context as it places parameters on what is to be imagined and how; the ability of politicians to prioritise their interests as security concerns depends on what the public (even if not all the

public) is willing to believe and what has been sown in the popular imagination as sources of threat or protection. The mistake, probably, is to assume that this was new: throughout history politicians and religious leaders have presented versions of events that fulfil their interests. What is new, or at least enhanced, is the ability or facility of populations to gain perspective on, and produce critiques of, the versions of events presented by politicians. The aesthetics of neoliberal politics are amplified but are also increasingly contestable in a world mediated by the internet.

Whether the critique of post-truth neoliberalism is concerted or disconcerted, it frames a fundamental rejection of any claim that neoliberalism is rational, neutral or inevitable. It is a culture that produces security agendas that preserve its cultural assumptions, and there is no incentive for it to take on board information that threatens it. Confronting neoliberalism involves not simply empirical data to challenge a cultural perspective, but a critical and a reflective angle on the selection and production of data and recourse to the art of persuasion. Politics and policy are not shaped by new information presented but by argument that addresses itself to the assumptions and priorities underlying decisions, that is to say, by a line of reasoning that prompts a change in culture. Presenting culture not as oppositional to, but constitutive of security, puts it centre stage in the discussion, including as a means towards gaining security, rather than a catch-all explanation for irrational behaviour. This issues fundamental challenges to what has been presented in Security Studies as indisputable, and prepares the ground for the study of cultural resistance.

The notion of cultural resistance has been explored by Matthew Arnold in his late nineteenth-century work, 'Culture and Anarchy' written during times of rapid changes of industrialisation and urbanisation in England. Arnold perceived rising chaos, and presented culture as a means of resisting the politics, commerce and mechanisation (Arnold 1990 [1869], 82). Arnold's perspective was conservative, presenting culture as a refuge from the challenge of anarchy, and he attributed no creative merit. Taking on the concept of cultural resistance, Gramsci argues that while traditional warfare involved, 'wars of manoeuvre' that seized the state, cultural resistance involved 'wars of position' that involved infiltration and attack to reconfigure civil society (Gramsci 1971, 229–39). The analyses differ but the authors agree that the population is informed by culture that is socially constructed and has the potential for political outcomes.

Examining capoeira as cultural resistance has aspects in common with Gramsci's theorisation of subalternity, particularly in its manifestation in the early years of the twentieth century. Gramsci's work presents 'history from below', for colonised people excluded from the cultural hegemony. His concept of subalternity, though, has been critiqued for being Eurocentric, and an important rationale for choosing capoeira is to engage with a discourse that is not defined by European colonialism. Mbembe accounts for the loss of 'distinctive historicity' by observing that since colonisation, African people and places have been 'embedded in times and rhythms heavily conditioned by European domination'

(Mbembe 2001, 9). Capoeira, while influenced by the slave trade and colonialism, maintains a narrative that is determined by the players. Gramsci understood subaltern people to be characterised as being without agency because of the social status they have, and Scott's work on 'weapons of the weak' is similar in presenting Malaysian peasants in everyday forms of resistance (Scott 1985). Much of the story of capoeira, conversely, is about agency in the face of oppression, and while class is significant in the history of capoeira, the expansion of the constituency and the fact that capoeira is artistic rather than a literal experience is also part of the analysis.

Broadening and critiquing the definition of culture and its relationship with security, and situating capoeira as an artistic and lived culture among others, starts to frame how sub- or counter-cultures co-exist and interact with hegemonic cultures and their security regimes. Much of the world's population rejects in whole or part the culture of neoliberalism and constructs counter-cultures, whether expressed artistically or more generally through identities and priorities. Capoeira and culture more generally are difficult to measure, but powerful stories from the perspective of those in positions of political weakness provide a necessary complement to dominant narratives by introducing alternative characters and world-views. Critical Security Studies scholars have argued that security can be constructed through an understanding of identity and culture (Collins 2016, 71), and according to Fierke, 'the point is not to romanticize alternative traditions but rather to ask whether a cross-cultural engagement over the meaning of security would express a more diverse human face which might expand our perspective on significant global problems' (Fierke 2015, 192); this is a helpful way of portraying the challenge.

Into the game

Capoeira's early history is documented largely through police records of arrests, and this form of documentation indicates succinctly the need to gain alternative perspectives on the art and players to those presented by state power. The people who are registered on police records as criminals or vagabonds present an alternative perspective of themselves through capoeira; it is one that valorises them, their ancestry and their way of life. Through its music, movement and ritual, capoeira presents a narrative of heroes instead of criminals, African heritage rather than state institutions, and a rejection of the authority of the powerful.

Critiquing the dominant mode of recording history, the anthropologists Comaroff and Comaroff note: 'Text – a sad proxy for life – becomes all' (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992, 26). Conquergood quotes the Comaroffs enquiry: 'do we still have to remind ourselves that many players on any historical stage cannot speak at all? Or, under greater or lesser duress, opt not to do so' (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997, 48; Conquergood 2004, 314). In doing so he highlights the practical and political advantages of non-written cultures among marginalised and non-literate communities. Conquergood writes,

Oppressed people everywhere must watch their backs, cover their tracks, suck up their feelings, and veil their meanings. The state of emergency under which many people live demands that we pay attention to messages that are coded and encrypted; to indirect, non-verbal, and extralinguistic modes of communication where subversive meanings and utopian yearnings can be sheltered and shielded from surveillance.

(Conquergood 2004, 314)

Identifying what is essentially a clash of cultures, Conquergood writes, 'Marching under the banner of science and reason, [the enlightenment project of modernity] has disqualified and repressed other ways of knowing that are rooted in embodied experience, orality, and local contingencies' (Conquergood 2004, 312).

A lead in researching these other ways of knowing is given by de Oliveira's work on Congado music played in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais. De Oliveira's methodology accesses unconventional data – rhythms – to track a history of cultural and political practice that draws on and represents the African heritage of the musicians (de Oliveira 2006a; de Oliveira 2006b). Afro-Brazilian groups parade, with one of their members crowned a 'King', to the sound of the music, the rhythm of which he traces to the Congo/Angola region in Africa. Bands march in close proximity to each other and it is by maintaining musical cohesion and focus within the group that musicians are able to avoid being distracted by the performance of nearby musicians. Through his investigation de Oliveira exposes the data and identifies the political significance of continuity of identity that is achieved by the musical conventions and their reproduction in Brazil. He presents the case that,

This incredibly powerful tradition, with its slow moving King and its low and powerful drumming, which was born out of the necessity of African slaves in Brazil to find new identities, to be accepted by the ruling society and at the same time to keep values and institutions from their original culture, lives on in the vitality of the young generation of those communities.

(de Oliveira 2006b)

De Oliveira's research provides a point of departure in indicating a non-written and metaphorical discourse that provides political alternatives to the structures and institutions of the Brazilian state, while also providing performers with space in which to practise their art. The meaning of the Congado music is embodied in the movement of the players, their instruments and the ways in which they play them, and the music de Oliveira analyses presents a political alternative without directly confronting dominant forms of power.

In a similar way, the discourse of capoeira – its music, movement and ritual – is largely obscure to the casual observer, who is likely to be confused or intrigued by the spectacle. As Faber writes, 'the centrality of the body to ritual means that

"ritualization" is a particularly mute form of activity. It is designed to do what it does without bringing what it is doing across the threshold of discourse or systematic thinking' (Faber 2004, 110). Capoeiristas are not required to articulate the significance of their art, but there is a shared vocabulary of music and movement, and players have their own accent and interpretation, depending on their style or group, gender, age and experience. People from across the world can converse in the language of capoeira, and as with any language, these discussions produce new ideas. Pastinha sings, 'I'm going to learn my ABC of the berimbau'. Capoeira is knowledge embodied in its practice, not tied to the conceptual vocabulary or means of communication employed by the Brazilian state.

Capoeira's development over time has been diverse, flexible and responsive. There is no overarching political ambition or concerted direction, and the parts that are passed on through training and play are the outcome of negotiated priorities, opportunities and constraints. For this reason, the primary research methodology for this book engaged with how capoeira is played and taught. This data complements written accounts of the history of capoeira and its social and political context and is a marker of capoeira's development; its corporeal representation embodies the parts of the discourse that have been selected for repetition and forged through the development of the art.

Playing and training

The research for this book brings data from Salvador, Bahia, where capoeira has been played consistently and where the most significant developments of the twentieth century were initiated. The primary approach to data gathering was emic, meaning that I adopt the perspective of the capoeira player to determine rules (conventions), meaning and explanation (Kottak 2014, 47). I spent six months in 2012 and a further seven weeks in 2015 training and participating in capoeira games, known as rodas. I trained in capoeira Angola with FICA Bahia and spent some weeks in Kilombo, a permaculture farm and capoeira community oriented by Mestre Cobra Mansa. I also trained with Filhos de Bimba, the definitive capoeira Regional Group, led by Mestre Nenel. I attended other classes, including in João Pequeno's academy and GCAP, and have played in numerous rodas in academies and also in the street. I was a regular participant in the roda in Praça da Dinha, led by Saputi. These groups uphold and represent the importance of lineage to capoeira, and along with many other groups in Salvador, they host a good number of foreign students.

Emic research provides access to the historical accounts communicated through the movement, music and ritual of capoeira training and play. Capoeira's history is one of change with continuity; and the majority of it has not been written down; it is hard to capture capoeira in written text, and writing is not the priority of the majority of its practitioners. Instead capoeira is transmitted through the bodies of players, and the vast majority of teaching and learning is done in classes and orally. That said, social media has latterly become a significant

medium for sharing games and instruction videos, and the internet has become a significant forum for debating issues surrounding capoeira. There is a huge breadth of styles within capoeira, and my choice to train with Angola and Regional groups was made with a view to capturing the breadth of practice, having already trained for around five years in London with a Contemporânea group, Cordão de Ouro. I have also played elsewhere in the UK, and have visited groups in France, Portugal and Congo and these experiences have enriched my understanding of capoeira. Decânio, who trained with Bimba and wrote biographies of Bimba and Pastinha, asserts 'at its origin, there's just one capoeira … each teacher creates their own style' (Decânio Filho 1997, 6).

The investigation revolves around learning capoeira – in the sense of learning a language and its usage, rather than dissecting it for its grammar. Greg Downey, embarking on research into capoeira intended to find out what capoeira means, but found people were interested only in playing – with what it felt like, not what it signifies. My experience was similar in that, while there is a near-universal assertion that capoeira has a history of resistance, for many players, training is about improving strength, flexibility and tricks. Many players are reluctant even to dedicate time to learning music, where much of the knowledge is constructed and communicated, and most people do not play capoeira to make a point or win a political argument. Downey argues that phenomenology – the study of experience – is useful for breaking up the functionalism of art. He focuses on the way that capoeira changes people, using phenomenology to look, 'from the inside out, asking how the world looks after one has spent enough time in the roda' (Downey 2005, 20). My research was guided by the inquiry to understand the security outcomes of capoeira, even if they are not planned: it focused on how the practice of capoeira leads to security outcomes through the reordering of patterns of threat and protection.

Emic research into capoeira accesses data on movement, music, ritual and conventions of interaction as well as on the significance of breaks from convention. Working within different groups provided insights into a wide spectrum of expression and creativity, and allowed narratives to emerge through 'co-operative inquiry' in which 'sense-making is in the process of the inquiry, in the cycles of action and reflection' (Reason 2008, 229). Capoeira is intriguing for adepts, who spend hours talking about minutiae and teasing out the details of people's reactions during a game. Routine participation in capoeira classes, games and events renders first-hand experience of what Conquergood has referred to as extralinguistic modes of communication, the forms of embodied knowledge that are transmitted through the interaction of training and playing. As with learning any language, the emic approach exposed me to different uses and colloquialisms of capoeira.

Emic research was chosen in favour of the perhaps more apparently obvious approach of interviewing players. This was for three reasons. First, it gave me direct access to the experience of being a capoeirista. As Bleiker argues in his theorisation of the aesthetic turn,

> knowledge communicated through artistic, philosophical and historical insights cannot always be verified by methodological means proper to science… It produces what can be called an 'excess' experience; that is, an experience, sensuous at times, which cannot be apprehended or codified by non-aesthetic forms of knowledge.
>
> (Bleiker 2001, 520)

Anyone who has trained capoeira is familiar with the emotions that are aroused and, at least after a certain level of proficiency, of the learning that results from these emotions. The mix of dance, fight and play gives rise to feelings of exhilaration, anxiety, wariness and relief, which are central to the way the game is learned and what it means to players. Emic research allows for aesthetic data to be gathered directly rather than mediated by language.

A second rationale for emic research derives from the nature of capoeira and how it is normally consumed. There are capoeira performances – these were initiated in the 1930s and have fallen in and out of fashion with practitioners, and social media has massively extended its audiences and conversations – but capoeira is fundamentally played for the players who are present at the game. Training is training for the roda, the live interaction, not choreographic training for performance or the stage. Taking part means entering the roda, being part of the flow of communication between those playing and making music, rather than observing at a distance. It also involves the researcher in an inventory of philosophy and expressions, including quotations ascribed to practitioners of the past, many of which are not recorded beyond the oral tradition.

The third reason for opting for an emic methodology stemmed from my experience of capoeira teachers' public speeches and interviews bearing little relation to what is taught within the class or experienced in the game. It is not simply that teachers' strength lies in *doing* capoeira, including teaching it, rather than in presenting an account of it, but that deceit is central to the art, and that includes constructing myths about its origins. Júnior writes about teachers' speeches as poetry, political and aesthetic 'producing fabulous narratives' (Júnior 2010, 27). Wacquant makes a similar observation with regard to research into boxing in Chicago's South Side in the USA,

> the behaviours described [in the book] are those of the boxer in his 'natural habitat,' not the dramatized and highly codified (re)presentation that he likes to give of himself in public, and that journalistic reports and novels retranslate and magnify according to their specific canons.
>
> (Wacquant 2004, 6)

The persona presented to the uninitiated or perceived outsider by capoeira teachers is at times far removed from the character who teaches and plays capoeira.

The emic research is complemented by secondary sources, including histories of capoeira and Brazil, music recordings and biographies of key players to

construct a critical angle on the narratives that grow up in the academy. Capoeira players perceive significance in their history, both in terms of the meaning they attach to capoeira and in terms of the value vested in teaching lineages. The oral tradition of the art, though, it is not literal or linear. Capoeira is not taught with respect to a timeline and there is little attempt to distinguish moments in history; dates are not cited, and stories are not related with reference to events outside capoeira. Music, movement and ritual are presented as a timeless given alongside, in many situations, a narrative of loss of tradition. Rego, transcribing songs in 1968, writes, 'it is too dangerous to try to distinguish old from modern capoeira songs and … songs from capoeira itself from songs originating elsewhere and sung during the game' (Rego 1968, 89). It is not only difficult but practically irrelevant to trace when particular songs or rituals emerged as compositions draw on previous rituals or songs and rework them, but referring to recordings and secondary sources allows for patterns to be detected over time. Also, there is passing disregard for evidence that arises from outside capoeira; researchers who work with evidence beyond the oral tradition of the game have found little to support some of the grander claims transmitted through capoeira practice. This has done nothing to diminish the enthusiasm or sincerity with which they are re-told; instead the claim is made in lyric that, 'to be a good capoeira, you don't have to be a doctor'.

Getting close

Writing from the inside of an art exposes the researcher to various forms of censorship and self-censorship and an evident danger of sympathetic bias. At times I have wondered whether it is possible to write critically as I have felt the thrall of the art and its players; at other times I have felt over-critical when the politics of jealousy, chauvinism or in-fighting has dominated games or gossip, obscuring or distorting the bigger picture. While there are dangers in getting too close, an equally valid concern would be whether it would be possible to understand capoeira without entering into its conventions and community, and the majority of writers on capoeira are either seasoned players or become players in the course of their research. This level of involvement is not unusual in the study of oral traditions. Valerie Yow writes under the title, 'Do I like them too much?' and comes to the conclusion that closeness to the subjects of research can make the researcher more alert to the enquiry and more attentive to the consequences of research (Yow 2006, 67).

Proximity to the art does not resolve a particular challenge that arises from the diversity of capoeira practice; according to Mestre Claudio Feira de Santana, there are three truths in capoeira: my truth, your truth and the truth (workshop, 19 June 2017). There are patterns of practice, but the changes over time and the varied philosophies of the different styles means that there is very little in the way of universally shared understandings of specifics. Bleiker argues that 'aesthetic understanding is based on the very acknowledgement that signification is an inherently incomplete and problematic process' (Bleiker 2001,

520). While this may satisfy the researcher, it makes presenting work controversial, as ideas that are readily accepted in one group or location are contentious, rejected or incomprehensible in another. It is difficult to establish any shared understanding of practice or meaning, and charting a narrative that develops analysis without excluding some practices or drawing fire has been particularly challenging.

In order to minimise a sympathetic bias and evade a crippling weight of caveats while entering fully into the art, I engaged with the diversity of capoeira as a means not only of gathering a breadth of data but also of avoiding allegiance to one particular group or teacher. In Bahia, I trained with a variety of groups without joining any of them. In London I have trained regularly (at different stages) with Regional, Angola and Contemporânea groups, and now hold the title of Treinel in an independent Angola group that is not affiliated with an established lineage. This range of training has enabled me to learn from and respect each branch of the art and incorporate their different contributions and complementarities into the analysis.

My ambitions were altered through the course of the research. I had expected to find more overt meanings or etymologies of movements, music and ritual. I had expected a longer recorded history, and more continuous specificities of practice. What I found was a wide spectrum of activity that almost defies definition with a host of politics, hierarchies and intricacies, and one that has an extraordinary hold on its adepts, including me. I have encountered elations and disappointments in the journey, and have found the research intellectually challenging in sorting through contradictory claims and narratives. There have been similar challenges in the acrobatics needed in capturing and describing embodied narratives, analysing the ineffable, and determining how they speak to more conventional discourses of security. I have become part of the research, as the history of capoeira is passed through the body of each player and the interpretation that each body gives. I have trained for hours over a more than ten-year period, learnt the instruments and songs, submitted to ritual and conventions, and sought out my own expression and understanding of capoeira through playing.

A note on nomenclature: the title 'mestre' for men and 'mestra' for women is bestowed on senior teachers, usually by their teacher or by the community. I have recorded this title, where applicable, on the first mention and thereafter refer to players simply by their name. Capoeiristas tend to go by a single name, and often this is a nickname; some are inventive, attaching to some part of the person's game or character, but many are banal such as Little Head, Long Legs, Moustache or Big John. In the text I have used the names by which people are known in capoeira and kept them in their original Portuguese. There is ambiguity in the case of some academics; Mestra Janja, for example, publishes under her name Rosangela Costa Araújo. When people go by two names I have used their capoeira name when referring to their capoeira and recorded their academic name in the citation and bibliography. Several ladainhas are referenced by the singers who have recorded or popularised them, which does not signify

that they are necessarily the composers; many other songs are in the public domain or of contested authorship.

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4 Game of life

One of the elements of capoeira that is most difficult to explain to non-players is: what is the *point?* In cultures where games and fights are dominated by structured competition, the idea of a game that has no definitive rules or scoring is peculiar. On the other hand, this confusion throws light on the merit of other games: aside from the ludic interaction itself (which capoeira shares), there is little that is of any worth in many games. What is the point of engaging in any game for the meaningless delight of winning or, for that matter, the unnecessary disappointment of losing? Capoeira has competitive elements, in that players try to trip up, take down, outperform or intimidate their partner. It is also similar to notions of playing as children do; playing around, rather than playing a game. In the early twentieth century, capoeira was also known as *vadiação*, which translates as hanging out. Capoeira has much in common with recreational activities such as making music, drinking, telling stories or chatting.

Because of capoeira's history of oppression by the state, there has always been a political aspect to play; capoeira was defiant in the face of legislation, and disruptive of political or social order, hence the laws banning it as a public outrage. There is no evidence to suggest, though, that people played primarily in order to protest against specific laws or political positions; on the contrary, throughout history people have played for many reasons that vary over time. Hecht, investigating glue-sniffing among children in north-eastern Brazil notes that many observers cite the fact that it reduces hunger as a reason for sniffing; when he asked children, though, they said they do it because they liked it (Hecht 1998, 62). Hecht writes, 'Hunger, violence and ostracism … may be the context in which street children exist, but their lives can hardly be reduced to these elements' (Hecht 1998, 233). Some parts of capoeira are non-mysterious as they reflect other activities that human beings enjoy: being together, singing, playing, dancing and performing acrobatics. Why, though, play capoeira when it was illegal and players risked police abuse? And similarly why play when people are pushed for time and exhausted from work as occurs in advanced industrialised countries in the twenty-first century? Why hang out when you are busy?

Capoeira is a cultural activity – an art – and a way of life: Moraes talks of 'playing capoeira outside the roda' (Nascimento 2007, 35). This chapter presents some ways of theorising capoeira, incorporating debates relating to

aesthetics and corporeality that have been introduced into discussions on International Relations and Political Studies. It brings these two sets of literature together as capoeira defies definitive categorisation but indisputably has elements of representation and corporeality. The chapter also presents some authors who have worked on capoeira, followed by an overview of the game. It concludes by proposing that the linkages between capoeira and life are so numerous and intricate that there is a duality between the game and life; this duality is central to the approach of the book and the theorisation of cultural resistance that capoeira offers.

Art and representation

The aesthetic turn in international political thought was marked by Bleiker in an article that argued that 'representation is always an act of power' and that politics takes place in the gap 'between a form of representation and the object it seeks to represent' (Bleiker 2001, 510). Bleiker's article, published shortly before the 2001 attacks on New York and Washington, came at 'a moment of great opening in International Relations theory towards aesthetic phenomena and of a great narrowing in international politics to security issues only' (Hozić 2016, 202). There was

> almost a sense of urgency among critical IR scholars – a rush, indeed – to address 'representational gaps' in US foreign policy, often in the hope that revealing them would also create opportunities to challenge its destructive course under G. W. Bush.
>
> (Hozić 2016, 202)

Reflecting on the aesthetic turn, Koschut notes,

> Several emotion scholars have 'gone cultural' by investigating the creative workings of emotions in the reproduction of cultural meanings in world politics. Those authors affiliated with the 'aesthetic turn' and those who have been working at the intersection of popular culture, arts, and politics in International Relations have drawn attention to the human side of war by demonstrating how popular culture and art provide us with different forms of representation.
>
> (Koschut 2016, 176)

In resonating with value systems and emotions, art provides a 'powerful cultural script', and Koschut analyses how this can dominate other scripts to the extent that people are willing to sacrifice themselves in war to defend a nation-state (Koschut 2016, 174). States and political movements routinely collaborate with artists to channel nationalistic sentiments and proselytise. National anthems, statues, military paraphernalia and dress codes are designed and presented in ceremonies to project an ideal, an identity and a history. Political candidates

employ musicians, wardrobe advisers, ghost writers and photographers to harness the power of representation to enhance their popularity and career. Rancière's theorisation of 'aesthetics as politics' holds that politics exists when a group attempts to gain recognition within a given political order, and this is connected to aesthetics as it concerns how society is represented and what it displays (Rancière 2004, 51).

Recognising the aesthetics of a dominant culture maps out the terrain for formulating convincing cultural resistance. The notion that art can be a form of resistance has a long history. Picasso asserted that, 'art is a lie that tells the truth' (Hyde 1998, 13). Power can be defined as the ability to change people, and powerful art – by extension – changes people; but artists' ambitions are usually different to those of a politician. Art is used to comment and critique, rather than presenting a fully formed agenda or argument. Danchev and Lisle cite Auden as proposing,

> The primary function of … all the arts, is to make us more aware of ourselves and the world around us. I do not know if such awareness makes us more moral or more efficient: I hope not. I think it makes us more human, and I am quite certain it makes us more difficult to deceive, which is why, perhaps, all totalitarian theories of the state … have deeply distrusted the arts.
>
> (Danchev and Lisle 2009, 778)

Art removes people from the mundane and technocratic plane of everyday life. The weight of capoeira as an art form is captured by Catunda's observations while visiting Waldemar's training space in the 1950s, noting that capoeira is 'a real art; not an amusement but a necessity' (Catunda 1952, 16).

The aesthetic turn is helpful in drawing attention to the politics of representation, but leaves three areas for expansion of empirical and analytical work. First, this literature has been dominated by representation in European and North American cultures, and therefore does not capture the experiences of the majority of the world, or the breadth of cultural activity. Second, that which relates to representations of violence and conflict is concentrated around analysis of trauma, empathy and responses to war rather than structural violence, slavery, colonialism or inequality (Frost 2010; Moore and Shepherd 2010; Hozi 2016). Third, the analysis of many arts, such as paintings, sculpture, photography and film-making relies on a material trail of evidence; these are circumscribed as forms of representation, essentially transmitting messages from the artist to the observer and maintaining distance between the production and consumption of the art.

Capoeira is distinct from the modes of representation common to European and North American art forms; it is trained but not choreographically rehearsed, is not devised by a single artist but by the spontaneous corporeal interaction between artists and directed by music that is largely improvised, and it takes place in the present. What is created in the roda is co-created between the

players and the musical ensemble, which directs the speed and length of play, and the on-lookers in the circle of play. Capoeira has been observed and recorded, but is an oral tradition shared largely within the community of players: it is expressed through play, and that which is captured by clips and recordings is a depiction, not the art itself. This means that the production and communication of knowledge derives from the training and expression of players, and their interaction, with each player contributing to establishing what opportunities for interaction are created and how they are utilised.

While literature on the politics of aesthetics has been dominated by European authors, and often with reference to European art forms, there are notable other contributions, including by the Black movements of the 1970s and 1980s. Abdias Nascimento used the term Quilombismo, drawing the name from that given to settlements of runway slaves in Brazil (quilombo), to articulate 'the diverse levels of collective life whose dialectic interaction proposes complete fulfilment and realisation of the creative capacities of the human being' (Nascimento 1980, 151–2). His approach investigates the politics that derive largely from cultural life and racial identity. A complementary analytical point is made by Afolabi, who writes: 'the thrust of this conceptualization [of Quimbolismo] resides in the need to recognize African contributions and adopt a political organization that is steeped in the legacy of South American and Caribbean maroon communities'. Correia's poem 'Resistance', addresses itself to corporeal focus of expression. It includes the lines, 'still, the sound of the drums we have, We have the sound of Orixás' power … /If cruelty cuts off our tongue/In our body still remains the dance' (Afolabi 2012, 861), identifying the African body and drum as means of resistance, even when the voice has been silenced.

The body is a source of multiple forms of knowledge in capoeira, including reason, emotion, sensation, intuition, imagination and dreams (Júnior 2010, 27). Judith Butler uses the concept of 'embodiment' to present the body as the mediator between the mind and the environment. In learning music, she argues, the body is integral to the process of signification, and the student, by playing an instrument, learns the role and activity of a practitioner through the body rather than cerebrally (Butler 1990). Through their experiences of singing, playing and camaraderie, capoeira players embody not only the technique but also the meaning of the history that is being told. Marlin-Bennett makes a similar point with the observation that, 'bodies are … the means by which information becomes sensible: we understand information from various sources and with various kinds of content through our bodies' ability to sense' (Marlin-Bennett 2013, 601). The body represents, but also receives information and adapts accordingly; it is the site of expression in capoeira and the physical area to be protected from attack.

Bringing together the concept of aesthetics with that of corporeality provides an analytical lens on the form of the music and dance, the efficiency of the martial art elements, and of the physicality and interaction of the game. These elements overlay each other, to the extent that taking someone down with a sweep or a head-butt is one objective in capoeira but it has to be beautiful,

because capoeira is a dance as well as a fight, and it should be playful, not aggressive, because capoeira is also a game. In the early twentieth century, artistic and community expression of identity and history was defining for Afro-Brazilian people as Brazil was dominated by the legal, political and economic structures that were racially exclusive and channelled white power. By recognising the interaction of the dominant and counter-culture, the artistic choices taken by capoeiristas of how they represented themselves and their experiences are brought into focus as the site for contestation and change.

Play and politics

The ludic component of capoeira complements its dance and martial arts aesthetics. In unpacking the game, inspiration can be drawn from analyses of other games, many of which are concerned ultimately with the body and people's use of the body to express, compete or excel. Huizinga's book, *Homo Ludens*, addresses the centrality of play to culture, making the case that, whatever else people do, they play. Huizinga, whose work explores the play elements in culture, writes,

> A happier age than ours once made bold to call our species by the name of *Homo Sapiens*. In the course of time we have come to realize that we are not so reasonable after all … hence modern fashion inclines to designate our species as Homo Faber: Man the Maker … It seems to me that next to Homo Faber, and perhaps on the same level as Homo Sapiens, Homo Ludens, Man the Player, deserves a place in our nomenclature.
>
> (Huizinga 1950, ix)

Huizinga's thesis is that there is something elemental about play, this being an activity that represents human interaction and identity. His work provides a platform for exploring play as it pertains to human activity including the law and war, and he writes,

> Play is more than a mere physiological phenomenon or a psychological reflex. It goes beyond the confines of purely physical or purely biological activity. It is a *significant* function – that is to say, there is some sense to it. In play there is something 'at play' which transcends the immediate needs of life and imparts meaning to the action.
>
> (Huizinga 1950, 1)

With this observation, Huizinga concords with the argument made from an aesthetic angle that art does not have a defined agenda and operates through dynamics that are not necessarily calculating. The notion that there is something 'at play' works in reverse as well – that there is not only play taking place in political negotiation, but political negotiation taking place within games. Play is differently interpreted in different cultures and at different moments of

time, and while capoeira differs from European and North American games, Talmon-Chvaicer cites the Congolese author, Fu-Kiau, who elaborates the functions of play and its relationship with life in Central Africa:

> In the Kongo, play is integral to a philosophy of life, a way to understand life, to prepare for it. Play contains all the necessary ingredients for living well, both physically and spiritually. It accustoms the body, muscles, and limbs to move flexibly, steadily, and harmoniously. Joy and laughter generate positive energy. Music synchronizes the dancers' movements and motivates others to join in. Movement, fun, communal singing, dancing, a sense of affinity between individual and community constitute play, which is part of the great process called life.
>
> (Talmon-Chvaicer 2008, 29)

Fu-Kiau's account has much that resonates with capoeira. There is another side to the story, though, and that is of the interaction between the game and society and the state, and the political status and influence of sport. In much of the world, including Brazil, football has pronounced social and political significance. Traced from its roots as an unregulated contest, football has been institutionalised and now provides a schema for ordered competition, under the authority of agreed rules and a referee. More recently, football and other mainstream sports, including cricket and the Olympic Games, have been harnessed to promote the notion of friendly competition, sporting behaviour and diplomatic relations. 'Show Racism the Red Card' is a charity that draws on the cultural standing of football to combat racism in the game and society. Conversely, boycotting and imposing sanctions have made sports the arena in which hard politics are negotiated, or where the threat of exclusion is carried out without loss of life.

National sporting activities occupy a different, but also contested, political space. In Afghanistan, the game of buzkashi, a form of horseback hockey played with a goat's carcass in place of a ball, has undergone a process of negotiation and transformation as the state attempted to exert itself over unruly and unsophisticated play. The Taliban banned it, along with dog fighting and kite flying, as immoral. Originally played by any number of riders in a dangerous dash to place the carcass in the goal, the state has imposed some limits in how the game is played. Noting the parallels between the game and life, Azoy writes, 'leaders are men who can seize control by means foul and fair and then fight off their rivals. The buzkashi rider does the same'. Despite a sanitisation and bureaucratisation of the game, and its attainment of the status as the national sport, Azoy identifies three aspects of buzkashi that have maintained a political character: as '1. As a commemoration of cultural heritage; 2. As a metaphor for chaotic, uninhibited, and uncontrollable competition; 3. As an arena in which certain aspects of political competition can actually occur' (Azoy 2012, 3).

In another study of play, Geertz examines the practice of Balinese cockfighting and the state's attempts to prohibit it. Geertz records, '[the elite] sees cockfighting as 'primitive', 'backward', 'unprogressive', and generally unbecoming

an ambitious nation. And, as with those other embarrassments – opium smoking, begging, or uncovered breasts – it seeks, rather unsystematically, to put a stop to it' (Geertz 1972, 2). He records haphazard raids on known cock-fighting sites as the authorities attempted to impose a sense of urban order on peripheral areas and practices and, on the other hand, the intense significance of cock-fighting to the communities where it was practised and their defiance in the face of state agents and the law.

Themes across these games are the attempt by authorities to control players both in what they do (how they play) and in how this reflects on society and ultimately the state, and the tenacity of players to continue their games despite attempts to regulate or stop them. The force exerted by the state involves limiting the violence meted out in the name of sport, and extends to states' attempts to control, forge or sanitise national identities or cultures. Engaging with the question of why people continue to play in the face of state control or sanction, Geertz employs Bentham's notion of 'deep play': 'play in which the stakes are so high that it is, from [Bentham's] utilitarian standpoint, irrational for men to engage in it at all' (Geertz 1972, 15). Like the Afghan state's control over buzkashi and the Balinese authority's assaults on villages where cock-fighting was practised, the Brazilian state attempted to control and eliminate capoeira through the imposition of harsh penalties on its practitioners. The violence of flogging or incarceration in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century meted out on capoeira adepts made play irrational in Bentham's terms, and significantly reduced the practice of capoeira but did not stop it.

People taking apparently irrational risks through play forces further analysis of what informs decisions, and exposes an irony: if play is irrational, why is it considered so dangerous by the – supposedly rational – state? The effort expended in asserting authority over play reveals some acknowledgement of the significance of play to its practitioners, and possibly to society more widely. Geertz notes that to see Balinese cockfighting as a rite or pastime obscures its 'use of emotion for cognitive ends' (Geertz 1972, 27). According to this perspective, knowledge is generated through emotional – specifically non-rational – means. In a similar vein, Fryer quotes O'Connor's assessment: 'To regard capoeira as merely a martial art … is to miss the main point of the game: the creation and solidification of community, which is initiated and strengthened by music performance' (Fryer 2000, 38).

A further element of play, which takes the discussion beyond the institution of sport, is given by Hyde's tracing of the trickster. The character of the trickster occurs in many cultures, and is recognisable in the mockery and deceit used by capoeiristas in gaining advantage during a game. Hyde argues that the disruptive imagination involved in trickery is constitutive of culture and life. Tricksters are boundary-crossers (Hyde 1998, 7), as are capoeira players; they redefine space, time, morals, rules and the line between reality and metaphor. Hyde, contemplating the trickster, writes 'the problem is to make a "lie" that cancels the opposition and so holds the possibility of new worlds' (Hyde 1998, 70). Trickery is reiterated in the transgressions and disruption of morality when deceit

becomes a virtue. Hyde writes, 'when [the trickster] lies and steals, it isn't so much to get away with something or get rich as to disturb the established categories of truth and property and, by so doing, open the road to possible new worlds' (Hyde 1998, 13).

Capoeirology

The majority of capoeira's history has not been written down and most scholarship on the game is relatively recent; it is an academic field of study that has been burgeoning in the last 20 years. Non-literacy and lack of access to resources means that there are few written records of capoeira. The earliest written account appears to be *The Capoeiras*, a book by Portuguese-born Plácido de Abreu, a capoeira in Rio de Janeiro in the second half of the nineteenth century, detailing the lives of practitioners in the city (de Abreu 1886). The first half of the twentieth century is chronicled through work on and by the players of the day. Pastinha's thoughts, published as *Improvisation of Pastinha*, sets out in a meandering style his outlook and philosophy on the game (Pastinha 2013). Bimba's publications are more terse and technical (Bimba 2002). Angelo Decânio, a student of Bimba, provides invaluable insights into both players through his biographies, presented as legacies in a form that is largely lyrical (Decânio Filho 1997a; Decânio Filho 1997b). Waldeloir Rego published a book about capoeira Angola in 1968 (Rego 1968), but until the twenty-first century written scholarship on capoeira Angola was extremely sparse (Araújo 2004, 17). Canjiquinha reveals a fair bit about himself, capoeira and its politics in his unconventional book, *The Happiness of Capoeira*, which recounts his struggles, and offers a number of line-drawings and opinions on the game (Canjiquinha 1989).

A more consolidated style of written presentation is given by a pre-eminent student of Bimba, Mestre Acordeon (Almeida 1986). A stylistically comparable account is given by Nestor Capoeira (Capoeira 2003), as both these authors combine a commentary on their own practice with a history of capoeira, employing a creativity of expression that involves the reader in some of the dynamics of the game. Lewell Lewis achieves something similar, but by tracking insights from the perspective of a non-Brazilian player; his contention is that play is self-representation, not just historic representation, and with this he opens up the angle of analysis to include players as both artists and art. Like others, Lowell Lewis, addresses the multifaceted nature of the game, arguing that culture is derived from play and therefore that 'play worlds create contexts for "serious" cultural meaning' (Lowell Lewis 1992, 188–219).

Among the scholars who provide the social and political context of capoeira are Fred de Abreu (de Abreu 2005), Carlos Eugênio Líbano Soares (Soares 1994), Liberac Cordoso Simões Pires (Simões Pires 2004) and Adriana Albert Dias (Albert Dias 2004). These authors provide the context of capoeira within the politics of race and the evolving Brazilian state. Their contributions are complemented by work on the history and origins of capoeira, which provide a

focus for many authors (Rosenthal 2007, 263), and detailed histories have been written by Röhrig Assunção (Röhrig Assunção 2005) and Talmon-Chvancier (Talmon-Chvaicer 2008).

Linking the study of capoeira with neuroscience, Greg Downey presents a more abstract strand in the study of capoeira, arguing that playing capoeira alters the way that the practitioner thinks (Downey 2005, 30). Araújo, drawing on her experience in Moraes' academy in the 1980s, contends that creativity itself gives rise to forms of knowledge and to the environment of political debate (Araújo 2004, 25; Araújo 2015). The consensus between these authors that knowledge is created in the roda provides a framework for examining the form and content of this knowledge, how it is communicated, and with what effect.

Relating capoeira through these forms of research and publications potentially puts the literal and the written word into competition with the musical improvisation and corporeal interaction, shifting the power over the production and communication of knowledge from practitioners to observers. Nestor Capoeira, noting the increased interest in capoeira as the subject of study rather than as a physical practice commented,

> probably those who value this path [of a deeper interest in history and research into the 'roots' of capoeira] will look down at players who do not have access to orthodox Western education. The shitty 'academic talk' will try to make itself more important than the body dialogue (the Game) itself. And probably I will be one of the main 'shit-talkers,' a dinosaur who knew Mestres Pastinha and Bimba.
>
> (Capoeira 2003, 155)

What has transpired, though, is that from the time of Pastinha onwards, writing, including poetry, biographies and musings as well as academic work, have accompanied the development of the game, and the vast majority of the authors are players. Many of them – including Janja (Araújo), Cobra Mansa and Acordeon (Almeida) – are among the most esteemed capoeiristas of their generation. Far from presenting academic writing as superior to the game, academics who write about capoeira defer to the primacy of the game and tussle with how to capture in words not only what happens in capoeira but also why and how it happens, and what its significance is. Understanding capoeira as an artistic culture brings with it the likelihood that it will have associated expressions, and indeed it has inspired music, literature, theatre and film; writing, including academic text, is another cultural expression that has accompanied the development of capoeira.

The research on capoeira reveals the diversity of practice and examines narratives that have grown up within and around the institution. Resistance is a pervasive narrative in capoeira, frequently alluded to in classes and workshops. Probably the most popular version of the resistance narrative is that capoeira was a form of fighting used in self-defence by slaves against their slave owners. This version of events involves enslaved people using kicks against the guns and

chains of slave drivers. It is a claim traced to a pamphlet written in 1928 by Anibal Burlamaqui (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 6), and that re-appears at the start of the 1954 film, *Vadiação*, but gains no backing from contemporary documentation. On the contrary, nineteenth-century police records from Rio de Janeiro show capoeiras being arrested for attacking members of the population, and particularly blacks, in sprees of blood-letting, and the popular version of physical resistance has been subject to sustained critique (Röhrig Assunção 2005; Talmon-Chvaicer 2008; Holloway 2012). While documentary evidence of attacks against police or other state agents is lacking, there are anecdotes, which are passed down through the game and its surrounding commentary: Bimba is said to have intervened with the police to rescue a boy from arrest. Besouro and Cobrinha Verde are credited with resisting when threatened with arrest for playing capoeira.

This book investigates resistance by asking what sort of knowledge is produced and communicated by playing capoeira, and analysing it with reference to rationality and security. The book's originality stems not from primary historical investigation but from its presentation of data gathered through participation in capoeira practice and the analysis of how that data constructs a critical and creative perspective. The central thesis identifies mechanisms by which capoeira has distributed security, and analyses these with regard to mainstream security policy and analysis.

The roda

It is not easy to describe fully or definitively what capoeira is, but there are elements that provide a guide to the art. The roda is the ring in which two people engage in the game of capoeira and is formed by other players standing or sitting in a circle; the word roda is also used for the event at which games of capoeira take place. The roda forms a secular-sacred space: everything that takes place within the roda is conducted in accordance with ritual, and this varies from group to group. The game of capoeira is a physical conversation between two players. The moves are questions and suggestions, and provoke responses. One player can test the other, or pose a challenge, and the other answers; by performing the movements in context players acquire the skills needed to play the game (Downey 2010, 33).

The base of capoeira is the swaying *ginga* move, and the other moves can be categorised into three groups: attacks, escapes and calls. Some moves can fit into two or more of these groups; a front kick appears as an attack, but it can be used to call the other person and invite a particular response, at which moment the real attack is mounted. The cartwheel – known as *aú* – can fulfil practically any function, as well as being a means of moving around the roda, depending on how it is performed. The only parts of the body to touch the floor in capoeira are the hands and feet and – except in classic Regional – the head.

Using the ginga, the player moves the weight of the body from one foot to the other, binding the interaction into the rhythm of the music that

accompanies play, and establishing a dynamic base from which other movements are mounted. The ginga varies from group to group, but the important elements are the sway and the protection of the upper body and face with the arms. One of Bimba's instructions for playing capoeira is – 'always ginga'. Pastinha described the ginga as a, 'perfect coordination of the movements of the body with the objective of distracting the attention of the adversary, making him vulnerable to strikes' (Lingo 1996, 25). The ginga that was used by Pastinha and preserved in footage from the era bears little resemblance to the ginga that is now used in capoeira Angola, even in academies dedicated to his lineage.

The attacking moves are self-evidently combative, issuing threats to the player, and thus provoking play – of evading and counter-attacking. The primary form of attack is by kicking; there are straight and spinning kicks, delivered in front of, and behind, the body. Despite the elaborate kicking, capoeira is largely non-impact. Players develop the ability to stop a kick so as not to hurt the other player, but to demonstrate where the kick could have landed. There is force in the kicks, though, and a chronicle of broken noses and teeth attests to the physical efficiency of the moves. It is not the case that impact never happens, it is simply that hurting or injuring the other player is not the objective of the game, and indeed counters the objective of the game by ending it precipitously. Hands are rarely used to attack in capoeira; as with other elements of history there is some discussion on this. Pastinha agreed that capoeira has nine moves, one of which was the *cutilada de mão* (hand slash) (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 160–1); elsewhere Pastinha, who in general made little criticism of Bimba, claimed that Bimba broke with tradition by using his hands (Muricy 1998). Bimba used moves called *galopante* and *godeme*, which involve hand strikes to the head and are still taught in Regional schools, though are rarely used in games. Despite attacks with the hands being historically part of both Regional and Angola, these attacks have not stood the test of time and hands or arms are used principally to protect the face and body, and to sweep away kicks that have not come to full force.

Capoeira can be described as predominantly non-impact, but it is not non-contact; the take-downs also constitute attacking moves, and are where much of the action of the game takes place. The kicks are chiefly about manipulating the other player by forcing them to evade the blow, displaying strength and describing the space in which they can move. There are, though, three ways of putting the other person on the ground; and Canjiquinha notes that ending up with your backside on the ground is the worst ignominy any capoeirista can face (Canjiquinha 1989). The take-downs are the *tesoura* (a scissor-like grappling movement), the *rasteira* (a leg sweep applied to the foot or feet of the other person), and the *cabeçada* (a head-butt, applied to the front or side of the body of the other person, or sometimes the head or teeth). The take-downs rely on skill and timing (although reach and strength help with applying them), and for this reason are characteristic of a game that relies on cunning. Because there is a comical element to tripping people up or knocking them over, the take-downs add levity and drama to the game. A beautifully applied *rasteira* that takes the

feet from under a player is rated above a strong kick, which threatens to injure the other player or mutate the game into a fight.

The use of feints maintains a tension in the interaction and allow the players to bluff: by feinting moves, particularly kicks, the weaker player can agitate the stronger and the stronger player can taunt the weaker without inflicting blows. The art of swagger and deceit is celebrated in capoeira, and the use of feints blurs the line between being a fighter and being a charlatan: no one knows how the threat would be executed. It is also captivating for on-lookers as much more can be threatened than it would be legal or playful to execute. Catunda writes of Waldemar's roda in the 1950s,

> if it was not for the precision of these movements [which are stopped before they injure the person] many of the kicks would be lethal … The latent violence never flares up and this extraordinary emotional control maintains the audience in an incredible nervous tension.
>
> (Catunda 1952, 16–17)

The trading of threats has evident political parallels beyond the game.

Players do not stand in the way of an attack; among the sayings attributed to Bimba is the assertion that 'only the cliffs face the tempest'. Use of a block is rare, occasionally taught in Regional as one way to defend against a *martelo* (hammer) kick at head or chest height. Blocks risk injury, though, and according to Contra Mestre Dija, 'arms are your last line of defence' (class, 6 July 2012). Limbs can be used to protect the face and torso, but the key defensive tactic in capoeira is escape – *esquiva*: this involves ducking the kick, or moving to the side or behind. Esquiva defines the game as it allows the interaction to continue rather than one player being beaten. A key escape move is the *negativa*, which involves lowering the body sideways or backwards into a lunge position, and thereby negating – or denying – the force of the kick. In Regional, the straight leg of the negativa is used to hook the supporting leg of the other player, thereby incorporating a counter-attack into the escape.

The call – the *chamada* – is a distinctive element of the Angola game; it can be used in Contemporânea but was eliminated from Regional by Bimba. A chamada occurs when one player breaks the game to call the other by raising one or both hands, either facing or with their back to their partner. The player who is 'called' joins the other and they both promenade across the roda two or three times before the 'caller' invites the other to restart the game. An alternative call draws the other player towards the musical ensemble, from where the game can be started anew; further variations on the move are also used, including the tesoura, which invites the other player to pass under the grapple or escape it with a cartwheel. Calling can also be achieved by performing a handstand, or *sapinho* – jumping like a frog – or *ponte* (a gymnastic bridge). These are moves that issue a test to the other person to see how they will respond; often they mirror the caller, performing the same move, until one player surprises the other by converting quickly into a kick or take-down.

The *chamada* breaks the game, allowing a change of pace. It is often used to assert some authority over the other person (hence it is advised not to call senior teachers). The chamada also makes use of trickery and according to Vieira,

> The chamada is the philosophy of the angoleiro, the trickery of the angoleiro. These days people are looking to be strong, to practise martial arts, to be an athlete to play capoeira. But capoeira does not depend on that. Capoeira depends on technique, on trickery and wisdom. If someone is violent in the roda, when they want to hit someone or wipe them out, I call them. They'll understand, one way or another.
>
> (Vieira 1995, 108)

Prowess in capoeira is demonstrated not by the use of force but the ability to control the other person and the interaction. Flourishes are demonstrations of charismatic power, intended to intimidate and manipulate the other player or amaze on-lookers. They are expressed through displays of acrobatics, including handstands, cartwheels, front- and back-flips, and somersaults in the air, depending on the style of capoeira. The flourishes add beauty and dynamism to the game, but are also a display of skill and confidence. They are risky as the player becomes vulnerable to attack, and risk-taking is a form of provocation in sparking new engagement and excitement. The close and intense interaction in capoeira Angola means that flourishes place the player in danger as it is relatively easy to catch someone – with a kick or a take-down – when they are doing acrobatics. For this reason, acrobatics in Angola are more guarded, with the limbs used to defend the face and torso at all times. In Regional and Contemporânea, players tend to grant more space to the other and the acrobatic displays become a game in themselves with players competing in the degree of elaboration that they can accomplish. There is also collaboration in generating an exciting, impressive and unpredictable game.

Music has become a central element of capoeira, although the origin of its use in the game is hazy. Rugendas' illustration shows a sit-on drum and police records from 1818 detail possession of a 'small drum' (Chvaicer 2002, 538). Frederico Guilherme Briggs' 1832 depiction of 'capoeiras to be flogged' shows one capoeira carrying what may be (but equally may not be) an agogô, the musical double-headed bell. There are no references to any other music accompanying capoeira until the early twentieth century, although police records detail capoeiras being arrested with drums, guitars, tambourines and bells, suggesting that these too were associated with the game (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 75). Querino records a berimbau being used to accompany capoeira in 1916 (Querino 1916), and Galm proposes that the incorporation of the berimbau in the early twentieth century was a key part of capoeira's transformation from a fight to a dance (Galm 2010, 26). Mestre Camisa asserts that the use of the berimbau is what distinguished capoeira in Bahia from the practices elsewhere, and allowed the capoeira there to survive the state oppression (Camisa 2016).

The orchestration that now accompanies physical play was defined by the two founding teachers of the modern era, Bimba and Pastinha. Bimba's ensemble, the charanga, uses a berimbau and two *pandeiros* (tambourines). Pastinha's ensemble, known by the more generic term of batería, consists of three berimbaus with differing sized gourds rendering three different pitches (gunga, médio and viola), two pandeiros, reco-reco (scraper), agogô and atabaque (foot-drum). The player of the gunga, the largest berimbau, commands the roda by setting the speed of music – and therefore of play – leading the singing and determining the length of the game.

The songs that direct the game fall into three categories. The *ladainha* or *quadra* is sung solo and marks the start of a new game or set of games; it is usually sung by the person playing the lead berimbau. *Ladainha* is the Portuguese word for 'litany' and – used principally in capoeira Angola – is a long, poetic song that frequently has elements of parables or histories; this provides artistic space for the development of jokes, political perspectives or personal attacks. The *quadra*, used in the other styles, tends to be shorter, typically four lines, but serves the same purpose of providing a focus at the beginning of the game. The chulas or louваçãoes follow; these introduce the call-and-response singing with a number of one-line exhortations or exclamations. Frequently these follow the broad pattern of praising God, thanking the teacher, and celebrating capoeira, but other subjects are brought, such as: 'the cockerel crowed, kokoroko!' (this being the sound it makes) to mark the start of the game. During the *ladainha/quadra* and the *chulas/louваçãoes*, two players squat at the foot of the berimbau waiting for permission to play. The lead singer starts the *corrido* and beats a triplet rhythm on the berimbau that is the signal for the two players to start their game.

The corridos are sung call-and-response, and cover a vast range of topics that will be explored in the pages that follow. Their melodic and rhythmic characteristics provide those playing the game with atmosphere and pace. The lead singer has scope to communicate – through the choice of song or through improvisations made to it – with the players and the rest of the roda, and can encourage a calmer or a more heated game, warn players of dangers that they may not have perceived, or make commentaries on the activity within the game.

Duality of the capoeira and life

The game of capoeira requires negotiation, craftiness and experience to play. It has many characteristics in common with life more generally; capoeira and life are two interconnected and concurrent human journeys and it is commonplace in capoeira to make no distinction between the two. The term duality is used in physics to denote that an entity both a wave and a particle. In capoeira an insight into the duality between the game and life can be gained from a consideration of personal survival: Bimba taught capoeira as self-defence against physical attacks on the streets of Salvador, and is commonly reported to have

declared that, 'it is better to be beaten in the roda than in the street'. This has the implication that the roda is training for the street (that being beaten in the roda is training for an attack outside), or that it is a substitute for street fighting, a preferable context for proving worth, or strength and resolving differences.

There are more abstract connections, though, and capoeira is considered by many players as not simply a game, fight and dance, but a form of spirituality and a way of life. What you learn in the roda informs you as a person, training reflexes, self-control and how to deal with situations. The relationship is presented in the song, 'Dona Maria from Camboatá', which tells of a woman who arrives at the market and starts bossing people around. In subsequent verses, the context is changed from the market to the game, with the line, 'She arrives at the roda and does a somersault'. The same woman is noted for her assertive character, expressed both through bossiness in the market and acrobatics in the game.

The duality has been investigated in various ways by authors on capoeira. Talmon-Chvaicer, reflecting on differences between African and European past-times notes that in African cultures dance is part of life in general, and is associated with work, coming of age and death, rather than simply being a sign of happiness (Talmon-Chvaicer 2008, 29). Abib refers to capoeira Angola as 'A knack to teach and learn … life', placing this learning experience within the realm of informal education (Abib 2004, 126–59). Capoeira is exhilarating and fun, but it also marks a past of oppression and elements of violence and trauma within it. The duality of capoeira combines with the emic methodology to grant access to the emotional, psychological, political and physical domains within and beyond the game.

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5 Black Bahian labourers of the early twentieth century

The who, where and when

From the obscurity and oppression of the turn of the twentieth century, capoeira players started to make gains in protecting their art and identity. From the mid-1930s, the legal restrictions to playing were eased by the state and then abandoned; capoeiristas started to consolidate their groups and their game. In Bahia, capoeira had survived the violence of slavery and illegality; this did not spell the end of the struggle, though. On the contrary, as practitioners entered a new era they maintained and then extended their discourse of struggle, articulated through the game. The significance of this discourse is not diminished simply because it did not face violent state punishment. This chapter and the next track the knowledge that is produced by playing capoeira; this chapter looks at the who, where, and when of capoeira. It presents the case that knowledge of class and race is constructed in the music, movement and ritual, building an identity and history of, and passed through, capoeira practice. Chapter 6 goes on to examine the how and why of capoeira, analysing the way that causal explanations and rationale are constructed through the game. Together these chapters present the perspective that is framed by capoeira, generated aesthetically and corporeally through training and play. Mestre Toni Vargas sings, 'with the foot and hand, and with the head on the ground, capoeira writes its history'.

Capoeira players do not have a fixed or unified political position and did not confront the state violently or through political channels. Understanding capoeira's struggle and its increased influence and status in society and politics involves investigating processes within and surrounding the game. The development of capoeira in the political space that was dominated by the state resembles the decision-making conditions of the majority of the world's population: most people are not able to take 'rational' decisions that shape or significantly affect their environment. The notion of strategic rationality has dominated powerful discourses such as rational choice theory (Miller 1992, 23) that leave little analytical space for behaviour that falls outside its parameters: behaviour that is not calculating or driven by individualism, or is made within severe constraints or with imperfect information. Capoeira is not rational in the conventional sense; instead it is a deep game that is apparently irrational but is also significant and powerful.

The data here presents two of the dominant themes constructed through the game of capoeira. The first, that of class, emerged in the music and movements of the first half of the twentieth century, when the demographic of Bahian players was small and folk songs were used to accompany play. In the racially stratified city of Salvador where capoeira was played at this time, class largely intersected with race albeit that there was already a good deal of racial mixing, including with Indigenous peoples. Around the 1980s, and with the revival of capoeira Angola, the theme of African heritage gained prominence as a category as more self-conscious connections were made between the African heritage of capoeira and an internationalised discourse on race. In the absence of an internationalised class consciousness, this had the effect of decoupling race from the subject of class, which, in the narratives of capoeira, was historically and geographically bound to the experience of labourers in Bahia in the early twentieth century.

This decoupling marked a key moment in the development of the discourse of struggle, and made it possible for African heritage to provide a focus during the globalisation of capoeira. African heritage became a uniting narrative for constituencies around the world who had little in common in terms of interests, experience or identity beyond their practice of capoeira. At its heart of the representation was an organising principle based on the uniting political statement that slavery, which is defined in racial terms, is wrong.

Class: working class, Bahian men

With the suppression of capoeira in Rio de Janeiro in the late 1800s, Salvador, the capital of Bahia, became the major locus for capoeira in the early twentieth century. Salvador did not have the same degree of Portuguese immigration as Rio de Janeiro, and capoeira players were predominantly of African, Indigenous and mixed race descent. Further, capoeira in Salvador was not generally associated with weapons, and had no history of gang or political affiliation. Bimba asserted that capoeira was 'something for cart-drivers, cheats, dock workers and vagabonds' (de Abreu 2005, 7). At Mestre Waldemar's training area, Catunda makes the observation that Bahian capoeiristas were workers; he notes that the capoeiristas in Bahia are people,

> who pass the entire week hard at work, fighting to guarantee the everyday bread, for themselves and their family. The Bahian capoeira is not like it is in Rio, art which is cultivated almost exclusively by the lumpen proletariat, art which is persecuted by the 'morality' police as dangerous, the cause of crimes and drinking.
>
> (Catunda 1952, 16)

Catunda's testimony of Bahian capoeira is romantic in its telling, but it is notable that he describes the capoeira players as those who are aware of their contribution to the economic life of Salvador, rather than an under-class of violent criminals.

The inclusion of music in capoeira in the early part of the twentieth century and the establishment of the academy meant that this became a defining era in the development of lyric form and content. Some of the earliest recordings are from Mestre Cabecinha and Mestre Juvenal, both in 1940; these players present a folkloric style of singing, with a melody floating over the percussive instruments. The lead vocalist on Juvenal's recording, Luciano, sings the song 'oh yes, yes, yes, oh no, no, no' with the verse, 'I'm a caboclo, I'm no fool', the term 'caboclo' referring to someone with Indigenous or mixed Indigenous and European or African ancestry, and much of the recording is dedicated to praise of the orixás. In a similar fashion, Camafeu de Oxossi integrates Candomblé music into the capoeira canon in his 1941 recording. A recording by Bimba, also from 1940, includes many songs that are still current in capoeira practice. His singing employs a shorter, punchier vocal form, one that is now more common across all styles of capoeira than that employed by Juveunal. Bimba released his *Capoeira Regional Course*, a collection of songs and berimbau rhythms that was accompanied by notes on training capoeira, around 1960. Gato Preto, Traíra and Cobrinha Verde's album followed in 1963 and Pastinha released his album 'Pastinha and his Academy' in 1969. Waldemar and Canjiquinha released their recording in 1986.

This archive of recordings represents some of the most influential players and musicians of the first generation of players who taught in academies or organised rodas. Typically the recordings showcase the various forms of capoeira songs – ladainhas, louvações and corridos – and include tracks of the berimbau rhythms. As such they stand as a historical record, complemented by Rego's documentation of around a hundred capoeira songs compiled in 1968 (Rego 1968), of how music was played and developed in the early years of the academy, and continue to inform melody, rhythm and lyrical content of capoeira songs.

In these songs players sang about their everyday lives and experiences. The songs comprise a lyric and melodic portrait of background shared by players, and the structure allows for improvisation and composition to take place within the conventions of the genre. All capoeira songs from this era (and practically all songs until the present) represent the male perspective, reflecting the predominantly male history of capoeira. There is, though, a palpable female human presence in the lyric. There are very few romantic love songs, but women's names appear in the lyric narrative. 'Miss Mary, how are you?' is often sung as a salutation at the beginning of a game, and 'Miss Alice, don't grab me', is sung in admonishment when players start grappling with their hands in the roda. Other references have less specific import, presenting only parts of stories, such as 'Katarina, come out of the sea', 'Katarina, go out to sea', and 'When the tide goes down, I'll see Juliana'. Mothers appear in song occasionally, and often as a calming influence for wayward sons. Mothers warn against risks (including in capoeira), as is evident in the song that starts, 'Mum, I'm going to be a fireman', and proceeds (now with the mother's persona), 'My son, don't be a fireman. A fireman puts out fires, he walks with death in his hand'.

Many of the early songs used in capoeira reflect the realities of the working class in the early to mid-twentieth century, with market and farm work often

cited. A ladainha sung by Traíra opens, 'Boy, what are you selling there? It's rice from Maranhão, my boss sent me to sell it'. Market traders and street vendors feature throughout the history of capoeira songs, with topical specificity given in the produce that is being sold. Lyrics that pertain to the marketplace include, 'I'm going to sell coconuts, madam', and '[Black] Lady, what are you selling there?' (salutations often have incidental racial descriptors). A song that is also sung in samba de roda runs, 'Driver, it's time to go; I was at the seafront buying flour to take in the car'. A woman named Katarina appears in the song, 'grate coconuts, make coconut cake'. The Modelo Market in Salvador has been a site for capoeira rodas as well as trading since the early twentieth century, and has inspired various songs including, 'In the Modelo Market, there's acaraje'. Mestre Cajé and Valú of the Mercado Modelo Group sing 'When I get to the Modelo Market, there are lots of people waiting for me, saying "hey [black] man! What are you going to do?" I respond, I am a capoeirista and maculelê [stick dancer]'.

Rural labour is represented in song through references the plantations, and often implicitly or explicitly recalling the forced labour of slavery. Sugar plantations were core to Bahia's economy in the nineteenth century, and plantation work is presented in songs such as, 'Oh plantation, oh sugarcane', and, 'The wind that shakes the sugar cane in the plantation'. Other lyrics record the orders of slave masters, for example, 'Cut the sugar cane', and 'work black slave, cut sugar cane in the plantation'. The lead singer can encourage a more animated game by breaking into, 'set on fire, set on fire', a lyric that continues, 'set fire to the plantation' an act of defiance against the plantation owner. The song, 'whoever doesn't know how to walk, slips when stepping on clay' is a reference to the clay soil of Bahia that was well-suited for growing sugar cane. 'Hey girl, some and see the cane farmer preparing the soil', refers to the tasks of smallholders working in sugar production of the interior of the state. The plantation also appears, more gently, in the song, 'I saw the sun and the moon come out, I saw my love in the plantation.'

There are a number of cowboy songs, and herding cattle was the only productive use of some areas of the interior of Bahia. Cowboy songs have association with Exú, the orixá of the crossroads, and master of trickery, and for this reason cowboy songs are sung to clear away negative energy at the start of a roda. Many cowboy songs have direct reference to the game: 'lasso, lasso, cowboy' indicates the moment for a player to strike, and 'good Cowboy – tie the cattle', and, 'Grab the bull's horns', convey much the same message. The prompt to manipulate a partner and demonstrate skill is given by, 'to prove that you're a good cowboy, bring the herd over here'. Some songs have more opaque significance to the dynamic of the game, such as 'my bull died at the entrance to the field, he went that way but he's not returning'. Cowboys are also referenced in the move, 'chapeu de couro' meaning 'leather hat' is a front circular kick and 'esporão' meaning 'spur', a heel kick used in Contemporânea and Regional. More generally, the horse as a means of transport is referenced in several songs, for example, 'saddle up my horse, boy, I leaving', and 'my horse got tired on the hill, I came to see you but did not make it'.

A further set of trades that is prominent in capoeira are those connected to the sea, and Salvador's bay provided a huge natural harbour and a major port. Examples include, 'the tide is high, ioio, the tide rose, the tide fell', and 'lift up your skirt, here comes the tide'. There are several songs that involve simply singing about the tide, sand or seashore, with lyrics of one or two words. A number of songs refer to experiences of dockers, sailors and fishers. Docking was a dominant trade in Salvador in the nineteenth and early twentieth century as Brazil's wealth was built on export. Capoeira was played on the docks, as is reflected in a number of lyrics. 'I'm a stevedore on the quay in Bahia' is a song the chorus of which cites the name 'Aruandê', a spiritual home, maybe derived from the name of the Angolan capital city Luanda, and appearing on Waldemar's recording. Another song claims, 'I learned to play capoeira on the ramp in the docks of Bahia'. The docks appear in the song that presents, 'Teresa sings sitting down, Idalinha dances samba, there on the docks of Bahia'. The iconic film *Dança de Guerra* (1968) showed Pasinha's most illustrious students, João Pequeno and João Grande, playing capoeira, armed with knives, on the docks.

Sailors were seen to be something of a threat to the urban population of Salvador, as they were associated with romantic notions of the men who returned after weeks at sea to sleep with women. 'Come out of the sea, sailor' is variously interpreted as the need to escape seduction by mermaids, or a challenge – that the sailor should come ashore and fight like a man. 'Lonely sailor' also depicts the sailor as a lonesome, carefree figure, dapper in his white clothing, without the responsibility of love or a family (Prandi 1996, 143). Its verse, 'who taught you to swim, was it the listing of the ship or the sway of the sea?' is mirrored in another song that poses the question, 'who taught you to swim, sailor, was it the little fish of the sea?' The 'sting ray's tail' is a spinning back kick, named after the use of the sting ray's tail as a whip-like weapon. There are numerous songs that refer to the everyday of working with the sea such as, 'my boat is ready, I'm going to catch lots of fish', and, 'the tide is high, look at the fish jumping in the tide'. The force of the tide and the dangers of the sea are used to convey messages of caution, such as, 'row the boat, oarsman', 'I'm not going to row against the tide', and 'I'm not scared of going out in a boat, I'm just scared of my boat turning over'.

The sea is a constant presence in songs not only as a source of employment but as a vector for journeying, going to or from Bahia, including by means of the trafficked labour of the slave trade. One corrido recalls, 'through the waves of the sea I came, through the waves of the sea I will return'. The sea has a spiritual side too, and a couplet states, 'Sweet Jesus of the sailors only travels by sea'. It is also the preserve of the mother orixá Yemanja, who appears in songs, sometimes as a mermaid. One song describes Yemanja's house as under the sea but on top of the sand and has the chorus, 'There gold and silver and diamonds that illuminate us!' (This is taken by some to reference the orixá Oxum as well, through the mention of gold).

The trope of the sea is used to establish a coastal setting for capoeira and the claim, 'I learnt to play capoeira by the sea' is evocative of the beaches and plazas

along the coast where games take place. Through these lyrics the sea becomes the setting for leisure, and primarily capoeira, rather than labour. The song 'whoever never went out in a boat, does not know what the sea is; whoever never played capoeira Angola doesn't know what it's like to hang out' links the experience of working at sea to that of learning capoeira. Another song, 'I went to Bahia, just to see the steamship on the sea' evokes the nineteenth and early twentieth century vessels that were used in the area. The group 'Angoleiros do Mar' (Angola players of the sea, led by Mestre Marcelo Angola) has specialised in developing a canon of sea songs.

There are a few songs in capoeira that are traced to military exploits, and these are sung from the standpoint of the conscript or infantry soldier who joins the war out of necessity or compulsion, and without engaging with it at a strategic level. One war that is referenced in a number of songs is the War of Paraguay (1865–70), recalled by the name of Paraná, which is the name of the Brazilian state and the river that border Paraguay. This war is of historical significance as slaves – some of whom were capoeiras – were enlisted for military service to swell the infantry ranks and reduce the numbers of capoeiras causing disruption in Rio de Janeiro. Around 15,000 men were enlisted from Bahia, of whom hundreds were slaves, although there is documentary evidence of only one Bahian conscript who was a capoeira (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 103). The corrido 'Paraná ê' is one of the most iconic capoeira songs, and occurs on Waldemar's recording. The verse states, 'I'll tell my wife that it was the capoeira who won the war'. (This is now also sung, 'capoeira conquered me' depending on context). Having killed around 75 per cent of the Paraguayan population, the Brazilian army crossed back across the river into Paraná. Bimba sings of conscription, 'they sent for me to help win – it is the war of Paraná', and another song is sung simply with the name, 'eh, Paraná!'

A couple of more specific references are made to war in ladainhas that recall conscription in the twentieth century. One starts, 'I was at home not thinking about anything', and goes on to narrate a story of being drafted to the army. Another, sung by Mestre Caiçara, includes the lyric, 'Brazil says that it has (Japan says it does not have) a powerful squadron to fight the Germans'. The singer reports, 'I've signed up and now I'm going to join the military expedition … it is my duty to fight'. The lyric presents a nationalist recruit to the Second World War when around 25,000 Brazilians formed the Brazilian Expeditionary Force to fight alongside the European allied forces in the Mediterranean. The songs display some ambivalence to war, though, as capoeiras and the state did not share interests. It concludes with some optimism or humour, stating, 'the navy is from the war, the army from the campaign, the fire fighter puts out fires, and the foreigner is beaten'. (This ending is sometimes sung on its own with the last line changed to assert that it is the policeman who gets beaten.)

There are other songs that reference non-military armed fighting, and a louvação runs 'a pointed knife, it's for stabbing'. There is little to suggest the involvement of capoeiras in organised violence in Bahia but the Malê revolt of 1835, the most prominent slave uprising in Brazil, took place in Salvador and

provides a context of slave insurrection. The lyric 'if you want to see me, go to Piedade tomorrow', is understood by some to reference an urban battle, pitched between competing groups of tailors in Piedade Square, although there is no embellishment of the context or outcome in the lyric. The 'battle of Camugerê' is recounted in detail in a song by Marquinho Coreba about the escape from slavery of Aidê, a beautiful woman, to the Camugerê quilombo; the chorus sings, 'Aidê flees to Camugerê'. The song relates that the slave master, going to re-capture the woman, was beaten back by the maroons living in the quilombo and killed. The song contains the line, 'freedom has no price, the black man knows who saved him'. Another song referring to the same story simply claims, 'I won the battle of Camugerê'.

The social status of capoeiras was such that they were enlisted by the state for armed operations but were also the victims of state violence both through punishment by the police in cities and through military exposure in the battle-field. The participation of capoeiristas in historic battles is significant to the narrative that is constructed through lyric. It places them central to the history of Brazil, and records the soldierly contribution that was made by the practitioners, whose capoeira was illegal at the time. The War of Paraguay was also a moment of liberation: in an effort to reinforce the frontline troops, slaves were promised freedom if they fought – on the misplaced assumption that they would not survive the war. Their skills in battle and their subsequent victorious return brought some public acknowledgement of their valour and strength. 2900 people from Rio de Janeiro, many of whom may have been capoeiras, were freed on account of their service in the war (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 88). (There are overlapping and eliding categories of blacks, capoeiras and slaves that allow inferences to be made about the history of capoeira).

With a few exceptions, the names of moves are not derived from the work-place, but the movement of capoeira is associated with the trades that the lyrics describe. The strength developed from manual labour is evident in the moves, particularly upside-down movements that require the arms or neck to take the weight of the body. Downey observes that what is strenuous exercise for the sedentary generation of the early twenty-first century was a form of relaxation for the manual workers of 100 years earlier (Downey 2014). Scheper-Hughes argues that people whose work is physical, as it is for labourers, are more likely to find corporeal expression (Scheper-Hughes 1992, 187). They are not acting or imitating work, but gesticulation derives from labouring experience, rather than, for example, from the experience of working with computers, driving cars or reading books. A passage from Frantz Fanon reflects this inclination towards the corporeal. He writes,

> The dreams of the native are always of muscular prowess; his dreams are of action and of aggression. I dream I am jumping, swimming, running, climbing; I dream I am jumping, that I span the river in one stride, or that I am followed by a flood of motor-cars which never catch up with me.
>
> (Fanon 1965, 41)

Geographical specificity underpins a range of songs, including in the casual mention of animals and plants indigenous to the region, such as, 'the sabiá sang in the orange tree', the sabiá being a bird indigenous to north-eastern Brazil that appears in several songs and is a popular nickname. Locations in Bahia are frequently mentioned. Suassuna sings, 'Oh my brother, what did you see there? I saw capoeira killing and also I also saw maculelê. Capoeira' to which the chorus responds, 'it's a game practised in the land of Salvador'. A corrido runs, 'I did not see the birth of capoeira, but I've heard the old people say it was born in Bahia, in the city of Santo Amaro'. Another claims, 'I came from Bahia to see you'; the province of Bahia, its capital Salvador and sites within the city recur in lyrics. Examples include, 'Bay of all the saints'; 'Good Jesus of Lapa!' (an area of Salvador); 'I'm going to the Ilha de Maré'; and 'Good-bye, Santo Amaro'. The ladainha 'Church of Bonfim' lists the tourist spots of Salvador, including churches and markets. There are, in contrast, few references to Brazil; occasionally it is mentioned as the country that abolished (or did not) slavery; or as in the ladainha (cited above) with regard to the Brazilian Expeditionary force in the Second World War but there is not a strong national identity conveyed in lyric.

Folk to nostalgia

There is a range of trades cited and embodied in music and movement of capoeira but they are all labouring jobs: there are no bureaucrats or members of the property owning class, except when the singer is addressing an – often absent – master. There is some sedimentation around the first half of the twentieth century in capoeira's depiction of class. Over time, this canon of songs evolves in its function from relating the lived experiences of players to presenting a nostalgic version of capoeira. The aesthetics of capoeira present an understanding of origins and social context, and with it an acknowledgement of shared experience and community. In the face of the growing popularity of capoeira across the country in the 1960s onwards, the re-iteration of Bahia as the home of capoeira turned from a casual mention to a political statement that asserted ownership of the origins of the art.

As capoeira was taught to other social classes and in other areas, recruits were instructed, through the moves and music of capoeira, the physicality of the labouring classes and the rhythms of Afro-Brazilian music. Desmond presents the case that, 'movement serves as a marker for the production of gender, racial, ethnic, class and national identities' (Desmond 1994, 36). A key message from the lyric is that capoeiristas come from the street; they are workers. Cobra Mansa, assessing class on a more abstract level than by relaying experiences through song, observes that working class students tend to have an attitude more suited to learning capoeira, while middle-class students need to be 'taught' about craftiness and street-fighting. According to his experience of teaching capoeira to different groups around the world, class difference is more significant than difference between Brazilian and foreign students (Araújo 2004, 209).

According to a song sung by Suassuna, 'you have to learn capoeira, how to be Bahian and know how to ginga'.

   Through these musical and corporeal expressions the perspective of the marginalised, black communities in the north-east of the country is represented in the game. In the twenty-first century, many Bahians are involved in trades such as farming, selling in street markets or fishing. The songs still reflect these realities, but technologies have changed and the way that the trades are cited in lyric have not kept pace to incorporate alongside these occupations references to players working in cafés, call centres or a petrochemicals factory: the working class presented in capoeira has a historic moment.

African heritage

The theme of class is complemented by that of race, and in early twentieth-century Bahia, these two categories were largely overlapping as Afro-Brazilians, including those of mixed race, made up the working classes. The references to class can be seen to be relatively consistent, recalling trades and occupations that have becoming increasingly antiquated. References to African heritage, on the other hand, have changed from a passing reference to people by their skin colour (a practice that is common in Brazilian-Portuguese vernacular, and often used in salutations as noted above) to a constant invocation of the name of Angola, and a re-telling of capoeira history and the history of Brazil more generally to include references to slavery and Africa, incorporating a narrative from an era that pre-dates the use of lyric in capoeira and maybe pre-dates capoeira itself.

   According to the Afro-Brazilian Museum in Salvador, more than 4.5 million Africans were taken to Brazil for slave labour between the beginning of Portuguese colonisation and 1851. Of these people, 1.2 million were brought to Bahia, of whom 350,000 were from the Congo-Angola region and 850,000 from Benin and Biafra (Verger 1981, 55). These people impacted on demographics, culture and politics of the Bahia, and capoeira developed among their communities. As with citations of class, the early references to African heritage reflected the social and cultural background of capoeiristas. The roda, call-and-response singing, and incantation of 'Iê' in songs derive from folkloric practice and are shared across other Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions. Capoeira practitioners used predominantly African instruments to accompany play (although the pandeiro was a mainstay of Portuguese music at the time) and words were used in song that have African origins, among them 'Aruandê' and 'Benguela', an Angolan port. There is an aesthetic of African heritage in the dance elements of capoeira that reflect the forms of samba de roda, Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian expressions.

   Alongside this embodiment of African heritage, there is a lack of self-consciousness of race as capoeira was played within and for communities that shared social, including racial, context. This lack of self-consciousness is such that there is racial objectification in some songs. Waldemar, for example, sings a

ladainha, derived from a nineteenth-century story of 'Riachão and the Devil', in which he describes a black man arriving at a town and challenging a character named Riachão to a singing dual. The ladainha is meticulous in its crude and derogatory description of the physical features of the man before announcing that Riachão refused to sing for an 'unknown black man' who could be a slave on the run, and indeed is characterised as an incarnation of the Devil. A similar objectification is found also in a quadra that relates, 'I went there to the foot of the cross to say my prayers, when a black man appeared with a face of a dog [the devil]'.

A key moment in the representation of African heritage came with the visit of Angolan painter Álbano Neves e Sousa to Pastinha's academy in 1965. He brought a series of sketches of an Angolan dance called *N'golo*, otherwise known as a 'zebra dance' that was performed at initiation ceremonies for young men. With marked similarities in the corporeal gestures of the dancers and capoeira players, the theory gained some traction that capoeira could have its origins in Angola. This combined with the fact that the name 'Angola' had been used to refer to the traditional style of capoeira at least since the early 1920s, and was increasingly used to distinguish Pastinha's teaching and expression from capoeira Regional. Over time the theory of the zebra dance would inspire accompanying aesthetics of capoeira, including insignia for groups.

From writings and recordings it is clear that Pastinha toyed with but did not wholly accept the idea that capoeira originated in Africa, including the possibility that it derived from the zebra dance. His book opens, 'Capoeira … the whole universe wants to see its source is in Brazil' (Pastinha 2013, 23). As capoeira Angola gained recognition in Brazil, Pastinha joined a state-funded expedition to Senegal to attend a Festival of Black Arts in 1966. He was old and blind and the trip was short; but it was iconic in terms of making connections between arts practised in Brazil and those on the African continent. On his recording, released three years later, Pastinha sang, 'Pastinha has been to Africa, to show capoeira from Brazil', and also, 'Capoeira came from Africa. It was the African who brought it'. Decânio, writing Pastinha's biography, notes that 'our colleague Jesus' (a capoeirista) went to Africa and found samba de roda, berimbaus, tambourines, candomblé, chula – but no capoeira (Decânio Filho 1997b, 30).

While the N'golo dance suggested that capoeira's origins lay in Angola, a second source of references to Africa was elaborated through invocation of orixás, the Candomblé pantheon from West Africa. Orixás are invoked by name on occasions, and often obliquely: Yemanjá, the deity of the sea, appears as a mermaid in songs, Oxum through mentions of gold. Orixás can also be addressed by Catholic counterparts: Omulú as St Benedict, known as a 'black saint', Ogum as St Anthony, Iansã as St Barbara (in the song 'St Barbara of the lightning'), Yemanjá as Mary the Mother of Christ. People were trafficked for slave labour from Angola and Congo, but also from the Yoruba and Evê-Fon kingdoms of West Africa. In Bahia, many capoeira players also were also devotees of Candomblé (Holloway 2012, 645), and members of the 'nation' of Angola, one of a

number of cultural groups that formed in Brazil, adopted the Yoruba pantheon and with it the term Candomblé de Angola. Consonance is embodied in the orchestration of the instruments: the three berimbaus in capoeira, for example, adopt the musical role of the three drums in Candomblé. The two dominant influences of West Africa – represented through the orixás and the musical bell, the agogô, and Central and Southern Africa, evident in the berimbaus and atabaques (foot drums), attest to African heritage and a fusion of cultures in Brazil.

The development of the narrative and aesthetics of Angola and West Africa reinforced the predominantly black ownership of capoeira discourse. Pastinha, himself of mixed African and European heritage, stated that the 'capoeira that we see today is a mix of African culture with the dances of the caboclos from Brazil' (Decânio Filho 1997b, 37). In doing so he acknowledged the contribution of Indigenous peoples in the development of capoeira, referred to by the term 'caboclo'. Pastinha's experience was largely restricted at that time to Bahia, and there are more Indigenous peoples in the North of Brazil than in the South, and more intermixing between black and Indigenous heritages. The caxixi – the small rattle that is held in the hand of the berimbau player – and the reco-reco are understood by some practitioners to have derived from instruments played by Indigenous peoples. 'Tabaréu', meaning a country bumpkin, is a word from the language tupi-tabaré and occurs in the song, 'Tabaréu who comes from the desert'. While there are traces of the influence of Indigenous peoples, these have been crowded out by the aesthetics of African heritage. European influence is not celebrated in the game, but Canjiquinha notes unceremoniously on the final page of his book that there were always whites playing capoeira (Canjiquinha 1989, 94).

As the theory was articulated lyrically and with increasingly self-conscious representation that capoeira came from Africa, a gap appeared in the telling of capoeira's history, namely the episode between the N'golo dance in Angola and the revival of capoeira in Brazil in the academies and use of lyric of the twentieth century. Elaborating the centuries of slavery bridged the gap in the story, and wove an overt discourse of struggle into the game. The forced migration and racialised experience of slavery alongside the name Angola (and sometimes its capital Luanda) were increasingly cited in songs. Dozens of songs made Angola central to the lyric, including, 'My father came from Angola, I'm going to return to Angola', 'This game is from Angola', and some simply repeated the name, 'Angolinha [little Angola] Angola'. The interchangeability between Angola as a motherland and a style of capoeira is captured in the lyric, 'I'm an Angoleiro who comes from Angola.'

Although some reference had been made to slavery previously, notably in the opening moments of the film *Vadiação* in early songs about plantation work, claims about slavery became more pronounced. Slavery became a theme in songs sung, particularly in Angola academies, but in many Regional groups as well. Mestre Acordeon, who is white and a Regional player, sang, 'I was a rebel black man in the slave house, with no fear of fighting'. The song 'I stepped on a dry leaf, I heard it crunch', is commonly claimed to represent the slave's experience of

running away, aware that any noise – including that caused by stepping on a leaf – could lead to re-capture by the pursuing authorities. It gives a poetic personal account referring to the misery and mental distress of the slaves, rather than simply the physical hardship or the injustice. Mestre Suassuna (also white) sings, 'I came here on board a ship, half dead, half alive, that is how I came … whoever was born a warrior does not accept captivity.'

Some capoeira groups developed rich narratives on slavery, detailing the conditions of slave life and the horrors of the Middle Passage, the crossing between Africa and Brazil, such as 'I lament my captivity', 'what ship is this arriving, full of blacks coming from Angola?' and, 'I came on a ship from Aruandê. Why did you bring me? What for?' The harsh conditions of slave labour are recounted with the lines, 'Work, black man, so as not to get beaten'. One verse recalls 'in the time of captivity, my master beat me, I prayed to the Our Lady [Mary the mother of Christ], how the blows hurt', which can be interpreted either as a statement of faith or as a critique of the colonial impositions of slavery and religion. A ladainha by Mestre Angolinha called 'Longing for my great teacher', reflects on the experience of being enslaved and brought to Brazil and recalling in lyric 'the lashes of the slave house and the solitary nights'.

The discourse of slavery enabled a radical critique to be relayed through capoeira songs that debunked of the assertion that slavery was abolished in Brazil by the Golden Law of 1888. The position is put succinctly in a ladainha by Mestre João Pequeno that asks, 'Madame Isabel, what history is this?' The ladainha offers a counter-narrative: freedom was not given by Princess Imperial Isabel, the presumptive heir of the Brazilian Empire (1846–1921) who oversaw the Golden Law, it was Zumbi who fought for the true freedom, training heroes in a maroon settlement. A similar perspective is given by Mestre Moraes' 'Zumbi, King of Palmares', which begins, 'history deceives us, telling us the opposite of what happened' and going on to trace the contemporary racial inequality of Brazil to the injustice of slavery. Toni Vargas sings, 'Lady Isabel, your law did not work'. A similar conceit is used on the FICA recording in the improvisation on the classic song 'oh yes, yes, yes, oh no, no, no', which is turned to deny the claim that slavery has been abolished.

Zumbi was the seventeenth century leader of the maroon settlement in Palmares, a maroon settlement that resisted the Portuguese for 65 years until its destruction in 1694. He was considered by his community to be immortal, his name meaning 'ghost' or 'spirit', a reputation that led to the Portuguese beheading him when he was captured. There is no evidence that capoeira was played by Zumbi or in maroon settlements (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 6), but his inclusion in capoeira lyrics provides a black hero and a resistance fighter. The incorporation of Zumbi's story into lyrics, nicknames and event names allows the account in and of capoeira to extend back beyond the history that is documented, opening the narrative to improvisation and imagination. While Zumbi is credited with heroism for leading the struggle, the songs maintain that liberation has not been achieved: the struggle is on-going, as the inequality of contemporary Brazil is represented as a continuation of the violence of slavery.

The notion of African heritage, words or ancestors rallies the consciousness of struggle and slavery. Establishing lineage and community through the discourse of capoeira, and constructing a non-literal concept of Africa allows its representation to perform social and political functions. Africa is not somewhere that has been left behind; instead it is the watchword for the motherland and black consciousness. It is the other side of the *kalunga* – the middle passage between Africa and Brazil – which continues to exist in people's identity and religious beliefs or expressions. It is the other side of death, where the ancestors live and provide guidance and protection. Angola becomes a lyrical past accompanying and legitimising play through an implied claim of common ancestry. Through the reiteration of songs and the lyrical rendition of belonging, Angola becomes the future too: frequently it is where capoeiristas are just off to, as is conveyed in the lyrics, 'I'm going to Angola' or 'I'm going to see the Angola players, so that we can play capoeira!'

Implicit to explicit

The representation of Africa takes various forms in the music, movement and ritual of capoeira. As capoeira spread from north-eastern Brazil, Bahian capoeiristas asserted authority over the aesthetics of the game through a more overtly articulated presentation of African heritage. Developing the discourse over time, players deployed narratives that had political significance within particular capoeira groups, and also engaged with wider – including international – discourses on race.

Cairns argues that blame and victimhood are central to practically all accounts of violence and the process of othering leads to identity formation or strengthening of social memory that carries violence across generations (Cairns and Roe 2003). The inclusion of representations in lyric from the perspective of people who had been enslaved intensified the narrative of struggle but this narrative had a complementary aspect. A song recounts, 'They banded together to attack the black guy, they brought a knife, a club and a machete, but this black guy isn't soft. He swapped his hand for his foot', and the chorus responds, 'his foot for his hand', constructing the image of the quarry escaping violent force with cartwheels and acrobatics. The representation of the victim of forced migration and violence, was accompanied by that of the hero as slaves were presented either as resilient to the system or subverting it, a theme consistent with the claims that capoeira was used as a martial art against slave masters. Mestre Jogo de Dentro commented,

> capoeira Angola gave me the opportunity to discover these values, all this history of suffering and abuse … [through capoeira] I was able to get out of a situation that few escape, I changed history but without trampling over what I believe, from my own history, and that is important.
>
> (Nascimento 2007, 34)

The Golden Law that ostensibly abolished slavery has been characterised as a 'false' abolition as it was not accompanied by land distribution or access to

education, and therefore effectively forced people who had been freed from slavery back into bonded labour (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 104). Disappointed by the Golden Law and by the resulting socio-political configuration, capoeira lyrics have questioned and re-told history, taking the perspective of the slave or maroon. The stories of Zumbi dos Palmares, the fighters in the War of Paraguay, and the 'battle' of Camugerê bring together the themes freedom and agency in the face of crushing power. The account of Zumbi overwrote the claims that a Portuguese princess had ended slavery with legal abolition. Just as the recollection of military battles and fights against slave masters grants capoeiristas agency in their emancipation and in the history of Brazil, associating capoeira with the life and achievements of Zumbi moves the narrative of abolition from one of passively receiving emancipation to one of agency in agitating for liberty. Recounting these stories locates capoeira politically in opposition to the state and slave masters, and counters the version of history that is dominated by European victories and expansion of power. Jogo de Dentro sings, 'they say it was Princess Isabel who ended slavery. When I take my berimbau, I feel my body shiver remembering the whole past when the black man were always beaten, and with capoeira Angola, managed to free himself.'

Lyrics became more self-conscious as the relational aspects of politics entered the narrative. Slavery does not take place in isolation as people are enslaved in relational to their masters. Jogo de Dentro sings a ladainha with the words, 'the black man was being beaten, the white man was smiling'. The construction of victim and hero narratives provided a context on which to draw for improvisation and expression: players were neither singing about personal experience, nor reproducing verbatim the music and moves of others as there are no capoeira songs that survive from the time of slavery. Instead, in what was an increasingly self-conscious aesthetic negotiation of race, players were developing the parameters in which to construct a set of characteristics that set markers in the history of capoeira that was being told.

Identity over time

Tracking how narratives change over time highlights the significance that they assume in different socio-political contexts, and practice creates a 'historical consciousness', defined by Glencross as 'how past, present and future are thought to be connected' (Glencross 2016, 413). The aesthetics of capoeira and its corporeality have produced knowledge, laying out what capoeira is, where it was played and who, historically, has played it. Araújo identifies capoeira Angola's crucial elements as being orality, community and ancestry (Araújo 2004), and the invocation of a labouring history and an African heritage establish the identity of the early-twentieth century capoeirista that is reproduced over time. The historic identity provides a base for lineage and the preservation of names situates players within a history of practice. The question, 'kid, who was your teacher', is the opening of a ladainha and a question that is posed to players when visiting academies; it aims to place the individual in capoeira context,

defined by the continuity of teaching through oral tradition. The status of teacher is mixed in with family line: there is a strong notion of being 'son' or of – invariably male – descent, as appears in the song, 'I'm the son of Cobra Verde, grandson of Cobra Coral.'

The construction of this identity in lyric and music reiterates worth and agency through the practice of capoeira. The heroism of Zumbi and the rejection of the Golden Law are two examples of how value is attached to African heritage. These accounts are echoed beyond the game too: 20 November is a national holiday in Brazil, dedicated to Black Consciousness and specifically honouring the memory of Zumbi. Fierke argues that interests derive from identity, not from the material (Fierke 2015, 83), and the construction of a perspective that is increasingly self-conscious describes the emergence of an interest group, artistically described. As this interest group spread across Brazil and then across the world, capoeira rejected the assumptions of dominant values (for example, of white supremacy) and of cause and effect (for example, how the Brazilian state was formed and how political priorities are forged) that are embedded in northern versions of history and inform the formulation of security agendas.

In the globalised era, a minority of capoeiristas have the lived experience of the identity narrated in the lyrics, music and movement of capoeira but they engage aesthetically with this heritage of the art. The emergence of racial inequality as a theme at a moment that capoeira was gaining international appeal provided a focus for an otherwise unconnected constituency of players, intensifying the political commentary offered by capoeira in Brazil and linking it in with a more explicit and broader discourse internationally. Downey argues that the racial reading oversimplifies the composite dynamics of capoeira and slavery in Rio de Janeiro (Downey 2014). He notes that capoeira was played by all ethnicities, and slavery did not describe a black-white distinction as slaves could be mixed race and thousands of black and mixed race people were free before abolition. In Bahia, though, while many adepts in the early twentieth century were mixed race, the artistic bifurcation of black people enslaved and white slave owners serves to reclaim capoeira as a Bahian practice. Capoeira is represented in its discourse as something attached to the senzalas and maroon communities of the north-east, rather than to Rio de Janeiro and the connotations of politically affiliated violence and blood-letting.

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6 Tricks and magic

The how and why

Capoeira constructs identity and history, and this has mounted a critique of mainstream representation and accounts. Identity and history formation is not particular to capoeira, though, and is something that is achieved by all sorts of groups, including dominant groups. Pursuing the enquiry further involves drilling into the how and why of capoeira to investigate its logic and modes of explanations. In the absence of command over the dominant narrative and politics, players find other ways of getting by, and of influencing people and situations.

This chapter charts a spectrum of activity from tactics, through resilience to anarcho-magicalism, describing the space of the weaker party and how capoeira players face up to, subvert or evade power and its narratives. Tactical choices conform to the dominant strategic logic and work through it in the available space. Resilience defies the dominant logic of oppression, allowing the weaker to cope and thrive in hostile conditions. Anarcho-magicalism is chaotic and inventive, changing the rules, changing the game and creating space and opportunities to live and flourish irrespective of dominant power structures. All three are tricks that are used *in* capoeira – capoeira does not rely primarily on physical strength but on guile and agility, and *by* capoeira – in that capoeiristas have continued to play, despite the hostile social and political environment, and have managed to protect their interests and extend their cultural and political influence.

Tactics

Playing capoeira, like playing squash, football or chess, involves attempting to dominate space, and within the roda there is a strategic purpose in manipulating the scope and movement of the other player by the use of kicks, feints and acrobatics. De Certeau differentiates between strategy and tactics, whereby strategy involves the ability to command and shape the environment. This is the aim in capoeira, but if one person dominates the space, the other has to work with what is available, and work tactically. De Certeau writes,

> The space of a tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power …

> It operates in isolated actions, blow by blow … It is a guileful ruse … What
> it wins it cannot keep … In short, a tactic is an art of the weak.
>
> (de Certeau 1984, 37)

The interaction between the strategic and the tactical, and the opportunities
and constraints it establishes for each player means that meaningful interaction
takes place between two players with different levels of strength and experience,
unlike in a game in which competition is defined by winning.

Within all styles of capoeira there are strong tactical elements. The lack of
scoring means that capoeira takes place in the moment. One player can get the
better of the other, and can provoke reactions; the other player may do better at
another stage. Timing is crucial too; much of the game revolves around exploit-
ing the mistakes and vulnerabilities that the other player displays. The use of
surprise – confounding the expectation set up – allows one player to gain emo-
tional space through the confusion of the other. There is a split-second moment
when it makes sense to give a *rasteira* (sweep) or *tesoura* (grapple); if the time
passes, the game moves on. Forcing the move is self-defeating as there is a risk
of injury and the game will be ugly.

There is tactical skill in bringing the game lower, from the combative to the
guileful and from an upright stance where the taller person has a height
advantage to a crouching game where small size and nimbleness are assets. Tac-
tical engagement is evident in a number of sub-games that are created, that
generate options for the person who is being attacked. Sub-games enable players
to change or subvert the pace or ferocity of the interaction by breaking the
trading of attacks and escapes and invoking a ritual of 'calling' the other (in a
chamada), going 'round the world' by circling the ring or returning to the base of
the berimbau and the authority – and refuge – that this commands.

Playing defensively is tactical and arises from a preoccupation with protec-
tion; for the weaker party protection is of crucial significance. The lyric, 'put on
your leather jacket, cowboy' warns players to protect themselves when they
enter the roda. Surrounded by superior power and treachery, the capoeirista can
be attacked at any moment and needs to remain alert to danger: one hand
always protects the face. In capoeira Angola, players 'close' their bodies by using
their legs and arms to protect their torso and face; in Regional, the arms are
used as a guard. This is functional in providing a physical barrier against attack,
and also expresses the need for caution.

There is a strong theme of protection, and particularly divine protection, in
songs. A corrido used by Saputi to open rodas has the chorus 'St Anthony is the
protector' (St Anthony being the Catholic saint equivalent of Ogum,
the warrior orixá). The lead singer elaborates in the verses: first, St Anthony is
the protector of Noah's ark, then often of capoeira, Salvador and sometimes of
love. Orixás are called on for protection, either by name – predominantly in
ladainhas – or by allusion. The corrido 'my mermaid, queen of the sea, don't let
my boat capsize' is addressed to Yemanja, orixá of the sea and protector of
sailors. Practitioners of Candomblé and those who adopt its aesthetics call for

divine protection with their voice or movement when entering the roda, or wear a string of coloured beads dedicated to a protecting orixá.

God is also a source of protection. The couplet, 'a little with God is a lot. A lot without God is nothing', establishes the nature of the relationship between the human and divine. The exclamation, 'God is great', is followed by 'I'm small', in a ladainha sung by Pastinha, and used in other song forms. The diminutive persona of the capoeirista is relative to the size and strength of the protector, and the lyric continues, 'everything I have, God gave me!' Such interjections connect the game to the spiritual, as the movement and music fuse a way of life and a statement of faith. The ladainha 'Oh Good Lord God' (Cobra Mansa) makes allusion to the Lord's Prayer. First it petitions, 'make me a good capoeirista' (with the usual lack of distinction between the game and life: it is not determined whether this means playing the game well or being a decent person). Then it cuts to the protective elements: deliver me from temptation, all evil and my enemies, and concluding with a prayer for God's protection.

Protection reduces vulnerability, and this is at the opposite end of the spectrum of security priorities to the realist aspirations of increasing strength. A corrido states, 'whoever doesn't know how to swim sinks to the bottom'. Capoeira does not present values predicated on conquering others; it is about survival in difficult circumstances, and sometimes making progress, as is related for example with the lines, 'if it rains on your bed, you'll sleep in mine'. In ladainhas, there are frequent references to being wary or careful: 'I don't go to your house, you don't come to mine', and, 'I say my prayers with a knife in my belt'. By allusion too, the capoeirista is often threatened as is suggested by the lyric, 'the German canary killed my songbird', with an implied tale of a small blameless bird attacked by an invasive species.

In the context of multiple and unrelenting threats, reducing vulnerability is a higher priority than increasing influence. 'Besouro' meaning 'Beetle' is one of the first adepts to be remembered by name in capoeira lore and is one of the few capoeiristas to be mentioned frequently in songs. He is quasi-mythical, although Mestre João Pequeno, when asked about him said, 'yes, he was my father's cousin' (João Pequeno 1988). Besouro Mangangá lived around the turn of the twentieth century (1895–1924) in Amaro da Purificação, when playing capoeira was violently punished by the state, and he gained notoriety as a fighter; he was also an infantry soldier, though was dismissed for rallying a group of 30 soldiers to attack some police officers following a dispute (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 123). He was reportedly shot several times, and his survival of these assaults gained him the reputation of having super-natural powers; he was believed to carry a protective amulet that made him impermeable to bullets. Besouro's characterisation as a beetle is telling: the beetle has a protective shell but is small and does not pose a threat as it does not bite and has no sting. Besouro's fame was built on his reputation of having the magic of transformation and escape; the beetle flies away when attacked, and Besouro is credited with the ability to fly when pursued by the police.

The tropes of protection and reducing vulnerability are reproduced in the construction of a context defined by jungle, given by ubiquitous mentions of

forests, animals and birds in the names of moves and in songs. As with the case of Besouro, the capoeirista takes the part of the smaller, tricksy animal. The animals invoked in lyrics and movement are not predatory: they are frogs, monkeys, scorpions, wasps, fish and birds. (The exception is nicknames, which often pertain to physical characteristics: there are many lions, jaguars, wolves, bears and, for that matter, giraffes and penguins). One corrido runs, 'the scales for weighing gold are not for weighing metal, there is a small bird that kills the coral snake'. Snakes are a constant presence in nicknames – Cobra Verde (Green Snake), Cobra Mansa (Tame Snake), Cobrinha (Little Snake) among others. A corrido runs, 'I stepped on a green snake, it's a good sign'. The snake is evidently dangerous, and one lyric recounts, 'I saw a viper in the cashew tree, my master told me to kill it'. It is also is a sly and tentatively admired, according to the lyric, 'one snake knows another, and doesn't need to say it's a snake'. The ambiguity of the snake is intimated by the line 'an old hole has a snake inside', which conveys the need to be wary of players who appear to be past their prime. Another song plays with the notions of surprise attack, relating that St Benedict (the protector of capoeiristas) was bitten by a snake, but it was the snake that died. Pastinha, referring to his students João Pequeno and João Grande, records that he had 'two brothers, both named João. One plays in the air, the other on the ground. If one is a gentle snake, the other is a hawk'.

The jungle is not the literal setting for capoeira but a poetic context in which norms and hierarchies are inverted, and a place of secrets, as is rendered by the lyric, 'the trunk fell over and rolled at the mouth of the jungle, nobody saw'. It is the opposite of the form of civilisation ruled by the rich and their institutions of law. Capoeira constructs a counterpoint to what Lacy refers to as the 'tame zones' of modernity (Lacy 2003). The tame zone in the early twentieth century was the modernity of industrialisation, order and progress espoused by the Brazilian state; later the tame zone was the dictatorship, and the political oppression that furthered its demands. Rejecting the various faces of the Brazilian state, and constructing an alternative set of principles and values, capoeira constructs the wild zone, the jungle that surrounds the town and terrifies the populace with its denseness and unruliness. The wild zones of the jungle are not threatening to all, though; the nurturing forest is where survival is based on wit, and alternative norms and laws exist. It is where fugitives – including runaways – hide, where dense forest provides obscurity, and with it protection and opportunity. A ladainha about an altercation between Besouro – presented as a crab – and the police ends, 'they [the police] are going to fight with a crab, an animal that doesn't have blood. If the police what to fight, let's go to the middle of the mangrove'.

The next level of protection is resilience – doing better out of a situation than expected or than others, and inverting bad luck by turning it into an opportunity. A corrido states, 'The boat capsized, sailor; there is treasure on the ocean floor'. Nancy Scheper-Hughes has written about psychological responses to persistent loss and violence and theorises resilience as the 'refusal to be negated' (Scheper-Hughes 2008). Observing carnival, Scheper-Hughes comments that people in

north-eastern Brazil, 'have a knack for making life a worthwhile experience' (Scheper-Hughes 1992, 19). She identifies resilience in people's ability to enjoy cultural practices in the face of extreme hardship, including the death of children. Observing how parents distance themselves from grief and join in the party in the street, she argues that the experience is transformative: people do not merely 'feel' happier, they *are* happier (Scheper-Hughes 2008). A short ladainha observes resilience in its opening couplet, 'when I die, I don't want crying or mystery, I want a berimbau playing'. A more light-hearted rendition of resilience is given by the lines, 'you say you know everything but the glow-worm knows more. It shines in the dark, something you don't do'.

Resilience was enshrined by Bimba in the instructions he set out for Regional: 'stay close to your partner'. He noted that fear separates people (Decânio Filho 1997, 172); this fear produces physical danger when distance between the players allows for more powerful attacks to be mounted that can result in forceful and direct impact. Maintaining confidence in the roda and staying close produces a more challenging game for both players. Resilience is demonstrated in the lines, 'I'm going to see if I can make some money; if I can't, well no one dies of hunger!' It is not about gaining ground so much as not ceding psychologically.

A ladainha notes, 'The ani (a black bird in north-eastern Brazil) bird doesn't sing when it's in a cage. It only sings when it's by the anthill and sees an ant outside!' As in many capoeira songs, the lyric describes a small unspectacular animal and, in this case, one that is biding its time. A similar sentiment is given by the song about a Brazilian rodent, the cutia: 'I saw cutia with coconut in its teeth', which, instead of running away, sits and defiantly watches the human beings while eating messily. Resilience also has an element of opportunism, and the capoeirista is always ready to take advantage of any situation, as is captured in the lyric 'the jaguar died, the jungle is mine!' usually sung when the stronger player has been caught in the game. The tactics used in capoeira demonstrate resilience: you counter an open kick by tripping-up the attacker, you smile and dance in adversary (this resembles Fella Kuti's 1977 iconic song 'suffering and smiling' that describes survival under the Nigerian dictatorship). If you are taken down you get up, if you are taken down again you get up again. You stay low. You look the other person in the eye and maintain the spirit of a game whatever happens.

Counter-rationality

There are elements of the thief in capoeira such as the use of deception to trick the other player and the tactical use of space and resources to make strikes. A verse runs, 'my brother and I bought buns; he didn't pay and neither did I'. The thief conforms to the dominant logic of the value of property and attempts to upset its distribution by stealing. The next step is to extend the concept of tactical rationality to include activity that appears to be counter-rational: forms of thinking and acting that do not conform to the dominant notion of economic

or political priorities but nonetheless produce outcomes that are significant and valued. Increasing protection and reducing vulnerability are already on the opposite end of the spectrum to the usual security discourse of how to rule from a position of strength. Delving further into the logic of capoeira, reveals the next layer: that of counter-rationalities pursued through ambiguity, alternative logics and contradictions.

Counter-rationalities constructed from below provide alternatives to the conventional understandings of explanations and decision-making. The mooted 'rational actor' needs both information and the power to act in order to make decisions. If one or both of these elements are missing, the process of making decisions is changed; this has been extensively theorised with use of the concept of bounded rationality in economics. Bounded rationality, though, suggests that people will make mistakes, and that, had they had full information, more time, or a more reliable pattern of experience, they would have taken more rational decision. Capoeira's counter-rationality frees itself from such constraints of calculation by introducing contradictions and riddles. 'In the capoeira roda', sings Pastinha, 'I'm great and small', juxtaposing his greatness as a player with his smallness beside God. Recognising counter-rationalities establishes the intellectual ground for analysing action that belies assumptions of strategy.

Forms of counter-rationality have been explored in capoeira by Luis Renato Vieira who argues that vagrancy and deception generate a second reality to Western rationality and efficiency (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 116). Lowell Lewis draws attention to the numerous contradictions in capoerira, noting that, 'the basic themes of liberation and domination, of freedom and slavery, of cooperation and deception, are the general symbolic preconditions within which images of accommodation, closeness, and physical inversion are usually at play in capoeira' (Lowell Lewis 1992, 85). Abib, similarly, theorises a 'differentiated logic' and 'ambiguous strategy' at work in capoiera Angola; practitioners reason in a different way as a result of their art, and the understanding they derive from capoeira counters the notions of progress and modernity of the Brazilian state (Abib 2004, 4). Nestor Capoeira adopts a similar line; he writes,

> The cartwheel and upside-down movements also help the player understand that capoeira, and life, are not simply a matter of winning and losing; and that if life has many battles and struggles, you also need to learn how to dance, be poetic, have fun, be unpredictable (not always rational and objective), and be slightly crazy and chaotic, if you are to savour the best in life and capoeira.
>
> (Capoeira 2003, 69)

According to this perspective, the joy of being alive is achieved through play; capoeira is a celebration, and being 'slightly crazy and chaotic' changes the player's experience of life. There is vulnerability in what he writes – that creativity and fun are given in response to struggles. In the absence of other resources, change can be prompted by taking risks, such as with acrobatics that expose the

player to attack mid-move. Acrobatic moves open up the game, challenge the other player to reciprocate or strike, and thereby change the energy of the interaction.

An alternative logic expands the scope of unpredictability. A message of caution in interpreting the world is conveyed by the song, 'not everything that glitters is gold, not everything that sways falls over'. (This seems to draw on 'All that glisters is not gold', from Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* [Act 2, Scene 7]). Achieving unpredictability in capoeira involves first learning standardised responses, and then learning to improvise on them without breaking the conventions of the game. Capoeira differs from most European or American past-times, but there are parallels with other African cultural expressions. Margaret Thompson Drewel, examining Yoruba culture, finds that

> playing involves spending time with people for its own sake, engaging them in a competition of wits verbally and/or physically, and playing it out tactically to disorient and be disoriented, to surprise and be surprised, to shock and be shocked, and to laugh together – to enjoy.
>
> (Thompson Drewel 1992, 17)

Such interaction is suggested by Canjiquinha and Wademar, who sing, 'my brother and I started a fight; neither of us won'.

Malícia and malandragem

The character of the smaller or weaker has already been presented with regard to the need for protection. How these characters succeed in the game and life against greater strength is attributed to wit, which is – in the absence of other resources – largely about deceit. Bimba asserted, 'Capoeira is treachery' (Almeida 1986, 2). The Portuguese word *malícia* is central to the game and means trickery or malice. Malícia rejects the notion of a fair game and proposes instead a subversive set of goals. According to Nestor Capoeira, malícia is gained through training the movements of capoeira as 'non-rational, lived, experiential knowledge' (Capoeira 2002, 20). Malícia is expressed in movements that confuse or distract the other person. Canjiquinha advocates, 'to break free from evil, use deceit' (Canjiquinha 1989, 4); it is a way of getting by.

Malandragem is the art of being street-wise, maintaining cool, having vision, double-dealing, and getting the upper hand. A ladainha proposes, 'where there's a malandro [a person with malandragem], the vagabond doesn't hang out; where there's a wise person, the malandro doesn't gamble; where there are piranhas, the alligator swims on its back', indicating the potential for smaller animals to attack the larger. Malandragem includes the ability to get away with behaviour such as feigning anger or injury, gaining from situations or people, and cheating, including cheating on women. A common louvação runs, 'long live my teacher, who taught me to deceive'.

Malícia and malandragem make use of fake smiles, or persistently correcting or annoying the other player to make them unsure. Both terms are considered pejorative in common usage, but both are valued in capoeira, which presents deceit as virtue as it allows the weaker party to get one over the stronger party. Capoeira is about intelligence, not brute force. There is a certain assumed heroism in this as a mechanism – that the weaker will be able to outwit the stronger. Hyde's accounts of trickster from various cultures reveals stories relating not to powerful or large animals, but to the unkempt and wily – coyotes, ravens, and weasels (Hyde 1998, 39–55), similar to those that appear in capoeira. A ladainha by João Pequeno puts it like this: 'God did not give intelligence to the wolf and the cobra cannot fly. What is all that body worth without a head to think with?'

Malícia and malandragem are detectable in the celebrated tradition in capoeira of avoiding arrest. A frequently cited character is Lampião, a folk bandit from north-eastern state of Pernambuco, who lived in the early twentieth century and is depicted in tales as fighting the paramilitary police and stealing from the wealthy. He is referenced in capoeira songs, with snippets of stories about climbing or descending the mountain. He is not recalled as a capoeira but is cited most commonly in the line 'look at Lampião's footsteps', which appears to refer to the fact that he wore his shoes back-to-front to confuse the authorities attempting to track him.

Malicía is a constant presence in games although it is scarcely mentioned in songs: in some groups it is the name of a base stance to one side from which moves follow; analogously, trickery is the oblique starting position and it is what makes the game possible. Malicía is also seen in playful interaction that is instantaneously transformed into a forceful kick or take-down, or persistent needling the other person physically or emotionally to wear through their resolve by attrition. This changeability and baiting comprises a central logic of the development of the game. A corrido runs, 'oh Mum! Pedro is annoying me; the more he annoys me, the more I want to annoy him back!'

Riddles

Bimba explored capoeira as 'situations that follow each other in a circular continuum – a bi-polar cycle – the turn of the earth – beautiful, dangerous – joke, fight – flourish, attack – flight, counter attack – easy, difficult' (Decânio Filho 1997, 150). Riddles and contradictions are ubiquitous in capoeira, and there is no expectation of resolving them. Canjiquinha opens his book, *The happiness of capoeira*, with the following instructions to the reader: '1. When reading this book, don't be guided by the punctuation marks you find in it. 2. Sometimes, there are contradictory assertions on the same page. Don't be fooled. That's how it is'. Canjiquinha goes on to note that 'capoeira is a game of double meaning. It has two sides that are hardly ever really distinct' (Canjiquinha 1989, 2). His disclaimer about the hectic punctuation is a conceit that is reproduced in *Capoeiras. Bahia, 19th Century*, which states in its introduction, 'forgive the mistakes

of my terrible Portuguese, principally the rubbish punctuation' (de Abreu 2005), although in 2005 it is reasonable to suppose that editing, spell-checking and proof-reading were normal prior to publication. It is frequently noted in capoeira classes that capoeira is very simple but very complex.

Riddles are a pervasive presence: Bimba sings of waking up in Itabaianinha where, contrary to expectation, 'the man does not ride a horse, the woman does not settle the hens, and the nuns who are praying forget the litany'. Riddles tease out contradictions and reflect on the unreliable and unfathomable way of the world, and the need to respond accordingly. There are serious sides expressed in religious tropes, often in ladainhas such as, 'God's world is vast, he carries it all in one closed hand'. There are also more light-hearted riddly statements made in ladainhas: 'the chicken has two wings but it doesn't have two gizzards', 'when I go, you come. When I come, you go', and 'we saw the wet land, but we didn't see when it rained'. A widely sung ladainha states, 'there are three stars in a line in the sky, one is mine, one is yours and the third one remains alone'. Riddles are played out in training: a teacher related on one day how his teacher was encouraging and humble, and the next how 'a lot of bad things happened here, a lot of violence' (class, 26 August 2018). It is stated with equal conviction that capoeira used to be more violent in the past and that it is more violent in the present.

There are riddles in corridos as well. In the song 'Paranà é' there are two consecutive verses that leave riddles unresolved and are apparently unrelated: 'I make a knot and tie the end, no one knows how to untie it', and 'I am an arm of the tide, but I am the infinite tide'. The frequent citing of these riddles constructs the world as the capoeirista perceives it, and the implication is that life is contradictory, changeable and confusing. Canjiquinha and Waldemar sing 'My brother and I were walking along together; I don't know if God allows two corpses in one coffin'. There are also explicit critiques of science or the order given by the dominant political system. It is worth quoting at length the ladainha 'I am free like the wind' (Mestres Boca Rica and Bigodinho).

> You say you have science so explain this: How is it that in twelve hours there's a transformation? It's not the sun that moves – that's fixed in its place. The earth is on an axis and the axis spins it. A snake that is so small kills a huge bull.

The song starts off with what is ostensibly a sober consideration of physics and then applies a *rasteira*, tripping up conventional scientific rationality. It does not grace science with a cogent argument about the sun and the earth (which would be submission to the bounds of the debate). Instead it implies that the account of cosmic order is patently ridiculous with a story from the animal kingdom that presents the classic capoeira trope of the smaller crafty animal killing the larger one.

Observing, accepting and commenting on contradictions are opposite to the 'can do' attitude nurtured by those in positions of privilege who only have to

believe to achieve. Living with contradictions characterises the experience of those who do not have power to organise of structure events or resources to their advantage. The position is reflected corporeally with a lack of rigidity: equilibrium in capoeira is not static with both feet planted on the floor but fluid and responsive, embodied in the swaying ginga move. A lyric runs, 'sway, sway but never fall'. Within capoeira groups there are all sorts of contradictions to be navigated: hierarchy co-exists with camaraderie, discipline with hanging-out, respect with humiliation and sarcasm. Capoeira maintains riddles in its training – of wisdom and deceit, of fighting and playing, of united struggle and internal division, and of control and letting go.

Chance

A third aspect of counter-rationality is chance: the belief that things happen randomly or for no reason. The corrido 'oh yes, yes, yes, oh no, no, no', is one of the oldest recorded songs and a frequently sung verse recounts, 'today I have it, tomorrow I don't'. No explanation is proffered either for the possession or the loss and there is an acceptance of misfortune. Life for people who were enslaved or severely marginalised is routinely disoriented: work is not related to money and there is no insurance in case of robbery and loss. A ladainha recounts the forced crossing of the slave trade from Africa with the lyric, 'Africans arriving by chance, or having died on the crossing' (Mestre Angolinha). The limits to agency and the precariousness of existence are addressed in a different way by Suassuna, who sings, 'the wasp has work to do building a house of grass. The wind comes and takes the house, and the wasp meets its end'.

   A common presentation of chance in capoeira is as fatalism. This theme is explored in the ladainha 'I had a dream', in which the singer relates having a dream that he was rich. In reality, the ladainha recounts, the narrator worked in a coffee plantation to earn money to buy capoeira clothes and to make a berimbau. But that too was a dream (in a different sense) and he was robbed of his earnings. As is usual in capoeira stories, there is a precipitous end to the tale. There is no exploration of events, no fascination with cause and effect, responsibility, blame or moral comment. There is no justice or attempt to claim it; there is just an account of what happened retold from a position that lacks the strategic leverage to control the situation.

   The chance of fatalism is linked to the cosmic order, another realm that the capoeirista accepts and does not explain. Love God, but be careful; a ladainha recounts, 'He makes one person rich, another poor. He makes one blind, another maimed. He made Solomon king, and he made St Peter a soldier'. (St Peter was a fisherman, but is often depicted cutting off a Roman soldier's ear to defend Jesus Christ.) There is no outrage at this distribution of grace, though. The song continues, 'I'm going a long way away. I'm going close to my God', this being the chosen spiritual path despite the divine injustice. Another song, a favourite of Bimba, recounts a similar combination of acceptance and faith with the lines, 'My neighbour got rich without working,

my father worked so hard and never got rich. He never went to bed without saying his prayers'.

There is also an expression of resignation, 'be well, be sick, everything in the world passes', and as expressed in the verse, 'between your house and mine there is a stream; you sigh from your side, and I from mine'. The role of chance has been theorised in other contexts as a source of strength or belief in the face of devastating destitution. Observing the desperate financial situation in Congo's capital Kinshasa and the tendency of people to turn to lottery or evangelical religion, Turner theorises the 'luck economy' that takes over when institutions, including the informal economy, collapse (Turner 2007). The higgledy-piggledy world described in capoeira lyrics is an insight into how luck produces order and disorder, and also demonstrates how those accustomed to chaotic conditions construct angles that that allow for observation but do not impose an explanation on forces beyond their control.

Crooked world, crooked way

Canjiquinha writes, 'capoeira always had confusion; that is how I learned: go there, go there, I'm going there' (Canjiquinha 1989, 12). The riddles in capoeira make use of a shared narrative, acting as parables and ambiguous warnings in the world of danger and opportunity that the capoeirista inhabits. Songs confound social expectations of race and hierarchy, for example with the lines, 'please don't mistreat this black man, he was the one who taught me; this black man with ripped trousers and a holey shirt is my teacher'. The assertion is of worth, strength or innocence in the face of accusations or assumptions to the contrary by those in power; refusing to accept the discourse of the powerful presents an alternative way of thinking.

Another angle on inequity is related in a ladainha by Waldemar that recalls the story of Pedro Cem, an early eighteenth-century trader who lost his goods when a storm struck the transport vessels and he is left destitute on the street. The ladainha opens with a sidelong comment on justice: 'those who deserve it go to heaven; here on earth, what is important is what you possess'. Faced with financial ruin, Pedro Cem is presented going from doorway to doorway, pleading 'give alms to Pedro Cem, who once had means and now has none'. As Pedro Cem had been a wealthy merchant, he is not pitied in the lyrics. The ladainha attributes his loss of goods to his excessive arrogance, rather than to the chance that rules the lives of the poor, or to the more literal cause, that being the storm that destroyed the ships.

Through the practice of capoeira, messages are communicated, with all their contortions, and they provide a means of surviving the dominant version of 'rationality', which is exposed as being unhelpful and frivolous. Fanon, writing about the African experience notes, 'The natives' (sic) challenge to the colonial world is not a rational confrontation of points of view. It is not a treatise on the universal, but the untidy affirmation of an original idea propounded as an absolute' (Fanon 1965, 35). A comparable process is discernible in capoeira and

Downey argues that capoeira is 'disorderly'. He brings an example from 1981 when the United Black Movement in Brazil attempted to make common cause with capoeira players in the Festival of Rhythm of Capoeira, held in Salvador. Canjiquinha disrupted the proceedings by singing that Princess Isabel had abolished slavery; unimpressed by the delegation from the United Black Movement, other capoeiristas joined in and left the meeting *en masse*, still singing (Downey 2014). Downey's example of disorderliness in political negotiation has commonalities with the scatter-gun of sentiments of discontent, confusion and rejection that are expressed in the game.

The confusion of the capoeirista provoked by these contradictions is commonly expressed: Mestre Paulo dos Anjos' ladainha 'Fickle world' starts out 'I don't know what to do to live in this world' and lists tensions, 'if I'm clean [people say] I'm cunning, if I'm dirty [people say] I'm filthy'. Others follow similar formats: 'I don't know how to live in this fickle world. If I talk a lot, I'm talkative, if I talk less I'm sly' (Mestres Cajiquinha and Waldemar). Capoeira registers frustration, and an intimation of an imagined alternative order of things. This ladainha ends intriguingly: 'I'm always telling you that envy killed Cain'. Cain killed Abel, but the Bible gives no account of what Cain died of, simply that he was expelled from Eden. The ladainha is suggestive of an untold part of the story: following the train of thought, though, it is logical that if Cain had not been envious and killed his brother, he would not have incurred the wrath of God, and would not have been exiled to face a lonely end. A similarly frustrated and riddle-laden ladainha is attributed to Pastinha and starts, '"I'm already sick of living on the earth, oh Mum, I'm going to the moon". I told my wife and she replied, "We'll go if God is willing"'. After providing some details of the following morning's breakfast and the farm that will be built on the moon, the song goes on to relate 'I, who never believed these things cannot accept that the moon would come to the earth and the earth to the moon. All this is the wrong way round – eating without working.'

The use of malicía and riddles, and the acceptance in lyric of chance as a beneficent and malicious force conveys the environment within which the game of capoeira takes place. It extends yearning in some of the few mentions of love in capoeira lyrics; a song by Mestre Boca Rica starts off singing about a lemon tree and ends 'love is mine, but you're saying it isn't'. Another song that recounts that the lemon tree branch has been swept away with the tide, concludes, 'I'm going to look for my love'. Articulating confusion or frustration from this perspective combines to mount a patchwork critique of the way things are. At times this frustration reaches breaking point; Traíra calls on the strength of Samson and the prayer of St Matthew (often a prayer for money), concluding, 'when I wake up angry, only God can deal with me'. This is uttered as a threat – of anger – when entering the roda, and it conveys the conviction: it's not *me* that's wrong – it's the world that makes me appear strange, but I do not have the power to explain or change it.

Anarcho-magicalism

'You have a golden tooth … I'll put a spell on you to break that tooth.' There is no standardised rubric for any part of capoeira, and like other elements of the game – the identity of the capoeirista, the significance of history and the tactics and rationality – there are variations in people's relationship with magic. Araújo argues that the suspension of norms and rules gives way to the magic of the game – people play with and for continuity (Araújo 2004, 138), and Lowell Lewis perceives the physical inversion in capoeira as a 'kind of sympathetic (iconic) magic' (Lowell Lewis 1992, 85). Almeida's chapter on his dream is a piece of magicalism in its blurring of the imagination and reality (Almeida 1986, 131–40). Magic in capoeira can be anarchic, as creativity is used to confound expectations, predictability and the order of things, even without generating or imposing an order of its own: for this reason, using it as a lens for analysis is referred to as 'anarcho-magicalism'.

Security Studies is not conventionally concerned with magic. Its centrepiece of strategic rationality would hold that what appears as magic is merely something that requires further investigation. A rationalist perspective holds that everything can be explained according to a coherent logic; engaging in magic, on the contrary, accepts that there are some things that defy explanation, logic and principle. Abib, tracing the European philosophy from Descartes, notes that, according to a rationality that is predicated on deciphering and untangling, everything that resists categorisation is cut out; he writes, 'that which is not intelligible, according to this rationality, becomes non-existent' (Abib 2004, 57).

A lead has been given to researching magic by Nathalie Wlodarczyk in her book, *Magic and Warfare*, which brings data from Sierra Leone and the practices used by civil defence forces for protecting themselves from harm during battle and more generally. Reflecting on the war in the 1990s she presents magic as a 'source of military tactics', noting that the battlefields of contemporary warfare is increasingly comprised of the population, and therefore their belief systems become relevant to the analysis of war (Wlodarczyk 2009, 7). Wlodarczyk's work acknowledges the force of communally held belief systems in affecting social, political, and even military outcomes. Capoeira is a mesh of belief systems, creativity and imagination, which shape the force of ritual and the significance of space, identity, history, and what power one player has over another.

Magic is considered here as the act of changing things from one form into another or making something out of nothing. Bimba relates changing form in, 'the magic world of the game of capoeira, where there is no double-meaning of "I and you", it melts into the unity of "us"' (Decânio Filho 1997, 50). Generating meaning and with it a history and philosophy involves making something out of nothing in the moment of play. There are claims to changing form within the teachings of capoeira. As noted previously, Besouro got his name (meaning 'Beetle') from his reputed ability to transform and fly away when pursued by the

police. Songs referring to Besouro dwell on the magic of immortality or death and incarnation, including the claims that he took on the name 'Cordão de Ouro' after his death, or lived on through the mandinga of other players. Cobrinha Verde is also credited with the ability to fight and disappear or change into an animal – a dog or a pig – on account of his association with Candomblé. This ambiguity or morphing of physical form and is picked up in a ladainha by Cabecinha: 'I change into a coral-snake and give a poisonous bite that doctors cannot cure'. The lyric presents the magic of capoeira as stronger than knowledge of medical science.

Mandinga, dendê and axé

There are forms of magic that are made with the body and the music that are fundamental to the game. Three principal forms of magic deserve mention, and all have names that derive from West African origins: *mandinga, dendê* and *axé*. No attempt to place parameters on these concepts will stand as a definitive account, but it is possible to indicate where these forms of magic are located. Cobra Mansa equates dendê with axé – and describes them as being: power, force and life (Apolo 2011).

Mandinga is fundamental to capoeira, and takes its name from the Mandinka ethnic group in West Africa. It is mentioned in one of the oldest written accounts of capoeira, Manuel Querino's 'Bahia of the Old Days', published in 1916 (Querino 1916). Canjiquinha elaborates his interpretation of mandinga in the following way, 'when two friends play there is no mandinga; they know each other and there is no meanness. Anyone who is mandingeiro is mean' (Canjiquinha 1989, 76). Mandinga as it is contemporarily used has lost this connotation of meanness and is detectable in the foibles of a player's movement, such as tracing patterns on the ground, a corporeal expression that is credited to Cobrinha Verde and Mestre João Grande. Interpreting music in the game is a form of mandinga in that it channels the energy of the musicians into the movement of the game. The Filhos de Bimba school sing, 'he has mandinga, he knows how to play'.

Mandinga is also the magic that one person performs in the roda as a part of the ritual, to make the play more beautiful and dance-like, and to control the other player including through the ability to charm, surprise or manipulate. It involves the development of sub-games, playing around with the other person emotionally and laying claim to the tone of the game. It is referred to in song, for example, 'release the mandinga!' – particularly if players are engaging in too sportive or combative a game, and 'I'm not giving anyone my mandinga!' suggesting the secret of play. It is also used as an adjective, and Waldemar's recording includes the assertion 'he is mandingueiro', referring to a player's crafty style. Contra Mestre Dija referred to the base ginga movement as an empty bag, which each player fills with mandinga (class, 29 May 2012).

Magic is manifest in exhilaration, which accompanies an exciting game. Saputi claimed that 'Angola is a party and the entrance fee is your voice' (roda,

29 July 2012). The physical exhilaration and interactive improvisation are themselves empowering, that is to say they generate power. It is acknowledged that magic has responsibilities or dangers: a commonly cited couplet is, 'whoever can't deal with mandiga shouldn't carry an amulet'. One ladainha couples this advice with another comment: 'if you can't improvise, leave it to those who can' (Mestre Canjiquinha and Waldemar). Improvisation is magic as it makes something out of nothing.

A second form of magic commonly invoked in capoeira is *dendê*. Dendê is an ingredient of the game that makes the interaction more exciting for players and observers. Dendê in its literal form is palm oil used in Bahian cooking; it originates in West Africa, and it is traditionally used for preparing dishes for the orixás; food is routinely left in the street for the orixás to eat. Dendê is used metaphorically for describing elements of capoeira; a close English equivalent it would be 'spicy' – something that infuses and adds flavour to the game. According to a corrido, Bahia has dendê; in the improvised verses, practically anything connected to capoeira, including named individuals, can be described as having dendê, and therefore contributing to the energy and appeal of the game. The power of dendê is communicated also by the surprise when it is defeated. A corrido issues the challenge, 'Whoever's never seen it, come and see licuri break dendê', relating the upset of the smaller fruit breaking the larger and a reversal of order of things, with the verses adding, 'come and learn' and 'I want to see it!'

Magic is used when playing someone who has a much higher standard, or someone who is being aggressive. Cobra Mansa, when asked how to play someone who has much more experience, simply replied 'play!' (class, 21 May 2012). Play is what makes the game. In extreme situations, a part of that game is leaving when it is too tough, but before that, transformation takes place within the game through the creativity and expression of the players. There is magic in maintaining composure in the face of provocation as this can change the nature of the interaction. It includes not getting riled, not entering the game of the other person when needled, manipulated or humiliated by the more powerful. Taking advantage from a vulnerable position changes the distribution of power by exerting influence over the game.

Describing magic as making something out of nothing includes the act of creating the game, the ritual and the community. There is little paraphernalia in capoeira; there are instruments to guide the music and there is a space requirement of at least six foot square to play in, but beyond that, there is no obligatory kit: there are no balls, sticks, hoops or lines. Each game is delineated spatially and temporarily by the people present. Capoeira practice has built up a vocabulary of conventions, but across the history and contemporary scope of practice there is practically nothing that is non-negotiable in its music, movement and ritual. The imagination creates stories, variations and songs and games. From the unregulated and disparate activities of early capoeiras, recognisable styles of capoeira have been delineated.

Axé is the divine energy of Candomblé, a religion with West African heritage. It is the life force, the energy that flows during the game, when people

come together to sing or play instruments, when they smile and hug, or demonstrate skill or charisma. This is a creative force that expresses feelings and liberates. Mestre Acordeon sings, 'let's ask for axé for this roda to start, according to the principles of capoeira and Candomblé'. Axé is not often mentioned explicitly in songs, but it is present: in a song that is apparently about a pandeiro (tambourine) and a viola (berimbau), the singer proffers: 'I bring the force of the earth, I bring the force of the sea'. 'Axé' is used a greeting, a shout of approval and also as a farewell.

Other transformations take place through the practice of capoeira and its *axé*: individuals become a group, noises become music, words become lyrics, voices become a chorus, and instruments become an ensemble. The process of coming together and creating a game is transformative in physical and psychological terms; it results in exhilaration and changes bodies and ways of thinking. Axé makes things stunning or profound, these being assessments that depend only on the perspective of the observer. There are social impacts too, as capoeira generates friendships and communities. Symbols are magic in that they generate something – significance and value – out of nothing. There are a few physical representations of magic: some capoeiristas wear *patuas* (amulets), or *fitas* (ribbons) that establish certain social codes, make life more fun and more beautiful, and give people identity and confidence in representing groups, events or affiliation. Some of the earliest data on capoeira comes from records of ribbons, hats or coloured clothing, which denoted membership of particular social groups. Hats in the nineteenth century signalled small wealth against the unmitigated deprivation of slavery (Talmon-Chvaicer 2008, 36–9). Symbolism allows people to take part in a group and its history, and it is not inconsiderable that a ribbon round the wrist or ankle can give a sense of belonging and memory. Since the mid-twentieth century, t-shirts, logos and names have given groups definition and identity, indicating membership and representation of the group and its teacher.

The three kinds of magic considered above affect the distribution of power: they operate through self-empowerment, and influencing others (getting others to do your will is one definition of power). The ability to influence others through mandinga, dendê and axé does not rely on the use or threat of force. These forms of magic are executed with a facial expression, a singing voice, the movement of the body. Charisma enables a person to gain esteem and, with it, sway that can be channelled to galvanise groups, stir emotions or be loved by everyone. Charismatic people can get others to act in ways beyond their better judgement. Elation and happiness are outcomes of the interaction of the capoeira game. People do not simply feel happy or elated; they become happy, despite the fact that nothing has changed in their material circumstances and the game has no winners or losers. Creating happiness out of nothing – this is magic too.

The logo on the Brazilian flag is 'order and progress', adopted in 1889 at the start of the Republic. Capoeira rejects these aspirations that have brought differentiated returns for the population and have no space for hanging out. Many songs talk of being 'called' to capoeira (and sometimes overcome or killed by it).

Sometimes it is the berimbau calling, sometimes the sea, sometimes Angola – 'if you call me to Angola, I'll go', sometimes Saint Benedict, a song in which Bimba sings the verses 'punish this black guy, conform to reason'. There is also a freedom – of vagrancy and nomadism: songs state, 'I'm off!' – I'm going out to play capoeira, like capoeira takes place or space a little apart from the usual cares of the world. Rejecting a dominant form of rationality and making an art out of the ungovernable is magic as it is transformative – and it is anarchic because it is not bound by rules. The practice of capoeira is disruptive of efficiency and calculation. Its mechanisms of elation, liberation and life force do not submit to scientific experimentation or linear progress.

Values and explanation

Tricks, counter-rationality and magic have made use of threats in feints and kicks and charisma in creative expression. As Valmir puts it, 'capoeira doesn't go in – capoeira comes out' (Apolo 2011). Stories are not told in such a way as to draw conclusions; on the contrary, as in the musical form, some elements are core to the rendition, and are passed on through repetition; the rest is left open to improvisation and interpretation. The act of improvisation enables people to change form and generate beauty or meaning. Moraes sings,

> when I start to sing, even the tough guys cry. The fish swims on the sand, the mute speaks, and the canary falls silent, listening to my singing. Enemies kiss, the blind starts to see, the weak beat the strong.

An article written in 1952 about Mestre Waldemar's roda in Liberdade opens,

> Any artist who does not believe the fact that only the people are the eternal creator, only from them can come to us the force and the real possibility of artistic expression, should watch a Bahian capoeirista. There the creative force is evident … having as its primordial and sovereign law life itself, which expresses itself in gestures, music and poetry.
>
> (Catunda 1952, 16)

Capoeira produces a creative and disruptive discourse that demonstrates that values and explanations are dependent on perspective. By commenting obliquely through play on the power structures over which the capoeirista has no control or understanding, capoeira rejects the dominant logic of science, history and conventional rationality.

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7 How has security been distributed through capoeira?

The identity, tricks and magic presented in the previous two chapters frame an artistic representation of the perspective of early practitioners and the essence of the game. The aesthetic rendition of capoeira means that all elements are open to interpretation through the corporeal expression of each player. As with other forms of knowledge creation, in capoeira, 'making knowledge … is an ongoing process shared *between* people and *with* the world' (Marchand 2010, 2). This chapter explores how security has been distributed through capoeira by using the duality of the game and life to bring together the history *of* capoeira told in Chapter 2, with the history told *through* capoeira in Chapters 5 and 6.

A corrido taunts the unaware with, 'the chicken feeds with its beak on the ground'. Faced with the question of how security is distributed through capoeira, the directives for individuals are clear in terms of remaining alert on the street, close to one's opponent, not getting caught in the other person's games and taking advantage of situations. When considering the social and political force of the game, capoeira gained vital traction when Bimba brought his shows to the attention of state authorities. By performing capoeira in public events he issued a challenge to the racism that informed public policy, including the law against capoeira. Other players offered non-directed, dispersed responses that did not engage with the aggressive power of the state. The longevity of capoeira has relied on players making decisions to pursue and promote their art. Assessing simultaneously the game and its social and political context, this chapter identifies three mechanisms by which capoeira has distributed security: by keeping inequality problematic, mobilising within systemic violence and maintaining the possibility of other outcomes.

In a dynamic setting of multiple authorship, the knowledge produced by capoeira has significance for players for training and for life. It has also had political force when communicated to those who are observers to the game or have become aware of it through other channels. Habermas theorises the concept of communicative rationality, which is, 'oriented to achieving, sustaining and reviewing consensus … that rests on the intersubjective recognition of criticisable validity claims' (Habermas 1984, 17). Framing rationality as social rather than individual is crucial to Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action, which 'provides a broader conception of rationality that recognises

communicative as well as strategic and instrumental forms of rationality and focuses on social interaction rather than on isolated individuals' (Miller 1992, 22). Acknowledging communication as constitutive of rationality extends the analysis of rational behaviour to activity that may otherwise appear pointless or insignificant. Habermas' theory of communicative action, 'clarifies the rationality of action oriented towards understanding' (Habermas 1992; Miller 1992, 39) rather than being specifically functional in pursuing its aims. Reflecting on Habermas, Miller records that communitarian and many feminist theorists

> argue that collective, communal identities are formed through communication. Common understandings arrived at consensually provide the basis for a morally valued way of life and the construction of collective identities that transcend the individual. These moral bonds and collective identities can form bases for collective action.
>
> (Miller 1992, 29)

While the study of capoeira is relatively young, communication through cultural activity has been explored with regard to music, and similarities between the two are pronounced to the extent that Nenel made the straightforward assessment, 'capoeira is music' (class, 1 August 2012). Ansdell and Pavlicevic write that, while communication is conventionally perceived as sender-message-receiver model, an 'orchestral model' can be more helpful, suggesting that 'music is perhaps better understood as a complex *social* phenomenon, where the meaning of any musical utterance lies within the context of its social use' (Ansdell and Pavlicevic 2005, 199). In capoeira, the two players in the roda communicate with each other within the interaction of the game but also, through their display, with the players who surround them in the roda, and beyond. Andsell and Pavlicevic draw on the notion of '*Communicative musicality* … [which] is the dynamic sympathetic state of a human person that allows co-ordinated companionship to arise' (Ansdell and Pavlicevic 2005, 195). Like genres of music, capoeira makes references that are intelligible within the context of their socio-cultural use leading to new cognitions and shared understandings (Stige 2004; Pavlicevic and Ansdell 2008, 362).

Communication through co-creation and negotiation

The innovations made by Bimba opened communications with agents of the state. Bimba was navigating uncharted territory in developing, teaching and disseminating his art. Explanations of change within the game have tended towards the charge that Bimba was co-opted by the integrationist state, with attention brought to his acceptance of white, middle class students, and the direct association with the elite and state power that his overtures afforded him (Frigerio 1988, 1). The notion of co-optation, though, denies the agency and intention of the artists; it suggests that influence is over-bearing and that change was unmanaged. Critiquing the accusations that Bimba was manipulated by the

state, Hofling notes that both Bimba and Pastinha were re-asserting the reputation of capoeira at a time in which it was in perilous decline. She highlights the decisions that Bimba took in order to reinvigorate a fading cultural practice (Hofling 2012, 66). Citing the artistic engagement of the early years of the academy draws attention to the fact that state oppression was not the only threat to capoeira. From Bimba's comments and innovations, it is clear that he perceived the apathy of the community as a greater threat to capoeira than the state. Bimba claimed that capoeira was in decay and that he had taken it 'from under the bull's hoof' (Decânio Filho 1997, 130). The practice had become so sparse and so weak in its expression and constituency that it is not clear whether it would have survived without the innovations that he made.

Acknowledging the gravity of the threat of apathy underscores the significance of the aesthetic nature of Bimba's work and a second site of communications: that which takes place within the community. It was by re-forming capoeira, including its expression and meaning, that he rendered it politically significant to players, new recruits and to the broader society. The struggle of capoeira Angola was also aesthetic as, by the time Pastinha opened his academy, capoeira was no longer threatened by the state and its popularity had been secured by Regional. The question for the survival for the Angola players' style was about how capoeira was played and what it represented, and the composition of a conservative art that developed folkloric and theatrical elements was made in response to what was termed the 'massification' of Regional (Araújo 2004, 25).

Recognising the aesthetic decisions made in political context, and the artists who made them, moves the analysis away from the notions of tradition/ modernity and rescue/loss (Hofling 2012, 5). It provides an angle on capoeira as a creative and reflexive human endeavour shaped by its artists, rather than being something that is crystallised (or broken) at a moment in time. No one has complete control over any game or over the development of practice and there are fundamentalists within capoeira, but the art – understood as a practice rather than a defined set of players or conventions – is adaptive. Unable to impose an agenda and unable to survive in an archaic form, negotiation and co-creation have been crucial to its continuation.

The space of the roda is a negotiated and co-created space. As one player executes a kick, the other escapes it, as one applies a grappling tesoura, the other evades it with a cartwheel; as the music plays faster the physical inter-action picks up speed, and when the lead berimbau player issues a series of trip-lets on the open string both players break play and return to squat at the feet of the musicians. The Filhos de Bimba group sing, 'to play capoeira, you have to know how to negotiate!' Players iteratively open opportunities and call each other to test the other and invite improvisation. As the game progresses, players understand how to push each other's boundaries, and demonstrate acrobatic skills despite the risk of attack from the other player. Play is used to renegotiate dynamics of threat and protection between the players. The fluidity of capoeira is evident in its movement, according to which players avoid impact, shifting in the same direction as the kick to evade it and dance to mount a counter-attack.

A distinction can be seen in the negotiation embodied in Regional and Angola games and over time this resulted in two increasingly distinct styles of play. In Regional, movement is extroverted, playing to overpower the partner but also to impress the crowd, and Bimba gained much of his reputation through public shows and was famously charismatic in his games and teaching. The body remains upright and extended and the kicks are open and powerful. Bimba also instituted instances of collaboration: foundational moves were trained in a choreographed sequence, and a series of set-pieces were standardised that allowed for extraordinary gymnastics called balões – balloons – including when one player flings the other by the neck. In a game of Angola, on the contrary, players keep the body 'closed', playing close to the ground and using the legs and arms to protect the torso. The preponderance of trickery means that there is little that is collaborative, and communication within and beyond the game is shrouded in suspicion and deceit (Marriage 2017).

Capoeira stands out from many other Afro-Latin and black cultures for expanding enormously while continuing to communicate a focus on its origins. Practitioners of Candomblé have kept their interests relatively closely guarded; Candomblé has not had comparable increase of membership and has practically no audience. The most visible forms of samba (samba-enredo), while maintaining the core rhythmic identity, became co-opted by the middle classes over the 1930s as the New State incorporated them into mainstream Brazilian cultural expression through carnival parades. Beyond Brazil, there are hundreds of examples of Afro-Latin artists who have made implicit and explicit social and political comment, introduced audiences to styles and given broader value to cultural contributions with visibility and popularity. Salsa and jazz, to name two of the more popular genres, have maintained stylistic peculiarities of rhythm, melody and harmony but do not have specificity of lyric content. The development of reggae was the opposite: emerging in the 1960s in Jamaica its message is more akin to that of capoeira, presenting – among a host of other subjects – core issues of oppression and liberation, but it is rhythmically distinct from other Afro-diasporic styles.

Capoeira differs from these cultural expressions because it has not become entertainment, its primary audience remains its practitioners and it has maintained a focus on its origins. Despite the existence of shows and the financial success of some of the larger groups, the mass appeal of capoeira around the world contrasts with its generally meek economic returns for teachers. Communications in capoeira are diverse and interconnected, and players have always interacted with their social and political environment. There is a layer of communication, though, that is not restricted to packaging, imparting or de-coding a message: that which takes place at the level of the body generating and receiving information through participation in the roda. Acknowledging participation as constitutive to articulation includes emotions such as exhilaration and frustration in the analysis of the communication that takes place in capoeira, and that contribute to the processes of intensive and extensive group consolidation. Negotiation and co-creation are not simply the art of persuasion with

those outside the group but a discussion of people's relationships with each other and with history within the group.

Keeping inequality problematic

A ladainha contains the lines, 'if I was the governor managing Bahia, you wouldn't be doing this that you're doing to me!' The first mechanism for distributing security has been to keep inequality problematic by maintaining discourses of difference and drawing attention to violence in relationships of power. The suppression of Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions by the state and later the attempts to integrate them into a national identity based on the notion of white supremacy, means that a celebration of African heritage amounted to defiance in the relationship between players and state agents. The fundamentally contentious relationship between capoeira and the state is captured by Moraes's comment: 'I do not think it would be easy to have a harmonious relationship between the state and capoeira, because when this happens, capoeira will have ceased to be capoeira' (Nascimento 2007, 35). While the debates on the changes that took place in capoeira through the twentieth century have been dominated by discussions of how race is constructed and what image is projected beyond the game, other institutions of power have also been negotiated aesthetically through the game. Two institutions of power that lend themselves for discussion are the military and the Catholic Church. Both are hierarchical and overwhelmingly male, and are recognisably influential within the organisational structure of the capoeira academy.

The military provides a template for vertical power structure within academies; Pastinha claimed to have provided a 'mestre de campo' (a military term equivalent to a Colonel) for capoeira (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 162). The structure supports a form of authority that resembles military hierarchy in that it is rarely challenged and is bolstered through use of titles and rituals of respect. A common acknowledgement of indebtedness to a teacher is, 'To him I owe gratitude, health and money'. A second military cue is given by the use of uniforms. Nearly all academies have uniforms, an aesthetic borrowed from sports teams and Asian martial arts, but also a mark of colonialism and the army. The use of cord belts, denoting proficiency, resembles the use of the coloured belts used in Asian martial arts, but is also consistent with the use of dress code and accessories to denote military rank. As capoeira is not a team game, the uniform features to attach a student to a teacher or school, to present an identity, a status (in the case of belts), and with it responsibility for style of play and behaviour. It is usual practice, and in some academies obligatory, to wear a group t-shirt when visiting another academy, in order to be identified easily by the host players.

As with the interaction with the dominant discourse on race, the discussion within capoeira of the military developed over time. Regional had been taught in military academies since the 1930s or before and this association had produced regimented training and attention to the efficiency of instruction and

attack. Moraes, who had performed military service in his youth, perceived the influence of the military on capoeira practice and led a concerted effort to remove its aesthetic of conformity from the game. Belts used to mark competency had been used across styles of capoeira, including by prominent Angola players such as Paulo dos Anjos, Virgílio and João Pequeno, and during the 1980s they were abandoned by most Angola teachers in a move to remove trappings of hierarchy.

Despite Moraes' anti-establishment discourse Angulo documents an interview in which Cobra Mansa reported that at this time, 'Moraes was working as if he was in the military; he was very authoritative, a strong character and personality who would come down very hard at times' (Angulo 2008, 169). While he was decisive in abandoning belts, Moraes was leading a conservative turn and clothing codes tightened in Angola academies. Photographs record Moraes in his younger years playing capoeira barefoot in shorts and a sleeveless shirt, while the musicians are bare-chested, and indeed the membership cards for Pastinha's academy carried an image of a student in a vest top. With the revival of Angola, t-shirts were standardised, with sleeves obligatory and shoes were worn for play. Regional and Contemporânea groups' uniforms were more consistent with mainstream Brazilian fashion, and often adopted colours from the Brazilian flag to adorn tight-fitting t-shirts and the use of *abadás*, a style of sports pants designed for use in capoeira. Through the directives of uniform, Angola academies promoted the liberation from the pressures of fashion and the ostentation of physique, which is prevalent in Contemporânea and Regional groups; Contemporânea and Regional conversely adopted a more liberal approach to clothing. Ultimately, though, both approaches imposed constraints, and uniform is an aesthetic apparatus of conformity and control, hence its use in the military. This is manifested publicly when infractions are corrected: in some Angola rodas, a player's t-shirt becoming untucked from the trousers during play can lead to the break of play, and the teacher's authority is exerted aesthetically to re-establish decorum and compliance.

The institution of the Catholic Church, too, has had a strong influence on the practice of capoeira, and its power is subject to discussion through the aesthetics of play. This is a conversation that is not impeded or compromised by the simultaneous influence of Candomblé as many players are practitioners of both. Catholicism is present in the routine devotion to God at the beginning of games. It is also invoked when players make the sign of the cross, usually at the start of the game or when escaping a convincing or surprising attack. Pastinha was Catholic; opening his manuscript 'How do I think?' he writes, 'Dear Jesus, do something for me. I asked God to answer my prayer' (Pastinha 2013a). He also notes at the beginning of his *Improvisation* that, 'all the mestres have faith in God, and in His peace' (Pastinha 2013b, 13). The presentation of capoeira as a Catholic and peaceful art is mirrored by Mestre Eziquel's homage to Bimba, whose orixá was Xangô: 'When I take up my viola in the Terreiro de Jesus [a public square in Salvador's city centre], I remember Bimba, kneeling at the foot of the cross'. João Grande sings, 'when I arrive at a hall, I start by giving praise

to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Sweet Jesus and Mary'; he then sings 'I've come to play capoeira … that much I cannot deny'. He has a similar song that is addressed to several orixás.

Catholicism is ubiquitous in the music of capoeira. The Portuguese word *ladainha* means litany and these songs are sung at the start of the game; louvaçãoes (praise songs), which open the call-and-response singing, very often start with 'Long live God', accompanied by corporal expressions of worship such as raising the hands upwards in prayer. Corridos make frequent reference to religious faith. An example that is evidently inspired by Catholicism is, 'St Mary, mother of God, I went to church and confessed', although Rego documents the second line as, 'I did not confess' (Rego 1968, 97) proffering a blatant rejection of the Sacrament of Penance. Catholicism is also evident in the vernacular, – 'So help me God!' 'oh my God', or 'Hail Mary, my God!' – profane expressions that derive from a Catholic societal environment. Snippets inspired by Biblical characters or various saints occur, including Cain and Noah, and sometimes with a familiar riddly flavour, such as 'Adam, where is Salomé?' (Adam being from the Old Testament and Salomé from the New Testament; the answer is given, 'she's gone to the Ilha de Maré' an island in Bahia). Another couplet announces, 'the secret of St Cosmas, St Damian is the only one who knows'; Cosmas and Damian are twin martyrs (who are also venerated in Candomblé as Ibeyi). There is religious sentiment at the end of rodas, too, and a common concluding corrido is, 'Good bye, good bye, travel well', with the verse, 'I'm going with God and Our Lady'.

As with the negotiation of race and the institution of the military, though, there are signs of contestation and dissent. A song, sung by Mestre Caiçara, acknowledges the dominance of Catholic culture but distances capoeira from religious observance with the lyrics, 'tomorrow is the Sabbath … those who have [nice] clothes, go to Mass, those who do not, do as I do [play capoeira]'. The proposal that capoeira provides an alternative to Catholicism resonates readily as capoeira requires devotion and provides a rhythm to the week (with regular training and games) and a community. Following Bimba's lead, Regional and Contemporânea and some Angola academies have 'baptisms', to mark a player's introduction to capoeira, and use the occasion to bestow capoeira nicknames onto new recruits. These baptisms clearly derive from the practice of the Catholic Church, but equally can be taken to reclaim space from it in mounting an alternative. Referring to the experience of slavery, Toni Vargas sings, 'I had a father, mother and daughter, but I lost my whole family, freedom and love'. Assigning a nickname and a lineage generates a meaningful identity to initiates as capoeira players, and in doing so contrasts with the practice of the Church that forced enslaved people to be baptised with arbitrary Biblical – and European-language – names, disorienting them from their familial and community ties.

A ladainha recounts, 'my teacher was Solomon, he walked with his feet in the air and his head on the floor'. While the reflections on the military and the Catholic Church are not as developed as those on race, the way in which these

institutions are partially adopted and partially inverted by capoeira reveals how capoeira provides a site for discussions of power. The military and Catholicism, through their institutional structures and means of operating, preserve inequality and mete out violence. Capoeira lyrics present the perspective of the conscript, risking life when ordered to do so, and with no stake in the violence, except in the specificity of the case of the War of Paraguay and the promise of individual liberty. The Catholic Church as an agent of European power distracted from inequality and suffering caused by colonisation through its promise of Heaven, and dealt brutally not only with enslaved people but with practitioners of Candomblé. Capoeira does not tear down these institutions, but instead offers aesthetic reminders of the forms of violence that they entail, and their tendency to commit it against the relatively powerless. Through the game and its accompanying aesthetics players generate a space for the critique of social and political structures.

Suassuna sings, 'capoeira is our fight from the colonial era; it was born in Bahia'. An implication of keeping inequality problematic is that there is no grace or reconciliation; capoeira does not have a means of forgiveness or getting over past wrongs, including those of colonialism and slavery. Games are remembered in detail and every effort is made to pay back a take-down or kick. The lack of scoring does not diminish the intensity of the interaction, or the understanding of power exerted through it. The song, 'don't beat the child, as the child will grow up' is not about patience with a young learner who may have potential, but about revenge. It is followed by the line, 'the one who gives the beating does not remember, the one who takes the beating does not forget'. It is not about drawing a line and moving on; it is the opposite, asserting control over the discourse to hold the line against dominant power by keeping the struggle alive.

Mobilising in structural violence

The second mechanism for distributing security operates through the communication that facilitates mobilisation in structural violence. This mobilisation was achieved not simply by expansion of the constituency but by the intensification of identities within the group that counter the prejudices promoted through structural violence. Structural violence was first theorised by Johan Galtung as the violence of state institutions that prevented people from meeting their basic needs (Galtung 1969). It is a definition that has been influential in Peace Studies and, while it has been critiqued for its lack of conceptual boundaries, it has evident applicability to forms of racism that are inflicted through legal and political institutions. Bimba's claim to have saved capoeira from the 'honky-tonk' at a moment of critical weakness is indicative of the damage that structural violence inflicts beyond oppression: that of consigning populations to apathy. Bimba's recruitment of students and the establishment of his academy was, like capoeira, a bold move that exposed him to a measure of vulnerability as capoeira was illegal at the time.

The popularity of Regional saw not only the inclusion of white, middle class students in Bimba's academy, but an explosion of groups across all sections of society and all areas of Brazil from the 1950s onwards. Bimba continued to teach black students, and the popularity of Regional saw significant recruitment in working class areas of Salvador and inspired the creation of capoeira Contemporânea (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 142). From a handful of players in Salvador in the 1930s, there were an estimated 6 million players in Brazil at the turn of the century (Araújo 2004, 1). The global expansion of capoeira through the 1980s and 1990s and the intensive and extensive use of social media by players in the twenty-first century has resulted in a phenomenon of millions of players across 150 countries, and an comprehensive mix of classes, races, nationalities and genders (Goulart 2005). Mestre Acordeon, a student of Bimba, sings, 'I came from Africa, but I'm from the whole world'. The specific roots in black, working class, male society notwithstanding, a key characteristic of capoeira, and a crucial measure of its visibility and marker of its political profile, is the extent and diversity of its constituency.

The mobilisation was initiated by the intensification in the aesthetic discourse communicated through the game. Bimba's development of the martial arts aspects injected meaning – of efficiency and robustness – into moves that had become ineffective, and the academy provided a site for establishing the ritual, orientation and hierarchy of the game. These innovations had ludic and lyrical manifestations and bouts with practitioners of other martial arts constructed the narrative that capoeira was strong and functional, and could engage with discourses beyond the roda. Recruitment of across social classes conveyed confidence that capoeira was not miserable or parochial. What is most evident from accounts of Bimba's life and work is his tireless energy, his charisma and his ability to communicate corporeally and musically to broad audiences. Mestre Cafuné, a student of Bimba, recalls the moment that Bimba led the new student in the ginga movement with the words, 'from this first physical contact with that man we received an enormous charge of energy that always stayed with us' (Doria 2011, 30).

Angola academies did not demonstrate a level of aesthetic development comparable to that led by Bimba until the 1980s, when they too responded to the near-disappearance of the style. The intensification in Angola academies played twin functions of galvanising the community and communicating to potential new recruits, although its performance aspect did not match that of Regional. The re-Africanisation of capoeira Angola saw a gradual overhaul of the aesthetics of the style, and most notably with the exaggerated use of the name 'Angola'. The 'abandoned waist', choreographed by Bimba, had been used in Angola rodas, including by João Pequeno, a prominent student of Pastinha (Júnior 2010, 65), but this was dropped from the Angola game. The music was played more slowly, taking pace out of the game and providing the accompaniment for the pronounced use of low play, requiring flexibility and upper body strength. The intensification of the lyric was accompanied in some academies by a radical black discourse (Angulo 2008, 154). The black movement was in its

ascendency in Brazil and the development of the aesthetic expression of the Angola game made it more clearly distinct from Regional. The influence of Moraes on the development of Angola is hard to overstate; GCAP defined a generation of players, and also sparked intense division and disagreements as the character of the style was negotiated (Angulo 2008, 190).

The re-Africanisation defined a focus for discussing domestic social and political issues within Angola academies. In addition, the elaboration of the discourse on Angola, slavery and race contributed to further mobilisation in preparing the ground for the internationalisation of capoeira. Re-Africanisation took on board the popularity of other black cultures in Brazil, including Rastafarianism and reggae, and many Rastafarians became involved with capoeira Angola. This is recorded aesthetically in the fact that many capoeiristas have dreadlocks, and in the use of red, green and gold accessories; the Rasta cap is used by members of the Angoleiros do Sertão group, led by Mestre Claudio. Representation of the labouring class derived from first-hand experience and generated an identity that attached to a particular social stratum in Bahia, but the discourse of slavery was never a reflection on personal experience. Instead it provided a link between capoeira and narratives of black consciousness elsewhere, and particularly among African-Americans in the USA. The discourse on race expanded the appeal of capoeira Angola, which had always struggled to gain recruits (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 25).

There is an ambiguity in the term 'Angola', which simultaneously refers to a style of play and a – rather abstracted – possible homeland of capoeira. One verse states, 'My father came from Angola, and he's going to return to Angola'. The ambiguity of 'Angola' meant that the increased mention of the name signalled not only a re-Africanisation but also a tendency to sing more about capoeira itself, as is given, for example in lyrics such as, 'I am an Angola player, I'm going to hang out (play capoeira)'. For as long as capoeira was historically and geographically specific, its practitioners shared a background of class, ethnic, age and gender. As capoeira spread to different parts of Brazil and then became globalised, this commonality was reduced; players from Japan, Sweden and Australia were taking part in an art that derived little from their everyday lives. They had little in common with other contemporary players, still less those in the past, beyond their capoeira, and as capoeira became a point of contact in a diversified constituency, songs were sung about that. This finds expression in songs about the instruments used to accompany play, such as, 'chi, chi, chi goes the viola' (which imitates the sound of the highest-pitch berimbau) and 'my drum is made with bull-hide'. In Contemporânea and Regional the name of Angola is not invoked, but hundreds of songs simply address themselves to aspects of the game – the roda, the instruments, teacher, and the fun of playing capoeira. The Filhos de Bimba sing, 'I'm going to a beautiful roda, yes!' Rallying around their shared lineage, the group also sings extensively about Bimba, his life and lovers. As with the invocation of Angola, this provides a focal point to cohere the in-group.

The move 'going round the world' breaks the game as both players walk around the edge of the ring before resuming play. As capoeira spread, its

communication acquired regional accents, depending on the cultural context in which it was played. In the globalised era, each group develops aesthetic specificities, including group names, insignias, uniforms and interpretations of rituals. The musical backgrounds of players affect the melody and timbre of the voice; dance, martial arts and gymnastic traditions affect the way that players move in the roda and their corporeal expression. The primacy of corporeality and aesthetics in the communication of capoeira allows for adaptations to be made to context, with the effect that that capoeira is attractive to new players and remains meaningful as its constituency grows. Camaraderie is integral to the organisation and enactment of the game. The call to play capoeira is given in the song, 'Come and play with me, my brother'. The expanding constituency gives rise to 'co-ordinated companionship' (Ansdell and Pavlicevic 2005, 195) within an artistically shared perspective. During the louvacões, the chorus responds to each line by repeating the lyric and attaching the salutation, 'my friend'.

As capoeira players learn the moves and music, they start to understand the significance of their art and the ritual representations of its value. Capoeira frames an independent discourse on race that was not, by more conventional means, shared among such a diverse group of people. The understanding that is gained through capoeira is communicated through the body, where race is constructed and experienced. Through corporeal communications players engage at various levels of consciousness and commitment with the structural violence of racism, and there is racism everywhere. Klein observes, 'nearly every country has its own while nationalist or neo-fascist movement to confront' (Klein 2017, 205); but also there is apathy everywhere and capoeira speaks to both. It is not the case that there are no racists who play capoeira, but that the discourse systematically counters racism with a celebration of African heritage. The discourse allows for introspection, which creates space that is not defined by the racism of society, and community, which inspires against anomie and apathy, providing two avenues for mobilisation within structural violence.

Maintaining the possibility of other outcomes

The third mechanism by which capoeira has distributed security was by maintaining the possibility of other outcomes by generating potentiality. As creative space has expanded and the constituency has grown, more players and non-players have become incorporated into the communication of capoeira's identity and tricks and magic, resulting in outcomes that were not planned or envisaged. There is always a twist to the tale: Bimba opens his first recording with the lines, 'the iúna [a type of bird] is crafty when she's at the watering hole, she was quick, but capoeira killed her'.

At the beginning of the twentieth century it is unlikely that anyone could have imagined that Afro-Brazilian culture could influence the dominant Brazilian identity. The legislation against capoeira was the product of layers of political, economic, and social pressures to discredit or destroy Afro-Brazilian

cultures. Galm notes that before Bimba's innovations the 'berimbau became less visible … due in part to dominant social pressures that strived to distance Brazil from its legacy of slavery' (Galm 2010, 161). He is referring to the tendency of the state to hush up its colonial past and eliminate references to slavery that was part of it. The form of security that the state would have imposed without the contestation raised by capoeira would have been physically, politically and culturally disempowering for players and Afro-Brazilians more generally, as it would have relegated the experience and reflections on African heritage and violent racism, and the version of history they construct, to integration and oblivion.

The strengthening of capoeira's discourse has taken place not only through the expansion of the constituency, but by players communicating their ideas and values through other artistic channels. Bimba established connections with jazz musicians, taking the berimbau to a wider audience, and Baden Powell and Vinícius de Moraes composed the hit 'Berimbau' in 1963 (Galm 2010, 47). Capoeira became a mainstay of the tourist trade in the 1970s, providing street shows and the sale of trinkets and souvenirs that extended the aesthetics of capoeira beyond the constituency of players (Júnior 2010). Waldemar sold painted berimbaus, and Canjiquinha, as a functionary in the Bahian Ministry of Tourism, used his position to promote the cultural reach of the game (Canjiquinha 1989). Hofling's work follows the folkloric troop *Viva Bahia* (Long live Bahia) led by Emília Biancardi. She observes how the presentation of happy Bahians was sold in performance as prominent players, including Canjiquinha, developed capoeira in line with the expectations of Brazilian and international audiences. Hofling talks about a 'destination image' co-created between performers and audiences as capoeira became increasingly used as a spectacle in the Bahian tourist trade, which was based heavily on cultural shows (Hofling 2012).

The influence of capoeira was increased further as non-players relayed its discourse through a range of media. Artists, including film-makers, sculptors and authors incorporated capoeira personalities and aesthetics into their work. Among the prominent figures in the art world living in Salvador, were the author Jorge Armado (1912–2001), sculptor and line-artist Carybé (1911–1997), and researcher Ângelo Decânío (1923–2012). These artists brought capoeira to a public that were not practitioners or necessarily drawn to its spectacle, but were introduced to capoeira as an Afro-Brazilian expression through contact with other elements of culture. The representation of capoeira in other genres expanded the aesthetic reach and placed another layer of negotiation onto an increasingly composite aesthetic identity. As with the notion of a 'destination image' players were not wholly in control of the representation of capoeira, but equally they were crucially influential and the negotiation took place through artistic media that were not managed by the state or the political elite. In raising the profile of capoeira to national and international audiences with no prior knowledge or understanding of the game, these non-capoeira artists also presented opportunities for capoeiristas to work with other art forms to publicise their contribution to the cultural industry of north-eastern Brazil.

Despite the expanded constituency and the communication between capoeiristas and other artists to audiences beyond the game, the future of capoeira was by no means certain, and despite thousands of players in Brazil, capoeira hardly provided an income to some of its most illustrious practitioners. Bimba and Pastinha massively extended capoeira's appeal and repute, but both men died in poverty and with uncertain legacy. Contemporânea academies were thriving but Pastinha had no practising heir; Regional had largely lost its artistic steer and Nenel, Bimba's son, who later dedicated his work to his father's heritage, had not yet established his academy.

On the wall of Pastinha's academy was written, 'capoeira is the mandinga of the slave looking for freedom, without principle or method; the end is not known even to the wisest capoeirista'. The revival of Angola and globalisation of capoeira followed hard on the heels of the deaths of Bimba and Pastinha. There is no predictable outcome of any game or of the popularity or cultural standing of the art. Attack and play sparks change; the chamada calls the other person, changes the energy of play and therefore allows for different directions to be explored. The development of capoeira, its spread across the world, and its political influence have extended in ways that went beyond Bimba's ambition to revitalise and develop the art in Bahia. A lyric that reflects on such changes of reputation runs, 'He used to wear torn trousers, now he wears a linen suit, imported Panama hat, leather shoes with red tips. Look at the black man!'

The game retains the attention of those in the roda as there are always surprises. Toni Vargas sings, 'capoeira is destiny; what it wants, it does'. Excitement is roused by demonstrations of skill or the intricacy of interaction between two players. A take-down will always raise a cheer, and may be acknowledged in lyric, for example with the song, 'my machete cut at the base, the banana tree fell over', 'the dove flew away, the hawk caught it', or 'the baraúna [a tall hardwood tree] fell over, how much more likely that I will!' The excitement is heightened when there is a reversal in the apparent order of things. When a child trips up an adult, or a less experienced player catches someone more experienced the lead singer may break into, 'the little crab chucked the gameleira tree on the ground' (referring to the fact that the crabs make nests in the roots, causing the tree to fall over) or, 'when the big bell strikes, the little bell has already struck'. The outcome of a player ending up on the floor is greeted in the lyric, 'I never saw a new house fall over!'

If other outcomes are possible, there is potentiality, and within the conventions of play, anything can happen in a game. Capoeira is an 'emancipatory communicative act' (McCarthy 1981, 273). Bluff is used extensively, and the fact that kicks are stopped before they make contact means that the impact of the threat is never fully known. The notion of 'rationality oriented towards understanding' is supported by the repetition that makes up training and playing capoeira, and the discussions that take place within capoeira communities. Presenting and debating threats in a cultural context allows them to be communicated in a way that is experimental and capoeira extends communication beyond spoken discourse. Moraes makes the case, 'I understand the perspective

of Luther King, but I prefer the side of Malcolm X. The freedom of black people will not be achieved through conversation' (Nascimento 2007, 32). Capoeira provided space outside formal political institutions where issues such as race, heritage and inequality could be negotiated. Abib writes that the past is not something that become fossilised but something, 'live that maintains tension with the present, projecting future possibilities' (Abib 2004, 11). The discussion is primarily aesthetic, largely focusing on how representations should be made, including how history should be recounted, and drawing discussions about politics away from the contestation of immediate interests and material concerns, to questions of a longer term and relational issues.

Corporeal and aesthetic communicative rationality

A song issues the challenge, 'play inside, play outside, I want to see a beautiful game'. Bringing together the history of capoeira and the history told through capoeira highlights the consonance between the communication within play and beyond the game. The communication passed through capoeira does not engage in argument with the pomposity of colonial power, it extends its own version of history and community through play, contesting and generating political space. The mechanisms do not exert force or diminish the opposition, but mobilise support to reject the inevitability of dominant power that is held in place through violence, including the structural violence of legal restrictions and political exclusion and its attendant apathy.

Habermas theorises how communicative action transmits cultural knowledge through the formation of mutual understandings (Habermas 1987, 140), and the communicative rationality of capoeira is strategic in increasing shared understanding and framing a perspective that challenges inequality and structural violence. Habermas' analysis also confirms the relationship between language and its political environment, noting that speech acts take place in a dynamic relationship with contexts in which they are embedded. Capoeira extends the notion of communicative rationality by including communication that takes place corporeally and aesthetically, something Habermas recognises but does not explore in depth. The extension of the concept has two points of significance in understanding how communications constitutes rationality in capoeira. The first is that the communication through capoeira is qualitatively different in nature to speech acts on account of the multiple aesthetic modes of expression and transmission that allow for a highly variegated set of negotiations and co-creations. Second, that as an artistic discourse, the measure of rationality is not limited to whether it generates 'criticisable validity claims', but – leaving space for counter-rationalities and magic – whether it is meaningful and valuable as representation.

Miller quotes Bowles and Gintis' claims that, 'bonding is constitutive of, rather than merely instrumental to, social action' and that 'solidarity and common interest come into being only through concrete communicative and organizational practices' (Bowles and Gintis 1986, 160–1; Miller 1992, 30). The

notion that common understandings can be arrived at consensually through communication combines with the duality between the game and life to bring into focus the interconnectedness of corporeal, aesthetic and political elements of capoeira. As capoeira takes place in and between bodies, the game links the production of knowledge with social and political action. As knowledge is embodied and each player extends this knowledge, becoming part of an orchestral model of communication. Playing generates potentiality of action through the exhilaration of play, the ideas that are generated by the interaction and the mobilisation that strengthens, and is strengthened by, group membership, loyalty and security.

Filling and critiquing the gaps

Cultural resistance is necessarily creative and the mechanisms of keeping inequality problematic, mobilising in structural violence, and maintaining the possibility of other outcomes are inter-dependent. They have strengthened communities of practice and communicated directly and indirectly with observers and society more broadly, weaving capoeira into the fabric of cultural experience, reducing the threats faced by players and increasing their protection. In ways that are not coordinated or planned, capoeira starts to fill and simultaneously critique the formulation of, some of what Bilgin has referred to as the 'historical absences' that are constitutive of the dominant security agenda, defined by a political elite in collaboration with international economic collaborators (Bilgin 2010). The attempts in the early twentieth century by the Brazilian state to eliminate capoeira were driven largely by the political expediency of denying Afro-Brazilians space, including cultural space, within the modernising political configuration. The history embodied in capoeira makes an empirical contribution in reclaiming that space, and 'filling' the gaps that arise from this racial bias with other experiences and priorities. The empirical contribution includes the representation of the labouring class, Afro-Brazilian music and instruments and registering of Zumbi and Besouro as heroes.

   In filling the historical gaps, capoeira also critiques how these absences are produced and reproduced. Foucault argues that,

> a critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged modes of thought the practices we accept rest.
>
> (Foucault 1988, 155)

Presenting the perspective from below involves examining how inequality is maintained in legal, political and social institutions, and revealing how these are connected, and centred around race, class or gender. Responding to inequality with mockery or trickery provides a set of insights that undermine or disturb the strategic space commanded by the powerful, and their assumptions. These initiatives – the continuous testing of boundaries through improvisation

– are celebrated by, and constitute, the game of capoeira rather than being dismissed as problematic or deviant.

The subject matter and the way that it is relayed through capoeira does not conform to the dominant logic of historical record or strategic analysis, and does not submit to the rigours of research or veridical reproduction. Instead narratives are driven by the imagination and improvisation; through the game and its accompanying music, capoeira players have the liberty to elaborate and invent. Toni Vargas sings, 'my spirit is free, the berimbau liberated me'. Improvisation establishes alternative modes of story-telling and in doing so it throws into relief how myths of statehood were also invented: how Europeans invented their own superiority and the legitimacy of legal institutions that enabled them to own and trade other people.

Dominant narratives present a course of history that charts the development of liberal politics through ethical progress and international relations, with some parts of the population failing to comply or compete. The slave trade was legal until 1888 in Brazil, this being the last country in the western hemisphere to achieve abolition. The Conference of Berlin took place in 1885 and represented a new political dispensation for European powers and the birth of the modern state. For those who had been enslaved, one form of control – that over human bodies – was substituted for another – over the possession of land and how it was demarcated. Subsequently, the end of colonialism occurred with the break-up of the European empires. The end of the Second World War interlocked with the start of development as an overseas venture: colonial rule gave way to stewardship through development. When state-led development reached its impasse in the 1980s, the nascent neoliberal project promoted the market as the guiding authority, again with wealthy countries defining the terms of engagement. In the face of this version of events, which includes nothing from the perspective of those enslaved, colonised or incorporated unevenly and often violently into the processes of global capitalism, capoeira celebrates its own continuity and cultural expression, independent of the colonial or economic aggressions of European powers.

Exposing historical absences and elevating the perspective of alternative discourses also indicates how absences speak to each other. Through references to Africa as the motherland, capoeira recreates a set of experiences and presents a period of exploitation and loss. The forced removal of people from Africa is connected to the pain of the disorientated and destitute black population in Brazil. Capoeira represents the suffering, frustration and confusion experienced by people who were enslaved. In the contemporary era, the celebration of African heritage counters the dominant narrative in the twenty-first century of Africa as a case of emergency and despair by representing the continent in historical terms as a place of religion and culture. Its perspective makes the patterns of oppression and the continuities over time visible in a way that is obscured by a narrative of development. Through the perspective provided by capoeira, the discourse of inequality is seized back from the anodyne formulation of the powerful by naming the threateners, their interests and their means of violence.

Foregrounding the African experience, including of those who were enslaved, places centre stage the violence that created the forms of order and disorder that persist in Europe, Africa and Brazil. It presents people not as possessions, aggregate numbers, biological or physical disasters of abuse, but as agents with an identity and history who experience, interact and share what is personal and significant. Albeit constructed in retrospect and with artistic licence, songs that relate stories of slavery recall it from the perspective of the slave, rather from the perspective of the slave traders, observers or the Victorian middle-classes involved in the emancipatory movement. Critical Security Studies has an established tradition of focusing on problematisation rather than problem solving. Capoeira does the same, in problematising the continued abuse of power, and it creates alternatives.

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8   What is the significance of capoeira to insecurity in contemporary Brazil?

The popular précis of capoeira being used as physical resistance against slave masters or state agents is not supported by evidence, but the forms of resistance offered by capoeira are discursively constructed and have changed over time, adopting a variety of meanings and engagement with different actors. Pursuing an activity that was deemed by the state to be an affront to decency indicates the intensity of oppression from which capoeira emerged and of the nature of resistance it offers.

Playing capoeira continues to be the mainstay of the art's political influence, and Araújo's research finds that in the contemporary era a prime reason to train reported by respondents was in order to preserve the art (Araújo 2004, 220). Röhrig Assunção notes that for some groups, simply playing is counted as a form of resistance (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 207). While this might appear self-regarding, the history of capoeira shows that staying in the game has been crucial in maintaining channels of communicative rationality. In addition to maintaining their game, some capoeira players, acknowledging in various ways the duality between the game and life, integrate values, creativity and perspectives from capoeira to inform activism and project work. These activities provide insights into the political and social circumstances and the ways in which capoeira resists contemporary insecurity in Brazil. They give rise to further influence as the globalisation of capoeira constitutes a form of soft power. The mechanisms that have been identified, dating from the early twentieth century onwards, are now put to political awareness, building communities, and finding alternatives to the mainstream. These contemporary forms of cultural resistance are more legal and more planned and articulated than they were in the past, but they represent a continuation of the struggle.

Contemporary insecurity in Brazil

Brazil's contemporary security situation exposes the inadequacies of conventional perspectives of security, and epitomises many of the challenges faced by states and populations in the twenty-first century. The country is not subjected to physical external attacks to its sovereignty or territory, and has one of the largest economies in the world. It holds regular elections, has lifted tens of

millions of people out of poverty this century with rising social spending and decreasing inequality, and life expectancy has risen consistently for the last 40 years. Brazil is also a popular tourist destination, and hosted the FIFA World Cup in 2014. At the same time, it faces extreme forms of insecurity that interact with each other, clustering round the inter-related issues of inequality, gang- and state-violence, and turmoil within the political institutions.

First, despite the progress made in recent years, Brazil still has high levels of inequality in income and employment (Góes and Karpowicz 2017, 3), which has prominent racial and regional aspects and is inter-generational. Historically the social basis for access to political power was maintained by a literacy require- ment for suffrage, which remained in place until civilian rule ended the military dictatorship in 1985. It was this overlaying of social conditions with economic and political power that has framed the continuation of racial discrimination, despite the fact that race has not been codified since colonial times (Skidmore 1993). Inequality is manifested in overlapping categories of economic, political and security status, as areas in which earnings and social provision are low are politically marginalised and violently policed.

Second, millions of people in Brazil are not governed by the state but by gangs. This is a co-infliction of violent power on the population to oversee trade and services in poor neighbourhoods as the government is relieved of its responsibilities in already marginalised areas, and gangs are able to collect rev- enues (Cano and Duarte 2012, 2). Gangs are based principally in Rio de Janeiro, but their operations and the violence that they command fundamentally com- promises the authority of the state and therefore of the security of the entire population. Further, gang violence interacts with state violence as police death squads operate in symbiosis with gangs, sharing personnel and territory (Freeman 2012, 96). In 2017, the Brazilian police killed on average 14 people each day (Phillips 2018), and the state violently imposes itself even in areas where armed gangs are not in operation. Bahia, which has never been the site of large armed gangs has more police killings per head of the population than Rio de Janeiro (Smith 2016, 4). This violence is presented as pre-emptive by catego- rising the killings by police as 'resistance followed by death', 'acts of resistance followed by death' and 'death in confrontation' (Smith 2016, 5). With these categories, police place the blame for the killing on the victim's action or attitude.

Third, widely divergent interests and huge differences of power have com- bined to fuel turmoil within the political institutions that has developed into a crisis of democracy. Parts of the crisis are driven internationally, reflecting events taking place elsewhere in the world including the rise of the right wing in the USA and Europe. Brazilian state power in the neoliberal era is stitched into international processes of global capital, and the political predicament is compounded domestically through bribery and mismanagement of petrochemi- cals, oil, shipping and construction industries. There is widespread perception of entrenched corruption among the political elite (Loureiro and Saad Filho 2019). The crisis is evident in the turbulence surrounding the office of the

president and accompanying populist politics. With high rates of homicide and rape, violent crime became a central issue for many voters in the 2018 presidential elections, a charm for right wing politicians who stoke the fears of the middle class and working-class alike by identifying and demonising culprits, something that is represented interminably on television channels. While central and southern areas of Brazil voted in favour of Bolsonaro's hard-line politics, Bahia and the rest of the north-east of the country continued to support the Workers Party.

These forms of insecurity are interlinked in the interests they promote and the distribution of threats that they pose, and are racialised. Smith observes the contrast between the portrayal of the happy capoeirista that appears in tourist propaganda and the everyday experience of violence among black communities in north-eastern Brazil. She entitles her book, *Afro-Paradise*, arguing that the veneer of paradise is a construct for external consumption; the subtitle addresses the reality of, 'Blackness, violence and performance in Brazil'. Smith relates the story of a ten-year-old boy, Joel, who dreams of becoming a capoeira teacher. Soon after appearing, smiling, on the television the young protagonist in her narrative is killed in his own home by a stray bullet fired during a Military Police raid in the neighbourhood. In the altercation that follows, the police simultaneously deny the shooting and threaten further violence. For Smith, 'Afro-paradise is a choreographed, theatrical performance between the state's celebration of black culture and the state's routine killing of the black body' (Smith 2016, 3).

Reflecting on the high rates of violence, Renato Sérgio de Lima, director of the Brazilian Public Security Forum referred to 'a devastating scenario', noting that the incidence of homicide had been exacerbated by out-dated legal and police practices alongside an expansion of organised crime. Identifying a continuity that is widely acknowledged in Brazil, he observed that the majority of victims were young, black men from under-resourced urban areas (Phillips 2018). Power is exercised not only through the terrorisation of parts of the population by means of state neglect and abuse, but also through differential economic opportunities that maintain patterns of security and insecurity regardless of political configurations. The Brazilian state has preserved the power of a small demographic – changes of personnel notwithstanding – through the dictatorship and democracy, and during the current upheaval.

Political space

As the act of playing capoeira caused progressively less political abrasion (as it was no longer illegal and became less socially contentious) the discourse of struggle embodied in capoeira and its surrounding narrative expanded to fill the available political space. This is represented corporeally in the game: as one player cedes ground, the other moves in to maintain the intensity of their interaction. Capoeira players had always borrowed from other cultural activities, and the bridge between capoeira and political debate was built by Moraes in the

1980s. It marked the start of a new chapter of capoeira Angola in articulating a political position that problematised issues of historical representation, race and inequality. The schema for intentional social change was inherent to the emerging discussions that took place within the capoeira academy, and Regional and Contemporânea groups developed complementary extension work. The end of the dictatorship in 1985 and the globalisation of capoeira that followed opened more opportunities to expand the political space commanded by capoeira.

Activism

Individuals and groups have used and developed their capoeira practice to shape planned community and political action in diverse ways. A prominent example is Cobra Mansa's farm *Kilombo*, which was established in 2008 near Valença in rural Bahia after years of nurturing a group and like-minded community in Salvador. Kilombo combines capoeira Angola practice with permaculture, a form of sustainable agriculture and living inspired by features of ecosystems. It provides a community setting in which players train capoeira while learning about and participating in permaculture. Set back from the road along a small track lined with banana trees, the name Kilombo recalls the 'Quilombo' maroon settlements where those who had fled from slavery came together to develop forms of social organisation in the rural interior. In doing so it pays tribute to the maroon communities in representing a way of living that evades, undermines or subverts the system. The use of permaculture techniques is a rejection of consumerism and industrial farming, working to source locally, reduce consumption and increase recycling.

Kilombo attracts both capoeiristas and permaculturists, establishing an environment that facilitates discussions within and between these groups of people. The farm has shared spaces for sleeping, and assembles the community on a daily basis by cooking by rota, and eating together. Two hours of capoeira training begins before breakfast at 6 a.m. each morning (and earlier in the summer, to avoid the heat), providing a focus at the start of the day. The regularity and physical dedication of training forms a framework for communal living, and leaves the rest of the day for agricultural work and construction and maintenance of sleeping quarters and farm buildings. Among the vegetable patches and fruit trees, numerous projects are dotted across the farm that experiment with recycling, soap making, bio-construction and art. Capoeira music is practised in the evening after dinner, integrating training into the pattern of each day. 'Permangola', an event celebrating the concurrence of capoeira with permaculture, and its diminutive 'Permangolinha', a smaller gathering, are hosted each year at the farm.

Kilombo generates a world apart; there are a few permanent or long-term residents and a flow of visitors participating in and learning from an alternative, artistically inspired, rhythm of life. It has something akin to the Angola that is constructed in songs: a creative, fluidly defined, retreat where capoeira is a constant calling and different laws apply, as communicated by the songs, 'life in

Bahia has worn me out, I'm going away, I'm going away to Luanda'. Beneath the idyllic veneer are the hard facts of bearing the costs and risks of organic farming, including utilities bills, insurance against flooding and bad harvests, and organising large groups of residents and visitors who have different needs and inclinations. The struggle is met with capoeira: the reputation and charisma of Cobra Mansa, who travels extensively and teaches to cover the costs of the farm, and the community of players who visit, contribute to and draw from the experience. What could be described in straightforwardly economic terms of selling labour and subsidising farming with accommodation fees is underwritten by the force of the art to bring people together: it is capoeira that draws people to the farm, galvanises dedication and motivates the enthusiasm to contribute financially.

In urban environments, other initiatives have used capoeira as a means of activism and the street remains a space in which politics are discussed. During the impeachment of Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff (of the Workers' Party) in 2016 and the ascendency of Michel Temer's right wing administration, millions of Brazilians mobilised on both sides of the political divide to voice their political affiliation or discontent on the streets. Following the takeover of the presidency by Temer, the capoeira group Nzinga, which has two women, Mestras Paulinha and Janja, at its head, staged a street roda in the centre of Salvador. The group, whose founding teachers trained in Moraes' academy in the 1980s, have long maintained discussions on race and politics (Araújo 2015). Many of the players who took part in the roda were young, black women, and the identity and history that their capoeira embodied stood in contrast to the white, male, elitist cabinet that was assembled by Temer.

Reflecting on the roda, Mestra Paulinha presented a discourse promoting women's equality, and particularly black women's equality, through the practice of capoeira and mobilising under the slogan, 'Coup, but only in capoeira' (Stewart 2016). The slogan makes a pun between the political coup that ousted President Rousseff and the kicks in capoeira, rejecting the former and recognising the political force of the latter. The sentiment derives from the academy's established philosophy: the group's name, Nzinga, recalls a sixteenth-century Mbundu queen (who lived in present-day Angola) who fought against the Portuguese colonisers. The academy is by the sea in Salvador, and draws on its location to invoke the orixá Yemanja, and also to reference the protection of the capoeirista alongside environmental concern: the sign outside the academy states, 'Yemanja protects those who protect the sea'. This presentation of the group's ethic unites the resistance embodied in the roda with the classic tropes of protection, African heritage and the sea. The female force of the mother orixá commanding the academy contrasts with the frequent invocation in other academies of the Ogum, the warrior orixá who accompanies many of the male teachers in Salvador.

There are further examples from outside Bahia of initiatives that retain and develop understanding of Brazil's history through the practice of capoeira. In Rio de Janeiro, Mestre Carlão, who heads the group Kabula, has used capoeira

as a means of revisiting and representing the history of Valongo, an area of the city close to where the ships docked when bringing Africans to slavery in Brazil. From 2012, a series of rodas, billed as 'Wisdom circles' were held on the quay at Valongo. They were interspersed with lectures, and the presentation of art forms is used as a means of claiming space through the creativity of the roda, framing historical discussions and raising awareness. Attention was drawn to the slave trade, and acknowledging the state's brutality, including how it is manifested in the contemporary era. As such, capoeira was used to present a challenge to the state and its treatment of the population. Capoeira rodas were organised alongside archaeological and anthropological work on the social and political history of the area, and the lectures have been published as a book distributed, alongside politically engaged music, on the internet and through capoeira networks (Teixeira 2015).

Projects

Another approach to cultural resistance is taken by many groups that have social projects that work through capoeira, and particularly the proselytisation of capoeira to under-privileged sections of society. In practice, project work has some overlaps with activism in terms of the embodied communication and it operates largely through the expansion of the constituency, but in engaging with under-privileged groups, project work differs in its engagement with power. Activism draws on mythologised histories of capoeira that present capoeira as kicking outwards or upwards to generate space and challenge or change structures of power. Project work tends, on the contrary, to exert authority over less-powerful groups by presenting a cultural agenda to them; as such it is also less likely to present challenges to existing power structures but, in that projects are socially oriented, the approach operates with a view to mitigation and reform of structures of oppression or violence.

The Filhos de Bimba school has a social project called Capoerê, a name that is taken to have African origins relating to childhood and has obvious similarity to the word 'capoeira', which gives children from less advantaged areas the chance to learn capoeira. This extension work is born of the recognition of the black working class origins of capoeira, and has precedents in the expansion of Regional in poor areas in the 1940s. While capoeira as an art does not have the command or reach to rescue or distract all young people from the dangers facing them in marginalised areas, including police violence, drug addiction, and community gun violence, the project has given hundreds of children the cultural framework in which to develop a sense of identity through community and practice. Children from the project are invited to take part in rodas, which introduces them to cultural practice and brings them into contact with people from outside their neighbourhoods.

Professor Berimbau, who works on the project, says that it gives the children 'a hope of some future' (Filhos de Bimba 2016). Reflecting on his own capoeira experience, he pointed to the graduation photographs on the wall of the

academy, noting that he was the only one from his cohort who had not travelled abroad with his capoeira (class, 6 June 2012). Many teachers past and present have come from under-privileged backgrounds, and the chance to train and be part of a community of players introduces the possibility of children attaining a different future through their art, including – but not restricted to – by improving their employability and material conditions. Regarding the Capoerê project, Nenel stated, 'we're not going to save any children, but capoeira has this power to transform and give opportunities to children to have another sort of life' (Filhos de Bimba 2015).

In an extension of this approach, and still drawing on the same aesthetic communication, there are groups operating internationally that use capoeira to challenge the marginalisation or trauma faced by particular populations. By reiterating reflections on slavery and struggle, capoeira maintains political potentiality through its narrative of victims and heroes. Its corporeality also lends itself to discussions on interaction, determination and confidence, themes that are channelled and adapted by capoeira groups that are involved in work with refugees and war. Foremost among these is Capoeira4Refugees (formerly Bidna Capoeira), an NGO that was founded in 2007 in Syria, and now operates in over 38 countries. Its founder, Tarek Alsaleh, is a capoeirista but does not have a title or school, and works with various groups on the project. Capoeira4Refugees's work is presented on its website in the following terms:

> Capoeira has proven to be effective in creating a safe space for these children to play, learn life skills, and in promoting health and psychosocial wellbeing. Capoeira is a Brazilian art form, born out of slavery, and consisting of live music, sport and play with no winner and no loser.
>
> (Capoeira4Refugees)

Drawing on the critique of power made by capoeira, Capoeira4Refugees aims not simply to train children to play capoeira but to establish an organisational structure and culture that challenges the prevalent norms of aid organisations and funding. This includes providing training for the participants to take on organisational roles in developing the work, rather than being restricted to implementing projects devised by the NGO. The approach is a drive for 'localisation', a term that has found current favour in aid circles, and is a direct challenge to the traditional forms of aid administration that are prone to project collapse when the funding ends. Strengthening local capacity engages directly with the practical obstacles of lack of resources and experience. It presents the potential for altering the relationships of power, including power over planning and organisation, that people experience as a result of being displaced, living in war, or receiving assistance in refugee settlements. Capoeira4Refugees was recognised for its achievements when, in 2018, it won a CharityTimes Award for best small charity for its work to localise interventions.

Another project, Gingando Pela Paz ('Ginga-ing for Peace') is headed by Mestre Flávio Saudaude and teaches capoeira to children in Haiti and the

Democratic Republic of Congo, in association with Unicef. Here too, capoeira is not taught merely for its physicality; the project's posts include statements such as 'capoeira is a social technology which is being used more and more to protect children exposed to armed conflict' (Facebook post, 21 July 2017), and 'As well as stimulating learning, reducing stress and reinforcing friendship ties, [music] acts directly to strengthen self-esteem, and offers a great opportunity for dialogue, sharing and reflection' (Facebook post, 20 February 2019). Working in areas that are marked not only by violence but also by extreme destitution, the message is of a better future and unity. The *Guardian* newspaper made some footage about players from the Central African Republic who had learned capoeira in a refugee camp in Congo. The narrative of the young capoeira instructor, who was a refugee, opened, 'When we do capoeira it brings us all together. We are acting as one force and we are united together with Muslims and everyone else'. Reinterpreting the non-impact nature of the interaction of capoeira, the player asserts, 'because in capoeira you don't touch each other, you ask for forgiveness and tell your friend that you are sorry' (*Guardian* 2017).

Through these projects, capoeira extends the parameters of cultural resistance by becoming the protector, particularly for at-risk or vulnerable children or young people, rather than being a threat to the state. In different ways, the projects integrate the nature of capoeira, and particularly its critique of power, to inform not only what they teach but how and why. This has found expression in challenging social marginalisation in areas of Salvador, localisation of NGO work and a narrative of reconciliation in war-affected populations. Capoeira is brought to refugee camps and other marginalised spaces to strengthen – at a psychological level – the young people with whom the organisations work. The approach is explained on the Capoeira4Refugees website as, 'play and laughter is the best medicine for traumatic experiences' (a claim that is hard to prove scientifically). The approach is designed to enable the children to withstand the situations in which they find themselves and offer alternative outcomes to social isolation or disorientation, or to the violence of joining armed gangs or militia groups in camps or war.

Activism and project work problematise inequality and violence and mobilise recruits, although recruitment is not necessarily the aim: capoeira, for devotees, is simply something that people do as part of life. The duality of life and the game enables practitioners to present capoeira as providing alternatives, including different futures and different organisational or power structures. The nature of the game, including the fact that it has no winner or loser, is engaging to play and to watch, and provides children with a community and creative physical activity, is cited by the organisations and participants as valuable for its adaptability to different circumstances. There is continuity in the centrality of the body, particularly for people with few material possessions. Training musters resources integral to the body that can be generated within budget constraints; confidence, self-expression, agency and social interaction are transmitted through play.

While Capoeira4Refugees and Gingando Pela Paz appear distant from the insecurity in Brazil, in fact all the examples brought derive from and manifest

the globalised nature of capoeira: Cobra Mansa's farm, Nzinga and Filhos de Bimba have large numbers of foreigner visitors who inevitably bring their influence to capoeira and to the groups' identities. Whether capoeira is played in Brazil or abroad, it embodies a globalised phenomenon that communicates in varied ways with diverse constituencies and audiences. Within Brazil, this provides for political pressure to be magnified through alliance with foreign players. Outside Brazil, the extension of capoeira to refugee camps takes place in conversation with the capoeira that is played in Brazil through the turnover of personnel, collaboration with capoeira groups and discussions on social media. Consequently, the activism and project work cited brings pressure to bear on domestic social and political structures, but also looks outwards, projecting an aesthetic derived from the experience of Africans enslaved in Brazil. As such, it overlaps with another means of distributing security, that of soft power.

Soft power

Through and alongside the activism and social projects, there are less direct, intentional or concerted ways in which capoeira influences the distribution of security. The spread of ideas, interests and identities through capoeira has been magnified in the age of globalisation and digital technology. A dynamic operates on the global stage that recalls the politics of the early twentieth century and the capoeira players' struggle for legality and public recognition. Cultural expression provided a channel for early capoeiristas to value and preserve their history; contemporary Brazilian culture – including capoeira – presents this history to an increasing and diversifying audience on the global stage. In the twenty-first century, Brazilian cultural expressions are strong and popular nationally and internationally, whereas formal politics are held by many inside and outside Brazil to be corrupt, and state institutions endanger the lives of ordinary people. As Brazil's development indicators and economic and political performance are divisive and volatile, constancy is provided by the representation of Brazil as a country of culture, ethnic diversity and playfulness.

A second form of soft power is exerted through the spread of Portuguese through the globalised practice of capoeira and the community of players. Capoeira is a key vector of Portuguese language learning outside Lusophone countries. As with many other gains, this was not planned and has no defined goal. Portuguese has remained the language of teaching and playing as capoeira has grown geographically and digitally, and has resisted the cultural imperialism of the English language without economic or political force. The names of the movements, and most group names and nicknames, remain in Portuguese. Songs are sung in Portuguese, including improvisations, meaning that students need to have at least a basic vocabulary if they are to lead music in the roda. Brazilian teachers have maintained command over discourse and largely over teaching space. Details of capoeira instruction, including cultural references, jokes and implied meaning, often remain incomprehensible until students become proficient in Portuguese.

An associated set of gains have been made through the integration of capoeira into a global tourist trade as students travel to Brazil to learn, and invite teachers to attend events elsewhere. The access to foreign currency that this grants has bolstered academies financially, particularly in Salvador, and therefore supported the maintenance of sites of significance and historical styles of play. Many of the iconic academies that were established in St Anthony's Fort in the revival of Angola in the 1980s have not engaged a younger generation of Brazilian players and are frequented predominantly by foreign students drawn by the narrative of lineage and history. Academies that are headed by students of Pastinha rely on their cultural capital to gain official funding and foreign revenue. Outside St Anthony's Fort there is a more dynamic capoeira scene that attracts players from all over the country and the world; their involvement contributes to Salvador remaining the most influential location for the continuing practice of capoeira.

While soft power is hard to quantify, familiar elements of continuity and identity are perceptible in the spread of understanding of capoeira, the Portuguese language and the internationalisation of learning and teaching. This is significant both in terms of the face that Brazil presents externally, and in terms of how Brazilians perceive or position themselves in or with respect to the rest of the world. Also, as with other aspects of the story, these outcomes are co-created as capoeira enables not simply the projection, but the co-creation of soft power by Brazilian and foreign players as political inclinations coincide or are strengthened through collaboration and exchange.

Regressive power, prejudice and the limits to resistance

It is easy to lionise capoeira, but for many players saving oneself – in the game, or in life from poverty or obscurity – is project enough. When analysing the ways that security has been distributed, attention needs to be paid not only to the mechanisms by which a more equal distribution, albeit small and slow, has been achieved through capoeira but also to the processes that have overlaid existing power structures, reinforcing the regressive distribution of power and security. Examining these identifies where the limits to resistance lie: under what circumstances do players reproduce and reinforce inequality, rather than challenge or neutralise, forms of insecurity?

Capoeira represents the lot of the oppressed and has poetic resistance narratives. For many practitioners, the everyday experience can be more mundane. Reflecting on the politics of capoeira Moraes sings a ladainha that tells of a duck betraying a thrush to the hawk. He ends with the observation, 'I feel such pain in my chest when I see nowadays the duck and the hawk living together', observing the weaker party being willingly compromised by the agenda of the stronger. Much of the pedagogy of capoeira revolves around aggression and sarcasm and many teachers display psychological or emotional insecurity through fundamentalism or jealousy. The everyday politics is as divided and petty as any other group activity and in-fighting between mestres has an

established history (Röhrig Assunção 2005, 29). There is often no extraordinary camaraderie; there are disputes within groups and between them. There is no agreement on the conventions that apply, and little appreciation either of diversity or of points of convergence between styles.

The institutionalisation of capoeira challenged the racialised inequality of early twentieth-century Brazil by valuing African heritage and a labouring class perspective, but in codifying practice and teaching it established its own hierarchy of knowledge production and transmission. In creating a space for cultural resistance, the adoption of a vertical hierarchy within the institution established new structures. There is seldom open discussion of power within academies, and respect for the teacher is demonstrated by acknowledging superiority. Disagreements between students and teachers are routinely resolved by the student leaving the academy or being expelled as the hierarchy privileges the teacher.

In 1952, Mestre Waldemar – then in his mid-30s – led a roda in Liberdade, an area of Salvador. Catunda wrote of Waldemar's roda,

> the ritual, the tradition, that the capoeira players observe, is very rigid. The mestre holds the knowledge of tradition. From this position he has ultimate power … This authority of the mestre is one of the most admirable and touching things I've seen. Respect for him, demonstrated by the community, the care with which they surround him, would make many conductors of classical music jealous … But the mestre never abuses his rights, and does not assume dictatorial power. He knows that his authority comes from the community itself and he behaves as an integrated part of it.
>
> (Catunda 1952, 17)

Catunda's account indicates the danger of authoritarianism within groups. As the academy became established, the community of players became students, and the introduction of fees, pedagogies, and privatised time and space removed capoeira from the street where aesthetics were forged to the private sphere where they were taught. These shifts signal how the academy is prone to reproduce the political and economic conditions that gave rise to and sustain its existence. This does not negate the possibility of resistance within the academy but clarifies that progressive politics involves constant negotiation of the way that power is constructed within the institution as well as outside it.

Unaccountable power

With the growth of capoeira across the world, the vast majority of academies have retained the power structure that has a teacher at the apex, supported in larger groups by ranks of subordinates with a mandate to provide support. Malandragem and malícia are presented in capoeira training as tricks to outwit adversaries or illegitimate force. When combined by an organisation structure that distributes privileges vertically upwards, deceit and trickery lend themselves to unaccountable power and abuse. These find expression in various forms of

prejudice that are pervasive in many capoeira groups, and are routinely mani-fested in layers of misogyny. One lyric announces, 'a woman is like a snake … she leaves the rich man in misery and the poor man shameless'.

There is near-total dominance of men in powerful positions and many senior teachers are culturally and politically reactionary, not least because their family and social network is described by the patterns of power within the academy. When deceit is a virtue, the power structures are in place to use capoeira for self-aggrandisement and sexual adventures rather than to confront inequality. Caiçara sings, 'a house made of leaves is a straw house; if I were fire I would burn it; every jealous woman, if I were death I would kill her!' The option to deal with dissent through violence, whether literal or symbolic, limits the scope for contestation, and without constituencies making convincing counter-claims, power shifts naturally to the order of physical or titular superiority.

Women have traditionally been presented with suspicion in capoeira music. Barbosa's examination of lyric finds that women are presented in song as jealous and complaining, rendered in metaphor for example with, 'the tame cow gives milk, the feisty one gives only when she wants to; the tame cow gives calmly, the feisty one kicks up her hoof'. The woman, when portrayed as a snake, is venomous; the man, even as a snake, is presented as fearless, flexible and cunning. The exception to this treatment she finds are mothers (including the Mary the Mother of Christ), who are presented in songs as caring and advising, being characterised as, 'anchor-women' (Barbosa 2008, 10).

Some explicit forms of sexism have been addressed as the number of women playing capoeira has increased. A ladainha contains the lyric, 'the man plays pandeiro, the woman claps', indicating differentiated roles in the roda. Conven-tions preventing women from opening rodas or playing particular instruments are observed in some groups, but are not the norm and are contested. That said, the pinnacle of power is often guarded: I have been told by male teachers that it is hard for them to pass the largest berimbau to a woman to play, because of the power vested in the lead instrument. Explicitly sexist sentiments in songs are sung sometimes, but also critiqued. A ladainha sung by Waldemar, for example, lists the trials of a man who has to deal with a leaking house, a stubborn horse, a jealous wife and a crying child. His remedies are to repair the house, reason with the horse, quieten the child and beat the wife. Commenting on this ladainha, one teacher warned the class that if a man sings this before entering the roda with a woman, he is unlikely to have a friendly game (class, 27 July 2012).

Explicit forms of misogyny, including those relating to the role of women in the roda and the community, are now debated openly in many capoeira groups. The use of social media has allowed videos of violence in the game to be circu-lated with ease, and has generated international debates on the treatment of – often younger – women by more experienced and physically stronger men. In July 2017 a video went viral of a game that took place at a women's event. A male teacher kissed the backside of a young woman and, in response to her remonstrations, forcefully kicked her out of the roda. The video sparked intense debate, itself a ritual that involves some players declaring that giving and taking

blows is part of the game. It prompted a considered blog by Mestre Ferradura who identified three forms of normalised violence that provided the social context for the attack and the defence that was made of it by some commentators: violence against women in society, violence within capoeira, and the collective violence through the channels of social media as discussion of the original episode escalates (Ferradura 2017).

More pervasive forms of misogyny are the acts of omission. Sexist songs are less commonly sung than in the past, and many of the songs analysed by Barbosa, whose work is based on Bola Sete's 1968 catalogue of lyrics (Bola Sete 1997), have fallen out of usage. They have not, though, been replaced by songs that construct a positive image of women in general or particular or present their perspective. 'There are still other factors', writes Barbosa, 'such as [the] temporal and cultural gap, violence, greater physical strength and chauvinistic behaviour' that describe a different space for men and women in the roda (Barbosa 2008, 15). Despite a now large proportion of capoeira players being women, there is a dramatic silence in recording their contributions. Before the present generation, there were very few women recorded by name in the annals of capoeira. Maria Doze Homens, one of the few, gained her nickname '12 men' as a reflection on her lack of femininity in beating up 12 military police officers. It is known, though, that both Pastinha and Bimba taught women. There are photographs of Pastinha teaching women, and there were four women in the original *Turma de Bimba*, Bimba's group, including his daughter (Galm 2010, 45). Canjiquinha records in his book that he had 'several female students' (Canjiquinha 1989, 29).

The sexism that has denied women respect and visibility in the past can be examined through the lens of the sexism that does not attribute value to their work in the present. The majority of games available for viewing on the internet are between men, forming the false future-history that few women play capoeira at the beginning of the twenty-first century. There are very few women in the upper echelons of the capoeira structure, and given the significance attached to hierarchy and the teacher, this institutionalises sexism in reserving for men the positions that manage power and knowledge. That said, some women have gained titles and prominence, particularly in Regional and Contemporânea. Among the very few in Angola, Janja, Paulinha (both Nzinga) and Mestra Gege (FICA) have made convincing challenges to the routinised violence and gendered exclusion, both through their style of teaching and when leading rodas, and through their broader commentary on capoeira, pedagogy and politics (Oliveira and Barreto 2003; Araújo 2015). In 2019, a documentary entitled, *Mulheres da pá virada* (meaning more or less 'women kicking up a fuss'), presented the work of 12 Bahian women, and identified the oppression, violence and silencing that women are subjected to in capoeira (Felipas 2019).

The marginalisation of women in capoeira practice is indicative of a more generalised conservatism attached to efforts to maintain privilege that is incoherent within discourses of liberty and equality. This privilege was evidenced in the spread of Regional in the early years to poorer neighbourhoods, when

capoeira reproduced the cultural power of the middle classes as they instructed recruits from the working classes in the discipline of training (Nascimento 2007, 13). Proposing capoeira as a discipline that is imposed on others, which is the political outcome of a vertical hierarchy, means it is unlikely to be disruptive, and ironically, the conservatism of preserving the form of the style effects a radical break from the past in terms of its nature, as capoeira is used to reinforce rather than challenge power. The conservatism that attaches the practice of capoeira to a particular moment and the interests of a particular section of the community promotes capoeira as an art of imitation and logically limits the progressive distribution of power and security within the academy and beyond the game.

Corporate power

The interaction between capoeira and dominant power has been a recurrent theme in the history of the game. Given the privatisation of the academy in the 1930s and the significance of the tourist trade in the 1970s, a radical individualism, competition and association with advertising and market price can be presented as an extension of past practice as interpreted in the neoliberal era. 'Selling' capoeira is facilitated by the fact that it is impressive to watch and the perceived benefits to individuals of capoeira are easily commoditised. Capoeira training speaks to many First World insecurities over physical and mental wellbeing in honing flexibility, strength and fitness within a social context. The existence of capoeira accessories, routinely sold at events, and available on the internet attests to the pitch that capoeira maintains a healthy and creative mind and body in a sedentary and anxious environment.

Categorising capoeira as martial arts and athletics, Red Bull hosts annual capoeira competitions in Bahia, with a particularly high-profile event in 2016. Red Bull propaganda relayed popular claims in announcing the five benefits of capoeira as being: 'it's an educational tool; it helps to make you more social; it teaches you to learn multiple disciplines; it's good for stress reduction; and it's a complete physical activity' (Lee 2017). The benefits cited by Red Bull situate capoeira within the individualised and a-historical ideology of corporate business. The Red Bull competition sparked debate within capoeira academies and on social media with some arguing that capoeira was selling out to big business while others observing that capoeira necessarily interacts with capitalism and has always had competitions. The discussions bore similarities to the early debates over the legitimacy of various aspects of Regional (de Almeida 2006). The fees received by the judges, among them João Grande and Nenel, and the prize money for the winners attracted particular attention, not least because many professional capoeiristas barely make a living and the payments appeared to quantify the concessions made.

Red Bull's marketing captures the contemporary zeitgeist of personal fulfilment while promoting its corporate image. Capoeira is rendered a product that can be sold internationally and generates revenue through advertising. In

staging a public show, the Red Bull competition is likely to inspire more recruits, meaning that there is scope for expanding the constituency of players. The potential for resistance, though, is undercut by the terms of engagement and the message that is being communicated. The annual capoeira competition finds an individual winner from a series of bouts; this eliminates the reverence to history and the contribution of the community to the construction of the roda, and simultaneously denies the significance of music and ritual by reducing the interaction a physical competition.

Unaccountable power has no reason to be reflective, and investigating misogyny in capoeira highlights how capoeira as a form of resistance is weakened by the prevailing treatment of women as it alienates much of its constituency and presents an out-dated and unconvincing practice to observers. The Red Bull competition sells the spectacular and simultaneously diminishes the value attached to its political and social context by providing a platform the corporeal expression in isolation from its history and community. The limits to resistance in both conservative and corporate practices reproduce dominant norms and demonstrate how inequality, if not addressed, tends to be reinforced. Preserving structures of power in capoeira involved adapting to the constraints of the dominant political system rather than contesting them. The alpha male, constructed in the hierarchy of the academy or through the demands of direct physical competition, is not a subversive force, and in both instances the perspective of the weaker becomes imperceptible. These limitations find corporeal expression too: they deny the creativity of the player, restricting practice to imitation or competition. A ladainha counters such reduction with the lyrics, 'I have no superior, I am the child of freedom. I'm not recounting my life, because there's no need. I am not on the run, and you are not the authority' (Mestres Canjiquinha and Waldemar).

Still kicking

How does capoeira speak to questions of Brazil's contemporary insecurity, which essentially centre around the consequences of the state systematically attacking parts of its population? The insecurity experienced by millions of people in Brazil does not negate but instead necessitates the process of struggle through continued cultural resistance. Faced with inequality, gang violence and political turmoil, capoeira maintains continuity and provides a forum and expression to interrogate social and political dynamics. Following the first round of presidential elections in 2018, Mestre Moa do Katendê, a renowned capoeirista and musician from Salvador, was stabbed multiple times during a quarrel over politics in a bar in the early hours of 8 October. His death was particularly poignant in representing the increased threat, resulting from Bolsonaro's victory, to black communities and their way of life. His passing was a loss not only of a life but of a repository of Afro-Brazilian music and cultural expression. In the aftermath of the murder, Cobra Mansa led capoeiristas in a vigil in the Pelourinho, providing a moment of reflection, and a reassertion of the value of African heritage, as the country lurched to the political right.

In the face of the on-going forms of insecurity that mark Brazil's contemporary political situation it is necessary to be modest in the claims made about the cultural resistance offered by capoeira, as the patterns of insecurity, in terms of who is threatening and who threatened, display distinct continuities over the past 100 years. Millions of people across Brazil practice capoeira, and engage variously with the physicality, community or political aspects, through learning, teaching, activism or project work. The gains of capoeira, including the security gains, have taken place alongside continued attacks on, and the marginalisation of, populations in black working class areas.

While the contemporary examples of how capoeira distributes security are more self-conscious than they were in the past, there are important continuities in terms of keeping inequality problematic, mobilising in structural violence and maintaining the possibility of alternative outcomes. Capoeira practice has been characterised by tenacity, and the meaning that the art conveys has maintained a voice in a political configuration that is still racist and overbearing. Activism, project work and soft power have extended forms on non-violent resistance by communicating within and beyond the group. There are further continuities in terms of how practitioners form connections with other cultural activity. In previous generations, capoeira players borrowed from the aesthetics of martial arts or reggae to complement corporeal or political aspects of the game. This wove aesthetic identities and values into capoeira that accorded with the political inclination and concerns of practitioners. In a similar way, the contemporary approach to social and political work has borrowed from other forms of activities aimed at social change, including by adopting the channels of activism and project work. This demonstrates increased confidence and respectability of capoeira groups, in that players consider themselves and are considered by wider society, including on occasions by funding bodies, to present an approach to playing or life that is valuable and exemplary.

Throughout its history the cultural resistance offered by capoeira has tuned its focus to expose the politics of oppression. In doing so constructs a security narrative by highlighting and clarifying that oppression and violence against the populations of poorer, predominantly black neighbourhoods is not inevitable. This oppression is not merely sustained on account of the historical path, it is the outcome of series of decisions taken by successive generations of politicians to reproduce the existing distribution of economic and political power, and with it life opportunities and insecurity. These choices by political elites have been reinforced in the contemporary era by the licence granted by the popularity of the far right. In an openly racist rhetorical gambit, Bolsonaro's deputy, Antonio Hamilton Mourão, declared in August 2018 that Brazilians had inherited the 'malandragem' of the African and the indolence of Indigenous peoples (Soares 2018). These are political statements that frame the security and insecurity of parts of the population, and challenging them requires constant – that is to say, cultural – contestation.

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9 What are the implications for security analysis and policy?

Security analysis and policies have been, and continue to be, dominated by the economic and military interests of elite politicians in powerful countries. Capoeira represents the opposite perspective: cultural resistance and security from below. Dominant approaches to security, which are characterised by conformity and predictability contrast starkly with the core mechanisms of capoeira of keeping inequality problematic, mobilising within structural violence and maintaining the possibility of other outcomes.

Lacy observes that, 'The tragedy of the modern world is that the insecurity of existence cannot be overcome by enlightened human reason, reason articulated through cosmopolitan economies, ethics and identities' (Lacy 2003, 1). The reason for this, he argues, is that through 'networks of realism', Northern powers expose themselves to threats by framing their priorities in ways that suit particular and often short-term interests. It is a bind from which Lacy sees no escape as the survival of politicians is dependent on the manipulation of fear to maintain power (Lacy 2003). Lacy's contribution clarifies how even the most powerful expose themselves to severe threats by institutionalising dominant forms of security that protect their ideology and world view; the less-powerful are routinely compromised by the security ambitions of political and economic elites.

This chapter investigates the implications of the study of capoeira to security analysis and policy. It takes its cue from Chapter 3, which presented the irony identified by Duffield at the centre of the liberal peace, and the subsidiary contradictions it has in neoliberal security and development policy as northern powers attempt to impose their agenda while claiming commonality of interest through a partnership approach. These contradictions are characteristic of what Duffield terms the 'care-taker society' (Duffield 2018, 186–9) and are functional in accommodating rather than modifying realist concerns. There have been seismic shifts in the content of security analysis and policy, but the way that contemporary policy is played out demonstrates that there are also important continuities with the paradigm defined by territorial sovereignty and military strength.

The merging of security and development that took place during the 1990s, by including security concerns in development policy, precluded the possibility

of compromise in the agenda or implementation. Official aid agencies do not have the political independence to formulate aid that intentionally under-cuts the security of their government. In cases of rejection or resistance from recipients, or under-development posing threats to neoliberalism, the inability to compromise meant that agenda needed to be imposed. The way was smoothed by the claim of common interest although this leaves unresolved the question of how to operate in areas where there is genuine difference of interest. The attacks on New York and Washington in 2001 revealed the approaches taken to breaches of harder security interests and triggered both liberal war (in Afghanistan and Iraq) and an expansive surveillance regime. As these security technologies were mobilised in response to attacks on territory and ideology, they too precluded compromise. The violent invasion to impose liberal democracy and the use of surveillance as a liberal security technology were manifestly contradictory. This contradiction was smoothed by using 'terror' as a category used to describe particular forms of violence. By its framing, the notion of terror proffered the endless possibility of a just war abroad and justified violations of privacy and biopolitical control over entire populations through surveillance.

Capoeira steers its little boat through this dramatic territory by providing a perspective from which to challenge the triumphalism of neoliberal discourse that gives rise to claims of commonality, and to reassert human agency in an age in which surveillance (and terror) are defined by increasingly invasive technology. Consideration of inequality and aesthetics is of growing significance as the framing of and response to a spectrum of threats are played out in the politics that takes place between events in the world and their representation in 24-hour news and social media. Taking on board the lessons from capoeira entails accepting that radically different approaches can disrupt and re-shape the analysis and policy of security. This does not neutralise or deny the aggression of states or political factions that gain power from the destruction of others, but it does provide a perspective from which to challenge such aggression and the security configurations it produces, including the forms of insecurity that it imposes on others. The chapter ends with a presentation of the infinite game of capoeira as a counter to the politics of fear and scarcity.

Development and security

The end of the Cold War was, according to Francis Fukuyama, the end of history; with the rivalry between capitalism and communism over, there was no further ideological confrontation, and all that remained was for the rest of the world to adopt or adapt to liberal democracy as a form of governance (Fukuyama 1992). The dominance of the neoliberal agenda, which had been gathering pace through the years of Ronald Reagan's US presidency (1981–9), and his political relationship with UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (1979–90), defined the security of the new era. As development and security were brought together in the policy discourse of the Global North, the claim of commonality was an upshot of a position promoting a universal ideology. It

obscured the contradictions of the neoliberal order and the power dynamics involved in setting and implementing the agenda, and it relied on the assumption that the North would not abuse or neglect the South. It also obscured the differential power exerted through the market; donors promoted the market, self-evidently competitive, as the driver of development, and therefore security.

Development funding in the early 1990s was channelled bilaterally (government to government), but also through a burgeoning personnel and remit of UN agencies and international NGOs. The UNDP's formulation of human security, which was published during this expansion of aid operations, as freedom from fear and freedom from want, prompted a mass of academic and policy work (STAIR 2005). In identifying fear and want the UNDP presented abstract threats, rather than threats resulting from political agents and their decisions. The UNDP's theorisation of human security provided a paradigm for providing security through sustainable development and included health security and environmental security among its seven component parts. HIV/AIDS appeared on the agenda at the UN Security Council in 2000 and climate change in 2011 and 2018. Both posed the risk of extraordinary disruption and increasing loss of life, particularly in the Global South, and especially sub-Saharan Africa.

The merging of development and security extended the operational scope for official donors and aid provision, blurring the boundaries between development work and a broader security approach to the Global South. As a range of non-conventional threats entered the security discussion, including being considered at the UN Security Council, concern with security as it pertained to development converged with the harder national interests, represented in economic and military security. This brought other actors, notably industry, into the security conversation and the processes of engaging with threats. The following is not an exhaustive account of the responses made but an analysis of how perspective frames security interests and policy in describing a threat and formulating intervention.

HIV/AIDS

The idea of a common interest in combating the HIV/AIDS epidemic has been influential in the international response made to it, and its inclusion on development and security agendas appears appropriate on account of the concentration of infections in the Global South and particularly on the African continent. The subject of HIV/AIDS was addressed by the UN Security Council in 2000, this being the first time a disease had been discussed as a security issue. The Copenhagen's School's notion of 'securitisation' refers to the political process by which something becomes a security issue when it is treated as such in the discourse. The securitisation of HIV/AIDS linked the epidemic to the probability of political violence, particularly in Africa, and the root of that violence was presented as being societal or political breakdown. Kofi Annan, then-Secretary General of the UN, stated at the Security Council that,

> The impact of AIDS in Africa was no less destructive than that of warfare itself. By overwhelming the continent's health and social services, by creating millions of orphans, and by decimating health workers and teachers, AIDS is causing social and economic crises which in turn threaten political stability … In already unstable societies, this cocktail of disasters is a sure recipe for more conflict. And conflict, in turn, provides fertile ground for further infections.
>
> (Annan 2000)

Annan's assessment directed the rhetoric of the securitisation of HIV/AIDS, placing it in a cyclical relationship with violent conflict. It was followed by others predicting that the disease would destabilise democracies, create violent bands of orphans on Africa's streets, and spread beyond the continent (Price-Smith and Daly 2004; Ostergard 2007). A US National Intelligence Council report concluded that 'the impact of HIV/AIDS is likely to aggravate and even provoke social fragmentation and political polarisation … in the developing world [and] intensify the struggle for political power to control scarce state resources' (Fourie and Schönteich 2001, 34–5). This assessment came at a time when the notion of a 'resource curse' was a dominant explanation of violent conflict on the African continent (Ross 2003).

This presentation of the epidemic was notable for two reasons: first, that despite the extreme suffering caused to people living with HIV/AIDS and their families, it was another phenomenon – that of political violence – that was harnessed to attract international, and chiefly – in terms of funding – Northern attention to the issue. This was the more remarkable given the lack of evidence to support the link between high infection or mortality rates and unrest (Barnett and Prins 2006). Second, that with the presentation of political violence as a likely outcome of the epidemic, the people most directly affected by the disease became not the victims but the threat.

The Global Fund for AIDS, TB and malaria was formed in 2002 and aimed to, 'attract, leverage and invest additional resources to end the epidemics of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria to support attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations' (The Global Fund 2016). It was a financing mechanism and, while it appeared to represent a united effort against HIV/AIDS, it operated in an economic context that had been shaped by patent agreements that privileged the interests of pharmaceutical companies. In particular, the 1995 TRIPS agreement, driven by the USA, protected patents for a 20 year period, making the Anti-Retroviral drugs (ARVs) used to treat the disease prohibitively expensive for the majority of people in developing countries.

Advances in the availability of generic drugs were achieved, at first on account of an Indian exemption of drugs from patents agreements (dating from 1970) and later following high profile push-back from South Africa in 2001 when it allowed imports of generic versions of ARVs, including of some that were produced in South Africa. The same year, Brazil, facing a falling currency

produced off-patent drugs, and by threatening to do the same with patented drugs, forced bilateral negotiations with the USA to reduce prices (Barton 2004). These three countries had large populations of people who were not able to afford patented drugs, but they also commanded economic and political strength at state level to press negotiations with the North. They signalled dissent to the market-friendly approach to drug manufacture and distribution.

In the Doha Declaration in 2001, Brazil and a group of African countries put the case that HIV/AIDS and other diseases 'can represent a national emergency' (Barton 2004, 5) and at a follow-up in Cancun in 2003 a WTO agreement allowed generic drugs into developing countries. The conditions remained in the gift of donors and pharmaceutical companies, though, and by 2010 only one shipment had arrived under the terms of the agreement (Fleshman 2010, 1). The pharmaceutical industry justified its position by arguing that pharmaceutical products were not available because of the inadequacy of the medical infrastructure, and that non-patented drugs for other diseases were also unavailable to much of the population in sub-Saharan Africa, and therefore the blame could not be placed on the protection of patents (Barton 2004, 2). This position was inherent to the argument that the constraints on ARVs accessibility was the poverty of African countries, the high cost of treatment, national regulation, tax and insufficient international funding, rather than the patents (Attaran and Gillespie-White 2001). None of the agreements dealt effectively with the politics or economics of the low capacity to buy drugs in sub-Saharan African or the high cost of producing them. This means, essentially, that they did not take global inequality as a core issue in problematising the epidemic or formulating legislation. Neither the UN nor the WTO addressed the politics of distribution or the issue of how the interests of powerful governments and pharmaceutical companies were intertwined.

The availability of generic drugs was increased by a mechanism introduced in India in 2005 to balance patenting standards. Combined with government-led measures, the increased availability and use of generic drugs arrested the threat that HIV/AIDS posed to the Global North both through the spread of the disease and through the mooted political instability. On the African continent, around half of those in need of ARV drugs had access to them, and infection rates were reduced. In Europe and North America, the threat of HIV/AIDS was addressed through education and medical intervention to people living with HIV/AIDS. Cases were broadly restricted to specific sections of the population and were not perceived to threaten social or political turbulence. The UN reported a 'significant breakthrough' in 2011 (UNAIDS 2011, 5), referring to epidemic control.

The outcomes are policy successes for the powerful and exclude the lived reality of insecurity for the 37 million people living with HIV, 22 million of whom, according to WHO figures in 2015, did not have access to ARV drugs. It is implausible that a deadly epidemic gripping tens of millions of people Europe or America for decades would be counted as a breakthrough given how slowly and predictably the retrovirus spreads. It is even less likely that the priority for

action would be to stop it, or its possible political repercussions, from spreading to Africa and Asia. The securitisation of HIV/AIDS rested on the biological fact that anyone could contract HIV/AIDS and on the apparently inherently fragile nature of the African state, rather than on the political and social structures such as gender relations or structurally unequal access to education, protection and medical facilities that made some populations – and parts of populations – more vulnerable to infection, and less able to protect themselves.

Further, the distribution of ARV drugs was directed not by the insecurity experienced in sub-Saharan Africa but largely by the interests of pharmaceutical companies, tempered by the challenges brought by middle-income countries. The market, proposed as a driver for development, proved to be, instead, a mechanism for preserving the privilege of those with power. Analysing Intellectual Property legislation, Baker *et al.* argue that wealthier countries impose a 'one-size-fits-all' approach and influence rule-making in the WTO in order to pursue their political ends through trade agreements (Baker, Jayadev *et al.* 2017). By 2018 UNAIDS's message was more cautious in reporting that the 'UN warns that progress is slowing and time is running out to reach the 2020 HIV targets' as infections were recorded to be rising in 50 countries (UNAIDS 2018), while others saw the end of AIDS in Africa, on condition that all drugs were taken correctly, overlooking the social context of the disease and its treatment (Bloom 2018).

The framing and response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic reflected and reproduced the existing distribution of security. The use of fear was crucial in gaining political traction and engaging Northern populations and aid donors with the immediacy of the threat. A similar strategy was used in the responses to Ebola outbreaks in West Africa in 2014 (which led to Ebola being discussed in the UN Security Council) and in Likati in northern Congo in July 2017. In Equateur province in Congo in 2018, Médecins Sans Frontières claimed that Ebola could spread internationally, attracting $60m in donations for a response to an outbreak that had fewer than 60 cases or suspected cases (Joanne Liu, Pumphandle Lecture, 6 September 2018); the disease was discussed again in the UN Security Council that year. When the alarm is sounded that a virus threatens to spread beyond populations who are already suffering from poor medical provision, extraordinary – that is to say – security responses are mustered, but implemented to protect specific interests. Meanwhile malnutrition, respiratory and diarrhoeal disease do not raise comparable funds, despite the higher numbers of people affected in low-income countries.

Heather Talley and Monica Casper examine the political discourse surrounding the threat of HIV/AIDS in a chapter entitled 'Oprah Goes to Africa: Aids, Security, and the Imperial Imagination' (Talley and Casper 2010). They present the case that the discussion moved from a domestic public health debate in the USA (as drugs have improved the lives of people living with AIDS) to a political issue of national and global security. They draw parallels between the imagery of the body being invaded by viruses that know no boundaries and images of the nation being threatened by terrorist cells. While the security

aspects are taken over by the CIA, the human cost of AIDS is a subject that is dealt with by well-meaning celebrities (hence the title, 'Oprah Goes to Africa'), and as such becomes a form of entertainment for domestic audiences. The presentation of Africa as racialised, diseased, violence-prone and subaltern fits with, and therefore serves to confirm, the American popular imagination of the continent. The authors argue that the image of Africa as fertile ground for terrorism and the playground for celebrities entrenches and exacerbates the kinds of inequality that are responsible for the spread of AIDS.

Climate change

There are similarities between the formation of the security discourse on HIV/AIDS and on climate change. Emerging as an area of concern in the broader definitions of security that gained political popularity in the aftermath of the Cold War, climate change epitomised the forms of insecurity that could be addressed through sustainable development and the commonality of interests. Climate change, like HIV/AIDS, can be presented as having no single or intentional aggressor, and affecting a potentially undifferentiated population worldwide. Like HIV/AIDS its formulation is dependent on advances in scientific research, dominated by specialised knowledge production in northern countries, and corporate interests. There are also parallels in some neo-Malthusian efforts to link climate change inexorably to social and political violence in developing countries (Baechler 1998, 26). When it appeared on the agenda of the UN Security Council in 2011, then-Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon gave the appraisal, 'climate change is real and accelerating in a dangerous manner … [that] not only exacerbates threats to international peace and security; it is a threat to international peace and security'.

 Responses to the threats from climate change have a history that prepared the ideological ground for claims of commonality of interest. From the moment that it was discussed internationally, international summits and treaties were based on consensus: in the 1970s, the Limits to Growth – Club of Rome in 1972 and the World Climate Conference in 1979 worked on the basis of agreement. The Montreal Protocol of 1989 banned CFCs, this being arguably a formidable achievement of cooperation, although alternatives to CFCs were available. The 'Earth Summit' in Rio de Janeiro formed the basis of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), signed in May 1992, coming soon after the end of the Cold War. The Rio Declaration of Environment and Development, signed the following month, set out a 'new and equitable global partnership through the creation of new levels of cooperation among states, key sectors of society and people'.

 The yearly UN Climate Change conference, the Conference of the Parties (COP), was first held in 1995 in Berlin, and the Kyoto protocol was adopted in 1997 with a view to making legally binding obligations to developed countries to reduce their carbon emissions. It marked further cooperation in setting out common but differentiated responsibilities, an acknowledgement of the fact that

developed countries had historically disproportionately contributed to carbon dioxide emissions. Canada withdrew from the protocol in 2012 and the USA never ratified it. The Doha Amendment of 2012 and the Paris Agreement of 2015 demonstrated both considerable effort to galvanise commitment to reducing climate change and considerable evasion of that commitment. In 2017, the frailty of the approach was exposed when US President Trump withdrew from the Paris Agreement. Bolsonaro, on becoming president of Brazil, pulled out of hosting COP25 in 2019, which had been slated to be held there.

The formulation of the climate change threat has been shaped by the interaction between the scientific research and industry interests, particularly those of the oil industry, a voice so powerful it appeared to signal the existence of a scientific debate (Kolk and Levy 2001, 501; McCright and Dunlap 2003). Consequently the Global North has disproportionate control over information and policy implications, including the formulation of legislation and the ability to avoid implementing it (Gupta 1997). At the other end of the spectrum, less powerful nations have little sway over legislation and are in many cases more directly affected by climate change, with larger proportions of their populations dependent on agriculture. They also have fewer resources available to mitigate the impact of, or insure against, climate change. The claims of common interest, even when qualified by the acceptance of differentiated responsibility, did not support robust tools for change and have allowed some countries to continue to be outstandingly threatening in their use of non-renewable and polluting resources.

The assertion of commonality appears to be a rallying cry for collective action. It addressed the physical aspects of climate change, but it did not deal with, and in fact specifically overlooked, the power relations inherent to threats and protection. The political outcome is to deny the power differential that defines the debate, international agreements, legislation and its implementation. The way that power is denied was epitomised by Barack Obama, then-President of the USA, at the COP21 conference. He asserted, 'One of the enemies we will be fighting at this conference is cynicism – the notion that we can't do anything about climate change' (Obama 2015). With this statement, the leader of the most powerful country in the world, and of the largest per capita emitter of carbon dioxide on the planet put himself with the little people, and implicitly criticised their lack of resolve. Obama's own lack resolve on the issue was manifested when, looking back on the Paris Agreement, he boasted that oil production had increased every year that he was president.

Unlike the efforts to tackle the HIV/AIDS epidemic, there are no laudable milestones in the responses to climate change. While agreements chart the path of political discussions, conventional definitions and practices of development continue to rely on the destruction of the environment. In recent years, an Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS, formed in 1990s) and Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) have intensified their lobbying within the UN system. The extreme – existential and imminent – threat that is posed to low-lying nations demonstrates the difference of priority with timing and adaptation even among parties that broadly agree on the science.

In 2015, migration across the Mediterranean became a media sensation in Europe. A key driver of the migration was the war in Syria, which forced millions of people from their homes. In that the collapse of the Syrian agricultural system during the drought of 2006–11 fed into the urbanisation, mobilisation and subsequently out-migration, migration from climate change gained limelight (Conca, Thwaites *et al.* 2017). Barack Obama, US Former Secretary of State John Kerry, Bernie Sanders, Prince Charles and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker among other leading figures in the Global North lent credence to the position that anthropogenic climate change had played a part in the war and migration, although the links were unsubstantiated (Selby, Dahi *et al.* 2017, 232–3).

As millions more people joined the migration route, particularly from Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Yemen, Palestine, Sudan and sub-Saharan Africa, there was a growing political salience to the term 'climate refugees', despite – or because of – the varied and compound reasons behind displacement. Tying climate change into patterns of migration linked the issues to more conventional security concerns of territorial sovereignty and military strength and resulted in a familiar trope: the poor became not the victims of the dominant forms of oil-based development and security, but the threat. The notion of populations in the Global South being displaced by climate change presented immediate challenges to the political privilege of Europe and North America and highly visible threats to their physical borders. It allowed the fantasy to be formulated that the effects of climate change could be mitigated by hardening national borders.

In July 2018, the UNSC addressed the nexus between climate change and global conflicts again and the recommendation was made for a Special Representative on Climate and Security. While the language was nuanced, it maintained a neo-Malthusian flavour as UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed described climate change as 'one of a web of factors that can lead to conflict' (Mead 2018). As of 16 January 2019, nominations were underway for 14 members of a Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP), of whom half should be from Indigenous groups. The platform was assembled in accordance with the provisions of the 2015 Paris Agreement to develop a work plan to on the basis of equality and partnership. The move was made in the recognition that indigenous peoples protect 80 per cent of the world's biodiversity, but the tepid terminology that allowed them to 'play a role in the implementation of the 2015 Paris Agreement', indicated that their engagement would not go beyond implementation of an already decided agenda (Arkin 2019). The World Economic Forum recognised the failure to tackle climate change as the most threatening risk of 2019.

The examples of HIV/AIDS and climate change demonstrate how two development issues have been incorporated into the discourse of human security, and expanded to include hard security interests, economic returns and powerful actors, resulting in approaches that have not protected the most vulnerable populations. The issues were securitised by framing a scenario in which people living with HIV/AIDS and people made destitute or displaced by climate

change threatened what Lacy has termed the, 'tame zones' of the Global North, and therefore a threat to the neoliberal culture that distinguished the 'tame' from the 'wild' (Lacy 2003). This framing of threat logically made the preservation of the core economic and military interests of neoliberalism the referent object of security policy. In both cases, the claim of commonality that has shaped the response has structurally privileged the ambitions of the North and obscured the politics of knowledge production. Resistance was mounted to patent arrangements by middle-income countries, and the AOSIS and PSIDS have highlighted the exceptional immediacy of the danger confronting them from climate change. Talk of commonality, though, has been powerful in alleviating the responsibility of the threateners for the structural violence that they commit, and hobbling opposition or rejection.

Although they are unconventional threats, HIV/AIDS and climate change are tied into networks of realism through the vested economic interests of pharmaceutical and oil companies and their real or supposed potential to destabilise existing order, with a focus on physical attacks on nation states, through political disturbance spreading over borders or increased immigration to the Global North. Constructing threats in this way manages levels of fear, and in doing so gives voice to populist politics and domestic malaise. Securitising HIV/AIDS and climate change have not prioritised addressing threat to the most vulnerable populations, but identifying which part of the story could be presented as a threat in a way that facilitated the preservation of the status quo.

Contesting commonality – the perspective from below

The claim of commonality is a denial not only of different interests but of different power. History provides antecedents of its usage: 'common security' is a term 'coined by the Palme Commission in 1982 [that] linked arms control and broader concerns for the livelihood of people across the globe' (Buzan and Hansen 2009, 102). It was born of the era of nuclear threat and the observation that nuclear weapons could be associated with security only for as long as they were not being deployed. The nuclear arms race tended towards common disaster, and common security was presented as preferable. The claim of commonality enabled some states – namely those with nuclear arsenal – to increase the threat they posed, while posturing that they were maintaining security. In the securitisation of HIV/AIDS and climate change, not only did the claim of commonality promote the interests of the stronger in enabling them to dominate the timing and nature of the response, but the victims were framed as the threateners.

The knowledge communicated through capoeira confronts these inversions of threat with the insistence that interests are not held in common and the poor are not the threat, or indeed answerable to the powerful. A song that appears on Bimba's 1940 recording states, 'I'm going to tell my master that the butter has melted'. The lyric is interpreted to recount a slave's lack of concern and abdication of responsibility for the melted butter. The verses expand the story with, 'it

is not my butter, it belongs to the master's son', and, 'the master's butter melted and fell on the floor/in the water'. Cobra Mansa presents a different version of the song that states, 'I'm *not* going to tell my master that the butter has melted', but the sentiment is the same: the slave simply does not care. Capoeira challenges the notion of commonality of interests by representing identities and histories that were not only different to but incompatible with – and threatened by – the mainstream. In doing so it exposes the cynicism of dominant discourse and overturns the subtext that blames the poor for their situation and the threat they apparently pose to others. Keeping inequality problematic critiques the triumphalism of commonality that is inherent to post-Cold War neoliberal development and security.

The contemporary notion of commonality has an amnesiac tendency to overlook historical factors that led to global inequality and pollution. It resembles the early twentieth-century attempts by the Brazilian state to protect the emergent political order by erasing references to its violent past. The 'society' that was affronted by capoeira excluded people of African descent. Maintaining a discourse of difference, at first by simply playing in defiance of legal prohibition and later through a more self-conscious recognition and problematisation of inequality, breaks through abstract threats that were presented in terms of indecency and vagrancy to reveal how rules purporting to protect society as a whole are constructed and manipulated by the powerful. Implementing an agenda that is determined by the interests of the powerful insulates the wilful ignorance of structural privilege and forecloses input from dissenting voices.

On 3 December 2018, Greta Thunberg, a 15-year-old Swedish activist at COP24 stated:

> we can't save the world by playing by the rules … So we have not come here to beg the world leaders to care for our future. They have ignored us in the past and they will ignore us again. We have come here to let them know that change is coming whether they like it or not.

The implication that they will not like it is a rejection of the authority of the political leadership. Thunberg's participation in the debate was politically significant in identifying a different faultline between interest groups. Instead of the Global North defending its mode of development or borders against agendas or migrants from the South, Thunberg mobilised a mass support network of young people within the North, identifying their interests as being different to those of the adults whom she admonished. The defiance shown in school strikes across Europe and in other parts of the world underscored a message similar to that communicated through capoeira: that commonality and cooperation are not possible without contesting the inequalities exist and how they are reproduced.

Containing the HIV/AIDS virus saw off the threats of global pandemic but intensified inequality through the portrayal of Africa as diseased and violence-prone. Constructing a discourse that vilifies 'climate refugees' increases the hazards faced by people fleeing destitution by hardening public opinion against

them, licencing harder border controls, and diminishing people's chances of asylum. According to Fierke's definition that security 'assumes a field of relationships' (Fierke 2007, 46), it is only when security interventions shift the distribution of power and fulfil divergent interests that is there a mechanism to change the relationship between the threateners and the threatened.

Surveillance

The new world order that emerged at the end of the Cold War was arrayed around the power of the USA, and the ostensible uni-polarity of this order meant that the logical military outcome was of asymmetric conflict. No state or non-state actor could challenge the might of the USA through conventional weaponry and, despite the optimism of the era of neoliberal peace, there were still points of contention between states. The victory disqualified alternative world views, so violent responses were necessarily defined as terror. Since the attacks on Washington and New York in 2001, the concept of terror has defined the relationships between the Global North and other parts of the world. Its corollary, surveillance constitutes a second strand of the care-taker role.

Human security's abstract threats of fear and want are mirrored by abstract threat of terror. The formulation of the 'War on Terror', which started in 2001, does not identify agents, their interests or decisions. It also evades analysis of the power dynamics that lead to acts of violence, and of the politics of condemning them as terror. Surveillance operates through manipulation of fear in domestic constituencies to justify extraordinary levels of state intervention into the private sphere (Zedner 2009, 148). It is evidently problematic within the liberal discourse of freedom, and just as the notion of commonality smoothed the contradictions arising from the merging of development and security, the loud political discourse of responding to the threats posed by terror attacks relieves the contradiction between surveillance and liberal values.

Identifying the necessity of the category of terror to maintain political control exposes how the threats of terror and surveillance are constructed in complementary ways. They are driven by the technological advances that blur distinctions between civilian governance, corporate interests and military operations. This blurring is functional in transforming the nature of state power, and surveillance forms alliance with the liberal notion of transparency, which makes the act of surveillance easier. Mass surveillance has enhanced the powers of governments at the expense of the freedom of the population. Surveillance makes it possible for states to know what choices their populations are making, without requiring them to answer to the populations' concerns. The increased intimacy of the interface between personal preference and state power amounts to biopower, that is to say power over people's bodies. It enables the harvesting of population-wide information through smart phones, bank card payments and contactless transport ticketing. Zuboff, tracking the feedback loop between the state and the market, theorises what she terms 'surveillance capitalism'. This operates by the wealthy investing in surveillance technology that monitor

consumer preferences, allowing them to sell more and profile consumers more accurately (Naughton 2019; Zuboff 2019).

Surveillance has also impacted on warfare. The formulation of security as systems of protection and prevention were expanded to confront threats that were probabilistic and cataclysmic. Technological advances have allowed security policy to expand to address threats everywhere and plotted indefinitely into the future (Keen 2006; Duffield 2007). Assaults by the CIA using drones have caused thousands of civilian casualties during the presidencies of Obama and Trump, targeting people whose profiles are suspicious (Shaw 2016). The notion of pre-emptive killing in Brazil, described in police records as 'resistance followed by death' (Smith 2016, 5) has its digital corollary in the violence committed through drones that target on the basis of profiles assembled through surveillance data. Just as surveillance has introduced unprecedented asymmetry between the state and the population through the intimacy of the data harvested, it has introduced unprecedented asymmetry between the state and the suspected terrorist through remoteness; drones exert lethal power without exposing the aggressor to vulnerability.

There is an associated mutation in the form of power exerted through surveillance. The monitoring and neutralisation of an infinite array of domestic or foreign threats has become increasingly technical, with human decisions over control and response being replaced by computer algorithms. Rouvroy and Berns refer to 'algorithmic governmentality' as a three-stage process of collecting mass data, datamining by processing it to identify correlations (that is to say, producing statistical knowledge) and using probabilistic knowledge to anticipate behaviour by association with the profiles constructed through datamining (Rouvroy and Berns 2009, VI–VIII). Artificial intelligence can operate with complicated sets of scenarios, but remove human discussion from the formulation of life and death decisions. Algorithms are determined by past events and therefore reproduce inequalities, as has been researched, for example, with regard to hiring staff; an ideal profile is determined by previous staff members, meaning that future hires will reproduce inequality because there has been inequality in past (Cave 2019). Even subtle algorithms are not creative or imaginative; they are not the fruit of negotiation around values, identity, perspective or judgement. In that algorithms are inductive, artificial intelligence is built on the assumption that the future will be like the past; in that they are decisive, they shape that future, and confirm the biases that they impose. This feedback traps governments into destructive and unaccountable analysis and policy that increases their power without a problematisation of what the resultant increased inequality will be.

Active security – corporeal expression and aesthetics

The increase in biopolitical control through advances in surveillance has heightened the significance of the human body in politics: the body becomes synonymous with data. Capoeira makes the body and its cognitions sites of

resistance. The corporeality of capoeira indicates the means by which people have managed to liberate themselves from extraordinary constraints by reasserting agency, and the potential for extending this to cases of biopolitical control. The body in capoeira produces information and knowledge and is a vector of communication; the codification of embodied knowledge means that the knowledge passed through the body can be illegible or partially illegible to outsiders. Corporeal expression has not only freed practitioners from legal constraints but embodied knowledge to navigate and negotiate national and international discourses on race and inequality.

In the face of the biopolitical power of surveillance, the ability to engage aesthetically through the imagination and creativity counters the constructed inevitability of the technologies of control. It presents the freedom to create, act and be, irrespective of the priorities of the powerful, and to game and shape dominant power. The importance of trickery, ruse, deceit in responding to superior power provide an antidote to the legal and cultural demands of transparency. Byung-Chul Han argues that transparency reinforces dominant power as it destroys privacy and trust, and homogenises societies, effectively neutralising resistance (Han 2015). Capoeira is an expression of human agency; as such it is the opposite of the controlling technologies of the powerful or the agenda that they impose. Mestre Oto, a student of Bimba, proposed, 'capoeira is about rejecting domination, even if you are being oppressed' (Filhos de Bimba meeting, 15 July 2012). Capoeira musters celebration in adversity and the ability to dodge a system that is abusive.

Capoeira side-steps the stipulations of transparency and conformity. Mainstream security policy is increasingly focused on restricting and monitoring freedom of movement and association to the extent that no real understanding of freedom can be derived from a position of strength. Capoeira's use of deceit, trickery and evasion are straightforward responses to injustices in the world that players are attempting to avoid. Surveillance relies on inequality of power between the observers and the observed, something that capoeira renders problematic. Capoeira lyrics rendered the assertion, 'I don't know how to live in this fickle world'. Escape is key to surviving asymmetric conflict, whether characterised by command of the development and security agenda or by asymmetry of weapons or of information, as in the case in the era of surveillance.

Escaping the care-taker

A unifying characteristic of surveillance, the fear of terrorism and climate change (and in different ways HIV/AIDS) is the extent to which populations become vectors of their own insecurity; people – as individuals, communities and nations – become involved in their own destruction and that of those around them. HIV/AIDS is transmitted principally through unprotected sex, and an appreciable understanding of climate change at least since the 1970s has not halted oil-driven development or individual consumption. In a similar vein, there is widespread understanding about the dangers of surveillance, and for

reasons of convenience or addiction, people comply with the prompts of smart-phones and the internet. This unifying feature is not coincidental; while there are individual decisions involved, there are social and political processes that promote norms and cultures – including gender relations, normalised inequality and over-consumption – that describe the path of least resistance.

Freedom from fear and freedom from want as theorised by the UNDP is incompatible with neoliberal development, which exacerbates inequality through its aggressive intervention abroad and controls domestic populations and by promoting consumption (want) and fear. The preceding discussions imply that security, whether framed as human security or surveillance, cannot be provided for two fundamental reasons: first, the provider has different inter-ests to the recipient, and second, agency is a part of security; security is some-thing that is negotiated or agitated, or fought for, something co-created not something that comes as part of a development or governance package or something that can be enforced by monitoring. This has implications for the way that security policy is formulated and promoted, particularly in areas of the world in which insecurity is generalised and extreme. It is not possible for northern donors to provide security as part of a development programme for as long as they maintain control of knowledge, policy and implementation. A capoeira song taunts, 'you're in a cage, little bird, because you're singing and crying'.

Capoeira is not a plea for assistance; it does not address itself primarily though argument or force to the powerful but aesthetically to the community of players. In the game and in life, capoeira is not concerned with direct confron-tation, which risks disaster for the weaker party, but works with continuous deflecting and outwitting of superior power. A ladainha contains the lyric, 'I am free like the wind, oh my God, no one is going to hold me'; it uses the verb '*segurar*' meaning to hold (Mestres Boca Rica and Bigodinho). Lea Frehse, a former student with us at SOAS, made the observation that the word 'security' derives from the Latin 'securus' (the same root as *segurar*) meaning freedom from care, including – she argues – freedom from being cared for. Freedom from being cared for – freedom from Duffield's 'care-taker society' – is ultimately liberating as it frees the weaker from the agenda of the stronger.

Capoeira differs from other combat activities and from conventional models of security in that its crucial mechanism is not of attack and defence but of attack and escape. Escape, avoids the immediate threat of injury and allows the game to continue. It is corporeally represented in the dodges – the *esquiva* and *negativa* moves and nimble footwork that evade kicks – and in the ability to transform the game by changing the song, calling the other person, or teasing them into a more playful interaction. Contra Mestre Aloan noted during train-ing that insecurity is 'not knowing how to get out of a situation' (class, 3 July 2012). The processes by which people become complicit in their own insecurity is a political act that is thrown into relief by the forms of resistance offered by capoeira players at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the way that the art has developed and spread. 'The capoeirista is astute and roguish' sings

Suassuna, 'he knows the value of life – that's why he runs from a fight'. Capoeira – in the game and in life – creates new ways of escape.

The physical escape used in the game of capoeira is complemented by the escape achieved through its conceptual independence, and particularly its conceptual freedom from the discourse of the powerful. Foucault defined discourse as 'a weapon of power, of control, of subjection, of qualification and of disqualification' (Foucault 2003, xx). In producing and communicating its own form of knowledge, capoeira rejected the assumptions underpinning the modernisation project, racial assimilation and the white superiority. The academy provided a space in which to discuss the presentation of history and race, and how heritage and interests were represented in music, movement and ritual. Developments remained at the artistic discretion of practitioners and conceptual independence enabled groups to continue discussing race and politics through the time of the dictatorship. Freedom of expression is the ultimate escape when the body is captive and is central to capoeira's origins, and to the era of biopolitical control through surveillance.

Critical security scholars frequently arrive at 'freedom' as a quality that accompanies and constitutes security, rather than the freedom of the Leviathan that is relinquished in return for security. What constitutes this freedom, though, is harder to discern, although there is agreement that freedom and security are inseparable, and that both security without freedom and freedom without security are unappealing (Booth 1991; Zedner 2009). In elaborating on physical escape (including from biopolitical power) and conceptual independence, capoeira indicates how freedom operates through the creation of different identities, histories, values and magic.

The infinite game vs the politics of scarcity

International debates about HIV/AIDS, climate change and terror have at their core the proposal that scarcity simultaneously stirs insurgency and the prompts the need to protect the status quo. A capoeira lyric runs, 'Shoo my canary, he beat his wings and flew away'. Escape is infinite, and the ability of capoeira to generate alternative outcomes, including outcomes that evade the inevitability of direct and structural violence, meets the politics of scarcity with infinite potentiality. The challenge for the millions of people whose life opportunities are compromised by dominant versions of twenty-first century security is to escape from forms of development and security that promote national and international inequality and with it HIV/AIDS and climate change; and to escape from terror and surveillance that render populations passive, fearful and manipulated by the powerful. The second challenge is to construct something different, given that the violently competitive culture of neoliberalism is normalised as a driver of development and security.

Fierke writes that 'rationality is embedded in context' noting that during the Cold War Gorbachev was able to act as if he was playing a different game. She writes,

> The power of 'acting as if' resides in a double move, that is, politicizing the rules of the dominant game by flaunting them, and, at the same time, acting within the framework of a more marginal game that already has meaning within a political context.
>
> (Fierke 2015, 61)

Capoeira, being based in agency and the imagination, provides the resources to act 'as if'. It makes use of what Julian Simon has called the 'ultimate resource' of human ingenuity and the human spirit, through which, according to his analysis, the human population will survive the threats posed by scarcity (Simon 1996).

Accounting for the, 'necessary ignorance of the neoliberal subject', Duffield theorises, *homo inscius*, the unknowing man. What has traditionally been presented as rationality has transpired to be contradictory. Capoeira throws *homo inscius* into the ring with *homo ludens* who maintains that there is something at play, something to play for and the possibility that it is through play that new realities emerge. Hyde writes, 'in artistic practice open to happenstance … human beings have a way to enter into the play of fate and uncertainty, and from that play this world constantly arises' (Hyde 1998, 127). *Homo inscius* reproduces fantasy by manipulating and circumscribing the imagination through post-truths, and scarcity becomes the base-line for fundamentalism to protect privilege rather than address the politics of distribution. *Homo ludens*, in producing knowledge and shared understanding through communication, extends the imagination and apportions value to things that are important; fluidity evades the rigidity of realism's constraints. A corrido runs, 'it was in the swaying and swell [of the tide], I saw the little crab turn over the bigger crab'.

There are infinite political resources, and infinite variations in how threats and protection are configured. Capoeira is infinite as it has no victor (Araújo 2004, 27); it has no goals, definitive rules or time limit. It is infinitely inclusive in ludic terms: whatever the experience, age, strength, size of the players, it is possible to have a game. Capoeira is the story of completeness rather than failure. Security, equally, is infinite as a set of on-going and mutating negotiations with respect to power relations and interests, threats and protection. Including the expression and creativity of capoeira in an analysis of rationality brings into focus how what is profoundly valued – in others and in oneself – is represented. The music, movements and ritual of capoeira reiterate what is important and credible at an individual and community level, according worth in a way that is coherent and comprehensible. Here is where the irony of the construction of the conventional security agenda resides: the irrational behaviour is the rest. The deterrent logic of mutually assured destruction during the Cold War, the networks of realism and the studied amnesia of the neoliberal project, and the contemporary assertion of cooperation within unequal competition embed irrationality within the security discourse. The contradictions in capoeira arise from observations that much of life is not lived in accordance with values; political configurations are imposed that make life self-defeating or

dull, or secure and fearful. In this category would fall the kinds of life that are calculating or predicated on terror and threat. Capoeira provides a critical perspective on all that, in other circles, passes for rational security-seeking behaviour.

The capacity of capoeira players to change the game, change themselves, and change relationships has demonstrated that power can be creative and positive sum; power can inspire confidence or trust, and is expressed not only through threats but by empowerment and influencing others. Through the game, capoeira counters individualism and anomie with community and fear with celebration. Its journey from marginalisation to cultural icon has been acknowledged by the UN and the Brazilian state. It would be a mistake, though, to confuse these accolades with the achievement of capoeira. Capoeira's achievements of escape and power have been charted through this book and approval from the perspective from above – the state and the UN – was neither the aim nor the trophy for players, it is simply recognition of the beauty, standing and history of the art.

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10 Structural violence and cultural resistance

At the beginning of the twentieth century, capoeira players were caught in a pincer between state oppression and the apathy of weak cultural expression. The mechanisms through which capoeira distributed security describe how players gamed power, including structural violence, from below by using their bodies, imagination and improvisation to initiate change. Physical escape in the game and the independence of expression freed capoeira players from the conceptual domination of the mainstream discourse. The ability of capoeiristas to escape and create within the game and – by means of the duality between the game and life – within the game's political context, indicates the dynamic and continuous process of resistance in the face of structural violence. Under circumstances of unremitting and multi-layered violence, resistance too must be structural.

There are implications drawn in the twenty-first century as the resources used in capoeira are not confined or defined by the neoliberal agenda. The investigation has unpacked the potential to chart histories and identities and promote alternative values and explanations that which have sustained a community of players and in modest ways influenced mainstream culture. The analysis of capoeira presents creativity and agency as elemental to the security gains made by capoeiristas. Tactical gains within the available political space are used alongside counter-rationality and magic – including music, charisma and play – to generate meaning and community, and to reduce vulnerability. Nestor Capoeira offers the opinion,

> capoeira can be a tool in the First World, a tool against the forces that tend to turn people into robots that do not think, do not wish, do not have any fantasies, ideals, imagination or creativity; a tool against a civilization that increasingly says one simply has to work and then go home and sit in front of a TV with a can of beer in hand, like a pig being fattened for the slaughter.
>
> (Capoeira 2003, 37)

The challenge for any society is not to allow the political and economic elite to hold the security discourse or agenda hostage. Analysing cultural resistance as

creative indicates that the policy implications of this study are directed to populations. It falls to them to act in ways that make the state responsive rather than manipulative; besides, the combined and increased power of states and companies provides no incentives for them to regulate themselves. It is a call to action, including cultural action, to populations to re-imagine and enact security that protects their interests and is inclusive, and to maintain expression and communication when under pressure from the state. Simultaneously there is a challenge to foster alternative political communities as the procedural implication follows that more voices are needed in security debates if policy is to be progressive. Inclusivity is not about a final achievement or a static state, it is a process and a struggle against both apathy and oppression.

The justification for using capoeira as a case for the examination of cultural resistance set out how capoeira is exceptional in its origins and form. Capoeira has provided a study of identity, values and rationality; its security gains have been gradual and dispersed, and the book covers around a hundred years of activity. The duality between the game and life has generated some extensions from the specificities of the game, but there is potential to take the implications beyond capoeira. Accepting that even in the case study there are caveats to claims of achievements, consideration needs to be given to what broader conclusions can be drawn from the discussion.

The complexity of capoeira derives from the fact that it is expressed through the interplay of movement, music and ritual forms, from its simultaneous manifestation as a game, a dance and a fight, and from the duality between capoeira and life. While this complexity probably certifies the uniqueness of capoeira, it also lays the ground for extending the analysis to an array of other cultural activities and ways of life that have points of contact with parts of its nature, in order to identify possible sites or forms of resistance. Despite variations in practice over time and across geographical contexts – including within Brazil – and the different security questions that arise from these different contexts, capoeira players have continued to play and communicate meaningfully through their game. There are three key contributions that arise from this work: the approach to studying security from below through an examination of cultural resistance, the identification of cultural mechanisms that distribute security, and the analytical engagement with infinity, magic and non-conventional forms of rationality.

Approach

Emic research is usual in dance studies and ethno-musicology, but less so in Security Studies, and the approach has assembled a narrative from a perspective that is routinely marginalised, and is becoming increasingly difficult to navigate in a research environment that is heavily bureaucratised and monitored. The emic approach has expanded the methodological scope by including data on corporeality and aesthetics in the study of security. A second innovation has been the lens provided by acknowledging the duality between capoeira and life.

The combination of the emic approach and the lens of duality has provided ways of interrogating aesthetic discourse within and beyond the game. This has opened up an entry point for investigating resistance simultaneously on two fronts: one in the way that culture faces up to power including structural violence, and the other in how it dispels apathy within the cultural community.

The emic approach has been crucial in investigating how artists have enriched life, engaged a community of players and forged and communicated aesthetically strong discourses. The case of capoeira has extended work on the aesthetic turn in three ways. First it has focused on an art form that does not originate in Europe or North America. The significance of this has been constant throughout the book as African heritage has informed the nature and function of play and dance alongside a continuous rejection of colonialism and neo-colonial power. Second, capoeira has extended aesthetic work on violence beyond discussions of trauma to trace the significance of liberation, agency and the embodiment of celebration. Third, by taking place in the communication between people and over time, capoeira has exposed a form of aesthetic that exists constantly in the present, and that is evolving and co-created rather than being recorded or expressed in material form. It is a form of communication that retains focus on the community and its origins while transmitting messages of defiance and persuasion to those beyond the game.

Examination of the everyday practice of capoeira has taken the discussion beyond more conventional moments or acts of political protest, such as marches, strikes and pickets. It also complements more cerebral contributions, such as intellectual and political debates by demonstrating how knowledge production can be linked to political action through corporeal expression. The study has increased the detail of analysis on how security is experienced emotionally, and by including not artefacts but artistic practice and intentional change, how security is negotiated within and between interest groups in non-confrontational ways. It adds elements that would otherwise be overlooked such as frustration, enjoyment and exhilaration as process and outcome of resistance, as these intensify experiences and commitment. Understanding security from below by tracking cultural practice has addressed security as a phenomenon that can be interrogated through constructions of race, class and gender.

Investigating capoeira has encompassed different moments of history and different angles on power, including activism, project work and soft power. It has also provided an approach to a range of artistic practices as possible sites for resistance, both in terms of the community that they inspire and the message they transmit. Capoeira's form brings with it the prospect of connecting the conclusions to thousands of artistic expressions, among them theatre, circus and music, and recreational activities, including dance and sport, that involve the communication of a message through community and narrative formation. Examining artistic and recreational activities for the relationship they establish between the activity and its social or political context presents the possibility to expand understandings of how people interact in order to reflect on and pursue forms of security that are within their gift to enact or invent.

This book was prompted by the observation that Congolese people are not producing their own account of history or contributing to the formulation of their security priorities and policies. Chérie Rivers Ndaliko's book, *Necessary Noise*, offers relevant insight into the cataloguing of local history in the years of the First and Second Congo Wars through work undertaken at a film and music studio in North Kivu, eastern Congo. The book captures the perspective of the arts students and their projects in a critique of international charity interventions that promote peace (Rivers Ndaliko 2016). Rivers Ndaliko's work indicates a direction for enquiry into how Congolese culture distributes threats and protection. In Congo the cultural scene is dominated by music, and investigating music through emic research would provide detail and texture to describe the nature and content of its communications. Congolese lyrics are not usually overtly politically contentious (although many songs do engage with politics) but music commands force through its popularity and the fact that people can identify with it as characteristically Congolese, an experience that is intensified by public performance and dance. Music is where people find their identity and escape from the preoccupation of direct and structural violence and destitution (Marriage 2008). Congolese music brings respite, defiance, and a national pride in an identity in a creative space that is not defined or dominated by the state.

Admitting corporeal and aesthetic data into the study of security and perceiving cultural activity interacting with its political context accesses otherwise imperceptible natures and forms of resistance. While the aesthetic and corporeal may not reliably change security policy in the short term, they illuminate how security is experienced and pursued, and the can cohere and change communities of cultural and political activities. They also expose the difference of lived values and priorities between parts of the population or between the population and the state.

Mechanisms

The methodology has led to empirical contributions to the analysis of cultural resistance as constructed by capoeira, along with an assessment of what limits resistance. The investigation serves to discard the formulation of abstract threats that are presented in the UNDP's definition of human security and in the notion of a War on Terror. Instead it provides a political framework to analyse how knowledge is produced and communicated, and what mechanisms affect the patterns of who is threatening whom, with what power and in pursuit of what interests.

The mechanisms of keeping inequality problematic, mobilising in structural violence and maintaining the possibility of other outcomes have been achieved by communicating knowledge that is produced within its cultural context. The limits of resistance, too, have demonstrated how reproducing the norms of a structurally violent society leads to stultified or regressive outcomes. Capoeira presents a template that can be applied in whole or in part and adapted to different contexts. How cultural activities or ways of living interact with or

evade dominant power then becomes an empirical question to be investigated, for example, through an enquiry into what knowledge is produced through culture, and how it is communicated within and beyond the constituency or community group. What mechanisms exist by which artistic practice evades or reworks power, or generates alternative spaces, narratives or outcomes?

Some activities have clear points of contact with capoeira, and could be explored further in terms of what they foster within communities and how they communicate with society more widely. Examples include parkour teams in Gaza and Skateistan, an NGO that works to encourage children's confidence and community through skate-boarding in Afghanistan (https://skateistan.org). Both of these are expansive cultural activities that incorporate the body in everyday play that increases physical strength and ability, and builds communities of practice under adverse social and political conditions. The use of acrobatics in parkour and tricks in skate-boarding engage with risk and expression. As in capoeira, enjoyment and exhilaration are means and ends, and defy the misery of tedium and listlessness that violence would otherwise impose. Just as street rodas claim public space, parkour and skate-boarding rework the physical landscape, and they take advantage of how it has been shaped by violence to transform it into a site of play. Bombed-out or abandoned buildings and streets provide opportunities and challenges for training and improvising. These activities claim space and turning it to creative use – gaining ground – something that is has immediate resonance within the study of security.

A further characteristic of the mechanisms resistance of capoeira has been the physical escape and conceptual independence as constitutive of security. The conceptual independence of capoeira indicates how it is possible to assert agency by gaining distance from the dominant discourses of security. Klein identifies moments when, despite the crushing force of neoliberal priorities, people have organised to protest, for example against the oil pipeline construction at Standing Rock in the USA. In a move that claims agency, conceptual independence and control over the discourse, the activists identified 'not [as] protesters but "water protectors"' (Klein 2017, 226). Laying claim to the discourse has also changed the culture of politics in Congo, where a generation of young activists has dissociated themselves from the rallies and ritual of formal institutions to mobilise in groups that are not attached to traditional parties, political dynasties or private armies. LUCHA, an acronym for *Lutte pour le Changement* (Struggle for Change) is the most prominent example, being a citizen, non-violent, non-partisan movement. The tenacity and extent of engagement of the group's political culture contrasted with the norm of – often paid or otherwise incentivised – attendance at political gatherings in Congo. Activities were pursued under threat of imprisonment, torture and death. Defiance in the face of these threats challenged the political establishment in demonstrating and mobilising new forms of power, and mounting a disorientation, even if not a comprehensive change in, the old guard in the 2018 presidential elections.

The mechanisms detected in capoeira can also be put to investigate less spectacular rejections of dominant power such as decisions by populations in the

Global North to evade or complicate surveillance. The 'predictive marketing and "nudge" politics' (Duffield 2018, 183) of surveillance capitalism are designed to make people feel insecure or incomplete, presenting challenges to populations in terms of how to push back against the combined force of the state and the market. In the face of biopolitical control, people's political profile is vested in the decisions that they take, down to the details of food, travel and communications. Acquiescence in dominant norms amounts to participation in a culture of unsustainable consumption and inequality; this has a security equivalence of environmental destruction and hard borders to preserve privilege. The study of capoeira provides insights into the formation of cultures that frame alternatives, such as veganism, climate justice and off-grid communities. These movements, like capoeira groups, have the potential to provide sites for identity-formation and values, and communication, resulting in understanding rather than strategic rationality. As with the struggle against racism in capoeira, the gains are small and societal rather than accruing to individuals but may still be resistance if they impact on the distribution of security.

Identifying mechanisms by which capoeira has challenged or changed the distribution of security provides ways of analysing other cultures within their political context, and has the potential to inform social or political action to redress insecurity. Exploring these mechanisms with regard to other examples has shown that cultural resistance has key strengths including that practitioners are heavily invested and supported by their community. Investigating how culture produces mechanisms for change grants access to the details of resistance not only of competing interests but of assumptions, identities, presentations of history and conflicting priorities.

Rationality

This book has explored ways of thinking about resistance through an extension of the concept of rationality. It has identified cultural resistance as a lived experience and key to political negotiation. Knowledge production and communication has been central to rationality, and for many people, not only capoeiristas, there is little space between cultural activity and culture as a way of life. The examination of communication through capoeira provides an angle from which to assess the rationality embodied in other cultural expressions and their corollaries to capoeira's counter-rationality and magic. Including the corporeal and aesthetic moves the enquiry from the question of what activity, choices or claims mean (which arranges them according to an established logic) to a more differentiated question of how they are meaningful (which accepts that different logics and priorities exist).

The dominance of neoliberal culture, its expansive and competitive nature, and its alliance with the market and surveillance has not diminished but augmented the significance of culture. Neoliberalism has codes that are alluring and expansive, and Duffield traces how the contemporary rise of big data, which is defining of its knowledge systems, has converted history and politics into

information and data (Duffield 2018, 153). This intent to break knowledge into data is a cultural activity that was supported by the evolution first of computers and latterly of artificial intelligence. Control over the definition and collection of data informs a capacity of surveillance and the feedback with capital. 'The goal is to automate us' argues Zuboff identifying latent threats in the ways in which states and companies claim 'human experience as free raw material for translation into behaviour data' (Zuboff, 2019, 8). This technological development is not inevitable; they are tied to the rationality of propaganda and sales. Naughton adds, 'these processes are meticulously designed to produce ignorance by circumventing individual awareness and thus eliminate any possibility of self-determination' (Naughton 2019).

Data divorced from its historical and political context does not inform or formulate nuanced development and security policy. As was seen in with regard to HIV/AIDS and climate change, apparently neutral scientific facts, such as the biological possibility of contracting HIV/AIDS or the physical impact of climate change across borders, overlooked relevant political factors, that is to say knowledge, and biased the responses in favour of those producing information and against the vulnerable. The security implications of data stripped of its context extends to other areas of aid intervention, affecting already severely distressed populations, and confounding the purported rationality of assistance. Regarding humanitarian intervention, Duffield notes that understanding food aid to be the 'medical importance of nutritional intake, individual capacity and recipient knowledge', dismisses the notion of social reform from the aid agenda (Duffield 2018, 172). Pursuing this line of thinking further, and apparently without irony, the *Lancet* published an article to explain that, 'smart medicalised interventions', could be made without needing to address the, 'general deprivation and inequality' (Duffield 2018, 173).

Such data co-exists with post-truth statements and fake news. The purpose of these devices is to discombobulate, generating alternative facts and controlling the limits of the imagination. This works in conjunction with big data as fake news stories are created to track connections and communications and distort political orientation. The character of the 2018 Brazilian elections was exposed in the means of debate: as fake news swamped social media, the political space was dominated by expansive stories – those that could be sold and consumed regardless of their veridical merit (Phillips 2018). Fake news is disruptive in stymying people's ability to sift and assess information. Equally disruptive, and for the same reason, is the strategy of blocking communications. States exert power over their populations by cutting off the internet, restricting the forms and sources of information available, particularly at moments of political sensitivity. This provides elites with the opportunity to air state news channels in isolation of their political context or journalistic critique. The government of Congo shut down the internet for 20 days between 31 December 2018 and 19 January 2019, apparently in an attempt to foreclose speculation over the presidential election results. It was a policy replicated elsewhere, and there were 119 total shutdowns on the African continent in 2016–7 (Dendere 2019).

Understanding the production and communication of knowledge as constitutive of rationality sharpens the analysis of how political elites manipulate knowledge production and communications to reproduce patterns of security and insecurity. It also explains how people are bound into neoliberal culture through their engagement with the market and surveillance. The contemporary politics of security is strung between the hyper-rationality of artificial intelligence and the hyper-discursive production of fear. Taking decisions, control and responsibility – that is to say, acting rationally – between these two extremes is not a question of calculations but of imagination, context and creativity. By virtue of the duality between culture and life, such cultural factors, and culture itself, affect politics and are central to the pursuit of security.

Critical Security Studies is concerned with the ethics and politics of security, and the study of capoeira has cast light on these issues through its analysis of rationality founded in communications and oriented towards understanding and participation. The observation that weaker parties, including less powerful states, but also populations or parts of populations, have routinely been excluded from security discourse generates an ethical implication: without including these voices, already disadvantaged people are further marginalised. This marginalisation is ethically unsatisfactory as it reinforces patterns of inequality. Including different voices into analysis is a promising step towards a more inclusive security analysis and policy.

There is a further conclusion, though, that relates to the politics of security. This conclusion holds that it is not a question of whether culture *should* be included in study of security – as an ethical issue – but a conclusion that it *is* part of security. Theorists need to include culture, because it reveals the details of how people operate and interact – what underpins the relationships of threat and protection and what resources – including infinite resources – exist to challenge or change them. In providing these particulars, it also provides the detail of how people are differentially impacted by security policy, and how art and life choices interact in changing bodies, identities and values. The study of capoeira has provided a framework for understanding how people interact with each other at cultural level and so provides the detail on how society works. Security Studies scholars, if they are to navigate the interplay of threats and protection, need to acknowledge and understand such cultures, the ideologies they generate, and their strength through discourse.

While the duality between capoeira and life is frequently acknowledged in training, teasing out the intricacies of this duality has been crucial to exploring the mechanisms of cultural resistance, and theorising its relevance to other contexts. For those who are victims of neoliberal agendas of development and surveillance, security involves creating a different future by escaping the inevitability of structural violence and creating alternatives. Capoeira maintains the possibility of other outcomes, and therefore of the potential for change achieved not by promoting a claim of commonality but by reiterating the will to negotiate and co-create security. Through capoeira, players have engaged in meaningful community activity, strengthened their discourse in the face of

greater power, and exerted agency through representation and the body. These are ways of sparking change; culture as an intentional activity and as a way of life can change the artists, the audience and the political environment in which it takes place.

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Glossary

Agogô double-headed musical bell
Angola a style of capoeira
Angoleiro/a a player of capoeira Angola
Atabaque foot-drum
Axé life force, used as greeting and to describe games
Batería musical ensemble
Berimbau musical bow that leads the ensemble; the three sizes are the gunga, médio and viola
Candomblé Afro-Brazilian religion practised particularly in north-eastern Brazil
Capoeira an Afro-Brazilian game, dance, fight and way of life
Capoeirista capoeira player
Chamada call, used to break the game
Contemporânea a style of capoeira
Corrido a short song that accompanies play
Dendê literally palm oil, used metaphorically like the words 'tasty' or 'spicy'
Ladainha a long solo song sung at the beginning of a game
Louvação short call-and-response lines
Malandragem the art of being street wise
Malandro someone who has malandragem
Mandinga sorcery used to make games more beautiful or cunning
Mestre the top rank of capoeira teacher, master of the art
Pandeiro tambourine
Rasteira a leg sweep
Reco-reco scraper (musical instrument)
Regional a style of capoeira
Roda the ring in which capoeira is played, the game of capoeira
Tesoura a scissor-like grappling move
Toque rhythms played on the berimbau

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