

## **GINGANDO OUTSIDE BRAZIL: THE MEANING OF THE CONSUMPTION OF BRAZILIAN CAPOEIRA IN GERMANY**

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## **Introdução**

a capoeira é uma manifestação cultural brasileira que está hoje presente em mais de 150 países. A sua internacionalização se espalha rapidamente, recebendo grande aceitação (até maior que no próprio país de origem) entre os estrangeiros que assumem a prática. O interesse por Place Branding e a necessidade de se trabalhar a imagem de uma marca país vem aumentando e a exportação de produtos culturais, pela carga simbólica que carregam, podem ser definitivos na busca por um diferencial competitivo.

## **Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo**

A partir então do entendimento que o fenômeno da internacionalização da capoeira impressiona por suas dimensões, por seu histórico e também pelos possíveis impactos na gestão de uma marca Brasil, o presente estudo iniciou-se com objetivo de responder à pergunta: “por que capoeiristas estrangeiros se engajam numa atividade originada e impregnada da cultura brasileira?”. Entender o que os atrai, mas mais importante, o que os mantém praticando e difundindo a capoeira pelo mundo.

## **Fundamentação Teórica**

Administrar e controlar a marca-país impacta na atração de turistas, fábricas, empresas, negócios, talentos, além de abrir mercados para exportação (Hanna e Rowley, 2008; Dinnie, 2003). Devido à carga simbólica que carregam as manifestações culturais brasileiras, podem se mostrar uma forma privilegiada da compreensão desta identidade brasileira. A imagem da marca Brasil está impregnada de associações feitas a produtos culturais internacionalizados, como samba, bossa nova, telenovelas, igrejas.

## **Metodologia**

Com a intenção de buscar a experiência subjetiva, ou seja, a interpretação que os capoeiristas fazem do motivo da capoeira ter entrado em suas vidas e, mais importante até, de ter permanecido relatou-se uma pesquisa fenomenológica. Foram realizadas dez entrevistas em profundidade com capoeiristas alemães e brasileiros, observação participante em duas aulas de capoeira em Hamburgo e não participante num evento em Hannover (Alemanha). Análise de conteúdo com ajuda do ATLAS/TI.

## **Análise dos Resultados**

Os dois aspectos da capoeira que mais atraem os capoeiristas alemães são os aspectos físicos (capoeira como esporte vigoroso, luta e acrobacia) e o artístico (o elemento musical). Mas os mantêm na prática é o aspecto social, o senso de comunidade que é sentido através das relações com os mestres, demais integrantes do grupo e, indo além de fronteiras, da comunidade capoeirística global. A capoeira promove um sentimento de libertação metafórica e literal em seus praticantes.

## **Conclusão**

Muito embora seja uma manifestação cultural brasileira, a capoeira é flexível - tantos em sua definição, como em sua variedade - a ponto de se moldar e agradar diferentes tipos de pessoas e culturas. Ela preenche necessidades universais - notadamente o senso de comunidade e pertencimento - justificando então a grande aceitação mundial da prática. Reconhecidamente brasileira em sua conquista do mundo ela acaba divulgando e aumentando interesse e conhecimento dos estrangeiros sobre o Brasil.

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# GINGANDO OUTSIDE BRAZIL: THE MEANING OF THE CONSUMPTION OF BRAZILIAN CAPOEIRA IN GERMAN

## Introduction

Capoeira is a cultural manifestation with a complex definition, which involves many facets, like art, music, dance, fight, sport and folklore (Wulfhorst e Vianna, 2012). It carries with it many brazilian elements that are preserved when it goes beyond the borders of its origin. There is almost no adaptation in countries in which it arrives. The name of the movements, songs, rituals are all kept in the portuguese language. (Falcão, 2008).

Besides being genuinely brazilian – and the resulting historical-cultural load of the country it carries – capoeira has been proven as an international phenomenon. After 45 years since the beginning of its internationalization, it is estimated that there are approximately two million capoeiristas only in foreign lands, nearly 20% of total. Capoeira is present in at least 150 countries (Federação Internacional de Capoeira, 2013), being that 71 countries have ‘rodas de capoeira’ officially registered. Only in Germany there are 27. In 2008 capoeira was raised to the condition of imaterial cultural heritage of Brazil and in 2014 of humanity as well. (Deutsche Welle, 2014).

Although the numbers and its strength abroad are impressive, there are very few studies which try to understand the international capoeira phenomenon and none seeking to understand the consequent impact it can have on the perception of the image of the Brazil brand by foreigners.

The importance of the application of branding practices to nations and places grows and becomes more relevant for increasing global competitiveness. The management and control of the brand-country impacts on the attraction of tourists, factories, companies, businesses, talents, in addition to opening the market for exports (Hanna e Rowley, 2008; Papadopoulos, 2004; Dinnie, 2003, Kotler e Gertner, 2002).

Despite this extensive discussion and interest in branding practices to nations and places, Dinnie (2003) points out that traditionally the scope of the literature produced is short of the historical and cultural dimensions on which nations are constituted. Supported in the constructs country-of-origin and country brand, *place branding* carries in itself a multifaceted nature, from developments in areas such as sociology history, national identity and politics, export, management, anthropology and consumption, among others.

In the case of Brazil, what represents the national identity is the so called brazilianess: a set of considered distinct traits of the brazilian culture, or even, quality itself of what is brazilian. From the place branding perspective, the brazilianess can then become a very valuable asset for the economy and for the brazilian development strategies (Sebrae, 2002). And, of course, brazilian companies can use this as a competitive advantage in the internationalization of their businesses.

Due to the symbolic load carrying brazilian cultural manifestations, interpreted through its mercantilization of cultural products, can show privileged means of understanding the brazilian identity.

The brand image Brazil is already impregnated by associations made with internationalized cultural products, like *samba*, *bossa nova*, soap operas, churches, and religions (Rego & Pastina, 2007; Perrone, 2002; Silva, 1991).

Thus, the objective of this paper is to explore the motivations that lead german capoeiristas to engage in an activity steeped into brazilian culture and the possible effects this engagement can bring to the Brazil brand as a whole. As parameter these motivations were compared to brazilian's motivations.

In the colonial Brazil period, african slaves trained a fight to keep them in shape in order to use their body in cases of escape and confrontation and, as a cover for such training, which included music and instruments, the activity that became known as capoeira. Although today, due to its transformation in time, capoeira classification is difficult, since it has become a cultural manifestation that involves music, dance, ritual, movement, play, sport, martial art, all at the same time, it is undeniable that its origin is the fight for freedom.

The capoeira internationalization movement began in the 1970s, when folkloric groups were touring abroad, most notably to the US and Europe, making presentations of this tropical art. Already used to making these presentations on streets and parks for tourists in Brazil, and realizing the interest and enchantment generated in foreigners, these tours were seen as a possibility for work and money (Falcão, 2008).

Such trips abroad were opportunities to make contact with foreigners interested in the practice and attract teachers and masters to stay in the countries they visited. The avalanche of capoeiristas abroad is "determined by economic factors and is related to the search for recognition and prestige" (Falcão, 2008). These brazilian capoeiristas saw the emigration to developed countries as an attractive alternative to their lower social status and their reduced earnings in Brazil (Rocha et al, 2015).

For foreign consumers interest in capoeira is initially generated by wonder and curiosity in developing a vigorous physical practice, which in addition to being healthy functions as self-defense. Adding to this the fact that it is considered "exotic, which gives it a certain charm to those who practice it". The interest then expands to other related manifestations of the brazilian cultural heritage, such as the frevo, maracatu and maculelê and end up falling in love with Brazil, expressing desire to visit the country and learn the portuguese language (Falcão, 2008).

The immigration movement of capoeira was intensified in the 80s (Assunção, 2002) with the worsening of the Brazilian economic crisis. In the 90s, the strong presence of capoeira in the media (in movies, in games, in advertising) helped to spread it on the foreign market (Rocha et al, 2015; Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012).

Rocha et al (2015) conclude that the internationalization model of capoeira until today was the process of diasporic internationalization, since capoeira groups outside of Brazil make a great effort to maintain the connection to its roots, if not only the country, but mainly to its originating brazilian groups.

In the concept of “diaspora” is embedded the notion of network, because it would be responsible for making emigrants/immigrants connect with their countries of origin, while giving the necessary support to its members to live and survive the difficulties they encounter in their host countries (Butler, 2001).

A defining characteristic of capoeira is its organization in groups (Rocha et al, 2015; Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012; Falcão, 2008). A single group can lead to various groups in other locations, these groups will remain affiliated to the original group, keeping an organization that has similar elements of franchise and licensing schemes.

## **Methodology**

From then on, the understanding that the internationalization phenomenon of capoeira impresses for its dimensions, historical background and also by the possible impact on the management of a Brazil brand, this study was initiated with the objective of answering the question: “why foreign capoeiristas are engaged in an activity originated and impregnated by brazilian culture?”.

In the phenomenological investigation, the researcher focuses the phenomenon and not the facts themselves, because his goal is to unravel the phenomenon, uncovered it. The phenomenological research starts from the understanding of the meaning which notices the confrontation with the world, its values, its beliefs and joint actions, where the human being is at the center (Aguiar & Barbosa, 2013). Therefore, the intention here is to seek the subjective experience, in other words, the interpretation that the capoeiristas make regarding the reason for capoeira to have entered their lives and, even more important, to have remained in it.

Aguiar e Barbosa (2013) argue that since the purpose of phenomenological research is to describe the overall structure and the meaning of the experience lived by the subject, the best data collection methods are interviews and observations. Such methods were then used on this study.

The observations were both the participant and nonparticipant types. The nonparticipant one was the presence of a researcher in a capoeira event held in Hannover, Germany, by the newly founded (june 2015) german group called Capoeira Paixão, led by a german teacher, named Rojão, who had left her original group. This event was held on May 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of 2016, for children of the group. Counting on the participation of two Brazilian masters (one resident in Lyon, France), a brazilian “contra-mestre” resident in Hamburg (Germany) and two teachers, one german and one greek living in Germany. In addition to capoeira and music lessons, in this event was held the ‘batizado’ and exchange of strings rituals. Besides notes being taken, the observer filmed and took photographs. The participant observation took place in Hamburg, Germany, on May 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, when one of the researchers took capoeira and music lessons with students of the Meia Lua Inteira group, present in the city for 20 years. Photographic records were also made.

For the collection of data through interviews the guide for interviews in phenomenological research proposed in Fischer et al (2014), was followed.

We chose to start the research work in Germany. This choice is justified in the fact that this country is being seen as one of the first European countries to be recognized by the capoeira community as a destination for brazilian capoeiristas emigrants. In the 90s, there were two major annual reference capoeira events, which attracted practitioners from across Europe, the Easter Meeting in Amsterdam (Netherlands) and the Samba Meeting in Hamburg (Germany). The latter concentrated up to 300 capoeiristas and lasted one week.

Today, several capoeira groups in Brazil have their bases in various German cities. 100% german groups begin to emerge there, such as the Capoeira Paixão, subject of non-participant observation described previously. In a Google search for “capoeira addresses” in just four german cities (Hamburg, Berlin, Frankfurt and Munich), 83 addresses were found for the practice of such activity.

So, for this article the research problem was delimited to the formulation “why *german* capoeiristas are engaged in an activity originated and impregnated by the brazilian culture?”.

During the month of May, when a traditional german capoeira event happens, *The Capoeira 10*, five German capoeiristas were interviewed in Hamburg, some students and others with sufficient degree to teach classes as well. These capoeiristas are part of different groups, aged between 21 and 56 years, but in common the fact that all have already traveled to Brazil due to capoeira, demonstrating their high degree of engagement with the activity. Moreover, three interviews were conducted in portuguese, language now dominated by these germans. Table II summarizes the profile of the respondents. The average time of practice by these germans was of 14.2 years.

After this round of interviews, it was felt the need to interview brazilian capoeiristas as well, in order to understand and differentiate what would be the motivations caused by capoeira, from those that were due to the fact of being a foreigner interested in capoeira. Therefore, five additional interviews were conducted with brazilians from the cities of São Paulo and Recife, during the month of June, as shown on Table II. The choice of Recife was in order to have at least some germans and brazilians respondents who had in common the same group, the *Meia Lua Inteira*, to better track the differences between the nationalities. And so, with these ten interviews we arrived at the theoretical saturation, in regard to the research question. Some other interesting points that open new alternatives for research and deserve further investigation, were raised by respondents and will be discussed in the last session of this article.

The conduct of the interviews was done in a most informal and loose manner, following the phenomenological tradition, where researchers are encouraged to prepare a single opening question (Fischer et al, 2014): “*tell me how capoeira came into your life*”. And from there on the interview continued as a conversation without specific a priori elaborated questions. The interviews were recorded, producing 300 minutes of conversation.

The preliminary analysis of data occurred during the actual transcription of the interview recordings, where a codification began to be held, based on the selection of some quotes that showed more evident. After the transcription, a more careful reading began to group the codes into categories by subjects, and some connections between them started to appear.

In order to complete the analysis, the content analysis software ATLAS/TI was used as support. Once again a reading and text encoding review was made, now with the prebuilt

categories and all the quotes classified according to their respective codes, thus facilitating the organization of the written analysis.

**Table I: PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS**

code	age	time of practice	capoeira status	nationality	home	interview format	language of interview	date of interview	time of interview
ENT 01	37	10 years	student	German	Hamburg	face-to face	English	24/5/2016	32:22:00
ENT 02	33	16 years	teacher	German	Hamburg	face-to face	Portuguese	26/5/2016	46:12:00
ENT 03	56	28 years	teacher	German	Hamburg	face-to face	Portuguese	26/5/2016	48:04:00
ENT 04	43	16 years	student	German	Hamburg	face-to face	Portuguese	28/5/2016	26:40:00
ENT 05	21	8 years	student	German	tesourinha	face-to face	English	29/5/2016	28:41:00
ENT 06	32	5 years	student	Brazilian	Recife	skype	Portuguese	13/6/2016	25:20:00
ENT 07	29	3 years	student	Brazilian	Recife	skype	Portuguese	15/6/2016	27:59:00
ENT 08	37	16 years	teacher	Brazilian	São Paulo	face-to face	Portuguese	15/6/2016	24:52:00
ENT 09	23	16 years	teacher	Brazilian	São Paulo	face-to face	Portuguese	16/6/2016	01:04:36
ENT 10	40	8 years	student	Brazilian	São Paulo	face-to face	Portuguese	16/6/2016	32:47:00

source: the authors

### Analysis

The first impression that respondents report about capoeira is unanimous both for brazilians and germans: capoeira is something “different”. But for the germans different means in an “exotic” idea and arouses curiosity. For brazilians is means more in an “alternative” way, because it is something off stream. Although for brazilians capoeira is not new, it is not common. Just as for the germans, all interviewed capoeiristas were the first ones of their family circles - if not of the wider circle of friendship – to practice it.

The brazilians reaction contradicts the very origin of capoeira: how can it be considered “alternative” in the country in which it was created? One possible explanation comes from the family circles reaction, at the moment they have got to know the intention of the interviewee to start the practice. Among the brazilians, the reported reaction is of prejudice, worry and lack of encouragement.

*"I think people see it as alternative, but still very marginalized. People see as a “maloqueiro” thing. And I think as people see it as a marginalized practice, my family had a certain strangeness, you know? ( ... ) My cousin complained that this was something of maloqueiro, and I would end up smoking marijuana, and all this business " (ENT07)*

The respondents justify this reaction by the history of capoeira that still adds a negative charge to the capoeira image, but this is not carried together when it goes abroad. Germans respondents report that they were really encouraged by their family circle.

*" They [the parents] know what I do, they love it. My family, especially my mother. They know this new group, they help us" (ENT01)*

After the first impact, the understanding the definition of capoeira is common to all interviewees. Capoeira carries a complexity both for its definition - as seen in the literature review - as for its diversity of formats. But all of them seem to understand and appreciate this complexity. And this may explain why capoeira attracts the most different types of people, regardless of their nationality.

Respondents are interested in capoeira by the combination of its physical (sport), artistic (notably the presence of music) and social aspects (the feeling of belonging to a group). For different respondents, weights and the order of these aspects may change, but the three of them are always present.

*"But I also wanted to do a sport, but did not know what. I found nothing interesting. Always wanted to do something as a group, I do not want to do anything alone. So this also I liked a lot: you do something together. Capoeira can not be done alone. Mostly the music, I found the perfect combination. Because you move to the music. It's not so rigid, it is very fluid. And even still you can learn instruments and sing. This is three things in one"*  
(ENT04)

In the physical aspect capoeira is seen as a vigorous physical activity, very intense and beautiful. The mixture of a fight, a martial arts with acrobatics is for some cases the first reason that attracts them to capoeira. People in search of a different physical activity, interested in a fight or in learning the acrobatic moves.

It is difficult to dissociate the physical aspect of the music, because part of the movement that so much attracts the practitioners happens because it has to be made under the rhythm of a song. The typical expression and most basic capoeira movement is called "ginga", when you swing your body from one side to the other, between movements or in order to deceive yourself. The ginga movement approaches the capoeira to the definition of dance.

*"It has the musicality, has dancing issue. It is not a dance. Capoeira is a fight. But it is almost a dance. It is a fight where you improvise a lot, you dance with the other one"*  
(ENT06)

*"I think it's a mixture. There are people who are interested in the culture as well. And you need it [culture], if not, you are not doing capoeira, but sport. You do the movement, but you do not live movement. You have to live the movement, you have to feel the movement".*  
(ENT02)

The capoeira music is very characteristic. In addition to the typical instrument, the berimbau, people who participate in a "roda de capoeira" (the play circle) should clap and sing the chorus. There is always one capoeirista, usually the most seniors one, responsible in guiding the play in the roda, controlling and marking the rhythm of the play. In a roda, everybody participates, two playing and the others making the music, giving the so called "axé" (energy). Some even report that the repetition of the chorus and the clapping take them to a kind of "trance" state, keeping them focused on that moment, freeing their minds at least for a moments of others problems they may have in life.

To be a capoeirista one must know of capoeira music. Play the berimbau - all german respondents had their own berimbau - and sing the songs. And exactly to know how to sing these songs that the interest in learning portuguese arises. Since the songs are not translated, german capoeiristas want to better understand the meaning of what they are singing. All german respondents had attended at least a few months of portuguese language course. In the



event of Hannover, for example, the German teacher of capoeira, taught the children to respond in Portuguese the chorus of a Portuguese song. Himself with accent correcting the accent of children and translating into German, so that they could better understand the meaning of what they were singing.

*"the good thing is that I speak a little Portuguese and now I can understand and I am able to sing. If I don't understand still gets a little hard. And I keep reading lips "(ENT01)  
"Many people begin to make Portuguese classes. Now I have five students who are enrolled in a Portuguese course "(ENT02)*

For some, music, instead of physical activity, was what drew attention at first. Via radio or by curiosity with a berimbau, the fact is that even before approaching a roda to see what is going on, one can hear the capoeira music. Although also widely pointed by the Brazilians, the music appeared with more emphasis among German respondents. Maybe because of the uncommon language, the odd instrument and of being not usual in other martial art, the music seems to be primarily responsible for bringing this exoticism to the Germans point of view.

If the first two aspects, physical and artistic are the characteristics that attract future capoeiristas, the third aspect - the social - seems to be the main reason that keeps them in capoeira, with no distinction between nationalities. The reports show that turning into a capoeirista provides the individual insertion in an existing network almost instantly. And therefore the feeling of belonging, security and well-being resulted from being part of a group.

There are three levels of established relationships: the capoeiristas with their master or teacher; the capoeiristas with other capoeiristas of the same group; and the capoeirista with the capoeirista community in general.

These first two types of relationships end up merging in an extreme loyalty to its initial group of capoeira, whose bond is difficult and, in many cases, extremely painful to be cut. For various reasons, some capoeiristas feel pressured to leave their groups. This decision, or even the thought of it is accompanied by anguish reports and sense of betrayal to the original group.

*"I think the bond is so special (...) Wanting or not, people forms a bond, we were already becoming a family. And that counts a lot. I do not understand, really, how some people can move from one group to another "(ENT09).  
"And there is some people who says, 'gee, you are not in a group (...) you're not training, do you want to train with us?'. I said I will go, but I won't (...) I'd rather be without capoeira than to train with another group. " (ENT09)*

The relationship of a student with his teacher was reported with conflicting feelings. On one side the master figure imposes a great respect, firmness, security and pride. The student recognizes the story constructed in his career and in his work as a teacher, acknowledges that one has a lot to learn and being his disciple automatically brings a "surname" to the other capoeiristas, result of the master's name recognition. A "seal", a "brand" that the capoeiristas will carry with pride, because it indicates to what "line" one belongs within the capoeira universe. This is one side of the relationship that sees the teacher as the protector and almost a paternal reference in several areas that transcend the capoeira, whom you seek approval.

*"I went there and it was the first time I met the masters. And I was also very impressed. With these people who had a different expression, a wisdom that I found even a little magic.*

*I have never met someone like them before. There is karate master ... But it has something more mystical about brazilian masters "(ENT04)*

*"I think it important this "father" side. The teacher gives advice to me. I've already cried on his shoulder. So today I see him as a reference, someone I can count on "(ENT07)*

But this same " father " that protects, is often seen as hard and rigid. And this arise conflicting situations. German respondents were more critical with this inflexible posture they perceive in the masters in general.

*"I was not allowed to anything. To question, nothing. I had to do what he told and things like that, but it didn't seemed right to me " ( ENT01 )*

*"I do not really like it. I was always afraid of capoeira masters ! ( ... ) I met some who only behave like masters because they are masters of capoeira, they make us feel small . But then I think, "What 's wrong? " . They are masters of capoeira, I am singing teacher, others are dentists, that is, there is no difference. They are not better people! I have to repeat it to me, again and again. And I do not like it. " (ENT01)*

The feeling that the capoeirista have with others members of his group is reported by words such as "family", being back "at home", "bond" and "link". There is a sense of brotherhood formed among the members of a group, which extrapolates to protection situations in and out of the 'roda de capoeira. They attribute this feeling to the living that exists beyond the hours in classes. The trips, participation in workshops and events, the experiences in the 'rodas' form a body of shared stories that deepen personal relationships, strengthens the bonds and feeds this sense of belonging.

*"they were really warm and welcoming. I never had this in any other group. I think this is special in capoeira" (ENT01)*

*"I don't know if it's because we've been through so much together, for caring so much with each other, both in and outside of the 'roda'" (ENT09)  
(ENT01).*

In capoeira classes there is no separation by grade levels: older students and new students practice together. This is very encouraged as there is an unspoken rule where the older (in capoeira) takes care of the youngest . This makes beginners to feel welcomed and accepted from the moment they start to practice. Germans believe that being hospitable is something attached to the brazilian culture, but that impregnates the spirit of capoeiristas wherever they are from.

*"there is something about welcoming people, of receiving, making the new one feeling less gangling"(ENT07)*

*"[being hospitable] is part of brazilian mentality, but much of it is of the capoeira community" (ENT 05)*

This aspect made us understand the third observed level of relationship: a global community of capoeiristas no matter the master, the group or the country the capoeirista belongs to. There is a sense of recognition and instant affinity when one meets another capoeira. Knowing the person or not is irrelevant , because by definition, one capoeira tends to help the other

*"this is something about the capoeira that I really love: its big, big, big network"(ENT01)*

This network is quite extensive and ends up providing a deeper meaning in their lives: freedom. Both metaphorically and literally, through capoeira one can find a path that allows him to transit other worlds different from the ones he is used to. Capoeira makes people go "out of place" allows them to "change scenery".

Literally, the mobility is geographic and it is represented by the opportunity to exchange and “run the world”.

*“I always wanted to live abroad (...), but i had never been able to actually realize this dream, this will. And because of my friendship with her and through the Meia Lua Inteira group, because it was through capoeira, the oppotunity to go there, to Viena, came up”(ENT06)*

Metaphorically this freedom may be represented by a socio-economic or a personal mobility. Both feelings are perceived between the two nationalities, but the first one in a more clear way among brazilians, while the second one among the germans.

The socio-economic mobility was perceived on the reports about how the prejudice is broken by the capoeira, as if through it different worlds could join and live with tolerance. This movement takes place both “top-down” and “bottom-up”.

*“it allows me to have contact with other people that otherwise I would never have, because I live inside a bubble, a glass little ball. When would I have the opportunity (...) to talk to people that live another reality than mine, in another world? So, today this is what delights me the most in capoeira. It is how it approaches me to people I would never have otherwise this type of contact” (ENT 07)”*

*“Gradually capoeira was conquering me. It was giving me things I did not think I could ever had” (ENT09)*

*“They started to leave their environment, they began to go elsewhere, to leave the periphery, where there is only bad things. We do not realize the evolution. But looking back now, it made a hell of difference”(ENT09)*

From a personal point of view, capoeira promotes an increase of self-esteem. Learning and playing capoeira requires one to give and loose himself completely. To the germans managing to do that is more challenging for them than for brazilians due to cultural backgrounds. It is a barrier they have to overcome to be a capoeirista.

Another aspect of the reported self-esteem is the regulating and “therapeutic” role of capoeira. Capoeira represents the only steady aspect of the respondents lives, no matter how messy personal life is. Capoeira keeps their balance.

*“Nowadays capoeira has a very importante role in my life. There were moments in my life I lost control and it was the only thing that still hangs with me (...) I do not see it just as capoeira, I see it as my arm” (ENT08)*

In addition to capoeira versatility, diversity further enhances its ability to be flexible and thus to please a large number of culturally different people. There is no such thing as “one capoeira”. In contrary, there is an understanding of the diferences that exists from one group to another as well as the changes and adaptations that take place within the same group. And everything is considered capoeira.

*“Each group has a style (...), its particular way (...) I find it very interesting to realize this, to get to know this (ENT02)*

*“The way I see capoeira is changing every time. It is nothing fixed” (ENT05)*

Although capoeira has shown this universal aspect, foreigners clearly keep in perspective that this cutural manifestation has it origins in Brazil. And this impacts directly on their interest and awareness regarding to the country in particular and brazilians in general.

*“Before [capoeira] I was not interested in Brazil or portuguese at all! (...) I didn’t know that brazilians speak portuguese. I thought they spoke brazilian,” (ENT01)*

*“I dont think I would have chosen Brazil (...) because if I didn’t play capoeira, I would not know anything, no one there, nor the language” (ENT05)*

Interest in other brazilian products and expressions increase, as the learning of the portuguese language, trips to Brazil (where they look for the origin of capoeira), capoeira musical instruments, and other cultural manifestations, such as other styles of music, literature and candomblé, an afro-brazilian religion.

*“I am interested by the authors of Brazil, I like to read the most popular things (...) and also the samba music and the bossa nova” (ENT02)*

The awareness of the origin of capoeira seems no longer assign a “certificate of authenticity” as it was used to the brazilian emmigrants capoeiristas. The presence of a new generation of high-ranking and validated foreign capoeiristas is now observed in Germany. The feeling is that if a german capoeirista is ready to teach is because he did well his homework: he knows enough brazilian culture in order to be able to pass on his knowledge on capoeira.

*“I just received my teacher graduation. I have to know this things [candomblé]. I can not be a teacher if I do not know these cultural things. You can’t have a high degree without having gone at least once to Brazil” (ENT02)*

For brazilians the presence of capoeira in the world promotes a mixed feeling of pride and irritation, since it conquers the world more effusively than it conquers Brazil itself.

*“capoeira abroad is cult (...) is seen in a much more respectful way, more valued as a cultural manifestation” (ENT06)*

## **Final Considerations**

The meaning of capoeira for capoeiristas is the same either in Germany or in Brazil. Regardless of their nationality, the feelings, the benefits and reasons are the same. Small variations of intensities may vary from one person to another, but in its essence capoeira is for everyone.

The complex nature of capoeira – its diversity and versatility – allows it to mold and fit the different types of people. Therefore, even though it is a brazilian cultural manifestation capoeira proves to be universal. Its meaning has found echo in different cultures.

There were really few differences between practitioners of the two nationalities. However, these differences together can help justify the greater acceptance capoeira has found in foreign lands: (1) the more objective relationship with the master, (2) a greater dedication and commitment in training sessions, and (3) greater support, both in terms of space infrastructure and of emotional given by family and friendship circles. Such difference in acceptance of capoeira impacts on brazilian capoeiristas, generating a mixture of pride and irritation.

The aspect that drew the most attention to the behavioral study effect on the consumer, is the social meaning of capoeira. The need to belong to a group leads them to consume this

practice together as a group, as well as all other products arising from it, such as trips, events, instruments, etc. Capoeira has shown an interesting manner to study the formation of global consumption communities, their connections and networks.

The impact capoeira has generated on Brazil to foreigners who practice it is unquestionable. The awakening and the increased interest, the awareness, the knowledge of brazilian history and culture is reported in all cases. From the learning of the portuguese language to tourism in Brazil, capoeira increases the contact points of these foreigners to the Brazil brand. As a managerial implication, capoeira could be worked as a strong element that carries the brazilianess in managing the Brazil brand identity.

However, an issue of attention must be considered. Due to its universality and the current moment of its internationalization the capoeira know-how is no longer restricted to brazilians. A new generation of foreign graduated capoeiristas are training and coordinating their own work in their places of origin, competing even with brazilians that moved abroad to disseminate capoeira practice. Yes, it is still perceived a certain magic in a brazilian capoeirista, but the evidence shows that to be from Brazil is no longer enough to sustain a differential of these brazilian capoeiristas in the markets, now more competitive overseas. Committed foreigners capoeiristas assimilate enough of brazilian culture and thus legitimate themselves within the community as keepers of this knowledge. And, this seems to be not only sufficient as credibility to consumers of these markets, as well as more convenient, since the access (to areas, local incentives, mobilization of groups, language, among others) is facilitated.

The diasporic nature of capoeira's internationalization tends to change with this new generation of foreign teachers and graduateds who are replicating the capoeira know how. They stay in their cities, with all the benefits, and without the liability of the foreignness which burden that it carries. The capoeira internationalization process is entering a new phase.

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