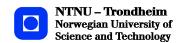Matías Knust Dragunski

Children Play Capoeira

A (somewhat) multi-sited exploration about children's experiences with Capoeira in Norway and Spain

Master's Thesis of Philosophy in Childhood Studies

Trondheim, November 2013

NTNU – Trondheim
Norwegian University of
Science and Technology

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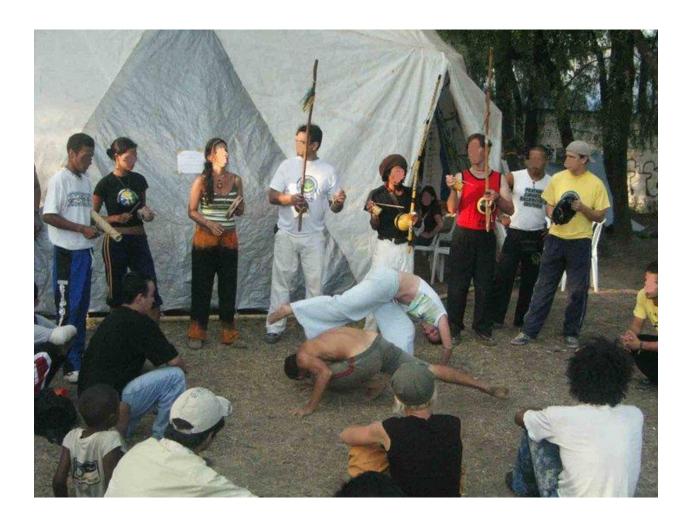BARNEFORSKNING
NORWEGIAN CENTRE
FOR CHILD RESEARCH

Do Children Play Capoeira?

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Master's Thesis in Childhood Studies

Matias Knust Dragunski

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This was the place I observed Capoeira for the first time and the next day a *capoeirista* taught me the first ginga and *esquiva* movements.

The picture was taken by my Italian friend Lorenzo Toppi in Parque da Harmonia, while staying in the Acampamento Internacional da Juventude in the context of the V Forum Social Mundial, event that took place in the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil during the summer of year 2005. I call this picture "bare foot _roda_ dance in the Capoeira", referring to the believed, Tupí-Guarnaí word that gives birth to Capoeira, and which means an empty grassy space in the woods. As I experience during this exploration in the Global North, most of the Capoeira *rodas* took place inside established training centres, though sometimes the groups also performed outside in the streets, in parks and squares. Picture: (LT).

To Sussa lenda who taught me Capoeira for the first time and to all *capoeiristas* who know they have a *mestre* embodied, although very deep inside.

"It is true, as Marx says, that history does not walk on its head, but it is also true that it does not think with its feet. Or one should say rather that it is neither its 'head' not its 'feet' that we have to worry about, but its body"(sic)

Merleau-Ponty, 1962: xix

"[T]he "book" from which the children learn their vision of the world is read with the body, in and through the movements and displacements which make the space within which they are enacted as much as they are made by it"

Bourdieu, 1997: 90

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

The thesis presented here is a (somewhat) multi-sited ethnographic exploration, this means I centered the analysis on children who practice Capoeira in Norway and Spain. The research gained in depth in the art thanks to visits made to Lisbon and Copenhagen. Through a qualitative analysis, based on a theoretical concepts from sociology of childhood and also from the philosophical-biological-sociological concept embodiment, this thesis contributes to the creation of knowledge in the field of childhood studies.

Throughout this study, childhood is understood as a social construction which is shaped and re-shaped by children who should be researched in their own rights. This study, considers thus children as competent social actors who have agency. Hence, children are observed as not determinate by historical or cultural processes, rather, they are considered as constructors and doers of their own lives. Capoeira, as a syncretic diasporic-transnational, originally Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestation, is observed as a leisure activity, a possibility to become a modern ritual to the children, a place for them to express themselves though body language. The practice is observed as embodied, this means, children take their practice within their bodies, and in time this can impact their *habitus*.

Children who train Capoeira start their practice invited by their parents, though they think the acrobatics and the martial arts kicks are "cool" and have generally a good times practicing diversity aspects the art offers them, however, they also dislike other and used their agency to achieve what they want to do.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Capo-eira[1] is nowadays a globalized diasporic (Delamont & Stephens, 2008) and transnational practice, "a syncretic cultural manifestation blending game, martial arts, dance, music, oral poetry and theatre" (Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012: 85). Originally an Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestation (Röhring, 2005; IPHAN, 2007; Taylor, 2007), for *mestre*[2] Acordeon, a famous *mestre* inside the Capoeira community, it is a martial art form that combines fight, dance and music (Almeida, 1986). For *mestre* Néstor Capoeira, another celebrity, it is also "a primitive ritual inserted in a contemporary place and time, yet still retaining its original integrity" (Capoeira, 2006: 37). According to my principal informants, children who regularly practiced Capoeira in Norway and Spain, it is martial arts, dance, acrobatics, games and music. Some children said that Capoeira was for them "a place where I can really use my energy" (Thor, 11 years, Norway). It "is like a game of movements, well, which are not the normal that you do… Capoeira is the movements, playing instruments and these things" (Perico, 10 years, Spain). Furthermore, for Lisbeth (10 years, Norway), Capoeira "is life".

Capoeira captivates children (Anderson, 2001) and adults from a first sight with its spectacular body movements (de Campos, Stephens, & Delamont, 2010), creating a special atmosphere with its music that must accompany any *roda*[3] to be fully realized (Downey, 2002). Capoeira is a "magical theater" (Capoeira, 2006) and captivated me with its rhythms during my first

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[1]It is believed that Capo-eira originally refers to two Tupí-Guraní words. These refer to a grassy place in a forest, a free space from trees and bushes where a war dance was practiced (Röhring, 2005). Most of the Portuguese words used through this thesis are written in *italics*. When a term is introduced for the first time, the translation will be most of the time provided as a footnote. Moreover, most of the translation used can be found in chapter 10 (A LITTLE AFRO-BRAZILIAN CAPOEIRA DICTIONARY).

[2] *Mestre* is the highest graduation level a *capoeirista*, a person who regularly performs Capoeira, can achieve and is important not to confuse it with master, which resembles the owner of slaves. Néstor Capoeira (2006) states that *mestres* and *contramestres*, the level immediately below, were *capoeiristas* called this way by their *discípulos* or pupils and as a way of acknowledgment by the Capoeira community.

[3] *Roda* means circle and the *roda de Capoeira* "is a space as well as an event. Spatially, bodies-of spectators, of adepts waiting their own chances to play, and musicians, themselves practitioners-form a circle to enclose the game, to contain it, and, according to Capoeira's oral history, to conceal the practice from persecuting authorities" (Downey, 2002: 491).

encounter, on a moonlit night while I was walking through Parque da Harmonia in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

The thesis aim is to explore the embodied experiences, perceptions and perspectives of children[4] who regularly practice Capoeira in a Norwegian urban area and in a rural Catalonian town. Furthermore, it includes other fieldwork experiences in a Balearic island and in Barcelona in Spain, and visits to international Capoeira meetings organized in Copenhagen, Denmark and in Lisbon, Portugal. The work was possible thanks to the application of a "not so multi-sited" ethnographic methodology (Hage, 2005) and is based on a critical theoretical approach that comes from the social studies of children and childhood and sociology of childhood. Accordingly, childhood is understood as a concept that is socially constructed and re-constructed, thanks to multiple negotiations that occur within the society, children included. Childhood is always placed in a particular cultural and historical context and this implies that the social construction of children and childhood varies across cultures and history (Jenks, 1982; James & Prout, 1990) and even within the same culture (Woodhead & Montgomery, 2007). In this study children are observed as a structural form (Alanen, 2001; Qvortrup, 2009) and as competent social actors with agency (Robson, Bell, & Klocker, 2007) who build their own social lives and influence in their close social environment and also in the whole society (James & Prout, A New Paradigm for the Sociology of Childhood?, 1990). Therefore, children should be researched in their own rights (Speier, 1976; James & Prout, 1990; Qvortrup, 2002). Alongside the theoretical perspectives from social studies of children and childhood, this thesis problematizes children's experiencing Capoeira through concepts like embodiment (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Bourdieu, 1997; Toren, 1993; Lewis, 1995; James, Jenks, & Prout, 2006; Maturana Romesin & Verden-Zöller, 2008), social space (Bourdieu, 1996; 1997; James, Jenks, & Prout, 2006) and *habitus* (Mauss, [1935] 2006; Bourdieu, 1990; 1996; 1997; Delamont & Stephens, 2008).

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[4] All the participant children in this research, girls and boys, were between 5 and 11 years old.

The 19 of August of 2004 Gilberto Gil, famous Brazilian singer and songwriter from Bahia[5], who served as Brazil's Minister of Culture between 2003 and 2008, was invited by Kofi Annan, that time Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), to its European headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. In that occasion, the Minister took with him 15 Brazilian and foreign *capoeiristas* to honor Ambassador Sérgio Vieira de Mello, who was killed exactly one year before by a bomb blast in Bagdad, Iraq. There, the Minister said:

> "Nowadays Capoeira is practiced in more than 150 countries. In America, in Japan, in China in Israel, in Korea, in Australia, in Africa and practically in the whole Europe. Capoeira has disseminated through the world with enthusiasm. Thus, without talking Portuguese, a Chinese, an Arab, a Jew or an American can repeat the rhythm of the same music, the art in the same compass and the *ginga*[6] from the same *toque*.[7] The diasporic Capoeira in the world is a reality that already has support from educational institutions like the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which endorse the work lead by the initiative of Brazilian *capoeiristas* in several countries" (Gilberto Gil, 2004; referred to in IPHAN, 2007: 91).[8]

In his discourse, Gilberto Gil states different facts, e.g. Capoeira has become a global practice, it counts with support of international organizations like UNICEF, and it is a 'diasporic' phenomenon. Here I want to make a short reflection because at the same time the former Minister claimed the diasporic character of Capoeira, another one was happening. As described before, 15 Brazilian and 'foreign' *capoeiristas* performed in an official act under the institutional frame provided by the UN. This means, that while Gil remarks that Capoeira is living a diasporic moment, through the *roda*, Capoeira was revealing itself as a 'transnational' phenomenon (Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012) because Brazilian and 'foreigner' *capoeiristas* were performing in front of the authorities.

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[5] Refers to the Brazilian State of Bahia, were it is said Capoeira is originally from. *Mestre* Bimba and *mestre* Pastinha developed their Capoeira styles and , traditions, and academies in the capital city Salvador, historically known as São Salvador da Bahia de Todos os Santos, in English: "City of the Holy Saviour of the Bay of all Saints". Nowadays Salvador is the largest city on the northeast coast of Brazil.

[6] *Ginga*: Is the basic footwork in Capoeira. *Gingar* means "to swing" and although the movement varies according to every *capoeirista,* it is fundamental because is a "fluid cement" that hold diverse parts of the game together (Taylor, 2006).

[7] *Toque*: Means "beat" and in Capoeira it generally relates to the beat or rhythm of the *berimbau*, the one string bow- shaped instrument that establishes the speed and style of the Capoeira *jogô* or game (Almeida, 1986).

[8] Translated from Portuguese by the author.

There also exists a cultural "omnivorous consumption" of Capoeira, by foreigners who travel to Brazil to try a more authentic art (Hedegard, 2013). Thus, this process, as *mestre* Acordeon told me in an informal interview, is occurring in two forms: knowledge that goes to the world and another one that comes back to Brazil, with the diasporic experiences of Brazilian *capoeiristas* that return and with the foreigner *capoeiristas* that visit the country.

For the *Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional* (IPHAN) [9], the practice of Capoeira risks becoming a repertoire of movements and chants, losing its essence and *fundamentos*.[10] This can happen because it can be taught by those that did not learn the frames of tradition, thus being more like a sport modality and, therefore, ignoring its proper cultural aspects. This is related to a break in the transfer chain, due to the evasion or death of the older *mestres* without formation of new ones. So, it appears as evident that the continuity of the Capoeira practice as a cultural manifestation depends directly on the transferring of knowledge from the *mestres* to the new generations (IPHAN, 2008:17).

This research explores mainly the Norwegian and the Spanish scenarios. As a methodological result of "following the people" (Marcus, 1995), the physical space "par excellence" where I located children who practiced Capoeira was within the setting of training centre's and academies. Accordingly, although I explored *rodas de rua*[11]during my fieldwork, children's experiences are principally related to an institutionalized social space, where Capoeira represents a form of an adult-organized after school leisure activity. However, children who regularly train Capoeira are embedded in a significant web of meanings (Geertz, 2006) provided by a syncretic diasporic and transnational Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestation during their practice. This way, aside from the movements and the music, the *fundamentos*, the characteristics of Capoeira, its

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[9] *Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional* (IPHAN): National Institute of Historical and Artistic Patrimony.

[10] *Fundamentos*: The *fundamentos*, foundations or characteristics of Capoeira. For *mestre* Néstor Capoeira, the *fundamentos* are"""the knowledge of the human's true nature"-seasoned with a strong dose of "good humor" and "dressed" with the colors of Brazilian Afro underground culture" (Capoeira, 2006: 112).

[11] *Roda de rua*: Is a *roda* that is performed preferentely in the streets, though performances in parks and squares are also included. "A street *roda* from time to time and an "open" *roda* where *capoeiristas* from other academies might come and play are part of the Capoeira academy dynamics. In fact, the "normal" classes and even the *roda* at the end of the daily class (to a certain extent) are practices whose goal is to prepare the student for these more public types of events" (Capoeira, 2006: 78).

philosophy and values are also embodied by the children *capoeiristas*. Through their practice, children can thus embody a *habitus* related to an insurgent cosmopolitanism (de Sousa, 2006).

1.1   The Choice of the Topic

While searching for a topic for my master thesis, I had the possibility to join some days of an international Capoeira meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark. I went there with some friends from my Capoeira group in Norway because I wanted to develop my skills in an intensive workshop. There, during the training with adults I observed a special group for children:

> "Two Capoeira *mestres* are at one end of the sport center and sing and play music with an *atabaque*[12]*e* and a *pandeiro*[13]. Both are singing in Portuguese, maybe about the old days of slavery in Brazil. The audience is formed by group of about 14 children, girls and boys. They are sitting in front of the *mestres* and their parents, who are observing the situation a little away from the place. However, they are close enough to capture all what is happening. Like the parents, I also observe the entire group of children when they start to practice body movements at the rhythms of the music. It seems that all are having fun, because all people show a big smile in their faces" [Field notes, 19 March 2011, Copenhagen].

I felt I had found an interesting topic for my research. There I meet a diasporic Brazilian Capoeira *mestre* whose *apellido*[14] was Puma, who told me that he had a huge group of children who trained regularly with him in Barcelona. I asked him if I could do my research with him there and he agreed, though I had to ask the parents and the children. I felt like I had found the keys of heaven. Following this experience and the academic approval of the thesis topic by my supervisor and my scholarship administrator, I started a first broad literature research on Capoeira and found out that there were few studies about children's perspective on this Afro-Brazilian art.

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[12]*Atabaque*: Is an Afro-Brazilian drum. Is made traditionally from Jacaranda wood, is rope-tuned and skin-covered. It is similar to a conga drum and to a djembé, being normally played with bare hands.
[13] *Pandeiro*: Is an instrument similar to a tambourine.
[14]*Apellido*: Nickname.

Before heading to Barcelona, I was informed that a huge Capoeira *batizado*[15] was going to be arranged in Lisbon, Portugal. As it was a meeting especially arranged for children, this gave me a great opportunity to observe Capoeira in another context, adding some new perspectives to my fieldwork. Indeed, the short travel was worth it because I could meet many *mestres* who came to Europe during the 1980's and this opened the doors for informal conversations and observations in a different socio-cultural context. In this visit I met diasporic Brazilian *mestre* Dedé, who invited me come and do part of my fieldwork with his group on a Balearic island.

In-situ, once I was in Barcelona, I got to know that the classes were taught in a sport center in a Catalonian rural town, 90 kilometers away from Barcelona. The town was badly connected and the possibility to arrive there with public transport was complicated because only one bus went there at around 6.00 am. Luckily *mestre* Puma picked me up sometimes with his car and we went there together. I always tried to go with him, not on only considering that it was the most reasonable mode, also because it was a good opportunity to have informal conversations about children and Capoeira. Another unexpected problem happened in the middle of July when all the children left for holidays. This situation made me feel that I would lose all my time there and I remembered the invitation extended to me by *mestre* Dedé in Lisbon to visit his Capoeira academy in a Balearic island. Following, I went there for two weeks and this experience helped to give me relevant fieldwork experiences.

Last, but not least, I developed the research during wintertime in an urban area in Norway. I explicitly state this because this is a long, cold, dark time. It is difficult to practice a cultural manifestation like Capoeira outdoors in the snow. This context was marked by an almost opposite climate compared to *Capoeira's* origins in tropical Brazil. 10 children participated in the classes in a regular basis. During this period I got to know *instructor*[16] Jens, a European non-Brazilian *capoeirista* who was in charge of teaching the children in the group. I observed several classes and had great fieldwork experiences in Norway, accompanying the group to different settings like a performance in a hotel and some visits to public schools to show Capoeira to other

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[15]The *batizado* or baptism is a ceremony where the *capoeirista* is recognized as initiated in the art and receives his or her first *cordão* or belt and an *apellido* or nickname, which is how she or he will be recognized inside the Capoeira group.

[16] *Instructor*: Means instructor in English and is the first official teacher level in Capoeira (commonly followed by the stages of *profesor*, *contramestre* and *mestre*).

children. Only rarely did the *mestre* or *contramestres*[17] of the group come to visit to hold workshops with the children. In this local group, all *profesores*[18] and *instructors* were Norwegians or Europeans and this makes Norway special space to observe the transnational mixtures of Capoeira.

1.2 Related Studies

In this section I present the related studies to children, childhood and Capoeira. Almost all these studies observed the relation between children and the art from the perspective of sport, history, education and psychology. Only the research done by Anderson (2001) made in Copenhagen, explores, from a sport-childhood studies perspective, two groups of children, one who trains gymnastics and another who practices Capoeira. She states that the Capoeira School was an age-integrated space for sport practice, compared to gymnastics that was age-graded. Thus, the gymnastics social space creates an identity for consuming sport as a child, whereas Capoeira creates an identity space for being consumed by sport as *capoeirista*.

Coêlho de Araújo (2005) researched the child-sport-game-historical perspective of Capoeira in which adults and children had something to say. In an interesting angle, he states that while Capoeira was a body expression of violence in the beginning, children with their free play-imitation process transformed the violent status of capoeira to a playful one.

From an educational framework, Sonada, de Olivera, & Marchi Júnior (2009) claim that children from 3 to 6 years old need to be taught Capoeira by the utilization of an amusement and entertainment-oriented playful methodological approach. Heine, Carbinatto, & Nunomura (2009), state that the principal teaching styles like command, task, reciprocal, individual, discovering-oriented and solution solving are pertinent to the initiation in Capoeira and they offer orientation to the teaching of the teachers that use these activities. Jungers Abib (2006) explains, in another sense, how the old transmission of knowledge took place in the past in

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[17] *Contramestre*: Level immediately below *mestre,* it is the second highest level a *capoeirista* can achieve.
[18] *Profesor/a*: Teacher.

Capoeira. Thus, Abib describes how the educational experience of *Capoeira Angola*[19] was and still is transmitted orally and especially through a close relationship between *mestre* and apprentice.

Finally, from a psychological perspective, Rauch (1995) researches the context of drug prevention, rehabilitation and social integration initiatives. According to him, Capoeira is a comprehensive activity that promotes health and education, fostering individual and collective growth by providing both mental and physical discipline, and being a creative activity that also enhances a sense of self-esteem. For Burt & Butler (2011), Capoeira combined with a therapeutic method can, through a culturally sensitive model, change the aggressive behaviors of adolescents. Candusso (2008) states that *Capoeira Angola* and other complementary activities impact positively in opening new life perspectives to children from disadvantages communities. Thus, this Afro-Brazilian tradition can become a significant educational reference because of its holistic concept of the human being. Hence, it offers an alternative to the modern teaching processes and preserves ancestral values, stories, and games that are a fundamental role in the definition of cultural identity and feeling of belonging.

1.3   The Aim of the Research & Research Questions

At the beginning, the aim of this exploration was to explore how Capoeira impacts children's well-being. Accordingly, I wanted to research children who regularly train Capoeira in a core or first-world setting on an everyday basis. Hence, Norway and Spain appeared to be good spaces to start the investigation. Thus, I established contact with *mestres*, teachers, parents and children in different groups and was curious about how Capoeira was adapted by the children and how they exercised their agency in the Capoeira social space. However, after starting the research I realized that the research would be too time-consuming.

Researching the impact of Capoeira in children's daily lives means to go deep on it, probably I would need to be with the children in school, at their home and follow them in their other daily

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[19] *Capoeira Angola*: Is the Capoeira style developed by *mestre* Pastinha, which claims to be closer to the real African roots and thus to be the traditional Capoeira.

routines. As this was too difficult, I decided to observe their Capoeira classes and follow the groups of Capoeira to different events where they went. Children were not present all the time, but I focused on them and their inter- and intra-generational relations. The encircling research question that guided my fieldwork, interviews, analysis and all the knowledge produced during the exploration is:

How do children who regularly practice Capoeira experience this syncretic Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestation in Norway and Spain?

Accordingly, the aim of the research, following a childhood studies perspective, was related to giving children an opportunity to be heard about a topic that concerns them. Thus, Capoeira was observed as an activity that takes part of their everyday life. To answer this research question, the further presented sub-research questions were also relevant to keep the track on children's experiences:

1) How is a typical children's Capoeira class constructed?

2) How do children experience Capoeira as a social space?

3) How do children embody Capoeira?

4) How do children exercise their agency inside the Capoeira social space?

1.4   Relevance of the Research

Researching children who practice Capoeira and its relations to childhood is very interesting for me not only because I am a *capoeirista* myself, but because it has been used by several institutions and NGO's to improve the life of children living in especially difficult circumstances in a diversity of settings like in Brazil (Projeto Kirimurê, 2013), Australia (On Line Opinion, 2012), India (Capoeira Conections, 2012), Jamaica (Capoeira Alafia, 2013), in refugee camps in the Middle East (Bidna Capoeira, 2011) and recently also in Norway (Save the Children, 2013). Hence, this was an opportunity to explore children's perceptions and experiences about the art in a first world context. This means that this thesis is about children who are not marginalized and

live their life in a Western world context, a situation that academic research frequently leaves behind.

Finally, Capoeira has been introduced in new socio-cultural contexts to help children in extremely difficult circumstances to overcome their situations. Like refugee camps in the Middle East (NGO Bidna Capoeira, 2011), it has been or is utilized in poor neighborhoods in Jamaica (NGO Capoeira Alafia, 2012) and India (Capoeira Connections, 2012) and also to help immigrant children at the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) in Australia (On Line Opinion, 2012). Seeing how Capoeira can be used in such situations made me curious to learn more about how the art communicates ideas of healing, peace, resistance, liberation, freedom and resilience.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The work has been structured in 8 chapters in an attempt to respond the research question and the sub-research questions that guided this thesis. Thus, Chapter 1 Introduction; is the presentation unit, where I give insights to the choice of the topic, children who practice Capoeira in Norway and Spain, the aim of the research and its relevance. In Chapter 2 Background; I refer to the mythological and historical foundations of Capoeira, the modern era represented by the observation of capoeira as a Brazilian national sport, the creation of the first academies and its nowadays globalized practice. At the end of Chapter 2 I introduce the physical space of the settings and brief biographies of the teachers. Chapter 3 Theoretical Perspectives; is related to the theories and concepts utilized through this thesis. Thus it focuses on the social studies of children and childhood and its social construction. Concepts like childhood as a structural form, children's agency, embodiment, *habitus*, leisure activity and Capoeira as a syncretic Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestation are presented here to later support the analysis and discussion chapters. Chapter 4 Methodology; presents the research design as a not so multi-sited ethnography, the methods of data collection, analysis and ethical issues. Chapter 5 Reconstructing Children's Capoeira Class; re-presents an ideal class, showing the syncretic characteristics of the art. Chapter 6 Children's Perspectives, Perceptions and Experiences about

Capoeira goes in depth into children's embodiment of the art. Here I analyze the reasons children have to join the classes, their perceptions of the teachers and present their experiences during the training, showing cases where I observed exercising their agency, aspects they disliked about the class, what they liked, how they perceived it was training with adults, playing music, the *roda* and finally the importance of history to give meaning to their Capoeira practice. In the Discussion 7, I discuss Capoeira as a social space, as *habitus* and as a space where children exercise their agency. Finally in Chapter 8 I assess the principal findings of this research and then I make recommendations to future research on the topic.

2   BACKGROUND

Capoeira is an Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestation and expression that is challenging to define as it is commonly identified as a combination of a fight and a dance. It also involves music, songs and myths. It embraces rituals and a whole world vision connected to religious beliefs, philosophy and ways of living.

This chapter deals with the background of Capoeira, its myths, history and how its practice has travelled from Brazil to the rest of the world and, specifically, to Europe. I then will delimit Capoeira as it will be understood in this research and draw lines to activities that children practice during their classes in Norway and Spain.

2.1   The Myths of Capoeira

The origins or 'roots' of the art are not at all clear and its history is contradictory and ambiguous. There are many myths and master narratives around Capoeira which have formed its identity and helped to spread it around the world. According to Röhring (2005), citing Barthes, the function of myths is to talk about something in a simple way, purifying the things they talk about. In this way, the art disseminates an unaltered 'essence' from the foundational moment to present.

Following Röhring (2005), there are three foundational myths of Capoeira. The first states that Capoeira was originally from Central Africa and was completely transplanted by black people to Brazil. The second myth, related to romanticism, is that runaway slaves invented Capoeira it the *quilombos*[20] in Brazil. The third myth fostered by the nationalist ideology of the nineteenth century, states that the art has entirely Brazilian origins, signalizing that the word "Capo-eira" comes from the native Tupí-Guaraní people. This refers to a grassy place in a forest free from trees and bushes, an empty space where the war dance was practiced. Furthermore, the movements are imitations from local animals and were practiced by the Creole. These three

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[20] Quilombo: Maroon villages.

myths are still discussed in the academic research today and continue to be transmitted orally by Capoeira practitioners.

Finally, according to IPHAN (2007), recent studies have traced similar war dances in Central Africa and other countries that were part of the African Diaspora. However, it cannot be denied that cultures adapt and are re-constructed with influences of their surroundings. For Almeida (1986), besides the African roots, it is important to recognize the ruptures and continuities of Capoeira, fundamental changes occurred in Brazilian soil.

2.2   Capoeira History

Beyond the myths and the proven links of the art to ancestral African practices or to the Tupí-Guraní culture, today is clear that Capoeira has further developed in urban centers in Brazil, like the harbors of Rio de Janeiro, Salvador and Recife. Hence, Capoeira's history is recognized as a syncretic cultural urban manifestation that permeates the past and the present (IPHAN, 2007).

The oldest document referring to capoeira dates from 1789 and states that slave Adão[21], who was put in jail for practicing *capoeiragem[22]*, was released (IPHAN, 2007). According to Röhring Assunção (2005), the repression from the state against the *capoeiristas* was a constant during the reign of the Portuguese Empire in Brazil. Any slave or freeman caught *in flagrante* performing the art, although not causing any harm, would suffer immediate 'correction' in form of a brutal whipping. For Soares, cited in IPHAN (2007: 14-15), Capoeira between 1808-1850 had a rebel tradition with strong slave roots, which seduced those people from other social or legal conditions because of its malleability and resistance. Hence, Capoeira seems to apply not only to black slaves, but to all who suffer under the slavery system. According to Foucault (1991: 137) during the seventeenth and eighteenth century new forms of coercion started to operate over the body. Through methods of discipline that partitioned time and space, social institutions created a new political anatomy and new mechanics of power which assured societal domination and control. These disciplines, made possible a meticulous control over the operations of the body,

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[21] Adão: Is the Portuguese version of the name Adam. Interestingly, it coincides with the first character of the Bible.
[22] Means Capoeira, putting emphasis in its philosophical aspects.

assuring a constant subjection of its forces and imposing upon them a relation of docility-utility. These 'disciplines' became general formulas of domination. In this context, *capoeiragem* signified liberation from the submission of slavery days.

From 1850, the art became more popular and gained adepts through diverse social classes in Brazil. According to IPHAN (2007), intellectuals, military and aristocrats started to practice the art, becoming a phenomenon that marked strongly the social life in Rio de Janeiro. However, although slavery was abolished in 1888 marking the ending of the Empire, the practice of Capoeira continued being contemplated as an offence against the public order and was considered a dangerous and improper behavior by most of the elites.

Following Röhring (2005), it is interesting to highlight that only after the *Republica Federativa do Brasil*[23] was established in 1889 was the practice of capoeira legally criminalized. Following the theories of the epoch like Social Darwinism, Positivism, and the ideas of white superiority, capoeira was observed as a threat, as an African barbarism and as a hideous lower class practice. Therefore, the new government dedicated one chapter of the Brazilian Criminal Code of 1890 on 'Vagrants and Capoeiras', with the goal to extinct and eliminate the art which was considered an obstacle of progress. During this period, according to IPHAN (2007), the police repressed the capoeira groups with extreme violence, especially in Rio de Janeiro and Recife. Many practitioners were imprisoned and banished to the island Fernando de Noronha.

The *capoeiristas* were informal or street workers, who lived from intermittent and sporadic occupations and who, due to their irregular work rhythm, had periods of free time and of entertainment. Besides their work they were also trouble makers. Many of them lived in the streets, enjoyed parties, drank, played capoeira and sometimes they killed. In short, they transgressed the patterns and rules of the public order. Newspapers of the time commonly characterized Capoeira as a fight, though this cultural manifestation was conquering its space in society little by little. According to Röhring (2005), although it was illegal, a growing middle class and parts of the elite started to challenge this discourse. Capoeira started to become a

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[23] Federal Republic of Brazil, known just as Brazil.

popular amusement during different celebrations in the streets, related also to *candomblé*[24]. In an interesting perspective, Coêlho de Araújo (2005) states that during this period it was the children who started to practice Capoeira in a less violent and more playful way than adults, who contributed to its free practice in streets and public squares. According to the author, it was the children who changed Capoeira as a violent fight to a playful game, losing the dangerous sense against public safety.

Seeking a new Brazilian identity for the Republic in times of romantic ideals, there was an ideological shift, taking distance from the colonizers Portuguese and seeing the enslaved African as inferior. The elite concentrated on the natives who provided an example of life in harmony with nature. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the idea of the *mestiço*[25] started to appear as an inspiration that would help to construct an image of a homogenous social totality. Following Röhring (2005), during the 1880s the two founding texts of capoeira studies associate the art with the *mestiço*. However, the art would remain illegal for several years, and the prejudices of capoeira associated with vagrancy, crime and marginality would remain to today.

2.3   National Sport, Bimba, Pastinha & the Generation of the Academies

The increasing rivalries between the imperialist nations prior to World War I amplified the necessity of well-trained male populations for military purposes. For example, following Röhring (2005), after Japan defeated Russia in the war in 1905, many Ju-jitsu masters started to travel around the world to show their skills and to challenge local fighters. In Norway, gymnastics became compulsory in urban schools for boys in 1889 (Zoglowek, 2012).

The case of Brazil, the elite following the nationalist *belle époque* ideals sought a national fighting technique turning their attention towards capoeira. According to IPHAN (2007), slave capoeiristas gained prestige due to their participation in the war with Paraguay of 1867-1870. In 1907, an anonymous official of the Brazilian army published the "Guide to Capoeira or the

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[24] *Candomblé*: Is an important Afro-Brazilian religion which has influenced samba and even the famous Carnival in Rio de Janeiro (IPHAN, 2007).
[25] Mestiço: Maroon.

Brazilian Gymnastics", the first effort to synthesize the different movements of the art (Röhring, 2005). According to IPHAN (2007), in 1910, the federal deputy Coelho Neto and Luiz Murat presented a project to make the learning of Capoeira compulsory in every school and barrack. In 1928, Anibal Burlamaqui designed a manual called "National Gymnastics (Capoeiragem) Methods and Rules"[26] for the instructional teaching of Capoeira (Röhring, 2005). The art started to be observed as a value, as an authentic representation of Brazilian culture and especially as the Brazilian physical education. The focus was on the physical improvement and the martial art, capoeira without songs and musical instruments. Thus, this new view expanded the places where capoeira could be practiced and its socialization process was marked the improvement in the athletic and sportive movements (Röhring, 2005; IPHAN, 2007). Although at this time capoeira was still illegal because of the law of 1890, the police started to tolerate it as long as it was not violent (Taylor, 2007).

Thus, Capoeira had been slowly molded and codified, and began fitting into a process of modernization and discipline that started to establish rules and order, and that would be followed by the building of the first capoeira academy by *mestre* Bimba in 1932. According to IPHAN (2007), the literature about capoeira in Bahia divides its history when *mestre* Bimba started to teach with his new method. For Sonada, De Olivera, & Marchi Júnior (2009), this was a radical change in the learning-teaching process because from that moment on capoeira began to be taught through systematic training lessons. This event gave birth to modern Capoeira, a new style recognized as *Luta Regional Baiana*[27] or *Capoeira Regional* and would consolidate during the 1930s. All these changes occurred in a historical context of institutional renovation of the Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestations which searched for legal, social, and political legitimization. It was also a period that saw an increasing devotion to physical culture in the Brazilian elite and educated classes.

According to Frederico José de Abreu (referred to in IPHAN, 2007), it was due to the initiatives of Manuel dos Reis Machado (1900-1974), best known as *mestre* Bimba, that capoeira was

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[26] "Ginástica Nacional (Capoeiragem) Metodizada e Regrada" in Portuguese.
[27] Luta regional baiana: Bahian regional fight.

officially recognized by the law, incorporating the art in a new academic space and expanding into other social segments and institutions.

> "The advent of Mestre Bimba in the earlier thirties and the diffusion of his work marks the beginning of modern-day Capoeira. In addition to becoming accepted as a social activity, a challenging game, and a national sport, Capoeira also developed as a means of self-development and an expression of freedom for anyone dealing with his or her own self and social constraints, especially those who struggle to survive in the present economic situation of Brazil" (Almeida, 1986: 5).

Soon, Capoeira became recognized as a sport, and *mestre* Bimba introduced white uniforms for his *discípulos*[28]. In 1937, the same year that Getúlio Vargas took Brazilian power through a *coup d état*, the new government of the *Estado Novo* started to decriminalize capoeira, and Bimba was authorized to maintain his academy *Centro de Cultura Física e Capoeira Regional*[29]. During this period Capoeira was perceived as the only authentic Brazilian martial art, though the *Capoeira Angola* practitioners did not subscribe to this view and still state that the practice had African origins. The most important representative of *Capoeira Angola* was Vicente Joaquim Ferreira Pastinha (1889-1981), best known as *mestre* Pastinha, who co-founded the *Centro Esportivo de Capoeira Angola* [30], which later became famous as *mestre* Pastinhas' academy. Although several other *mestres* practiced and taught also the Angola style, his academy became dominant and a model of how to play Capoeira Angola.

Mestre Bimba and Pastinha were both responsible for the expansion of the Bahian way to play Capoeira throughout other states of Brazil. Thus, they had gained the respect from society and consideration of contemporary intellectuals, artists and politicians who legitimated them as Capoeira *mestres* and, beyond that, as representatives of popular culture. During the middle of the twenty century, both *mestres* transformed themselves into the principal references of Capoeira in Bahia and laid the foundation for the modernization of Capoeira. It was then that Capoeira become known at the national level and received broad recognition from intellectuals

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[28] Discípulos: Disciples, students, pupils.
[29] Centre for Physical Culture and Regional Capoeira.
[30] Sport Centre for Capoeira Angola.

and tourists that appreciated the *rodas*. Hence, from 1950s the first groups of *capoeiristas* started to travel around the country (IPHAN, 2007).

2.4   A Globalized Practice: Travelling from Brazil to Europe

Starting in the 1960s and 70s, Capoeira truly became a globalized practice (Röhring, 2005; Taylor, 2007; Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012). This means that Capoeira is part of the globalization(s) processes, which is understood here as "a set of unequal exchanges in which a certain artifact, condition, entity or local identity extends its influence beyond its local or national borders and, in so doing, develops an ability to designate as local another rival artifact, condition, entity or identity" (De Sousa Santos, 2006: 396).

This transnational process has been possible thanks to the initial work of several *mistress* and teachers who, especially during the 1970s and 80s, left Brazil seeking better living opportunities, principally in the USA and in Europe (Cerqueira, 2007; Taylor, 2007; Delamont & Stephens, 2008). Through this migration the art left its local and marginal origins in Brazil and became a globalized practiced. The process has been successful, and today Capoeira classes are found in more than 150 countries across five continents (IPHAN, 2007). There are no formal studies about the quantity of Capoeira, though it can be found in diverse cities like Buenos Aires, Moscow, Tokyo, Jerusalem, Cairo and Luanda, just to mention a few and also in smaller urban areas and towns.

In this framework, this once repressed and persecuted syncretic cultural manifestation form in Brazil has been moving successfully from the periphery to the core industrialized states and to the whole world. According to (de Sousa, 2006: 397) "[t]he international division of the production of globalization tends to assume the following pattern: core countries specialize in globalized localisms, while peripheral countries only have the choice of localized globalisms". Capoeira, penetrating different cultures, socio-economical statuses and ages in whole world (Anderson, 2001; Delamont & Stephens, 2008), would thus represent a globalized localism and an insurgent cosmopolitanism, a way of resistance from the periphery of the system (Röhring, 2005; Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012). The practitioners of Capoeira, both children and adults, are

known as *capoeiristas*, and trainings are mostly arranged by diasporic Brazilians (De Campos Rosario, Stephens, & Delamont, 2010) like my experience in Spain, though also everyday more by locals and foreigner non-Brazilian teachers (Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012), as I observed during fieldwork in Norway.

Capoeira meetings or festivals are organized all around Europe by different groups and is usual to invite *mestres, contramestres*, *profesores*, *instrutores*[31] and other initiated *capoeiristas* from the same or other groups established in Brazil, the United States, European countries and as I experienced, also from Africa. More recently, non-Brazilian men and women and have achieved the status of capoeira *mestres*, though till now, as I experienced, this status was amply dominated by Brazilian men. However, I could meet diasporic Brazilian *mestres* in Lisbon and a transnational *mestra* in Barcelona, who learned the art in the United States and was one of the first foreign women to achieve this recognition (See: Acordeon, 2013). All the capoeira groups I visited had a Brazilian man as the leader of the organization. They were all called *mestre*. For de Campos, Stephens & Delamont (2010), outside Brazil, being Brazilian is used by certain *capoeiristas* to gain some authority in class, which is related to the originality and authenticity of the art.

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[31] Means instructor in English and is the first official teacher level in Capoeira (commonly followed by the stages of profesor, contramestre and mestre).

3   THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The main focus of this thesis is to explore children's experiences about their practice of Capoeira. For doing this, I followed Capoeira and children (Marcus, 1995), observing the social space of the art, classes with children in Norway and Spain, including visits to international events in Denmark and Portugal. Hence, the purpose is to amass a solid rationale from different ideas, concepts and knowledge in order to comprehend children's experience, perception and perspectives about Capoeira.

First I present what is nowadays understood as the social studies of children and childhood. Then, I describe theories of socialization and developmental psychology. Afterwards, I describe the social construction of childhood, childhood as a structural form and the relevance of considering children as social actors with agency. Next, I present an embodied perspective of childhood and Capoeira and the concept of *habitus*. I also discuss Capoeira as a diasporic and transnational social space. Finally, I show how Capoeira is understood as a leisure activity and describe the *roda de Capoeira* as a syncretic cultural Afro-Brazilian manifestation.

3.1   The Social Studies of Children & Childhood

Since the 1970's — coinciding with the starting of the spreading of Capoeira around the world — there has been an increasing intellectual and academic movement that promotes the idea that children and childhood should be researched in their own rights (Speier, 1976; James & Prout, 1990; Alanen, 2001; Qvortrup, 2002). During that period, there was also a heated debate among the UN member States while attempting to draft what later became the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989. This international law binding treaty, ratified by all member States, with the exception of Somalia and the United States, gave children the right to provision and protection, in a more or less paternalistic and welfare-oriented way, but also provided them a voice, establishing their right to be heard in all matters that concern them (Fottrell, 2000).

In 1962, the French historian Philippe Ariès published a foundational book for childhood studies titled "Centuries of Childhood"[32]. In his book, Ariès stated that the different relations and concepts understood by family, children and childhood change with time and are socially constructed. Furthermore, he stressed that "[i]n medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist" (Ariès, 1962: 128). Instead of being considered part of natural development, childhood only emerged as a modern construction starting in the mid-eighteenth century, he argued. For other authors like Pollock (1983) or Hendrick (1992), the idea of childhood existed before this time, but it was conceived of differently. Despite the fact that many historians and academics like Pollock and Hendrick have undermined Ariès ideas, he still remains a key figure in the historiography of childhood studies (James, Jenks, & Prout, 2006). He was one of the first academics to draw attention to the possibility of a changing understanding of childhood over time, meaning that is socially constructed (Staiton Rogers & Staiton Rogers, 1998).

Moreover, some claim that yet another paradigm in the study of childhood was emerging (James & Prout, 1990). For Qvortrup (2002) this is a "breakthrough", and a "conceptual liberation" to research with children about childhood. This vision, states that "childhood is both constructed and reconstructed both for children and by children" (James & Prout, 1990: 7) and considers childhood a social construction and as a social category of analysis like race, gender, religion or social class (Alanen, 2001; Qvortrup, 2002, 2009).

This idea of a new school of thought is criticized by Ryan (2008), who argues that the "new paradigm" does not exist because writers and thinkers have written from children's perspectives for centuries. Nevertheless, Hardman (cited in James & Prout, 1990: 7) states that "both women and children might perhaps be called 'muted groups' i.e. unperceived or elusive groups (in terms of anyone studying a society)". Furthermore, according to Anne-Marie Ambert (Qvortrup, 2009), until the eighties of last century, studies on children and childhood was near absence in mainstream classical and modern sociology. Finally, childhood studies and the sociology of childhood, is a "paradigm shift" (Lee, 2001), and offers new perspectives to observe children and

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[32] *L'Enfant et la Vie Familiale sous l'Ancien Régime* (1960) was the original title of the French version.

childhood in contrast to traditional theories like the socialization theory of structural functionalism of Talcott Parsons and the developmental psychology of Jean Piaget.

3.2 The Social Construction of Childhood

The theories of socialization and child development remain ahistorical (Toren, 1993). In contrast, the social constructionist approach to children and childhood observes the different ideas and concepts about them as products of diverse worldviews. This implies that the understanding of children and childhood varies across cultures and historically, even within the same culture (Woodhead & Montgomery, 2007). "[W]ithin a socially constructed, idealist world there are no essential forms of constraints. Childhood does not exist in a finite and identifiable form" (James, Jenks, & Prout, 2006: 27). Thus, childhood is an institution that is constructed and re-constructed thanks to multiple negotiations that occur within the society. Children are included in this process, co-constructing childhood in a particular cultural and historical period of time.

For Jenks (1982) childhood cannot be understood properly if observed as only a natural phenomenon. According to James & Prout (1990: 7, referring to La Fontaine, 1979), "[t]he immaturity of children is a biological fact of life but the way in which this immaturity is understood and made meaningful is a fact of culture" (James & Prout, 1990:). Regarding to Jenks (1982), the social distinction made between children and adults is not merely related to their physical differences or to the natural growing process of children bodies, but rather, childhood should be observed as a social construction.

> "Childhood is to be understood as a social construct, it makes reference to a social status delineated by boundaries incorporated within the social structure and manifested through certain typical forms of conduct, all of which are essentially related to a particular setting" (Jenks, 1982: 10).

This conception of childhood leaves behind the theories of the child development in psychology. It understands humans as products and producers of their own history and children and adults as living through an open-ended process (Toren, 1993). Thus, the paths through which children move to adulthood are associated with different social conventions according to local cultures

(Jenks, 1982). They also may be influenced by transnational cultures like Capoeira (Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012).

Following Jenks (1982), the transition from one social status to another is accompanied by a social practice which, as a rite of passage or initiation, turns the status of a child to an adult. This process is also inserted within institutional forms like the family, kindergarten, school, leisure and a-cultural activities, work, and ultimately all kind of agencies that help to keep maintaining the boundaries of child and the adult. In her research on childhood, Toren (1993) argues that ontogeny, meaning the origins and development of an organism, is a historical process, and "[t]his recognition itself requires the dissolution of the established dichotomies between biology and culture, and individual and society" (Toren, 1993: 461). From the social constructionist viewpoint (Jenks, 1982; Prout & James, 1990; Qvortrup, 2002), children are observed as active agents with whom adults construct and re-construct society. At the same time, children and childhood are worthy to be researched in their own rights

3.2.1 Childhood as Structural Form

Childhood is essentially a generational phenomenon (Alanen, 2001). The concept of the generation is fundamental to the study of childhood because it positions children and adults as a binary social structure within society. The difference creates a constructed bipolar social position where both children and adults have identities marked by their boundaries through social distinctions.

> "The child, therefore, cannot be imagined except in relation to a conception of the adult, but essentially it becomes impossible to generate a well defined sense of adult, and indeed adult society, without first positing the child" (Jenks, 1996: 3).

For Alanen (2001), the generational perspective situates children/childhood and adults/adulthood always in a relation of opposition. Thus childhood can only be constructed in relation to adulthood and adulthood in relation to childhood. However, these concepts can be researched in relation to other structures like gender, social class, religion and ethnicity, among others. For Alanen, generation is a concept that is socially constructed and can be observed, from a

childhood studies perspective, in three different "branches": 1) Sociology of children focusing on studying directly children in their daily life; 2) Deconstructive sociology of childhood, which puts attention on the discourses, ideas, images and knowledge's about children and childhood in society and; 3) Structural sociology of childhood, which studies childhood as a relatively fixed form. Here children are observed as passing through a certain period of time in life, though as a structure that remains as a permanent societal element.

> "In structural terms childhood has no temporal beginning and end and cannot, therefore, be understood periodically. Rather, it is understood as a *permanent form* of any generational structure" (Qvortrup 2009: 23).

Thus, following Qvortrup (2002), childhood as a period is experienced individually, though it is a collective generational transition from that time to adulthood. Otherwise, childhood as a permanent structural form maintains and has permanence. Children grow and move to become adults, though childhood as a segment remains, incorporating new children to experience their own childhood. Thus, though the understanding of childhood changes historically, it remains as a social structure and has different ways of continuity and change. Childhood is "*both* constantly changing *and* a permanent structural form within which all children spend their personal childhood period" (Qvortrup 2009: 26). For Alanen (2001: 13), "the task of the sociologist is now to link the empirical manifestations of childhood at the level of children's lives with their macro-level context". Thus, according to Qvortrup (2009), the focus should be placed on the social structures and the different mechanisms that impact and "determine" the construction of the imagined childhood and children's lives.

3.2.2   Social Actors with Agency: The Relevance of Children's Perspective

Traditional theories related to children and childhood like socialization in sociology, and cognitive development in psychology, have focused their research on a normative framework based on an adult ideological viewpoint (Speier, 1976). In general terms, this means that children are born in a certain historical and cultural context and thus they must adapt (e.g., socialize, develop, grow, mature) to meet the social conventions of society. Moreover, this perspective has

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influenced research in the way that children have been consistently inquired as conditioned or shaped by their social environment. Hence, according to Qvortrup (2002), children are observed as undergoing a preparation to be valuable in the future as adults, and their activities are typically considered as "childish" and purposeless. Following him, children's perspectives have been oppressed inside the social sciences and must be liberated by researching their own worldviews.

For James & Prout (1990: 8), "[c]hildren are and must be seen as active in the construction and determination of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live". Furthermore, they are active subjects influencing and being influenced by social structures. This means that children are and must be understood as social actors with agency who shape their lives and are shaped by their contextual conditions.

For Robson, Bell and Klocker, agency is produced in a relational way, depending on personal, contextual, and structural variables:

> "Agency is understood as an individual's own capacities, competencies, and activities through which they navigate the contexts and positions of their life worlds, fulfilling many economic, social, and cultural expectations, while simultaneously charting individual/collective choices and possibilities for their daily and future lives" (Robson, Bell, & Klocker, 2007: 135).

In this fashion, children are considered agents who negotiate with social institutions and co-construct with adults their social spaces. In my research, I observe children as co-constructors of the reality established in Capoeira because through their practice they impact the social space.

Part of the paradigm shift in the social studies of children and childhood (James & Prout, 1990) is related to the fact that it became relevant to research how "the events of everyday life look like in childhood… [and] …the interactional processes at work when children and adults say and do things together" (Speier, 1976: 170). Following Qvortrup (2002), children should be recognized in their own practice or activities and not be defined in comparison to adults' praxis. From a social constructionist approach, children and adults are both observed as "makers", "doers" and "constructors" of their life world. "*Children are and historically always were constructively involved in any prevailing system of production*" (Qvortrup, 2002: 56). Following him, there is a "diachronic division of labour" which produces a paradox, because "while it is generally

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accepted that children's schoolwork is indispensable for their future work as adults, their *current* school activities are not normally counted as valuable" (Qvortrup, 2002: 57). Likewise, many of children's everyday practices are considered as irrelevant, forgetting that many of their capacities, intelligence and creativity are generated via their quotidian activities and interactions with peers and adults. Finally, children are considered social actors with agency who through their practice, many times "invisibly", produce and re-produce Capoeira and society.

3.3 Embodiment & Habitus

In this section of the theoretical chapter I present two key concepts used during this study, embodiment and *habitus*. Both are deeply related to the way the people act in the world and furthermore, they have reciprocal implications. Embodiment is related to the phenomenological theories of Merleu-Ponty (1962). According to Bourdieu (1994), Merleu-Ponty was interested in the human sciences and in biology. He argues that ritual practices put into practice principles of generative *habitus* through the experience. Maturana & Verden-Zöller, from a cognitive-biological-psychological perspective afirm "[a]ny particular manner of being human is cultural" (Maturana & Verden-Zöller, 2008: 135). For them, our total human beings ocurr in this interplay between our body and the relational space. For Bourdieu (1990), this relation between em-body and social space, as he calls it, is solved though the *habitus*. Next I describe both concpets and their relation to this research.

3.3.1 An Embodied Perspective of Childhood & Capoeira

Merleu-Ponty argues that human begins live within a historically and socially situated body. Their visceral experience occurs through the mind and the body at the same time (James, Jenks & Prout, 2006). For Lewis (1995), language cannot exhaust the potential meaning of the experience of movement, and thus, the human body is the essential site for the construction of subjectivities and sodalities (non-kin groups organized with a specific goal). Moreover, Toren states that embodiment refers also to "those unconscious processes we constitute as knowledge

in the body - e.g. particular ways of moving" (Toren, 1993: 462). For Bourdieu, a pedagogic action and thus the practice of Capoeira can be defined as *modus operandi*, a "practical mastery [that] is transmitted in practice, in its practical state, without attaining the level of discourse[33]" (Bourdieu, 1997: 87). Following Bourdieu (1997), children do not imitate "models", but the actions of other people. He observes the body experience as a mythically structured space, where body and space are integrated, forming a relationship between man and the natural world through biological and social reproduction.

Following Maturana & Verden-Zöller, the embodied human experience can be characterized as starting with a certain feeling or perception of the world which creates an emotioning state. Afterwards, humans give meaning to the event through socially constructed symbols.

> "In the act of symbolization the observer makes one thing stand for another, but it is the emotioning involved in what the observer does that determines what happens in the moment of living through symbols. It is the emotioning that in fact gives a symbol its character as an aspect of human life. Thus, for example, rituals that we treat in our modern cultural emotioning centered in control and domination as revealing symbolic manipulation of transcendental powers, under another emotioning that is centered on trust, rituals constitute symbolic recreations that conserve in us our awareness of our systemic inclusion in the coherences of the biosphere and the cosmos" (Maturana & Verden-Zöller, 2008: 221).

Accordingly, when children (and adults) practice Capoeira or move their bodies in the Capoeira circle they can observe it and interpret it differently: as a game, as a fight, as a dance and/or as a ritual, depending on their experience and their emotioning. Thus, children's perspective will vary according to the individual child and his/her experience as part of the Capoeira group. Hence, the child can be moving inside or being a participant of the circle and this will be, as "the product of systematic application of principles coherent in practice" (Bourdieu, 1997: 88) embodied as an experience of emotioning and a certain *habitus*.

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[33] "Notions of child, children and childhood are all viewed as discursive formations through which ideas, images and 'knowledge's children and childhood are conveyed in society. Often incorporated in broader social models of action and cultural practices, they also provide cultural scripts and rationales for people (including children themselves) to act on and as children" (Alanen, 2001: 12-13)

3.3.2   Habitus

For Mauss (2006), each society has a distinct *habitus*, different attitudes towards the body which are related to education and imitation processes. All "techniques of the body" are assembled actions for/by the individual through all his/her education and by the whole society and the place he/she occupies in it. For Mauss (2006) the *habitus* varies across history and cultures, gender, religions, and age. He observes the techniques of the body as a socio-psycho-biological phenomenon.

In the theory of practice of Bourdieu (1990) also observes the object of knowledge as historically and socially constructed. For him, following Mauss, the structures that determinate a class or group conditions the structures of the *habitus*. These are the base for every subsequent perception and meaning that each individual or collective give to each experience.

> "As an acquired system of generative schemes objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted, the *habitus* engenders all the thoughts, all the perceptions, and all the actions consistent with those conditions, and not others... whose limits are set by the historically and socially stated conditions of its production" (Bourdieu, 1997: 95).

From this perspective, it can be argued that the regular practice of Capoeira has a certain impact on the basis schemes of perception and appreciation through which children comprehend the world. This is especially relevant, because "[u]nlike scientific estimations, which are corrected after each experiment according to rigorous rules of calculation, the anticipations of the *habitus*, practical hypotheses based on past experience, give disproportionate weight to early experiences" (Bourdieu, 1990: 54). Hence, the *habitus* influences an individual's generative schemes, impacting the production of thoughts, perceptions, actions and manners, especially in children, because they have more time embody their' practice.

For Delamont & Stephens (2008: 61) "the core aspects of the *habitus*[34] of capoeira outside Brazil are presented to the students as inalienably and inexorably Brazilian". Following it can be said that the earlier and longer children practice Capoeira, the heavier the weight of these "Brazilian" experiences and their effect on them will be. Nevertheless, as children practices are inserted in a

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[34] The *Italics* are mine.

diasporic, and also a transnational context, their experience of the Capoeira *habitus* is being modified. Actually, I think that more than "Brazilian", they relate to an Afro-Brazilian transnational *habitus*. Following Anderson (2001) they are *capoeiristas*.

> "The habitus is both a state of mind and a bodily state of being. At the individual level, a person's biology, and biography, gives him or her a unique habitus. Simultaneously, however, that person is also shaped by the collective history of any group(s) to which he or she belongs" (Delamont & Stephens, 2008: 59).

The *habitus* is individually embodied and socially constructed, and affects the person as a whole. For Delamont & Stephens (2008) referring to Wainwright et. al. (2006), the group of Capoeira can be considered as embedded by an institutional *habitus* because these groups have specific styles and cultures. Children acquire thus an individual *habitus* related to Capoeira an institutional Capoeira group *habitus*.

3.4   Capoeira as a Diasporic & Transnational Social Space

There are multiple definitions of Capoeira. It is SeeFor Delamont & Stephens (2008), Capoeira is a globalized phenomenon constituted as a diasporic social space because most of the teachers, especially the Afro-Brazilian express *saudade*[35] for Brazil and present themselves as self-exiled, nomadic Brazilians. For Wulfhorst & Vianna (2012), Capoeira is a transnational social space because besides the circulation of Brazilians, also foreign *capoeiristas*, ideas, commodities, feelings of belonging and identities disseminate. During my fieldwork I observed both realities, Brazilian teachers who told me that they would return to Brazil, but also European teachers, who felt that they identity was related to Capoeira, glocalizing the art.

In the case of the children that participated in this research, some had an everyday relation to a Brazilian *mestre* in Spain and to a European teacher in Norway. Thus, in this exploration, the diasporic and the transnational social space blended. According to Anderson (2001), it is common that children and adults have the opportunity to share with other "local" *capoeiristas*,

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[35]*Saudade*: Nostalgic, homesick longing.

thus I observe the space more as transnational or "hybrid". However, both groups of children and others in Denmark and Portugal related to established *mestres* coming from Brazil, and with other who came for participating in specific events like festivals, *batizados* and workshops. Moreover, all children were constantly exposed to the Brazilian Portuguese language, to Capoeira values and beliefs, to Afro-Brazilian music, instruments and thus to different identities. Capoeira thereby generates a "cross-cultural", "hybrid" or "transnational" context. It "constitutes a complete cultural field where diverse elements of Brazilian culture are communicated, shared and exported" (Robitaille, 2010: 1).

3.5   Capoeira as a Syncretic Cultural Manifestation

Capeira is a multifaceted experience. Noawadays is a globalized diasporic (Delamont & Stephens, 2008) and a transnational practice (Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012: 85). This syncretic blending game will be considered as a "'magic theater' where situations that arise in life itself and between people are staged" (Capoeira, 2002: 4).

According to IPHAN (2008: 6), Capoeira characterizes for being a multifaceted and multidimensional cultural phenomenon. It is a dance, a fight or a game, depending on the historical moment, on the adjacent context and on the objectives of the actors involved. Thus, Capoeira is related to its embodied practice while training, though it relates especially to its performance, while moving in the capoeira circle, though also while practicing a song, or playing instruments on the beach and while practicing the movements alone at home, among many others. Thus, Capoeira relates nowadays to a certain practicing social space, the people, the *capoeiristas* conform Capoeira, and following mestre Acordeon from a workshop I assited in Barcelona, "everyone has his own Capoeira, yours is not better than mine, nicer, nothing, everyone has his unique way to play Capoeira, everyone has its own *ginga*".

Thus, Capoeira related to the *capoeiristas*, Brazilians, Argentineans, Norwegians, Germans, Astrualians or Palestinian, all can be *capoeiristas* in their own way. Thus, Capoeira is experiencing through the globalization process a transformation that children are leading because they are the *mestres* from tomorrow. Depending how they experience the art during every

training, during every roda is forming an embodied knowledge that will became and *habitus* in the long run. Thus, following Maturana & Verden-Zöller (2008), the important aspect in this process is the emotioning, do children have a good time or a bad time. Do they related nice memories and challenges or monotonies and shame? This are the aspects that are in reality at stake when taking about children practicing Capoeira. If more children relate positively to Capoeira outside than in Brazil, this will end affecting the Capoeira form in its own birthplace. The *roda de Capoeira* is its fundamental social space to embody the music, the trickery, the *malandragem*[36], the fight, the dance, the music, the songs, the history, its philosophy and furthermost, it should be a space to embody love experiences because, following Maturana & Verden-Zöller (2008) these create our humanness. This follows a lineage system generation after generation, though the playing between the mother and her child and the Capoeira *roda* appears, I could argue, as an ideal place to develop playfulness in our competitive modern society.

Playing capoeira in the roda de Capoeira is an open dialog in a constant flow between two persons who communicate to each other mostly through body language. According to Almeida (1986), exclusively by playing in the *roda de capoeira* it is possible to experience its essence. From a phenomenological perspective (Merleau-Ponty, 1962), the experience of playing capoeira can be understood as an embodied route through which the world is first perceived and afterwards interpreted. In the same way, following Maturana Romesin & Verden-Zöller (2008), it is through a biological process of emotioning that the observer gives meaning symbolizing through language. Thus, playing capoeira can be defined as a constant emotioning through a communicative flow of two bodies interacting, contended in a social space (Bourdieu, 1989). This social space can be diasporic (Delamont & Stephens, 2008) and/or transnational (Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012) and is established especially in the *roda de Capoeira*, through the capoeiristas.

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[36] It refers to the lifestyle and actions of the *malanadro*, the "bad boy".

3.6 Capoeira as a Leisure Activity

While following Capoeira and children during my fieldwork, I experienced their social space in general, as "insulated and distanced" (James, Jenks, & Prout, 2006: 37). While in Spain I observed many times adults *capoeiristas* practicing the art in squares and parks or "in the streets", yet children were absent from these kind of "dangerous" places. In contrast to these public places, during the fieldwork I observed that children related to Capoeira more as an organized adult activity. Capoeira was thus associated with a formal training time that was part of after school leisure activities. It appeared as a foreigner cultural activity which mixed especially martial art, acrobatics, dance and music.

Olwig and Gulløv (2003) argue that children in developed societies are separated from the rest of society and are under close supervision of adults. In these special spaces for children, they are taught social values and are safe from harmful company, marginality and pollution. For Frønes, the "efforts to minimize risks converge with emphasis on controlling children's environments and activities by scheduling their time" (2009: 282). Many of the children that participated in this research trained in Capoeira one hour per week, though also participated in other leisure activities like football, rhythmic gymnastics, piano, violin or horse riding, among others.

The training of capoeira is distinct from other leisure activities because it is a living cultural manifestation related to the past through the history of the Afro-Brazilian community, but also to its present development involving diasporic and transnational capoeiristas as participants on a global scale. "Cultural activities confirm cultural roots and operate as mechanisms of social distinction, and they are important to the transfer of traditions as well as for the evolving of possible pre-figurative patterns" (Frønes, 2009: 283). Thus, basic philosophical ideas inside the Capoeira world like the characteristics of *malandragem*[37]. For Brazilian anthropologist Roberto DaMatta, *malandragem* is "the Brazilian art of using ambiguity as a tool for living" (cited in Robitaille, 2010: 5-6). Thus, this kind of ideas and conceptions form part of the everyday vocabulary in the Capoeira practice. Initially performed by slaves and lower classes in Brazil, these ideas have penetrated many spheres of Brazilian society, according to DaMatta. Maybe

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[37] *Malandragem*: Has a meaning related to Capoeira's philosophy, to someone who cheats, uses trickery and manipulation to take advantages over others and still has a bohemian life.

nowadays, through the practice of Capoeira, these ideas, values and beliefs are being adopted by European middle-class children in Norway and Spain.

However, the *roda* is the traditional social and physical space where the expressions of Capoeira take place. The *roda de Capoeira* is the essential space where Capoeira is revealed in all its magnitude (IPHAN, 2007). Although it was in the *roda* that the traditional and the informal way of learning Capoeira took place before the era of the academies (Jungers Abib, 2006; Taylor, 2007), nowadays, especially in the global north, this is related to a physical education style of classes and training (Downey, 2008). Moreover, the teaching-learning process of Capoeira is not uniform and varies within Brazil and also worldwide (Delamont & Stephens, 2007). For Nestor Capoeira, "Capoeira is a 'school for life', a 'magic theatre' where the interaction between different energies (that happen and then happen again in different contexts with the same basic pattern) is staged and reproduced" (Capoeira, 2002: 15). Thus, Capoeira is embedded through the experience of the practitioners, going with/in them beyond the more or less formal teaching-learning process. Theoretically it can be stated that children who train in Capoeira regularly embody, in their own way, this syncretic cultural manifestation. For Bourdieu it is the living of the bodies in a certain time and space which enables them to comprehend the world:

> "it is in the dialectical relationship between the body and a space structured according to the mythico-ritual oppositions that one finds the form par excellence of the structural apprenticeship which leads to the em-bodying of the structures of the world, that is, the appropriating by the world of a body thus enabled to appropriate the world" (Bourdieu, 1997: 89).

According to Bourdieu (1997), the house is the principal locus for the objectification of generative schemes, though we can argue that the practice of Capoeira also has an impact on these generative schemes. The *roda de Capoeira*, as a mythical-ritual space, is created as a socially constructed space emphasizing social integration where there are no distinctions between men and women and children and adults (Anderson, 2001). According to Bourdieu (1997), the analysis of the objectified schemes of perception, thought and action is assembled through the *habitus*.

Finally, following Lewis, there exist linkages between the activities of everyday life and special practices like dances, festivities and rituals. "[H]owever a given group of people divide up their

world of movement and interaction, there frequently seem to be revealing patterns that link those divisions ironically: sometimes as captured in local terms and sometimes as observed by an outsider (or both)" (Lewis, 1995: 226). For Robitaille (2010: 6) "playing capoeira allows foreigners to embody a central value of Brazilian society".

The Capoeira classes in Norway and Spain had a regular schedule, were an activities lead by adults and followed, in this case all the characteristics of traditional leisure activity. As many everyday activities that we join, frequently these have implications that are often overlooked because they are felt as just a small part of life. However, these daily activities and routines have in reality an impact on the perceptions through our emotioning (Maturana & Verden-Zöller, 2008). Therefore, especially after longer periods of repetitions these create *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1990; 1996).

Finally, according to Anderson (2001), Capoeira in Copenhagen offered a social space where children and adults meet like peers, contributing to de-construction of the pre-existing social boundaries through the practice of the art.

4 METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I present the methodological approach I used to research the experiences that children have with Capoeira. I therefore explain the rationale of using a qualitative methodology in the research design, to explore the meanings that children give to their own experiences. Accordingly, I provide an overview of research on children's perspectives, the research design as a (somewhat) multi-sited ethnography, fieldwork sites and sampling.

As it can be observed in the Appendix 4 – Overview of the methods used during the research in "units[38]", 21 children participated from semi-structured individual, group interviews or informal conversations. From these, 9 were girls and 12 boys. In total also 3 female teachers and 11 male teachers, while 4 adult women capoeiristas and 8 adults man participated in this research. From the 19 parents that participated, 9 were women and 10 men. Finally, a total of 33 units of classes or other were observed, and I experience 5 international meetings.

The way I addressed the ethical issues, which are especially relevant when researching with children, are also treated here. Then, I present the methods of data collection, the process of data analysis and other relevant aspects to consider when conducting research with children in multiple settings, like language and the problematic of using a translator. Is important to highlight that all the information gathered during fieldwork, as well as possible information that could lead to the informants was anonymized. Thus, all names that appear in this thesis are related to the reality though they are fictional. Furthermore, all pictures used to explain certain

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[38] By "unit" I mean the time-period of observation, this means it is an embodied experience unit. For example, the standard Capoeira classes took 1 hour, but the unit could extend this duration, because as I followed the children who practiced Capoeira more than merely observing the classes, when they joined adults' classes I stayed observing and writing "thick descriptions" (Geertz, 2006). During workshops and international meetings, and in the cases of performances in a hotel, a theater and when accompanying a group to visit some schools, these periods of time, units, could vary. The variations went between 2 hours to 3 days. In the case of the 3 days workshops and meetings, the activities for adults normally included practicing movements and dances, breakfast, exercises, lunch, exercises, dinner and parties often including *forró*, *samba*, live music and sometimes *samba de roda* and Capoeira. Children though, according to my experience, participated mostly from the day-time activities (practicing movements and dances, breakfast, noon exercises, lunch and afternoon exercises). However, I observed that sometimes young-adult *capoeiristas* brought their babies and children to night activities. For more details see: Appendix 4 – Overview of the methods used during the research in "units".

situations that occurred during fieldwork are without distinguishable faces, and all original data was destroyed once I finished the analysis.

4.1   Researching Children's Perspectives

Children have been the "object" of research in social science, especially in cognitive psychology and socialization theories in sociology, since the start of the 20th century. Nevertheless it has been in the last decades that the academic interest has shift to observe them as "subjects" of research and social actors with agency (Robson, Bell, & Klocker, 2007; Tisdall, Davis & Gallagher, 2009). In this wave, researching children's perspectives, experiences and knowledge, is valuable on one hand because they are co-constructors of the social world they live in and, on the other, legally and ethically they have the right to be heard in things that matter to them (UNCRC, 1989).

Doing research with children today, from a childhood studies perspective, means considering them not in opposition to adults, as immature, irrational, incompetent, asocial and a-cultural. Instead, they should be viewed as human beings that are mature, rational, competent, social and autonomous enough to be studied in their own right (Speier, 1976; Prout & James, 1990; Qvortrup, 2002). Consequently, this has led some researchers to argue that it is paradoxical to view children as competent, yet at the same time there is an increasing awareness of creating new methods and techniques to adjust to them. Following Kjørholt, Moss, & Clark (2005), this dichotomous construction should be broken to create liberating discourses. Thus, the researcher should accommodate and encourage a culture of relationship-building and listening with children, moving constantly in relation with them in positions of dependence and independence. Therefore Punch (2002) indicates that child-friendly methods help to balance the position of children and childhood in an adult society with adults' attitudes towards children. Children have, in general, a different development of language comprehension and communication. In this sense, through qualitative methods like interviews and participant observation, I strived to make more equal the positions between the children and me as researcher.

There was a constant seeking of researching "with" children instead of "about" children. I also used child-friendly methods like drawings, photographs and tours (Punch, 2002; Clark, 2005) though with different results; some of them, like photographs, did not work well. But beyond that, I had constantly in my mind that in qualitative inquiry "the researcher is the instrument" (Patton, 1990; Solberg, 1996). I maintained an open and awake approach and through reflexivity I was able to evaluate in-situ the necessary changing or not of the technique. Following Gallacher & Gallagher (2008: 513), I privileged an "immature methodology", so I was observing my own role and my own assumptions to change methods if needed. I focused on having a good attitude and spirit towards children and adults over a predefined method or technique and had the opportunity to work in a fluid way, enjoying serendipity and discovery (Corbin & Strauss, 2008: 12). I tried a "systematic curiosity" as Liebel recommends (Ennew & et al., 2009: 113).

4.2   Research Design: A (Somewhat) Multi-Sited Ethnography

The research design is the strategy that makes possible to investigate the research questions and should be systematic, manageable and also flexible (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). A not so multi-sited ethnography proved to be an appropriate approach for this thesis, as the research questions and the aim of the study is to explore the embodied experiences, of children who practice a syncretic cultural manifestation in diverse settings.

> "[m]ulti-sited ethnographies define their objects of study through several different modes or techniques. These techniques might be understood as practices of construction through (preplanned or opportunistic) movement and of tracing within different settings of a complex cultural phenomenon given an initial, baseline conceptual identity that turns out to be contingent and malleable as one traces it" (Marcus, 1995: 106).

Accordingly, as explained in the introduction and in the theoretical chapter, Capoeira moved from Brazil through the whole world, especially in the last several decades (Röhring, 2005; Falcão, 2007; Taylor, 2007; de Campos, Stephens, & Delamont, 2010; Aceti, 2011). Thus, the focus of the research was to explore the embodied experiences, perceptions and perspectives of children who regularly trained Capoeira in a Norwegian urban area and in a rural Catalonian

town in Spain. In both places my approach was through fieldwork, which focused on participant observation and qualitative research interviews as principal data collection methods.

Further, I opportunistically visited other localities to include additional perspectives for the framework of this research. Following Hannerz (2003), multi-sited ethnography seeks to establish translocal linkages. For Hage, the notion of multi-sited ethnography is less helpful than the conceptualization of a "single geographically discontinuous site" (Hage, 2005: 463). Accordingly, I studied a transnational and diasporic cultural manifestation (Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012) as a global phenomenon that is related glocally to children and childhood. Thus I treated all the locations, disperse as they are following Hage (2005), not so multi-sited, though as just one site.

It is important to remark that there was no aspiration to compare groups or contexts, but rather to broaden the understanding of the experiences of children as a structural form (Qvortrup, Childhood as a Structural Form, 2009) to Capoeira. The research design made it possible to explore the circulation of the meanings that children and adults in different socio-cultural contexts provided to Capoeira. In accordance with Hage (2005), in this somewhat multi-sited ethnography, I focused, following Marcus (1995) on the metaphor and on people, thus the accent was located on Capoeira and the children.

4.2.1   Fieldwork Site(s)

The selection of different study areas or fieldwork sites is related to the characteristics of multi-sited ethnography, though understanding all fields as just one site (Hage, 2005). During the exploration, the selections were generally preplanned, but also opportunistic in some ways (Marcus, 1995). Hence, I follow Capoeira and the children who practiced the art as much as it was possible during my research time. To follow Capoeira meant that I had to use all my accessible resources (e.g., time, money, connections) to go after *mestres* or teachers and children practitioners.

Accordingly, I had two main field sites that were public-private physical spaces[39]: one located in an urban area in Norway and another in a rural Catalonian town in Spain. These two places where chosen as the core of the research because I had connections there. Nevertheless, besides Barcelona, where I was staying to visit the group of children at the rural town in Catalonia, I also visited a Balearic Island, Copenhagen in Denmark and Lisbon in Portugal to broaden my exploration of Capoeira and childhood. As Hannerz (2003) indicates, in this kind of research new insights develop and new opportunities come into sight to some extent by chance. I also explored Capoeira in diverse settings, ranging from training centers to schools, hotels and town squares. Across distinct cultures, nationalities, languages, socio-economic classes, ages, the theme of Capoeira and its perspective on children and childhood was a constant.

Not all sites are treated equally in multi-sited ethnography because there is no possibility to have a uniform set of fieldwork practices of the same intensity and quality. All multi-sited ethnographies vary in depth, in extension, in accessibility, in time, in trust and in knowledge (Marcus, 1995, 1999; Hannerz, 2003; Nadai & Maeder, 2005). Beyond that, "[t]o bring these sites into the same frame of study and to posit their relationships on the basis of first hand ethnographic research in both is the important contribution of ethnography" (Marcus, 1995: 100). There is an inevitable change from site to site; nevertheless, this is the nature of the field itself. Participants and the researcher change in time, though the possibility to observe social actors in a common horizon is especially important in our era of globalization. Regardless of the variability in quality or accessibility, following Hage (2005), researching different sites as globally spread, as a geographically non-contiguous site, can deliver a better understanding of the whole picture when observing the multi-sited as only one site.

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[39] For a detailed description of this space See: Appendix 2 – Physical Characteristics of Capoeira in Norway & Spain.

4.2.2   Sampling

To identify the units of research I used "snowball" sampling. Basically, this technique involves a first respondent suggesting new respondents to the researcher to continue the investigation and so on. Atkinson & Flint (2001) claim that snowball sample has advantages when exploring populations who are difficult to reach. The first step was to get to know the principal gatekeepers, which were the Capoeira teachers. Once I had explained to them the broad themes of the research and gotten their consent, I encountered successively the parents and the children. Strategically, I presented myself in Catalonia and in Norway during a Capoeira event called *batizado*. Here students meet to receive, depending on their advances, a first or new belt, and it is common that parents accompany them. After having the verbal consent of the teachers, they gave me in both sites a few minutes to briefly introduce myself to the Capoeira community and explain to them the aim of my exploration to all the people present. There were normally around 40 people including children, parents, other capoeiristas, families and friends. At the end of my presentations I asked them for their authorization to start the research. This accessing mode proved to be very effective: nobody refused to participate. Immediately after, I asked for doubts and answered the questions people had and requested the information and consent letters[40]. Although I insisted to get the consent letters back, it took a while for the parents to give them signed to me. I had to call and in some occasions I had the parents to send them per e-mail or fax even after I had left the site.

The participants of this research were 19 children, 10 girls and 9 boys aged between 5 and 12 years, who practiced Capoeira regularly in Norway and Spain. Many other children participated in the trainings on an irregular basis, though they were not included in this research. 3 teachers and 10 parents also participated.

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[40] See: Appendix 1 for an example of the letter.

4.3   Methods of Data Collection[41]

The methods of data collection are basically the techniques and tools that allow the researcher to get the information from the studied reality. While doing this somewhat multi-sited ethnography I used different methods of data collection. Solberg (1996) recommends avoiding assumptions about how children "are" and suggests to have an open attitude, a "certain ignorance of age" to gain knowledge about children and childhood in contemporary society. "This implies greater emphasis on the situational contexts within which children act and that we move our attention away from 'being' to 'doing'" (Solberg, 1996: 54).

Ethnography's design develops during fieldwork (O'Reilly, 2009). This method gave me the "opportunistic flexibility" to explore different settings and made possible the application of methods like participant observation and individual and group interviews with children and with adults. I also tried some more "innovative techniques[42] with children like drawings and photography, but with different results. In Spain the drawings were a good way to enter into the conversation with children, however it still was difficult to talk with the 5 years old Adriana and the 6 year old Daniela. I also had lack of resources like time and language, because children went to school and joined other leisure activities and spoke many times in Catalan to me. In the case of Norway the lack of language made it more difficult. I gave them a camera to take pictures during the training, but this in one hand inhibited them from taking part in the training, and in the other, it was, as in the case of Spain, hard to find a time to meet because most of them also participated from other activities. Furthermore, I was only able to have a conversation with them through a translator. Thus, unfortunately, I was never able to talk with the children about the pictures they took.

Finally, I collected data through the application of traditional methods like participant observation, semi-structured individual and group interviews, and informal conversations. My experience with techniques like drawings and photography showed me that these can be challenging and require the disposition of at least resources like time, language and some money

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[41] In Appendix 4 – Overview of the methods used during the research, you can find a table with a detailed insight into the applied methods in every setting.
[42] For innovative techniques in researching with children see: Clark & Moss (2001) & Clark (2005).

to buy materials. This can appear as something obvious, but based on prior experiences as researcher in the Global South, many times there is no money to buy not even some blank sheets and colorful pencils. I though, still believe, agreeing with Punch (2002), that to combine traditional methods with these "innovative" techniques can be an effective way of carrying out research with children. Next, I describe how participant observation and semi-structure individual and group interviews were implemented.

4.3.1   Participant Observation

The participant observation method was the first data collection technique I utilized across all the different settings I explored. Scholars like Fine & Sandstrom (1988), James & Prout (1990) and Kjørholt, Moss & Clark (2005), Abebe (2009), Ennew, et al. (2009), recommend this method to explore children's worldviews. Most of them claim that it is a valuable tool to research children's ideas, attitudes and experiences in their own right. Furthermore, Ennew et. al. affirm that "[o]bservation is the basis of all good research" (Ennew et. al., 2009: 5.9) and may be may be structured or unstructured. According to them, it is fundamental for understanding the context of the collected data. For me, it was inevitable to start observing and participating from the everyday life in all the singular localities I visited. My strategy was moving from an unstructured to a structured participant observation and it became very time consuming, moreover at times it was exasperating. This was above all related to the quantity of classes I was able to observe, because lamentably there was organized only 1 Capoeira class per week in the rural Catalonian town and in the Norwegian urban area.

In Norway, the period of participant observation in the classes and other activities the group took part in, was the longest and therefore also the deepest. The shortest were Copenhagen, where I stayed only 3 days in March 2011 (1 unit) and Lisbon (1 unit). Covering some days of May 2011and especially the winter period from October 2011 to March 2012, I conducted my fieldwork in snowy Norway observing 23 units. Between June 2011 to November of the same year, I observed trainings and participated from two international meetings in Spain, covering 10

units, which included fieldwork in Catalonia and the Balearic Island. The group in Norway was quite active compared to the other sites during fieldwork..

Coincidentally, I observed classes on Wednesdays in the urban area and in the rural town. From 19:00 to 20:00 hours in Norway and from 16:00 to 18:00 in Spain. I entered in the field slowly, trying to get to know gatekeepers and children. During that time, I made unstructured observations and wrote my impressions in my research diary. I observed and actively participated with the children during the trainings so that I was able to be close to them and their experiences. This way I generated data from first hand, observing their body language and interactions with their peers and teachers. Entering the field this way proved to be a good experience because it permitted me to build trust and confidence with the participants.

One episode shows the impact that as researcher you can have during the participant observation method. It occurred during a *batizado* in Norway, a ceremony where the Capoeiristas receive their *cordas*[43] and *apellidos*. Here the ethnographic note:

> "When I was there, not participating directly in the ceremony, *mestre* Todau saw a child performing a "*bananeira*" position, which is when you do a hand stand. The kid performed it in a very good way so he wanted to give the child the *apellido* "*Bananeira*". He talked to *Boneca*[44], the *profesora* of the child and she answered to him that they had already a "*Bananeira*" in the group and she looked at me" [Field notes, 28 May 2011, Norway].

Indeed, my Capoeira *apellido i*s "*Bananeira*", though it is interesting to stress here that I was only observing and taking field notes about what was happening. I was also asked by a teacher to take some pictures. Though I was not actively participating, and was actually sitting on the side in a corner, a little bit hidden to the people who were participating in the ceremony, nevertheless my presence was noticed. I remember that after this, *mestre* Todau said looking at me "*voce é uma Bananeira morta*"[45] and some of the present people laughed. Finally the child received

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[43] *Corda*: Belt.
[44] *Boneca*: Doll.
[45] This means "*you are a dead banana tree*".

another nickname. This example shows clearly how the researcher, although "only" observing, impacts the reality.

> "In fact, even where the researcher plays no role at all in generating the account, one can never be sure that his or her presence was not an important influence" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007: 101).

Typically ten children participated in the trainings, and perhaps they felt like acting because of my presence. Hence, there needed to be sufficient time spent together until the children and adults got more used to and relaxed around me.

Interacting with the children was crucial, though I was also in the streets to understand what was happening in the social, economical and political context. I follow Capoeira to a variety of the places where children were involved or not involved, outside of the trainings. In this context, I participated in trainings and performances in squares, hotels and schools, among others. These spaces allowed me to make observations which were diverse in quality and depth, but that helped me to link these different sites into a common concept of childhood and Capoeira. More than doing a participant observation in the traditional field, I was following Capoeira, studying the interactions between children and adults in the Capoeira community and was, as Ennew et al. (2009) states, never "off duty".

4.3.2 Semi-Structured Group Interview (with Drawings)

As researcher I was being a questioner and wanted to know all what was happening related to children, Capoeira and the context. Being in the field meant asking around and observing, and it was not only "being" there, it was "doing" there (Heidegger, 1996). I was in the field collecting the parts of the puzzle, listening, taking notes, audio-recording and thinking about the next questions. Accordingly, I had many informal conversations, though for going more in depth into children's and adults thoughts I used semi-structured individual and group interviews.

I conducted 3 semi-structured group interviews with children, three 3 semi-structured group interviews with parents, 1 individual semi-structured interview and 2 semi-structured interview

with teachers in Norway. In the case of Spain I had 1 semi-structured group interview with drawings with children, 3 individual interviews with children, 2 semi-structured interviews with parents and 2 semi-structured interviews with teachers.

For Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) an interview is a conversation which permits a way to get to know people's worldviews. Without doubt, the scientific interview has become the most widely used method for conducting research in social science, being used in more than 90 percent of studies (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997: 113). "Interviews in ethnographic research range from spontaneous, informal conversations in the course of other activities to formally arranged meetings in bounded settings out of earshot of other people" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007: 108). I understood this method during my exploration, more than a situation where one makes questions to an informant that answers, as an "interactive and structured context where information and interpretation flow both ways" (Marton, 1981; cited in Gudmundsdottir 1996).

Scholars like Docherty & Sandelowski (1999) and Lewis & Porter (2004) suggest that young children between 3 and 6 years old can and should be interviewed in the matters that concern them. Interviewing children is different from adults because children have less vocabulary and experience the world in a way that adults have forgotten (Punch 2002). The narrative competence of children is what gives us as researchers an opportunity to "create a relatively accurate match between their images and the images created in our minds as we try to understand their expressions" (Gudmundsdottir 1996: 297).

The semi-structured interview is a type of interview where the researcher uses a guide line or script with topics to be covered. These may contain a sequence of meticulous questions to be asked to the participants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009: 130). Different from the informal interviews realized, the semi-structured interviews were arranged meetings in quiet places where the participants could express themselves freely. Normally I had an individual or group interview that lasted from around 20 to 90 minutes. When interviewing children or adults I tried not to make directive or leading questions and focused on the different topics by making open-ended questions which "encourage participants to think and to provide answers that are relevant to them" (Ennew, et. al., 2009: 5.35). Following Docherty & Sandelowski (1999) I asked children

more about what they do during training instead of how the training was. Interviewing adults was easier than children especially because of their facility with language. In Spain, during a group semi-structured interview with children between 5 and 10 years old I used drawings as a way to start the conversation. This was a useful strategy because children could explain their views not only with words. So I tried to listen to the "hundred languages of children" (Clark, 2005). In Norway I did not use drawings and the children who were all around 11 years old, seemed to have nice time with me and the translator. In general, the children seemed to feel comfortable and relaxed throughout the interview.

4.3.3   Issues of Language & Translation

Language was an important concern during my research. I am neither Catalan nor Norwegian, ergo; I do not speak Norwegian or Catalan properly. I speak Spanish though, and although in Catalonia the official language is Catalan and Spanish, the children I interviewed spoke Catalan more fluently than Spanish. I was able to communicate with the children in this last language. Sometimes I did not understand them because they mixed Catalan and Spanish, though these were exceptions and normally I did not have difficulties. However, another story happened in Norway. While doing my exploration there, I needed to use a translator to conduct the interviews. Thus, I tried to follow the recommendations of Esposito (2001) who suggests that the "inherent threats to the validity of cross-language translation can be moderated by the use of on-site, professional, real-time translators" (Esposito, 2001: 576). Accordingly, I conducted all the interviews with children helped by an in-situ translator, in real-time and this allowed me to increase my participation and to have an open dialogue with the children.

4.4   Data Analysis

From the exploration and the later analysis of the data collected through my participant observation and interviews with the children, many different themes emerged. Some of them were the meaning of capoeira and the training, the *roda*, the games, the music, the group, the

infrastructure, the history and the Portuguese language among others. Thus it was not possible to write about all the themes and I selected the ones I obtained the most information about and found the most relevant.

The analytical work is an ongoing process which in ethnography is not different from other stages of research. Therefore more than standardized steps to manipulate and order data, the important accounts are the reflections and linkages to theory (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The principal data collected during fieldwork in this exploration involves the field notes taken through participant observation and transcriptions of audio-recorded semi-structured qualitative interviews. Once all the information was written down and read systematically in a reflective process that lead to the emergence of themes and concepts in a top-down and bottom-up approach (Nilsen, 2005).

For the analysis of the interviews I followed the recommendations given by Kvale & Brinkmann (2009). Hence, I focus on procedures like "coding", where in a short sentence I defined the experiences of the fieldwork and the information gained through the interviews, developing categories which tried to captured the fullness of the experiences. Furthermore, thanks to a process of "condensation" I compared the information with data available in theoretical writings to combine descriptive level of analysis with theories. Thus, ultimately, through the fusion of the coded information from interviews and field notes, I was able to give meaning to the data.

4.5   Validity & Reliability

The concern about validity revolves around whether the findings of the research can be trusted and believed. "Qualitative research assumes that reality is constructed, multidimensional, and ever-changing; there is no such thing as a single, immutable reality waiting to be observed and measured. Thus, there are interpretations of reality; in a sense the researcher offers his or her interpretation of someone else's interpretation of reality" (Merriam, 1995: 54).

Reliability implies that if the same research is conducted again, the same findings will be found. In social sciences, this is a complicated aspect because human interactions are never static, they

are always evolving and changing. Thus, Merriam, (1995) recommends triangulation, peer examination and having an audit trail. During my study I kept in mind these assumptions and worked to validate internally my data by following the suggestions when possible. I made triangulation of data through using different methods to confirm the findings. I confirmed the collected data and tentative interpretations back with my informants when possible. The research was scrutinized by colleagues and I engaged in the exploration, collecting data over a long enough period I think. The possible language misunderstandings were solved by following Esposito's (2001) recommendations, validating the data by using different bilingual translators, interpreters and reviewers, and by making several interviews.

Finally, during the study, I tried to understand the phenomenon from the participants' perspectives and confirming the collected information and still contingent analysis gave not only more validity to the research, I think as Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) convey, it also illuminated, more or less, my informants experience.

4.6   Ethical Issues

Ethics in research are essential, and all scientific research that is somehow related to human beings has to deal with ethical dilemmas. After the "conceptual liberation of children" (Qvortrup, 2002), and the international recognition of the United Nations in 1989, to give children the right to be heard in things that matter to them (UNCRC 1989), new child-friendly methodologies have been developed and ethical reflections have taken course. National ethical committees, research center codes and guidelines have been created to have a rights-based approach when researching with children (Morrow & Richards, 1996).

Especially in Western society were children have become "priceless" (Zelizer 1985), "researchers have the duty to make sure that their research does not result in children being subjected to, or threatened with, any kind or abuse, exploitation or violence" (Ennew, et. al., 2009: 2.4). We live in an adult-centered society which considers "naturally" children as immature and incompetent, or in other words, without a valid voice. Furthermore, children live in an imbalanced power position compared to adults; they are more defenseless, have a lack of

knowledge and experience, and are structurally vulnerable (Morrow & Richards, 1996). The case has not been different inside the social sciences where children, like women, have been silenced or muted for a long time (Hardman, in James & Prout, 1990). Following Ennew, et. al., (2009), there is no agreement among researchers about how to carry out ethical research with children because all research has to resolve its own ethical dilemmas. Nevertheless, the most often discussed issues in the literature are related to informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (Punch, 2002; Gallagher, 2009). Accordingly, next I explain the ethical strategy conducted in this exploration to research with the needed sensitivity.

4.6.1   Child-Centerd Attitude

A fundamental ethical aspect to consider during research, before and after fieldwork is to maintain a child-centered attitude (Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008). I tried to keep this in mind throughout the process of the exploration while focusing on observing and listening to children. "The ways in which researchers view children are pivotal to the power relations that ensue between researcher and participant" (Robinson & Kellett, 2008: 85). Remembering that our society is adult-centered, I had to change my own thoughts and preconceptions. I had the continuous ambition to see things differently from our "natural" way of seeing children, from dependent to independent, from immature to mature, from becoming to being, back and forward, a constant interplay (Lee, 2001; Qvortrup, 2002). Accordingly, I tried to be at the same level, balancing our unequal power relationship, for example training with them or taking by sitting on the ground in a corner notes while observing them. As Gallagher (2009) indicates, my ethical attitude was beyond all an ongoing process of acting and reflecting to research with children in their own right.

4.6.2 Informed Consent & Voluntary Participation

As part of the duties to do research with children in Norway, I submitted an online ethical application to the Norsk Samfunnsvitenskapelig Datatjeneste (NSD)[46] stating my ethical considerations and the sensitive topics. Although this does not guarantee the procedures in the field, it helped me to reflect, and also bound me legally to my statements. I also received a support letter of the Norsk Senter for Barneforskning (NOSEB)[47] at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

Different geographies demand singular reflections and actions to deal with ethical dilemmas (Abebe, 2009). As multi-site ethnography exploration, I entered and left the diverse settings in dissimilar occasions and for irregular periods of time. This, added to the cultural complexity of doing fieldwork in different countries, make it practically impossible to act in the same ethical way all along the research. Morrow & Richards (1996), indicates that all research is situational and context specific and is therefore a continuous and asymmetrical process. Ongoing reflections helped me to deal with the ethical dilemmas that appeared during the way and I was able to get the informed consent and voluntary participation from most of the subjects.

The informed consent is an explicit act that can be verbal or written, where the participants are informed and understand the purpose and consequences of the research. It must be given voluntarily and must be renegotiable, meaning that the children can withdraw at any point of the project (Gallagher, 2009). I obtained verbal consent of all the children and written consent for all those who participated more and gave interviews. Previous to start the participant observations, I sat down with the children making a circle, presented myself and explained them the aim and outcome of the research. They were very curious and made different kind of questions. As I said that I was born in Germany, some children in Norway started to talk the little German they knew. Or also one child asked me if I was going to write about them for a newspaper and I explained to him and the group that it was for the university, and it was more in depth, more like a book than a newspaper article. Following, I asked them if they wanted to participate in the project and that it was possible to withdraw or to leave the participation at any time if they wanted. Always

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[46] Norwegian Social Science Data Service. (NSD).
[47] Norwegian Centre for Child Research (NOSEB).

before starting a participant observation session, an interview or any activity with the children, I asked for their consent again and again.

4.6.3 Privacy & Confidentiality

For Ennew et. al. (2009: 2.16), one rule to conduct ethical research is to respect children's privacy. The author indicates that the researcher should "[a]lways ask children's permission to use their stories and pictures; the permission of adults, parents, teachers and project staff is not sufficient". An ethical researcher cannot force the children or young people to participate in the investigation. Accordingly, their decisions and opinions must be accepted, and they should not be pressured to change their mind if they refuse to collaborate. The same attitude must be undertaken when children do not want to talk about a topic or prefer not to answer certain questions. Privacy "[i]nvolves issues throughout the research process which may be less serious than child abuse, but which are likely to be much more common: privacy from parents or workers curious to know what children have said or written, for example" (Gallagher, 2009: 21).

Depending on the context, I had individual or group interviews with the children with the presence of an adult or alone. Although it is recommended to make interviews with an adult who accompanies the researcher because of the possibilities of children abuse or other sensitive issues (Ennew, et. al., 2009), in some places I did not have an alternative to conducting interviews alone.

In the Balearic Island I interviewed 1 child alone. The reason was that I did not get to know any other adult than his parents and if they participated than the child would probably not be able to express himself freely. Thus, as the child and the parents were in the Capoeira school, I asked them for their informed consent to have the interview. All agreed verbally and in an office, while the parents waited outside, we had a private space to talk. I think that the fact that the child and I were having a Chinese dinner while we were talking helped him and me to relax and create a safe atmosphere to talk about his views. A different experience occurred in the Catalonian rural town, where a mother wanted to be present during the group interview with the children. I explained to her that she should not talk, but she insisted on talking and confirming or

disconfirming the children's beliefs. Thus I had to be firm with her and ask her to be quite and to let the children talk without "correcting" them.

Confidentiality means protecting the research participants, the researcher and the research from any harm (Ennew, et. al., 2009). "The principle of confidentiality is that research data in which individual participants can be identified should not be passed on to other people without the explicit consent of those participants. This is usually achieved by restricting access to data (Gallagher, 2009: 20). During fieldwork and later throughout the analysis and writing, all the information collected was stored password-protected on my personal computer. Also all the real names of children and adults participating in this exploration have been changed so that they cannot be identified. Furthermore, the pictures captured in the field they were all destroyed and the once I use in this thesis to show the atmosphere in certain situations, in all of them I erased all aspects that could lead to my informants. This way, I am securing their anonymity, making it virtually impossible to trace the data back to individual research participants. Finally, all the discussions about the study I conducted were done with people related to the research who signed a confidential agreement to secure this if necessary. No research collected data or information was handed in to third parties, nor are details of participants or specific locations revealed.

4.6.4   Power Relations & Respect

Power relations in the research with children are associated with ethical ideals in the sense that the researcher should make efforts to diminish the "natural" power imbalances among adults and children. For Gallagher (2009: 24), "[p]ower relations are increasingly recognized as critical in ethical practice with children". Diversity of manuals and books advocate for new more child-friendly and participatory methods to address the issue of sharing power (See: Alderson, 1995; Solberg, 1996; Christensen & James, 2000; Clark, 2005; Ennew, et. al., 2009). "Participatory methodologies … can help to reduce some of the power imbalances in the researcher/researched relationship" (Coad & Evans, 2008: 42).

In this exploration, participating preschool children were as young as 5 years old, but the majority were preadolescents, with an average of 9 years old. Preadolescents have more opportunities to develop themselves outside of the eyes of the adults. "They have power to control or contain the research in ways that younger children do not, and the participant observer is at their mercy" (Fine & Sandstrom, 1988: 50). Although some may disagree with this sentence, the truth is that every person, child or adult, has power and uses it willing and also unwillingly.

During the research I tried to build relationships with the children based on respect. For gaining children's (and also adults') trust I needed to get to know them, and maybe more importantly, they needed to get to know me too. This was a long process which started by contacting the gatekeepers, getting their informed consent and then from parents and children. The first technique I used was participant observation, which gave me the possibility to keep in touch with the people and to share experiences. Through all the process I tried to show my respect by being open and listening to all the participants. I tried to be far, but also close, to the same level as children. I remember in particular one occasion when I came early to the training and while waiting a child who also came early grasped my leg and did not allowed me to move. Instead of being a serious adult, I started to play with him by try making "efforts" to "liberate" myself. Immediately after I liberate myself I started run away. Unconsciously I invited him to play Tag by running away, and he answered by attempting to chase me to grasp my leg again.

Finally, it was also difficult to balance the power relations between the children themselves. It happened that in one group, for example, 2 boys between 8 and 11 were talking much more often than the 3 girls. The only way I found to manage this was to ask them to raise their hands if they wanted to talk, so that I could know who wanted to do so and choose the children that wanted but did not have the opportunity to express themselves before. At the end this helped a little bit, but in general the older children tended to raise their hands and speak more.

5   CHILDREN'S CAPOEIRA TYPICAL CLASS

"[T]rough capoeira one may walk forward in life with conscious determination to become physically strong and healthy, emotionally stable, mentally open and spiritually wiser. ... To live the capoeira philosophy requires sweat, mental discipline, sometimes pain, and always the magical experience of kneeling under the *berimbau* –the one string bow- shaped instrument that establishes the speed and style of the jôgo de capoeira. One must feel the philosophy from the inside out because only his or her personal participation will make it real" (Almeida, 1986: 6-7).

How is a typical children's Capoeira class constructed? In this chapter I try to respond to this research question. Therefore, I describe how the Capoeira class or training was developed by the teachers, children and other participants (*capoeiristas* in general, parents and other observers) in the two principal fieldwork sites: the Norwegian urban area and the rural Catalonian town. In addition to that, my notes and experiences gained from a visit to a Balearic Island and from international meetings in Lisbon, and Copenhagen, which provide interesting deeper insights about Capoeira.

Following Candusso (2008) and generally speaking, I divided the activities that took place during the capoeira lessons into training and *roda de capoeira*. The present part of the analysis relates to capoeira as an indoor leisure activity because I almost did not observe children training in the streets. In a general picture, the capoeira lessons with children involved the training of different body movements, to learn how to maintain balance and keep postures for a certain time. It was also linked to performing acrobatic movements and to playing music and singing. Music was more commonly present as background during the lessons. The language used was commonly the national language, Norwegian and Catalan, but the songs sung were always in Portuguese and most of the names referred to the different *movimentos* and also the *apellidos*.

I present below the re-constructed experiences I had during fieldwork, thanks to my interactions with children, teachers and other practitioners, as well as with adults who were present during the trainings. "Like any other scientific object, sociological facts are not given ready-made in

social reality: They must be "conquered, constructed, constated[48]"" (Bourdieu et. al., 1968/1990 in Wacquant, 2006: 5). Accordingly, next I describe and re-construct the "typical" elements of the Capoeira classes I observed during fieldwork. This was divided in The Class as a Space for Children; The Music; Teaching Martial Arts and Acrobatic Movements: The Methods; The Roda de Capoiera, Shows & Other. In Appendix 1 – Physical Characteristics of Capoeira in Norway & Spain you will find the physical charecteristics of the visited training centre's and the academy in the Balearic Island.

5.1 Brief Biographic Outline of the Teachers

Mestre Dedé was born in Río de Janeiro and has a diasporic biography. He started practicing dance and later discovered Capoeira. He saw in it a great potential of body improvement because of its "*spectacular*" acrobatic movements. When he was 14 years old he joined a local Capoeira group and 11 years later he graduated as a *mestre*. Afterwards, he participated in a dance group that went on a trip to Europe to perform on several occasions during the early 1980s. During this period he decided to settle in one of the Balearic Islands. There, after years of work, he was able to establish and run his own independent Capoeira academy, with approximately 15 children and more than 30 adult *capoeiristas* who attend regularly.

Mestre Puma, who runs the classes in the rural Catalonian town started learning Capoeira when he was 16 years old in Bello Horizonte. Later, he gained experience through teaching Capoeira to children in diverse *favelas*[49] in Brazil. He arrived in Spain also in a diasporic way by following his girlfriend who wanted to study there. They had a common plan to start teaching Capoeira in the Catalonian region. Mestre Puma makes part of one of currently largest Capoeira groups in the world. The group today still has its center in Brazil and is established in the USA, France, Germany, Israel, Sweden, Latvia, Australia, Greece, Russia, Japan, Cyprus, Indonesia and among other countries.

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[48] Constated (sic): Is the simple past tense and past participle of the verb constate. It means to prove, to verify if a statement is true or false.
[49] *Favela*: Shanty towns.

The classes observed in Norway belong to a group that is established in Brazil, Portugal, the United Kingdom and Germany. Teacher Jens has achieved the *instructor* level. His first contact with capoeira was at the age of 16, when observing a Brazilian classmate showing capoeira movements during a school exchange program in the USA. At this point of life disliking the statics of other martial arts that he had experienced as a child in Karate classes, capoeira appealed strongly to him. This was mostly due to the combination of physical challenge and rhythm as well as the absence of formal competition. Inspired through his younger sister he then started capoeira in Europe not before the age of 22. Since, he has been practicing capoeira continuously in different groups, styles, cities and countries as in Denmark, Germany, UK and most recently Norway. He has performed the art as a spare time activity for more than 10 years, gaining understanding and knowledge of Portuguese language and Brazilian culture. For approximately 4 years he has been teaching adults and children on regular basis. Yet he has not had the chance to go to Brazil, so his relation to it is mostly defined by his experience of Capoeira in Europe. The group in Norway is supervised by *mestre* Todau, who started practicing Capoeira when he was 10 years old in Brasilia. In 2002 he decided in a diasporic way to move to Norway and to develop Capoeira. However, most training units I observed were not conducted by him, as he visited the local group only four to five times every year.

5.2   The Class as a Space for Children

Traditionally Capoeira has been related to the streets, to squares, to its practice on the beach and in the open air (IPHAN, 2007). However, with its modernization process the practice of Capoeira has become associated with the academies, to indoor spaces (Röhring, 2005; Taylor, 2007). Nowadays both spaces co-exist and during fieldwork I observed many trainings and the organization of Capoeira *rodas* outdoors in the streets. In some opportunities I observed some children in these street *rodas* in the Balearic Island and in Barcelona, though they were just observing the situation as random spectator and exceptionally some joined the circle. Furthermore, it can be stated, according to my experience, that children's space inside the Capoeira world is located mostly inside the academies and as exceptions in other spaces. In

Spain, while having a group interview with the children in the rural Catalonian town, this short though interesting dialog emerged:

> MK: *Adriana, Daniela, what did you draw?*
> Adriana: *We drew the room, we don't like the windows.*
> MK: *You don't like the windows?*
> Adriana: *Yes, we don't like the windows. We want to play Capoeira outside.*
> Daniela: *Outside is better. Outside is the sun, outside is better than inside.*
> Adriana: *Outside I can play with my shadow.*

Some of the children wanted to practice Capoeira outside. I remember that the temperatures inside the training centre during the summer time of fieldwork were high. Actually outside the average temperature was around 30°C. However, children did not train outside. The 17 of May of 2012, although it was raining, I observed a group of children and adults performing Capoeira movements on a street parade in Norway. Finally, almost all the places that I conducted fieldwork, I could only observe children in action outside the academies, in adult organized activities like presentations in public events and festivals. Thus, in the next lines I will start re-constructing children's Capoeira training.

5.2.1   Before the Training

In all the places I did fieldwork I observed that some of the children were brought by their parents, especially the youngest ones, the ones who lived far away and the ones that came to class for the first time. I also observed though, that many children lived close to the training centre, actually in Norway some of them lived directly in front and others in the rural Catalonian town just a few streets away. The same was observed in the Balearic Island where children came walking alone or with some friends of the capoeira circle.

Before the class started it was usual that children and parents gathered for a while together or scattered over the place. These gatherings were especially common in Catalonia where there was a small bistro at the entrance of the training place. Thus, it was usual that parents sat down together and had a coffee or some cold drinks under an awning on the terrace while the children played around. They played around with a football, with their bikes, tagging each other or with

their imagination. In the urban area in Norway, this time was also occupied by the children, though the parents did not gather together. I observed that the adults had only small talks.

The atmosphere during this moment was different. In Catalonia the group of parents considered themselves friends and instead in Norway, they were concerned with bringing the children to the activity. Maybe because of the rainy and snowy weather, I did not see the children gather outside in Norway, though they met at the hall's entrance. There was a piano and they gathered around playing and singing or inside the classroom.

In all fieldwork sites children played by sliding on the floor, tagging each other, making constructions with pillows or climbing on the walls or other parts if possible. They used the different elements that they found in the place to play. In Catalonia for example, one day they found some costumes and they used hats and two boxing gloves to play. They also kicked big plastic yoga balls which were around half a meter high. In Norway, one day one of the teachers came with one big case to carry an *atabaque* drums and the children went inside the case and started to play and making fun.

When some of the parents came with their children they greeted the teacher briefly and many times they stayed waiting sitting in a corner till the end of the class. Sometimes, they had a more or less active participation in the class, helping the teachers or just interacting with their own children, encouraging them, or chatting with the other parents.

During the research I noticed that children in Norway were less effusive than the children in Catalonia. Usually they did not say hello to each other or to the teacher, there was a less demonstrative salutation, like eye contact for example. In contrast, in Catalonia especially the youngest children ran to meet their instructor and gave him a big embrace and a kiss and sat down on his lap. This was also the case when arriving late. After this moment, the classes started commonly with a warm-up.

5.2.2   Starting & Ending the Training

After having met, the class started normally with a warm-up exercise or sometimes with the practice of capoeira instruments and singing. Other times they started sitting in a circle. For example, after holidays the children sat down with the teacher and they talked about how they spent their holidays and shared stories with the group. Only one time I heard the teacher asking the children "what are we going to do to warm up for the class?" The lessons started regularly by the teachers organizing and leading the group of children.

At the ending of the class it was common to form a circle and to stretch the muscles and joints. This activity apart from preventing injuries, invited everyone to take time to relax and be calm. Actually, this moment was lead by the teacher and afterwards the group maintained the position and started to have discussions about the next activities the group would have. They talked about different issues that happened during the class or maybe the participation of the group in an event, the visit of the *mestre*, reminding the children to tell the parents that they had to pay the bill of the month and so on.

Now, I will re-present the main three different ways the trainers used to start the warm-up.

5.2.3   Three Warm-Up Modes

The warm-up exercises, which are common before practicing any sport activity to avoid injuries, consisted basically of making different movements with the body to prepare the muscles and joints for more intense activities. One of these procedures was introduced when the teacher organized the group and became the model of the activity, leading and commanding the children who had to follow and imitate him. The other way was through playing which could consist of arranging a play activity with the children or joining a game they were already playing. Finally, sometimes the class started by playing music with the capoeira instruments.

In the first mode, the group of children ran after the teacher for a few minutes and imitated him. Exemplifying, when the teacher stretched one arm and moved it in a circular and repetitive way straight forward the children followed performing the same movements. Then, when the

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instructor changed the movements moving the arm backwards, all children were supposed to follow him. This process where the teacher was the model to be followed by the children was then repeated with the other arm, hands, legs and feet, making different body movements.

The second mode was playing with the children. The teacher in Catalonia organized the group of children and they played *la serpiente*[50]. This game consisted on one person who started tagging the others, but moving like a snake on the ground. This sounds difficult, though when he or she tagged one person this became a helper, so the next one would also help and more snakes were tagging till everyone became a snake. In Norway the children also played tagging "Stiv Heks". Thor explained the game to me as follows: "*In the Stiv Heks game one is the witch and for example if you are tagged I have to sit like this [shows the position] and then another person has to make a cartwheel [in front of the sitting person] and then they are liberated*". (Thor, 11 years, Norway).

The third was another playing mode, when the children were already playing in the place beforehand. It happened that just before the training the children were playing games like tagging or simply running or sliding on the floor. Thus, the teacher started to play with the children and little by little introduced new rules to the game. This way, at the end the children were following the instructions given by him. At the end of the warm-up there the teacher often organized a *roda*, a circle made by the children and adults and all together standing or sitting started stretching legs, feet, arms, hands, wrists, knees and back among others.

5.3   Playing Music

"The berimbau resonates very deeply in my soul. Sometimes I think how can an instrument, just one string, can bring so much emotions? Perhaps this is the reason that the berimbau has such an importance in the game of the capoeira" (Almeida, 1999).

In all places I observed children's trainings, music was present and the berimbau was one of children's favorite's instruments. The quotation of Almeida above makes a direct relation to the

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[50]La Serpiente: The *mestre* used the Spanish word for snake.

research of Maturana & Verden-Zöller (2008). Probably *mestre* Acordeon*,* after many years of experiencing happy emotionings while playing the *berimbau*, has embodied these through his life and now just listening one string of the instruments make these feelings come back again.

Commonly it was playback music as background for the training, though sometimes adults and children played instruments live. As I was told by a teacher in Norway, the introduction of music lessons to classes was dependent on the experience and taste of the teacher. Thus, I observed that in all three settings the space given to music was different. While on the island every class started with the formation of a *roda* where all children and adults played *berimbau*, *pandeiro* and sang for approximately 20 minutes together, in Catalonia and in Norway this way of opening the class was more uncommon.

In Catalonia the lessons started sometimes with playing with Afro-Brazilian and Caribbean instruments traditionally used during Capoeira performances. *Mestre* Puma prepared the situation by placing some chairs in line for the children and brought the instruments from home and/or from the warehouse inside the gym. Thus, the children chose an instrument they liked and then they sat on the chair and followed the rhythm that Puma was teaching them to play. Many of the children told me that they liked to play music, that it made them feel happy when playing music, though others told me that when playing instruments it caused some pain. Daniela, a girl who was six years old told me in an interview that "*there are some* (instruments) *where my hands get hurt, with others not*", referring to the fact that sometimes playing the drums hurt after a while. Immediately after the capoeira class with children *mestre* Puma taught *batucada*[51], a percussion ensemble also called bateria to adults in the same place. The students were a group of parents and other adults who lived in the town and wanted to learn to play these instruments and get to know the Afro-Brazilian rhythms. Consequently, Puma normally had several instruments in the class and they were also available for the children. Among other instruments, the children used the *atabaque*, *pandeiro*, *reco-reco* and an *agogô*[52]. In Norway the playing of instruments

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[51] The *batucada* is an Afro-Brazilian ensamble conformed by percussive instruments like snare drum and djembé's.
[52] Is a typical Capoeira instrument made by wood or metal, normally it contains two metallic bells or made with coco nuts. Is an instrument that belong to the *bateria* and many children enjoy it.

was related to special occasions like for example when *mestre* Todau came from Oslo to visit the group.[53]

According to Almeida (1986), many times the capoeira songs are traditional and folkloric. Therefore, these are often related to stories about slavery times and to old *mestres*. However, the songs are also commonly improvised as I could observe with *mestre* Dedé in an international meeting in Lisbon. Besides the playing of instruments and singing, the rest of the people who are forming the *roda*, are clapping hands, which, according to Almeida, gives more energy and atmosphere to the *roda*.

5.4   Music as Background

The background music and especially the playing of musical instruments and singing are a distinctive condition of Capoeira when it is observed as a martial art. In most martial art forms music does not play a large part, and on the contrary, there is a kind of devotion to silence. While practicing capoeira, music is very tightly connected because Capoeira is played according to the rhythm of the music. I could observe in the *rodas* that when the music was slow, the capoeiristas moved also slower and more close to the ground, and in contrast, when the music was fast, they moved faster and higher, performing more acrobatic movements.

Consequently, during the trainings music was used most of the times as part of the background to create a special atmosphere. Here is an example:

> "The group stopped and changed exercise, practicing a typical capoeira training art which is called *paralelas*. They are advancing with their hands and then on steps. Thor goes further, he is the first one going standing with his hands, it seems that it is not hard for him. He seems to be more advanced than the rest of the group in this body movement. At the start of the *paralelas*, Knut had turned the music on and I asked him why he did it just at the beginning of the *paralelas* and he said to me 'Because the kids told me'" [Fieldnotes, 19.10.2011, Norway].

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[53] Reco-reco: Is an instrument which consists of an open-ended wood, gourd or metal which has parallel incisions in one side and is played by scratching a stick.

The music that was most often played was capoeira music and also other Brazilian songs. It was music made by the *mestre* of the group and also others made by other *mestres* like Acordeon and *mestre* Suassuna. Among other *mestres*, they became famous capoeiristas because they have produced popular capoeira music and also because they were disciples of *mestre* Bimba. Other music styles I heard were *bossa nova*[54], *samba* and *batucada*. These musical rhythms with Portuguese interpretations helped to reinforce the identity of this foreigner cultural manifestation.

5.5   Martial Arts, Acrobatics & Body Movements: Some Teaching Methods

The lessons during the training time varied and included diversity of games, playing musical instruments, storytelling, dance, corporal expressions and Portuguese language, though the main focus, and in relation to Acordeon (1999), was on the development of martial art skills and acrobatic movements. As I will explain in more detail later, through the playing of different games the idea was to practice capoeira movements and acrobatics in a playful way.

After having the warm-up the teachers focused the class on the learning and practicing new capoeira movements or improving known ones. Every teacher followed their own instructional style, combined in every singular group different ways of delivering capoeira to the children. Thus, there was not one predetermined didactic, though I observed different forms in one class and similar didactics across the different settings, which were moving between playful and unique instructional exercises.

According to Lussac cited in Sonada, de Olivera & Marchi Júnior (2009), in the learning of Capoeira there exist a series of methodologies which do not converge and are not homogenous. This diversity is related to different ideas and philosophies depending on the singular ethnic and cultural backgrounds of each capoeira group. Almeida (1986) states that obviously there are training methods that are better or more efficient than others, though ultimately, it will be the individual self who defines which method he or she will use.

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[54] Is a world known Brazilian music style which means directly translated into English "new trend". It was popularized during the 1950s-1960s.

The capoeira trainings for children in Catalonia and in Norway tended to be more playful and in the case of the classes in the Balearic Island were adults and children practiced together, they were more instructional. Thus, in a first instance it can be stated that in the Balearic Island the teacher started with music and then a warm-up exercise using the *paralelas* method. Later the class was divided not according to age, but according to the experience between beginners and advanced. In Norway all children practiced together and adults tend to be outside the training, though in the last classes I observed that this tendency changed. In Catalonia the children were sometimes divided between younger and older though no adults joined the group during my participant observations. In the next lines I will describe the different didactics or teaching methods I observed during my fieldwork.

5.5.1   Paralelas

This instructional tool was very common in all three settings. The *paralelas* (parallel) is a teaching method which consists of a group of students who form two lines and then all the rest follow the movements performed by them. One of the objectives is that the students look to each other all the way forward, concentrating on not hitting each other and on improving the execution of the movements. This example describes the method:

> "*Mestre* Todau was sitting on a red plastic chair, filling the form and looking at us sometimes. He gave Silvio and me orders, so we had to do what he wanted us to perform. We had to jump like a *coelho*[55] through the whole academy, after we had to walk like an *urso*[56], which means that we had to walk on "four legs", with the legs and our hand touching the ground and stretching. After this we had to make capoeira movements as *primeira base*[57], *bananeira*[58], *au*[59] and kicks. We had to stand with our hands and be very accurate on where to put the hands. Todau was correcting both of us all the time" [Field notes, 22 August 2011, Balearic Island].

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[55] Rabbit.
[56] Bear.
[57] *Primera base*: First base, is an important an basic Capoeira position.
[58] Handstands.
[59] Carwheel.

In the case of Norway the teacher also used this method during the training of children. They performed the movements and exercises in pairs. After the teacher and the assistant showed the movement or the sequence of movements, the children were asked if they understood the sequence or if they had any doubts or questions. Afterwards they had to perform the movements, meanwhile often listening to Brazilian music in the background.

5.5.2 Formação

When I asked the teacher in Norway what *formação* was, he told me that a term to describe it would be "drill formation". "*Students are given a guiding structure,* (that is) *helping to understand and to try technical exercises in your own space while* (simultaneously) *having the chance to observe and imitate both the trainer and fellow students in their performance*" (Teacher, Norway). This pedagogical approach and instruction method was commonly used during training sessions in all settings. I observed it not only during the indoor trainings with children, but also in adult classes, as well as in outdoor trainings in parks and public squares.

The *formação* method consists of a group of *capoeiristas* arranged in rows and columns at the same distance from each other. They follow and imitate the movements that the instructor communicates and shows. Accordingly, the instructor occupies the front position, first row and centered in the middle of the columns. Thus, the teacher in front leads the activity showing the shoulders or looking to the rest of *capoeiristas* that follow. Normally the group is ordered from more advanced *capoeiristas* till the last ones who are less advanced. Thus, all practitioners can look to the teacher or someone more advanced in front, making the training an opportunity to practice and to observe the movements made by a more advanced *capoeirista*.

The students followed and imitated the movements of the teacher. Regularly this was practiced in front of the mirror inside the academy or the dance hall, allowing all the students to observe the others and themselves while performing the movements. Here a small extract from my fieldwork notes:

> "They hear when Jens, the teacher says "*chapa*[60]" and they must do the movements kicking with their leg to the front. One child asks, "*chapa*?" Almost all the time they are looking to the mirror that is in front and they look also to Jens, who is also in front, kicking with their leg to the mirror. "*Cadeira*[61]" and all children imitate his movements" [Field notes, 5 October 2011, Norway].

The example shows how children follow the movements and also learn them with their names in Portuguese. Although the principal language during the training was the local language, many times this was mixed with Portuguese, especially when it came to name the movements or singing.

5.5.3 Playing Games

As it was explained above in the warm-up section, the trainers and the children used to play games to warm-up, though they did it commonly during different phases of the training. This way, the trainers work out with the children exercising different body movements that can be applied when playing capoeira during the *roda*.

Sometimes for example the children formed a circle and inside it only two children played. One had a hanging sock at the back and the other child had to catch it, though the idea is that both perform capoeira movements. Thus, the children used to attack and defend themselves with these movements with the objective of maintaining or getting the sock. During this game, it was common that the trainer played music with a *berimbau* or a *pandeiro*. I observed that in this case that regularly all children wanted to participate, they all raised their hand and waited for the permission of the trainer to play.

Another game used was dividing the children in two or more groups, depending on the quantity of assistance and then making them compete by performing capoeira movements. Subsequently they did the movements and ran across the training centre as fast as they could because the fastest group would win.

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[60]*Chapa*: Is a generic word for diversity straight kicks with the sole or heel of the foot.
[61] *Cadeira:* Is a position in the *ginga* when both legs are squared off.

The group also played different games in which they used a soft plastic square meter mat. Sometimes they used these mats as a platform to walk on through the space of the training centre and to tag each other individually or playing in pairs. This last game for example, consisted of each child having a mat and searching for a partner to play in pairs. They could all move only by moving the square meter and jumping from one to the other, so they had to move them constantly to advance together in all directions to tag one of the pairs that have to run away moving the same way. The idea is that one of the pairs tags another one and so on till the game is over. This game was not related to capoeira thought the children normally had fun and laughed.

5.6 The Roda de Capoeira, Shows & a Brief Description of Other Dances

In this sub-chapter I describe the *roda de Capoeira* in which children practiced and performed the embodied movements. The Capoeira social space, provided to be a place to play, where children could have fun, *ter brincadeira*. However, the *roda* played outside known physical spaces and related to new social spaces like their performances in shows, was a situation that was not so pleased to all children. Finally, very briefly I describe some other dances children practiced during training, although very little according to my experience.

5.6.1 The Roda de Capoeira

All the meanings related to the concept "capoeira" have their origins in its cultural manifestation which is the *roda de capoeira*. Capoeira is basically understood as a *jôgo*, as a game which has the *roda*, the circle of people as its characteristic space.

> "One experiences the essence of Capoeira playing one kind of athletic game called *jôgo de capoeira*. This game is played in the *roda* with the partners exchanging movements of attack and defense in a constant flow. During the *jôgo*, the *capoeiristas* explore their strengths and weaknesses, confronting their lack of knowledge, fears, and fatigue in an enjoyable, challenging, and constant process of self-improvement" (Alemeida, 1986: 11).

Two capoeiristas play together in the middle of the *roda* conformed by other capoeiristas who are playing instruments and singing in the *bateria*[62] and others who only sing, clap their hands or just observe. Only the pair that is in the middle of the *roda* plays capoeira by performing different body movements of attack and defense. At the same time the group surrounds them playing instruments, singing and/or clapping hands transmit energy *axé*[63] to the players. According to the oral tradition, the rhythm of the game is dictated by the *berimbau* (a stick with a bow and one string), the characteristic instrument of capoeira and which is played often by the *mestre* or the disciple with the highest rank. Nevertheless, they many times leave this position to rest from playing music and then enter to play and teach capoeira in the *roda*.

It is in the *roda* where the knowledge gained during the training is expressed. When you play capoeira you use and show the body movements and acrobatics that you know. The capoeirista will display corporal and facial expressions exaggerating the attack movements and the defenses creating and illusion of fight to the audience. The exchange of kicks and acrobatic movements becomes sometimes so fast that it appears to be a well trained choreography of movements. However, this coordination is achieved by playing capoeira often during the training and is maintained by players by concentrating on observing each other during the game.

Before the first couple starts to play capoeira, the group of the *bateria* plays an introduction song to start the ritual. Commonly it is the leader of the group who sings a litany, a style of chant known as *ladainha*[64]. He or she tells a story, says a prayer, issues a challenge and asks for *axé* (energy) and protection for capoeiristas in the *roda*. Also during the song old *mestres* are remembered and often there are references to God and the *orixás*[65] which are the gods of the afro-Brazilian religion *Candomblé*. During the song, after the part of the *ladainha*, comes a part that is called *chula*. "Here, the singer or leader[66] sings a verse and the participants respond in a chorus, repeating the leader's verse in song" (Araújo Simões, 2008: 67).

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[62] *Bateria*: Is the percussion and singing group, normally it is formed by three *berimbaus*, two *pandeiros*, one *atabaque* and one *agogô*.
[63] *Axé*: Energy.
[64] The *ladainha* means "litany" and it refers to a solo often sung by the most senior member present in the *roda* and is usually only accompanied by the playing of one *berimbau*.
[65] It is a spirit or God inside the Yoruba spiritual or religious system, very popular in Bahia.
[66] The leader was usually the present person with the highest ranking or level in Capoeira.

During the classes I observed some formalities in the ritual. For example the composition of the *bateria* with three *berimbaus* (*berra-boi* or *gunga*[67]*, médio*[68] *viola*), one or two *pandeiros*, *agogô* bells, *reco-reco* and an *atabaque* were always present if there was enough people to play them. The player normally started to play after the *ladainha* and the *Chula* were sung. In the meantime two capoeiristas take a place close to the *berimbaus* sitting or squatting. Then the bateria play a *corrido*, which is a song a little bit faster than the others. From this moment and only after obtaining the permission from the highest ranked person in the bateria, the game starts. The players shake their hands and make a reverence to the berimbau as a salute and a way of expressing respect for the game. It is also common that player make the sign of the cross before playing, but I did not observe this among the children.

Now the bateria is playing the *corridos*[69] and singing and the chorus answers while the capoeiristas started to play the *jogô*. Usually at this moment the game is played slowly, following the rhythm of the music. The moves of the bodies are close to the ground and to the partner. Attacking with kicks and defending by escaping or by kicking back the capoeiristas play very close as if they were one unit.

The game ends after a period of time determined by the couple who is playing, by the leader. However, another player can "buy" the games, this means he or she can interrupt a game that is in development and start to play with one of the persons who was already playing. Each of the players must observe the other and analyze the situation in order to know how to move next. As there is no verbal communication during the game besides the lyrics sung, the importance of body language becomes crucial. All intentions must be read by observing the other and here is when the concentration, the trickery, the feigning, mule kicks and freeze become also theatrical expressions.

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[67] *Berra-boi* or *gunga* is the berimbau that has the biggest *cabaça* and produces the lowest tone.
[68] It refers to the "middle", it is the berimbau with the middle seize *cabaça,* and thus it produces the *méio* tone
[69] The Corridos are an overlapping call and response typical of African singing.

5.6.2 Capoeira Shows

As I could discover during my exploration, capoeira went from the regular training time inside to new spaces where the art was exhibited outside, outdoors or indoors, to other people, to spectators. The time *inside* was normally bounded as a space for the teachers and the students to train. Sometimes parents, friends and/or siblings stayed observing the action, though the time was used the most to the exercise of different movements and positions. It is interesting to state that children and adults occupy generally different physical spaces. Thus the time spent together training relates more to exceptions than to the rule, which as I was able to observe separate children and adults, making two different groups.

Capoeira as an Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestation is a practice that comes from the streets (Röhring, 2005). Following, the *capoeiragem* was and still is performed and exhibited in the public space. When the two players are practicing capoeira during the training indoors, they are normally observed by other capoeiristas in an intimacy atmosphere, though when it comes to the streets or public performances, the probability to be observed by people outside the group increases. In these experiences the capoeira leaves to be something *inside* the group and it becomes a social ritual, *outside*, evolving other spectators and new participants.

Thus, I will treat all the capoeira meetings, festivals, *batizados*, public performances and exhibitions in squares, schools, hotels or theaters as capoeira outside. The underlying reason is that, at that moment, the group meets and interacts with the rest of the society and makes the cultural manifestation public. In meetings and *batizados*, the capoeira groups gather together with invited guests that could vary from trainers to relatives. In these occasions, capoeira was shared with more people than the regular participants. Accordingly, adults and children presented their skills to other capoeiristas who were not present in the regular trainings or to people from the same group or other groups, or even to people who were just spectators of the exhibition.

5.7 A Brief Description of Other Dances

Besides training the capoeira attacking and defense fighting techniques and acrobatic movements, the children also learned other related Afro-Brazilian cultural expressions. Some of

these were *Maculelê*[70], *Puxada de rede*[71], expressions in which children and adults performed singing, dancing and/or acting. The performances remembered histories about slavery times in Brazil, when escaped slaves formed the *quilombos*. These where fugitive settlements in which the black people and also whites lived free in community and in harmony with nature. The stories told and performed were also are associated with wars between rival groups, to the time of harvesting coffee and the panning for gold at the riverbed among others.

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[70] Is an Afro-Brazilian war dance.

[71] It means to "pull the net" and is related to a scenic representation of the work that fisherman did when they pulled the nets to get their fishes. Nowadays children and adults in Capoeira represent this tradition during the meetings, workshops and festivals.

6   CAPOEIRA: CHILDREN'S (& ADULTS') EXPERIENCES

This chapter analyses the interaction that children have with capoeira in daily life, including their perspectives, perceptions and experiences during training and the different activities they take part in. I also include experiences from events or exhibitions, which were part of special meetings the capoeira groups had. To do this, I will focus on children practicing in a Norwegian urban area and in a Catalonian rural town in Spain, although I will also refer sometimes to visits made to a Balearic Island in Spain and Copenhagen.

First I will address how capoeira arrived to the places and how children came across the art, describing the reasons that lie behind starting the training on a regular basis from children's and adults' perspectives. Then, I will analyze agency and resistance during a trainings session and how children experienced monotony while repeating the movements. Later, I will address the relation between training and playing and the threshold between ages that occurred in the settings. I will also focus on the teacher-child relations, the importance of history and children's perspective about music and the capoeira group. Finally, I will analyze issues related to the meaning of the *roda* and children's free play of Capoeira.

6.1   The Reasons to Start Practicing Capoeira

In the next lines I will present a description with the reasons that children and parents gave toe me related to starting to practice of Capoeira.

When I asked the children how they came with the idea to practice capoeira, in general they told me that it was an initiative of their parents. Thor (11, Norway) told me that he started "*because my mother saw a poster*". Lisbeth (10, Norway) said, "[*i*]*t was my mother, she brought a note and she asked me if I wanted to go*". It commonly happened that after this invitation, parents and children checked videos about capoeira in the internet. Thor said that "[*w*]*hen I got to see some real movements in the Internet and saw some real mestre, it was my father's idea, and then I saw it was really cool*".

Mestre Dedé in the Balearic Island said to me:

> "[a]nyone, when he sees capoeira, a child, an adult or any person get's in love with the side of plasticity of capoeira. ...there is a high percentage of domain of the body in a level of acrobatics, a pirouette, a somersault, equilibrium, flexibility, the continuity, the synchronization, this conversation of question and answer in a movement [of the bodies], makes that anyone get's in love".

According to a researched of a group of children capoeiristas in Denmark, they started capoeira after watching the Hollywood movie "Only the Strong" (1993). "Fascinated by the *capoeira* in the video, older brothers and fathers worked to find the capoeira school" (Anderson, 2001: 242). Moreover, in a similar way, but live though, the parents thought that Capoeira was "*beautiful*" and it stayed somehow in their memory. After 17 years, Llura, when she got a boy, she thought that capoeira would be very good for him. *"I don't know how, I saw it once many years ago and it fascinated me, so nice, so beautiful, it captivated me"* (Llura, mother, Spain).

One day, talking with Juliana, a Brazilian friend who works in a cultural centre, Llura asked her if she knew about a capoeira teacher. During that time in 2009, *mestre* Puma arrived in Barcelona and Juliana, who is from the same region in Brazil made the contacts. Thus, as there was an initial interest they wrote a project together and apply for funds at the Municipality. After it was approved, they promote the classes in different schools and established the core group of children who assisted to the training. According to the information gathered through interviews and focus groups conducted with parents and with children in Norway and Spain, they all though about capoeira as something spectacular. People's impression thanks to the plasticity of the bodies almost a constant.

However, there were more reasons. The parents thought that Capoeira was important for their children. Laila (mother, Norway) told me that she saw it after a dancing class she was attending and was nicely surprised by the combination of dance and the martial art, but also because of the music and the rhythms which were so different from the Norwegian ones that "*makes you stiff*".

The cultural and educational aspects of capoeira were considered by the parents, especially the ones who knew a bit more about the art. Bjørn (father, Norway) said that "*I would like to do*

capoeira, I thought why don't give it a try, because it's different, it's something that means something because it's build on a cultural foundation and you can do tricks and he [son] *loves to do tricks*". Edmundo (father, Norway) from Brazil told me that his child was practicing gymnastics and capoeira and it was not possible to do both so they decided for capoeira. "*For him maybe it is a little bit closer to the culture, to the roots of his father, to have contact to the Brazilians that practice capoeira*". Juliana (mother, Spain) also from Brazil said that "*it's from Brazil, not only culturally, also at an educational level*".

Finally, according to my findings in this research, and in line with de Campos, Stephens & Delamont (2010), the first time children and adults encounter Capoeira they become captivated by the art. For the children the art is "*cool*". For the parents, beside the fascination, the practice represents also a healthy exercise, a cultural connection to Brazil and an educational tool. At last, but not least, children search with their parents in the Internet, there they get to know more details about Capoeira and possibilities to join the activity.

6.2   The Adult, the Teacher, the Mestre

"Capoeira has remained until today, mainly due to the transmission of the teachings from the *mestre* to its student from generation to generation, through its practices and rituals" (IPHAN, 2007:51)

Following the authors of IPHAN (2007), the *mestre* is the keeper of the traditions and transmitter of the knowledge of capoeira. With the starting of the first legal Capoeira Regional academy by *mestre* Bimba in 1937 and the first Capoeira de Angola academy by *mestre* Pastinha in 1941, these two *mestres* became famous and are considered responsible for the expansion of the traditional and modern way of playing capoeira in Brazil and the world. They were legitimated as representatives and spokesmen of the Afro-Brazilian popular culture by artists, politicians and intellectuals of the time. In this line, all three *mestres* I was able to conduct an interview with in Catalonia (mestre Puma), the Balearic Island (mestre Dedé) and in Norway (mestre Todau), are the successors of this tradition and taught, according to them, more than the art of capoeira.

Mestre Todau synthesized his job saying, "[*m*]*y work is to promote the Brazilian culture, what Brazilian culture is*". All three mestres were Brazilians and professionals of the art, they made their living by working with capoeira and had additional incomes by teaching percussion and music, Afro and Modern dances like *forró*[72], *samba*, and also theater. For Brazil, these kind of mestres who are working outside the country are considered ambassadors and promoters of the national culture (IPHAN, 2007). Thus, capoeira trainings were part of a whole cultural transmission that even included Brazilian cuisine.

According to Delamont & Stephens (2008: 60) "[t]he capoeira classes across the world are taught by expatriate, self-exiled Brazilians to students who are enrolled into 'schools' of capoeira that are still based in Brazil". In the case of my research and in line with Wulfhorst & Vianna (2012), Capoeira appears as experimenting a globalization and also a glocalization process. In Norway the training was conducted regularly by Jens, a non-Brazilian, non-Norwegian European amateur Capoeira teacher who did not possess the mestre ranking and never had been in Brazil. Jens commonly managed the training with assistance of other capoeiristas from the adult group and all of them were practicing Capoeira for many years and had advanced knowledge of the art. However, he was not a Portuguese language speaker and in this sense, the process in Norway was not diasporic, but more hybrid and more glocal (Delamont & Stephens, 2008). *Mestre* Todau, the leader of the group in Norway was based in another city and made a few visits during the year. According to the children, he visited them between 2 and 5 times a year. Susan (11 years, Norway) said he came "*2-3 times a year, maybe a bit more often*" and Olav (11 years, Norway) stated that "*he comes to the grading day and at least* [to] *3 roda, so he comes at least 4-5 times a year*". This training was a collective and voluntary organization with a long-distance leading assistance of the *mestre*. The visiting of the *mestre* was related to internal workshops, graduations (*batizado/formatura*[73]) and other public exhibitions.

The children in Spain and in Norway had a good relationship with Puma, Todau and Jens. According to De Campos Rosario, Stephens & Delmont (2010: 104), to be Brazilian "has

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[72] Is a typical dance of Brazil, and popular among *capoeiristas*, I saw many dancing in the international meetings. It resembles somehow to the bachata.
[73] It means graduation, the moment when the *corda* is changed and the level of skill is acknowledge by the *mestre* or teacher.

particular resonance outside Brazil where the authenticity of capoeira teachers is valued by students". Notwithstanding, for children, teachers' nationality was not an issue they consider relevant. "*I didn't know he was from Brazil*" Susan said. In Norway some children thought that the Brazilian *mestre* was from Norway with Brazilian parents.

About the training with Jens, Olav said that it was "*fun*" and in Spain Daniela (6 years) said that "*what I like a lot is to be with Puma*". Despite the good relationship, for some children the ranking of the teachers in the Capoeira world was important. They valued the fact that a person with a high ranking or recognized by the group taught them. For example Perico from the rural Catalonian town said:

> "*I think we are very lucky to have* [*mestre*] *Puma, because he is the second best* [in the capoeira group] *and furthermore normally the ones that are a little bit higher teach the smaller ones, but Puma who is at very high level teaches us, we are very lucky*" (Perico, 10 years, Spain).

Likewise, Olav said "*it's something special when you meet a mestre with a red belt*". Line (11 years, Norway) said, related to this that "*then it's more exciting*" and Sussan added "*it's fun, because then we get challenged*". The children in Norway valued the trainings with *mestre* Todau when he sporadically came to visit them. They liked his grading and especially his playful personality.

All *mestres* had been living in Brazil and had years of experience playing Capoeira, teaching and leading groups of people. Actually, all of them started when they were teenagers and were working around 20 years with the art in Brazil and in other countries. In words of *mestre* Puma, "*capoeira for me basically is all. Is my philosophy of life, my work, it is all I like and know to do*". They were all experts in training the body with techniques and acrobatics, and were also singers, musicians and song writers.

In a discourse that was general across the teachers, they thought that children's trainings had to be different than the once with adults.

> "*Yes, it is different, different ways of working. Children always, depending on the age of the children, for example, to work with children who are from six years to twelve. Six, seven, eight*

years, these are children who want to brincar[74], thus I have fun with capoeira with them. I have fun with instruments, the same with the music. The ones that are older than ten years, I put them so, "you will learn". They know that they have to learn, then it becomes easier to assume directly the thing, instead of playing with them" (*Mestre* Todau).

According to Todau, and including the views of the other *mestres* and teachers interviewed, children should be taught capoeira with a different methodology than adults. In line with the research of De Oliveira (2009), *mestres* and teachers had no physical education title from any university or institution though I observed during my fieldwork, that these teachers had a good relationships with the children and based their trainings in a playful methodology. As recommended by Sonada, De Olivera & Marchi Júnior (2009), when teaching children they incorporated, by their own experience and practice, a playful methodological strategy related to amusement and entertainment.

Putting emphasis on the different focus that the teaching has between children and adults when it comes to violence, *mestre* Dedé explained:

"*you never get to something concrete as defending or attacking. For the child what is taught is that he can do the movement. That he conquest balance, that he conquest flexibility, that it is something that he enjoys… …in the first four or five years I do not put in practice this act of fighting, contact and that, I put in practice the skill of the body*" (*Mestre* Dedé).

It is interesting to observe that because capoeira is a multifaceted cultural manifestation, teachers can center their teaching on different aspects the art offers. Hence for teacher it was important to develop with children and young people body skills, control and mastery in movements, flexibility and balance instead of violent aspects. Related to this multiple perspectives, Claudio, a Latin-American father of a child who tried capoeira for her first time during a public exhibition in a hotel in Norway, told me that while children think that they are fighting, instead they are dancing. If they knew that they were dancing instead of fighting, maybe then they would not like it. Certainly, many children liked capoeira because it is a combination of game, fight and dance.

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[74] To have and make fun.

Finally, it can be stated that in general children in Spain and in Norway had a good relation with their teachers. Children said to me comments like "*he's is very nice*" (Olav) or I like to be with him. In general they seem to have fun during the training time and admired the way the teachers played Capoeira and the capacities they had to express themselves through their body. Being from another culture, speaking other languages and sometimes looking different (different skin color) was not an issue. The teachers observed children as different from adults. They emphasized their state as a growing period, when the physical structure and their minds develops. In words of Dedé, it is impossible that a child achieves the level of *mestre* because "*a child is not responsible for his acts*".

6.3   Children's Experiences During the Class

6.3.1   Children's Agency & Resistance: Sharing Adult's Control

"*What are we going to do to warm up for the class?*" With this question, *mestre* Puma started the training in the Catalonian rural town in Spain. Commonly the lesson started with some warm-up physical activity in form of a game and was led by the teacher. That day there was a double training and only two boys attended the first training part and then, in a second part younger children and new students were incorporated. In this section, I will show how children start referring to the question above, by creating several strategies to achieve what they want while exercising their agency and resisting the teacher's authority and control.

After the teacher asked the question, Perico (10 years) said, "[*g*]*inga*, *media lua* and *aú*[75]", manifesting the movements he wanted to perform. However, after a short period of practicing some of the movements, Ignasi (8 years) complained about a pain he felt in the upper part of a leg. *Mestre* Puma, who immediately stopped the training, went and checked him out. Thus, while the adult is distracted, Perico instead of continuing with the practice of the movements gets a big yellow yoga ball and starts to kick it repeatedly through the hall. It looks like a new kind of football class started with an almost one meter high and soft ball. After a moment of stretching

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[75] The *mestre* mix Portuguese names (ginga/swing, lua/moon, aú/cartwheel) and the Spanish (media/half).

and talking with the teacher, Ignasi recovers with a big smile that seems that will never disappear from his face. Corsaro (2005) explains that children use diversity of strategies to exercise their agency and achieve what they want. Here, the strategy of a feigned injury allowed the child to get some time and could be interpreted as what Corsaro calls a personal-problem delay.

Ignasi recovered completely very fast and started the practice of the movements again, and with little delay started dancing to the rhythms of Afro-Brazilian music. The child seemed very happy moving his body according to background's music and without any signs of pain. Then the teacher changed the activity. He showed some exercises the children should do on the floor, "*moving like a crocodile*" he says. He also told them that when they go to Brazil they will get to know these crocodiles. While the teacher is showing the exercises, suddenly both children leave the place. Corsaro (2005), calls this a relocation strategy, because both children escape moving to another area, they relocate ignoring the announcements and resisting the training by relaxing over some pillows they placed on the ground. During the group interview with the children Ignasi told me "*I like a lot capoeira, but sometimes when we are in class, I want to stop a bit. ...I want to leave and sleep*".

After some seconds of break on the pillows, the children resume the activity and practice some more *aú* and *cocorinha*[76] movements. Ignasi complains again about a pain to the teacher while he smiles with complicity to Perico. Later, during an exercise where Ignasi is crawling under the legs of Perico, when he is under him, Perico catches his body pressuring his legs and both laugh. This part was not considered in the original exercise though we all laugh. It appeared to me that the atmosphere is more relaxed. However, when there is a possibility to resist the authority of the *mestre* and sabotage the class, children do so, and it seems that they have taken control of the social space.

Later the same day, the teacher tells the children that they should practice the "*ginga*", "*meia lua*" and "*esquiva*"[77] or "*cocorinha*". He holds a big thick but soft stick around 1,5 meters long and moves it against them varying the altitude. Thus, when the stick is coming, the child that is close has to make a defense or attack movement. This exercise is done one by one and when it is

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[76] Refers to a Capoeira protection position.
[77] Refers to a Capoeira movement to avoid an attack, it is an evasion technique.

the turn of Perico to kick, Ignasi runs away again to the corner were the mats are, to lay there for a moment. It seems that through the relocating strategy (Corsaro, 2005) children have achieved their goal. Suddenly the teacher says "*they just want to play*", observing that the children are permanently resisting the training.

A few minutes after, while I am sitting on the corner close to where the mats and all the guarded stuff is, Perico comes and says to me "*I will build a temple*". The teacher leaves the room for a minute and meanwhile the two children start to build their temple with the diversity of assortment they can find in the hall. When he is back, he says "[*l*]*et's build a circuit*" and the children scream loud "*Eeeeh*" showing their happiness. "*But we will build a circuit that is related with Capoeira!*" the teacher adds, bringing different kind of objects he finds in the guarding place like pillows, sticks, cones, yoga mats and so on. The children join enthusiastically and discuss about how the circuit should look like, where to place the different elements and which capoeira movements they will practice in every station of the circuit afterwards.

At this point *mestre* Puma has shared the control of the situation. According to the research of Corsaro (2005) and in line with what I observed, this kind of situation creates a great sense of joy and control among the children. It seems that the initial question made to the children "*what are we going to do to warm up for the class?*" somehow was maintained by the children during the whole training till this moment, when the adult finally shared the control of the activity with the children. Yet, the teacher gives the children different kinds of advice and ideas about capoeira movements they could perform in the stations. The children nod to him and talk among themselves about more ideas to continue with the construction. The *mestre* tells them that it is enough and that they should start to practice the different movements in every station they have created. They agreed and started to practice.

It is interesting to note that after the time passed, the next group of children started to arrive and joined Perico and Ignasi in the circuit they created. After some minutes the training was over and Perico and Ignasi stayed, all together sat down forming a circle and chatted about their holidays. When the next training was starting, Perico asked the teacher if they could try the circuit one more time. *Mestre* Puma said yes, but that they should remember that they must relate the

movements to capoeira. This last situation can be interpreted as a moment where both children appropriated the circuit and felt competent with what they had constructed. Furthermore, it reveals to me a different way of training in which an activity like building a circuit is related to capoeira and was thus children's embodied experience of the art is expanded beyond the regular class.

The interaction described above is an example of the sharing of control and agency children experienced during the capoeira trainings. Furthermore, it shows diverse resistance strategies based on Corsaro's (2005) research on how children can gain power and control over a situation by constantly leaving an activity commanded by an adult. In an interesting threshold, the teacher reveals its flexibility while observing that children are playing building their "temple", and transforms it into a "Capoeira circuit". The adult does not justify his power on the childhood/adulthood difference, but is acting more as a guide so children can learn capoeira from their own perspective. The children are treated in a different way than adults because they are active in another way (Qvortrup, 2002). Hence, the teacher is recognizing children's praxis, understanding the situation and giving them a space to enjoy capoeira for themselves forming their own perspectives in a moment of more or less free play. Finally, I observe that children's capacities are recognized by the capoeira teacher, making them active participants who construct their reality through their own capacities, creativity, energies and intelligence, and created their own Capoeira circuit.

6.3.2 Monotonous Repetitions of the Movements

According to Taylor (2006), the *ginga* is a fundamental Capoeira movement. Therefore, as other movements, it was regularly practiced during the trainings in Norway and Spain. Actually, the training consisted to some extent of imitating and repeating different movements and positions till they became internalized by the students (Downey, 2008). These repetitions of the movements were brought by the teachers in various ways following different learning methods.

Albeit in general the children had a good opinion regarding the training and their teachers, they complained about the repetition of the movements. *Mestre* "*Puma said that we have to practice it*

because it is basic and we have to do it, you know? You can do it like this, like this, like that" said Ignasi (8 years, Spain), referring to the repetition of the movement. He continued saying that "*the ginga we don't like it to repeat it much*" and Perico (10 years, Spain), added that "*when I am doing the ginga I think when is this going to stop? In fifty thousand years?*"

It is interesting to note in children's words that one of them does not want to repeat the movement "*much*" and that during that process the other thinks "*when is this going to stop?*" Following Downey (2008: 205), capoeira students "rehearse movements over and over again until they become expert". This process of repetition was a regular practice as I was able to observe during fieldwork with children and adults in Denmark, Norway, Portugal and Spain. However, children said that the problem with the repetition of the movements had to do with the amount of repetitions and this is related to their subjective perception. Following Merleau-Ponty (1967: 207) all knowledge or worldview takes its place within the horizons opened up by the embodied perception. This means, that the rehearsing of movements can become a more or less disliked activity depending on the perception of every individual person. Toren (1993:462), found out in her research that the "meanings made by children may be direct inversions of adult meanings". Thus, although occasionally, when a group of children were instructed by the teachers to practice some of the movements alone, while he attended another group of children, maybe the time spent apart from the rest of the group repeating the movements many times, made them perceive this moment as a long monotonous period which for the adults was just a few minutes.

When new students joined the trainings, older students felt that they were repeating the movements they have done many times before. In Norway, during an interview with a group of children I had this dialog with Line (11 years):

> MK: *How was the class today?*
> Line: *It was a bit boring because we have done it many times before.*
> MK: *What was boring?*
> Line: *That we had to do this and that, putting your arm there, and the learning it was all going a bit slowly. There were things we had learned from before, but since there were new people there we had to do all over again. That was a bit boring.*

Line is talking about the repetition of basic movements as a consequence of the rotation and inclusion of new student to the training. When new children without experience joined the

classes, the more advanced felt sometimes that they were stagnated. Thus, she claims that it is boring to do things they have done many times before in a slow way. During the interviews, the children also claimed that unfortunately there were not enough teachers to divide all the children into different groups were they could train separately both the easy and more complex movements. The same situation happened in Spain; Isabel (mother) said that "*in the capoeira group there is a continuous movement of people who go in and out*" and therefore many times the movement were repeated, so the beginners could adapt to the movements, at the expense of the more advanced.

For Andreu (father, Spain), the aversion of the children to repeat the *ginga* is related to discipline and to the way they observe the training. Maybe the children have "*not understood it, or because it is difficult for him* [the child] *and he does not feel it integrated*". Furthermore, he added that these repetitions are an important way to "*incorporate routines*". He believes that for the children the *ginga* can be "*boring, but it can* [also] *be the most beautiful*". According to Merleau-Ponty (1962: xvii), when experiencing the beautiful, the subject is "aware of a harmony between sensation and concept, between myself and others". For children, when experiencing in a repetitive way the *ginga* there is no harmony anymore and thus the moment becomes unpleasant for them. Following Toren (1993), here the challenge is to listen to children's ideas and incorporate them as valid observations of the world. Children live their lives in terms of their own understandings the same way adults do. Thus, their ideas are embedded through their experience which is equally valid and should be considered that way by adults.

During the trainings many times children repeated the same movements, though when referring to the games these were considered, in general, as fun. Hence, it seems that when the children associated the practice of body movements to a playful activity that could be performed in a variety of ways this was observed as fun, although they repeated known movements many times. When the spectrum of time was larger and varied they did not feel the repetitions, nonetheless, when it became monotonous it was considered boring.

6.3.3   Training & Playing at the Same Time

The trainings of Capoeira consisted of a variety of activities. Some were related to physical movements like practicing martial arts movements and acrobatics and others were related to sound, like music or singing. In this section I will focus on the relation between training and playing.

During the trainings it was common to mix the practice of capoeira movements with different game activities. For Daniela (6 years, Spain), capoeira "*is like playing*". When I asked Lisbeth (10 years, Norway) to describe the training, she told me "*we do kicks and other funny things…* [like] *the games*". In a similar perspective, Thor (11 years, Norway) said that the trainings consisted of "*kicks, gymnastics, we are stretching and we practice capoeira, and then there are games*". Ferdinand (11 years, Norway) said "*I like it when we train and play at the same time, and when we do capoeira things during the relay race or the circuit practice*".

Following Sonada, De Olivera & Marchi Júnior (2009), the different methodologies used to teach capoeira, at some moments, do not take into consideration the phases of development and growth of the students. The authors state that the process of development of the children is of absolute importance and must be considered in the trainings. Accordingly, the capoeira teacher must work in planning a program which considers and respects the range and stages of development of the child. They suggest that "it is necessary the utilization of *lúdico*[78] (an amusement and entertainment play approach) as methodological strategy, making the child's learning process in Capoeira classes easy" (Sonada, De Olivera & Marchi Júnior, 2009: 130).

I learned from my observations that the playfulness was generally included, as a kind of constant variable during the trainings. Children were conscious about this playful aspect and when I asked them to describe Capoeira they said that "*is like playing*" and they liked it "*when we train and play at the same time*". It seems that children liked to play different kind of games where the physical movements of Capoeira were incorporated. Thus, these activities combined traditional games with the Capoeira movements. The next lines of an interview with Lisbeth (10 years) and

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[78] Playful.

Thor (11 years) in Norway illustrates to some extent the combination of some traditional games with the practice of capoeira movements during the trainings:

MK: *You practice different movements?*
Thor: *Yes we practice.*
MK: *Do you do other things?*
Thor: *We have sometimes games.*
MK: *What kind of games?*
Thor: "*Stiv Heks*" [tag each other with liberation], "*Mattesisten*" [tag each other by using small square mats]. *In "Stiv Heks" game one is the witch and for example if you are taken I have to sit like this* [shows a sitting mode similar to a lotus position] *and then another person has to make a cartwheel and they are liberated.*
MK: *Can you describe the "Mattesisten" game as well?*
Thor: *Its two in a team. We have two mats, one we are holding and the other we are standing on them and then we put the mat we are holding in front of us and then we walk over to the other mat and then take it up and then we have to watch out so we are not tagged by those who are following us, they can tag us.*
MK: *Do you like it?*
Thor: *Yes.*
Lisbeth: *Yes.*
MK: *Is there other game you want to explain me?*
Thor: "*Sura*", *you get free when you do not have your legs on the ground.*
MK: "*Sura*" *is the same as tag?*
Thor: *Yes*
MK: *Is this capoeira?*
Lisbeth: *Yes because for example in capoeira Sura you are standing in your hands, making the cartwheel, standing on your head and a lot of tricks, standing on your head.*
MK: *You do the capoeira movements?*
Lisbeth: *Yes.*

In this dialog with Thor and Lisbeth we talked about three games that children played during the Capoeira trainings in Norway, "Stiv Heks", "Mattesisten" and "Sura". Both children liked these more or less traditional games which were combined with capoeira movements. Thus, while playing they trained cartwheels, handstands, head stands and many other capoeira tricks and movements. It is interesting to denote another phenomena which is revealed in this conversation and is related to the holistic perspective capoeira has. As it was mention before, capoeira is difficult to be described and explained because it is martial art, dance, poetry, theater, music, philosophy, a way of living, among others. For Lisbeth and Thor, the playing of different games which are not necessarily related to the capoeira ritual, transform into capoeira when they include the body movements performed in the *roda*. This example not only shows the utilization of diverse games to train capoeira in a playful, amusing and entertaining way, it also acknowledges an operation of the teacher to incorporate new practices to the training.

Children expected teachers to find a balance between training and games. In general children enjoyed the games, though they disliked it when it became "childish". Line (11 years, Norway) said that "*there are some things that are fun and others boring. I like when we do actual training and not just games like 'tag you're it' and so on*". I interpret that for her it was important to practice the movements that allowed her to improve in the mastery of the art. For Susan (11 years, Norway) it was also important to maintain a certain level of seriousness when training. She said, "*I think it's not good when people at the training kid around and do silly stuff. It is not good for those of us who are there to do actual training*".

It is interesting to highlight children's perspectives, which have a blended view of the training, seeking a combination and mixture of the different aspects. The special inclusion of games for children, although supervised by the teachers, relates the capoeira training to a culture *with* children. Mouritsen (2002) argues that when children and adults join together to make use of diverse cultural techniques this is related to a "child culture". What I was able to observe during fieldwork contrasts with the research of Anderson (2001) in Copenhagen where she reveals that the Capoeira training there was "a form of organization that did not segregate adults and children" (Anderson, 2001: 240). According to James, Jenks, & Prout (2006), the practice of childhood is often apprehended through a radical separation between the categories of work and play. In this sense, coming back to the vision of the children, it seems that some wanted to be treated more like adults by leaving the "childish playing" and doing "actual training" like adults did, less games and more work.

In Norway and Spain the Capoeira program offered segregated spaces for children and adults, although they trained sometimes together. This was an instance of common space that children appreciated. Line said "*I like to join in on the advanced group training for grownups, because then it is not only games and fun, <u>then</u> we train*". It seems that for her, that training with adults is more challenging than training with peers. Thus, after a challenging training she can feel more satisfied if done properly. Next section will thus be dedicated to the experience of a joint training of children with adults.

6.3.4 A Threshold between Ages: Culture Contact

During fieldwork, only while visiting the Capoeira Academy in the Balearic Island, in line with the research made by Anderson (2001), the regular training was a mixed space with children and adults participating at the same time. Actually, in the core settings of the research, in the rural Catalonian town and the in Norwegian urban area, the Capoeira was conducted almost exclusively as training for children. Thus, only in the Scandinavian country did I experience a diminishing of the socially constructed borders between children and adults. In some situations the "threshold between ages" was lower and thinner and this way Capoeira allowed a common space for children and adults. This was a transitional period were the boundaries between the spaces of adulthood and childhood confronted one another. For children and adults this was in their own words, "a great experience". Speier (1976) defines the adult-child interaction as culture contact, an encounter between children's and adults' cultures.

While doing the fieldwork in Norway, I observed that sometimes when adults came earlier to their practice they started to join children's trainings. Step by step adults joined more and more the trainings with the group of children. One day Jens, the teacher, divided the children in two groups, depending on the color of the belts. The children received their belt color depending on the time they have been practicing Capoeira and the level of skills they have reached. Thus, Jens sat down and talked with some of the children who were beginners and had no belts. Meanwhile Knut, the teacher assistant that day, was with the more advanced children who had belts. Fernanda (Norway), an adult beginner capoeirista without a belt, arrived early to the class that day. When the children were practicing, she was asked by the teacher to help Knut.

Thus, she integrated children's training as an additional adult/assistant teacher. On this micro-level, the structure of units inside the group positioned adults/teachers, experienced or not, in opposition to the children/students. This distinction between children and adults was made in terms of the mass of the bodies and age, and not due to their knowledge or mastery of the art. In other situations the teachers asked the children to work in pairs and they cooperated and helped between the peers.

On the other hand, in many situations children and adults practiced together more or less as equals. Sometimes adults joined the training of children just like another participant and in other opportunities the training was planned to be joined by children and adults practicing together from the beginning. In others, children stayed longer and joined adults' training after they finished their own.

An interesting threshold allowed a group of people of different ages to share their experiences within the capoeira training. A special occasion was the celebration of Nisse, a kind of traditional Norwegian Santa Claus. A Wednesday during December a Nisse-*roda* was organized, mixing the Norwegian tradition with the Afro-Brazilian ritual. Thus, children and adults practiced together from 19.00 hours, normally children's exclusive training time.

Jens, the teacher is dressed in a white *abadá*[79] (pants) as normal, but with a red under t-shirt and red socks which were easily seen. All are training together and mixed, listening to the same Afro-Brazilian music and following Jens instructions. "*All together*" says the teacher and in pairs one has to jump over the partner playing the traditional "leapfrog". If the children cannot jump over the partner because he or she is too big, they have to change pairs. Next exercise consists also on jumping, but now performing a *tesoura*[80] and an *aú* movement. Jens has the *pandeiro* and as other times, he says loud different capoeira movements in Portuguese that children and adults perform. Children and adults are playing under the same rules. For Kaja (adult capoeirista, Norway) "*it is a very nice atmosphere and is good with the mixture*". Children and adults are mixed practicing in pairs diverse capoeira movements.

As children and adults were training-playing completely mixed, I observed that there were no borders between them. The "threshold between ages" had disappeared for some minutes. In the next lines I use some of my field notes of that day to give an impression of the atmosphere:

> "I feel amazed of how children and adults are mixed. I wonder if it is casualty or if Jens told them
> to mix between them. I asked a parent, who is sitting close to me observing, if she noticed this

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[79] In this case *abadá* refers to the white Capoeira trousers used in the *roda* and in during training in the academies. It was introduced like a uniform by *mestre* Bimba. But it can also refer to one of the biggest globalized Capoeira groups.
[80] *Tesoura:* Sscissors. It refers to a movement that is practice close to the ground and with open legs, where the other *capoeirista* has to pass through the body of the partner.

situation. She tells me that she thinks that Jens gave the command to mix. However I want to be sure, so I go to the middle of the gym and ask Jens "did you told all to mix between children and adults?" and he answers me "no I didn't, but is great, no?"" [Field notes, 14 December 2011, Norway].

According to the research of Anderson (2001) in Copenhagen, while in the training of gymnastics children are segregated and therefore maybe act "childlike", in the capoeira trainings "adults and children were peers" (Anderson, 2001: 241). Thus, this kind of organization gives the children the opportunity to practice being consumed by sports instead of being sports consumers. For the children, the practice together with adults was a good experience because besides having fun, they learned new things an were more people:

MK: *What do you think about the last training?*
Olav: *The one with the adults?*
MK: *Yes.*
Olav: *It was really funny. We learned a lot of new things. We did things that we had not done before and not just things we have done several times before.*
Thor: *It was really funny because we could have more teams when we had the competitions like "stafets"* (relay race).

For Line (11 years, Norway) the training with the grownups was "*very funny… because we were with the adults and it's more challenging*". In line with Line, for Anders (adult capoeirista, Norway) the training is also challenging with the children. He said "*I feel more tired when playing in the roda with them than I feel with some of the adults. With the kids it's an amazing physical hit*". For children and adults playing together was more challenging than normal. As the situation changed, they had to adjust to the new circumstances and both generations felt they were profiting from it.

Fernanda was especially concerned and worried because of the size of the children. "[Y]*ou start to consider your space and you have to see if you have any kid, is not the same thing of hitting the foot with someone your size and hitting with the foot someone that is like Andreas, like one meter high?*" In that sense, the trainings was more intense and less relaxed. No all had to put more attention to the surrounding because there were children, but also because the room was more crowded.

According to Line this mixing of groups does not happen often. "[*S*]*ometimes I stay after the training for the children is over, to join in the training for the grownups, but sometimes it's too late, since I have school the next day, so I am not allowed to stay so long. This is sad because I like to join the grownups' training*". She commented that adults training differs from the children's one because besides the games and fun, then they train. It is remarkable to observe that some of the children liked and use the possibilities that they were given. However, this possibility is controlled and denied by the parents who prioritize a good sleeping time for going to school next day.

Finally, although it existed a threshold that allowed children and adults to practice together in the case of Norway, as it has been described, it was related more to special trainings. Thus, the space was occasionally organized as an "age-integrated domain" (Anderson, 2001: 241). However, children and adults valued these experiences as positive and joined, both of them, the spaces of the other in informal ways.

6.3.5   Playing Different Instruments & Making Music

According to Downey (2002), full participation in capoeira demands to learn the body movements and to know how to play the instruments. The capoeira ritual, when the practitioners play in the *roda*, to be complete, needs the presence of a *bateria* or orchestra. This is lead by the *berimbau*, a bow with one string of steel, usually taken from an old car tire and which resonates thanks to the incorporation of a gourd. The music performed by the capoeiristas guide the rhythms of the players inside the game (Almeida, 1986). Olav (11 years, Norway) said, "[*b*]*efore we talked about the importance of the dance, but the singing is also important, to have the rhythm behind*". Music is a fundamental part of capoeira and is one of its most known characteristics. The dance-fight ritual is always played to the rhythms of live music and for Downey (2002: 492), "capoeira practitioners are expected to become proficient as instrumentalists and singers".

Following Downey (2002), in the old times when capoeira was illegal in Brazil, the act of carrying a berimbau in public could be sufficient motive to be arrested or even deported.

Although it is a long time legal in Brazil, nowadays, according to children's views and my own experience, it is still unknown in Norway and Spain. Perico (10 years, Spain) told me that "[*i*]*n Brazil people know them*, *but here they have arrived other* [instruments] *that people know more, because they are different*". In the case of Norway, in two opportunities I was stopped by people, carrying a berimbau and been asked if the berimbau was a bow and arrow. One day in a snowy winter, when I was with the capoeira group visiting a public school and carrying a berimbau in my hand, some children came to me and asked if it was the projectile weapon system.

Many children in the capoeira groups liked playing music and had instruments at home. They told me that they had traditional instruments like a pianos and/or keyboards, guitars, drums and also *berimbaus*, *reco-recos* and *pandeiros* among others. Susan (11 years, Norway) said "*It's not so common with these instruments* [referring to the capoeira instruments], *it is perhaps more common with pandeiro* [tambourine alike]". Line (11 years, Norway) said "*I have a berimbau*", Perico "[*w*]*e have drums… …from that that make a noise like bum, bum, bum*" and Olav told me that he has "*a keyboard*" at home. Furthermore, Ignasi from the rural Catalonian town told me, before receiving it that "*it makes me a big illusion that my mother has bought to* [mestre] *Puma the agogô because is my favorite instrument and I like it a lot*". Line in Norway told me that in difficult circumstances "*I think I would play instruments, because that makes you very happy*". It seems that in general children enjoyed listening and playing to Capoeira instruments.

Only during my visit to the trainings in the Balearic Island I was able to observe the whole group, children and adults, playing music and singing songs in a regular basis. In the rural Catalonian town and in Norway this part of capoeira was more sporadic. Igansi from Spain showing me some drawings said "*I have drawn instruments that I like, this one I like the sound* [berimbau]*, but I have never played it. This one I love to play it*[81], *it is my favourite instrument, and the drums, I also like to play it a lot*". The berimbau, is made from a native wood called Biriba (Rollinia Deliciosa) that grows in the South American tropical areas, and therefore had to be imported to Norway (cost around 700 NOK) and to Spain (40 Euros). It was considered in general an expensive instrument and maybe because of its fragile c*abaça*[82], of its big size for

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[81] The child was showing me a drawing of the *agogô while we were talking.*
[82]Gourd.

children (between 1.2 m to 1.5 m long) and/or because of the weight (the instrument is hold almost only with one finger) children did not have always access to it. However, there exist also *berimbaus* produced exclusively thinking on children's size (Kids Capoeira, 2013).

From all the children's I talked with only Daniela (6 years, Spain) told me that sometimes while "*playing instruments there are some were my hands get hurt, with other's not*". All children in Norway and in the Catalonian rural town agreed that they should learn more instruments. They perceived the knowing of playing music as an important aspect of capoeira and were well informed about the instruments' names and sounds. Perico said for example that "*drums and pandeiro are most recognized by the people. Pandeiro and berimbau, reco-reco, berimbau and agogô are not well known by the people because they are not from here in Spain*".

Igansi said to me during an interview that "*when I am training I do not have a very good time. When we play music I have a very good time or sometimes when we practice a concrete movement*". The playing of music was not only perceived as an aspect of capoeira that the children wanted to learn more. It also made them feel good in general, it lifted them up. For some children, moreover, this was a practical alternative to the physical exercises.

6.4 The Capoeira Community

In the everyday training, children from Norway and Spain met between peers and also with other older practitioners from inside the group. Following Thor (11 years, Norway) "*we got to know a lot of people, that's my experience*". As children and adults mixed during classes sometimes, it was common for the children in Norway to get in contact with other adult capoeiristas. This was more occasionally in Spain, because the capoeira training was only conducted for them. However, both had experiences at an international level, sharing experiences with *mestres* and capoeiristas from diverse cities, countries and continents.

For Perico (10 years, Spain) talking about the number of the group, said that "*we are not so many, but inside, we are like a big group, a nice group*". According to Alba (mother, Spain) "[*t*]*he big ones are four and the little ones are four. Most of them go to the alternative school and*

only one goes to a public school". In Norway a group of five children visited the same class and many of them lived in the same neighborhood and close surroundings, "*we are kind of circle of friends. I don't have many friends outside of these*" said Susan (11 years, Norway). Olav added, "*I talk to all the people in class* [at school]*, but Susan, Line, Therese and Ferdinand are closest to me*". Following Teixeira (2005), a capoeira group can help to promote a social space of interaction to work interpersonal competences to deal with emotions, creating and preserving an individual and a social identity. The groups give values, meaning, purpose and direction, balancing the positive and negative elements of the social life.

For Halvard (adult capoeirista), the capoeira group in Norway is:

> "*similar to a family in one way, because what you share is very personal in one way, it's who you are, so more than, for instance, in a work situation you are also performing a role in a work or in studies, but I think a goal in the capoeira groups is that people can bring their individuality and have room for that and a context for expressing it*"

Pamfílio de Souza (2008) states that the practice of capoeira brings social benefits like becoming aware about the existence of the group as such, giving responsibilities, duties and rights to people. In the Balearic Island and in the rural town in Catalonia the groups were directly trained by a capoeira *mestre* and thus the organization was more vertical than in Norway, were within the practitioners some were elected as representatives and members of a board composed by a leader, administration and social activities responsible. Thus, the adults were self-organized and managed the whole group. The board handled directly with other institutions like the municipality and the local university. Likewise, in the rural Catalonian town and in the Balearic Island, many adult capoeiristas helped to organize events, to distribute information about workshops and getting more people involved. However, children were, as I was able to observe, not included in this kind of organizational decisions. In an interesting related aspect, I could observe that the parents of the children many times were involved in the preparation of food for the events and festivals.

All children who assisted to special events met other peers and/or adult capoeiristas from their own group, or from other places. Capoeiristas from diverse cities, countries and continents came to participate from these events. This was the case of the *batizado* in Norway, were children met

mestres from Portugal and Brazil among other countries and in *batizados* and festivals in Spain. Related to this, Perico in Spain told me that he met a *mestre* from Brazil, he said that "*a mestre that was teaching us in the second festival, he spoke Spanish and Portuguese, he said he spoke Portuñol[83]*". Likewise, children met also other peers, like a French child who traveled to Catalonia to meet his peers from the rural town. Camil (father, Spain) said "*he* [son] *was surprised after having a good time with the* [French] *child, because he does not speak French and the boy did not speak any word of Spanish. With him, he would have practiced 20 times more*". As I could observe, the quantity of capoeiristas who traveled to this kind of international events was higher between adults than between children. However, all the ones who participated from these events had the possibilities to experience Capoeira at an international level.

An aspect that I could observe but was not discussed with the children was the occupation of the social and physical space inside the groups. Thus, the socially, the groups had a formal hierarchy based on the degree of skills that each member achieved, represented in the color of the belts. However, they tended to occupy the physical space in a horizontal way, represented by the form of the circle. When playing in the capoeira *roda*, but also when having to communicate information children and adults sat together on the floor forming a circle. Thus, in a contrast to traditional ways of teaching in our modern education systems where the teacher who knows is in front and the students who do not know are receiving information in the back, was replaced by a same level position. This, allowed children to talk and make questions at the same height as the teacher.

Finally, I want to conclude this section by stating that children felt good in their capoeira groups and that it was a nice place to be. Often they had or made friends inside the group and had the opportunity to get to know many people (children and adults) from different cultural backgrounds.

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[83] Portuñol in used the Spanish speaking countries and relates to the mixed use of Portuguese and Spanish.

6.5   Giving Meaning to Practice: The Importance of Capoeira's History

For children, to know about Capoeira's history is important. It gives context and meaning to the art and therefore to their own practice. Many times during the singing of songs the history is remembered and beliefs are transmitted. "[E]ven though music apparently is one aspect of this cultural expression, it executes a fundamental role in transmitting philosophy, values, history, and memories in building cultural identity" (Candusso, 2008: 17). Most of the children did not know Portuguese and in consequence were not able to understand the ideas transmitted through the lyrics of the songs. Actually, many times adults do not understand the lyrics neither and thus, they murmured according to the tune and rhythm of the music. Here is part of a dialog with children that shows their thinking about learning Capoeira's history:

MK: *What about the history of capoeira?*
Line: *That is cool.*
Olav: *I like that very much.*
MK: *Why?*
Line: *Because I just like it, it makes capoeira seem cooler. If you look at it without knowing the history behind it capoeira might look not so interesting.*
Olav: *Then it might look like just an odd sort of dance, but if you know it's a combat sport disguised as a dance…*
Line: *Then it sounds much more interesting…*

For children (and adults), the narratives related to capoeira are relevant because it gives meaning to the practice. As I have written above, children and adults are initially astonished with the "plasticity" of capoeira, the beauty of the movement and the possibilities of expression the art offers. Thus, through the capoeira training and while playing in the *roda*, the children are acquiring new body movements and incorporate the other aspects they experience of this Afro-Brazilian culture. Knowing its history and myths, slavery and freedom, gives capoeira a unique meaning that children think "*makes capoeira seem cooler*". Furthermore, according to Wulfhorst & Vianna (2012), capoeira as a cultural manifestation forms a "globalized localism" with values from the periphery which are others than those provided by the mainstream.

In all sites visited during the fieldwork time, I never heard music with lyrics interpreted in other language than Portuguese. Notwithstanding, I was told in Norway and Spain that they had sung in their local language occasionally few years ago, though these were exceptions. Related to this issue *mestr*e Dedé said:

"[W]hen a child or an adult creates a song in his native language, in a foreign language, he is doing something that means he really understands capoeira. He is translating capoeira for him. Now that it will be sung in English in a big capoeira roda, I doubt it" (*Mestre* Dedé, Spain).

The identity of capoeira is related to its historical development in Brazil (Almeida, 1986). Thus, although this multifaceted cultural manifestation has become global and continues developing, I found, in accordance with De Campos Rosario, Stephens & Delamont (2010), that teachers kept the tradition of singing in Portuguese all visited settings. According to Downey (2002: 490), "cultural and social influences play an important role, not merely in the linguistic or symbolic "interpretation" of music, but in its very sensual apprehension". The way the experience and feelings are embodied is inherently a social and cultural phenomenon (Downey, 2002). Thus, it can be said that children that do not know the arts' history experience capoeira as a leisure activity with less meaning. Getting to know Capoeira's history and the Portuguese language can help to understand in a deeper way this cultural manifestation. Language, as a fundamental aspect of culture, can thus become a barrier to feel integrated as foreigner practitioner to the capoeira world.

However, when I asked the children in Spain if they wanted to learn Portuguese they were not convinced. Perico (10 years) said "*not that much, it is similar to Catalan and Spanish*" and Ignasi (8 years) replayed "*I don't mind* " and then he told me a story about a *mestre* who spoke with him in Portuñol or Portunhol, which is the common given name to the irregular mixture of Portuguese with Spanish. During this group interview, only Adriana (5 years, Spain) said that she would like to learn the language. In the case of Norway children were not learning Portuguese and when I asked them about new things they would they like to learn, only Olav (11 years) mentioned it obliquely saying "[n]*ew songs… …perhaps, in Portuguese*".

For the parents in Norway and Spain, the Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestation is a foreigner expression that they feel far from their reality. Javier (father, Spain) said "*here it enters more like with forceps*", meaning that capoeira is related to another cultural origin being very different. Yet, they think that history is an important aspect of capoeira that children should know. Claudio, a Latin-American father living many years in Norway said:

> "*It is very strange, really, because the slavery and slaves in Norway didn't exist, almost, apart from the war, but after that it has not been seen. But I think it is important, is important to try to know the history of capoeira, to know a bit of history, the origin of how things started and for the Norwegians it is interesting to know the origin of this. Maybe it helps to all of us to think about how it started and how it is today*"

It is interesting to highlight, in the observation made by Claudio that knowing the past is important, to think on how things are in the present time. Following Röhring (2005), the globalization of capoeira provides an identity and feelings, to practitioners around the world, that are associated to resistance against oppression. This subculture of protest is obviously linked to the historical ideas of resistance to slavery. Wulfhorst & Vianna (2012) understand this as an "insurgent cosmopolitanism", as the embodiment of peripheral values that differ from those proposed by the mainstream.

6.6   The Roda de Capoeira in Different Settings

As it has been stated in the theory chapter, the *roda de capoeira* is the maximal expression of this syncretic cultural manifestation. It is the moment when movements, sounds and performance combine giving a holistic meaning to the practice (Lewis, 1995). "[T]he entire practice constitutes a 'commemorative performance', a re-enactment of Capoeira's 'sinister past'" (Röhring, 2005: 2). Following Almeida (1986), it is by playing inside the capoeira circle that people can really perceive its essence, and according to IPHAN (2007), it is in the *roda* where you learn the art.

Now I will refer to the *roda* de capoeira situation. As I could observe, there were mainly three kind of *roda*. One which was intimate and related to the trainings indoors, another that was related to public performances in more crowded location like shows. The last one was children's own experience inside their own child culture (Mouritsen, 2002). Next I will refer to how children experienced and perceived these three different spaces.

6.6.1 The Roda Inside the Capoeira Group

For Perico (10 years, Spain), the *roda* is "*a moment when we all meet and we make a circle with the people, and between two persons we make movements inside that circle, without going out from it and doing the movements*". Here it must be added that traditionally, the imaginary circle is formed by the orchestra (bateria) which plays music and leads the singing, and the other capoeiristas and spectators. However, from the observations made during fieldwork in the different settings, and agreeing with Perico, children "*sometimes* [play capoeira in the *roda*]*, but not much, little*". During the trainings, the teacher or *mestre* developed different kinds of activities which principally involved the practice of body techniques related to movements used inside the *roda de capoeira*, nonetheless, actively playing in the *roda* was more occasional. The "big capoeira *roda*" which was related to popular feasts in Bahía (IPHAN, 2007) maybe till today maintains its special and ritualistic meaning, this is could be a reason why the *roda* was not an everyday practice neither in Norway or Spain.

Traditionally the place to learn capoeira was inside the *roda* (IPHAN, 2007). Following Downey (2008: 206), since the era of the academies started in the 1930's in Brazil, the teaching methods have in a large extent separated games and free play, emerging a professionalized instruction. After all, in my research and in line with the recommendations of Sonada, de Olivera & Marchi Júnior (2009), during the trainings children had an almost constantly playful space managed with an open and joyful attitude by the teachers or *mestres*.

The participation in the circle could take place during the trainings (capoeira inside) and also in less intimate atmospheres like when children participated in public performances (capoeira outside). For Lisbeth (11 years, Norway), playing in the *roda* during the trainings was "*fun*", although she felt "*a little bit afraid of doing it the wrong way*". This "being afraid about doing it wrong" emotioning embodies an exposure feeling. When playing in middle of the circle, the whole group of peers and adults are surrounding and observing, which exposes the players. They can become conscious of the possibility to make something ridiculous (Walton, 2004).

However, the more the children participated in the *roda*, and thanks to the playfulness of the space, this emotioning of shame seemed to be overcome. Children like Line, Susan and

Ferdinand agreed with Thor (11 years, Norway) who said "*I have done it for one and a half years*, *so I have learned what I* [have to] *do*" in the *roda*. Thor insisted "*I think that if it's a lot of people then it sometimes might be embarrassing if you are doing it wrong, but it is also very fun*". The statements reveal that after many times of exposure in the *roda* children overcome the initial emotioning of shame and instead, they develop the capacity to perform in front of other people in the group with a playful emotioning.

For Perico (10 years, Spain), "[*n*]*ormally the roda we do it in the festivals, before we pass to the next belt. After we do the roda and making the movements and all this, the belt is given to us*". The child is talking about the *batizado* (graduation) ceremony which occurred, in this case, in terms of an international festival. The capoeira outside, was related more to the spectacle than to an inside intimate performance. Thus this occurred through organized public events like the festivals, show performances in theatres, hotels and/or in the streets. During normal trainings no more than 20 people participated in the *roda*, though in public exhibitions, which big events, the amount of people (which included the participant capoeiristas, their families and other spectators who maybe never observed a *roda* de capoeira before) could vary, as I experienced, from around 40 to 200 persons.

For children and adults, playing capoeira as an intimate performance during trainings is different than playing with the *mestre* in front of people they do not know or that have never seen capoeira. It is interesting to note, in the next dialog with the children in Norway, that there is a change of their perception according to the time they have been practicing and to the circumstances (capoeira inside/outside):

MK: *What did you feel when you were at the batizado* [capoeira outside] *the first time?*
Ferdinand: *The first time we had only been going to capoeira for two months and only Line and I were there.*
Olav*: There were several others who were doing capoeira, but they weren't there.*
MK: *But what did you feel and think that first time?*
Susan: *We felt quite small and it was scary.*
Line: *There were many people standing and watching.*
Ferdinand: *We were hiding a bit from the audience and watched the other ones.*
Line: *I felt I was not so good.*
MK: *When it is a roda here* [capoeira inside]*, do you also feel nervous about playing then?*
Line: *Not so much.*
Susan: *No that much.*
Ferdinand: *Not when it's only a roda here, but when it's grading I get a little nervous.*

Susan:	*Yes.*
Line:	*Yes.*
Olav:	*Yes.*
MK:	*Because all the parents and families are there?*
Ferdinand:	*There are people watching who don't take part in the roda.*
Line:	*Yes, we are to be given a belt and then we have to play with really good ones.*
Olav:	*We play with the mestre.*

Children remember the first time they participated in a *batizado* ceremony and they had been training capoeira for just few months. Thus, they felt "small" and "scared" because of the many people outside the trainings who were "watching". They even reveal that they were "hiding" from the audience and focused their attention on "other" capoeiristas to distract themselves and get less nervous. Thus, "they felt not so good" at playing. Yet, they do not feel much nervous when playing capoeira in the training centre. The capoeira inside, with peers, teachers and other familiar adult capoeiristas, after a certain initial period of "knowing", offers a safe place for doing it "wrong". This process can contribute to children's well-being by giving them basic psychological support like feelings of competence, relatedness and autonomy (Leversen, 2012). They admit that when there is a "grading", when people "outside" the *roda* are watching and they play with the "really good ones", with the "*mestre*", they get a "little nervous". A feeling that maybe is never completely overcome.

6.6.2   The Roda de Capoeira as a Show

Next, I analyze the participation of children in Capoeira as a show. I start the analysis trhough a conversation I had with the children in Norway, after some of them performed in front of around 200 people on the stage of a hotel. The frame was a dance festival that included live music and different dance styles like tango, salsa, lindy hop and samba. Many amateur and professional dancers from different clubs from the city participated and capoeira as a dance was also present. Important to highlight is that the only children that participated in this exhibition were three children of the capoeira group. Thus, I could go more in deep in children's experiences by following the group in this "capoeira outside" space.

MK:	*How did you experience being there? It's important that you speak loud, so I can record.*
Line:	*I think the audience thought it was a bit strange.*

MK: *Can you explain why?*
Susan: *Yes explain it!*
Line: *Eh, perhaps they had not seen anything like it before.*
Susan: *It was odd, because everyone else danced really elegant dances* [the children laugh].
MK: *You feel capoeira is not elegant?*
Line: *Yes.*
Ferdinand: *It is if you have a red belt.*
Line: *Yes, or if you view it like a dance it is a bit odd, but if you view it as a martial art it is quite elegant. It is very elegant, considering it is a martial art.*
Susan: *It is not elegant if you think that it is a dance.*
Ferdinand: *If you have a red belt, you are very good at it.*
MK: *Do you now mean the roda or maculélé?*
Line: *Both* [agreement from others and laughs].
Susan: *Yes.*
MK: *Olav and Ferdinand, why didn't you go?*
Olav: *I was away.*
Ferdinand: *The deadline for signing up was over when I found out about it. I didn't want to perform in front of so many people.*
MK: *Why not?*
Ferdinand: *I just didn't want.*

A first aspect that calls my attention in this dialog is that capoeira, as a multifaceted cultural manifestation, is difficult to be related to other art forms. In the context of this public event, children compared it to the other dances and felt that it maybe was not a so elegant dance. However, the ambiguity allows saying that "like a dance it is a bit odd, but if you view it as a martial art it is quite elegant". If children would participate from an oriental martial art exhibition, would they maybe feel that capoeira as a martial art is a bit odd, but as a dance is quite elegant? Or when they play music? Children's perception of capoeira is that of an "indeterminate genre" (Lewis, 1995). However, it can be an elegant dance if performed by someone who knows the art very well, like a capoeira *mestre* who has a red belt.

Another perspective children reveal is that capoeira in the Norwegian context is not a known art. They thought that the public would find their presentation "strange" because "perhaps they had not seen anything like it before" and finally, not all the children wanted to participate in such big events. Ferdinand, who did not assist said that "*I didn't want to perform in front of so many people*". Children play capoeira in the *roda* in the trainings atmosphere and can feel competent and confident at that level, but when performing in front of more people become unsecure. It is interesting to observe that in the capoeira inside this feelings were overcome more easily than in the capoeira outside.

Playing capoeira in the *roda*, in a small intimate space or in front of a larger group, is exposing yourself and your partner. Inevitable, both capoeiristas that are playing, are positioned in the middle of the circle, they are in the center of space and attention. Thus, the bodies' dialog define the center of the space, children/children, children/adults, adults/adults, all are equally positioned at the center when playing/acting in the *roda* (Anderson, 2001). Paraphrasing Merleau-Ponty (1963), in space there is no inside and no outside, though this can be "enclosed" through a socially constructed process, giving meaning to it and embodying it by the children. Here all the knowledge they have about capoeira interferes (capoeira disguise as a dance, slavery, liberation) and histories relate their present to the past. Thus, the through every movement that is played/acted in the middle of the *roda* is a path of liberation. Children experience step by step the change from shyness to "fun" and from a not free society to a free microcosm.

6.6.3   Children Free Playing Capoeira

During all the fieldwork, I did not observe children free playing Capoeira alone or among themselves. Thus, I asked them if they played Capoeira besides the training time alone, between them or with other friends outside the Capoeira group. According to them, the influence of Capoeira in their lives is small. Some children like Ferdinand (11 years, Norway) said that it plays no role at all in his everyday life. Others, like Olav (11 years, Norway) said "*I think it makes a difference. It is much better to do capoeira than to not do it*". For Susan (11 years, Norway) Capoeira impacts "[*a*]*lmost nothing, but on Wednesdays we have training*". In general, children in Norway and Spain perceived that they did not dedicate much time to Capoeira and that the activity had very little influence in their lives.

They also observed that they did not relate much to Capoeira outside the training time. According to them, they do not play Capoeira with other friends, because they "*don't have any idea or don't want to know*" (Perico, 10 years, Spain). They almost only play with the friends that also assist to the trainings and belong to the Capoeira group. Ferdinand (11 years, Norway) said "*One time we trained another day in the woods which was fun*". However, they only play occasionally between them. Olav said that they sometimes play, "[*n*]*ot often, but in summertime*

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when we are trying to do handstands we suddenly think about something funny with Capoeira".
Perico (10 years, Spain) commented that "[s]*ometimes when we are doing a competition with friends that live far, running, sometimes I do a Capoeira movement and it puts me very happy*".

Outside the training time, children sometimes practice at school and at home. Olav (11 years, Norway) said "[n]*ot often, but sometimes in gym class*" and Perico agreed "[i]*n my school, sometimes I do the movements*". Susan (11 years, Norway) said "*I practice a little bit, some tricks sometimes, but not often*". Ferdinand (11 years, Norway) added "*The same with me, but almost never*". Finally, Olav said "*I remember one time there was a movement I had learnt almost fully, so I cleared space in the living room and practiced there right after training*". Ignasi (8 years, Spain) said "*I sometimes play in the house and in the garden… normally alone, because when I am with my friends we play other things. Unless I am with a friend […] that also played Capoeira before*". According to Olav, he also practices in summertime sometimes. He said "*Sometimes in the summer I enjoy doing the cartwheels and doing handstands outside, but it's not training Capoeira with others, it's just practicing for my own sake*" (Olav, 11 years, Norway).

About playing Capoeira in the *roda* outside the trainings, the children in Norway explained to me the situation as follows:

> MK: *Do you meet to play Capoeira outside the training?*
> Ferdinand: *I have done it once. Then it was a roda with one person, two were supposed to be playing and one standing with one berimbau.*
> MK: *There were three people?*
> Ferdinand: *Four.*
> Line: *There were four, two who were playing and two standing... It was not a real berimbau.*
> Olav: *It was one person playing berimbau.*
> Line: *And we also only knew one song.*
> Ferdinand: *We played din don din, din don din.*
> Line: *Yes.*
> MK: *That's the only experience?*
> Ferdinand: *When we do it together we are not playing proper capoeira, but for example everyone is doing the cartwheel. Everyone is doing movements on their own.*
> MK: *When do you do play "real" capoeira?*
> Olav: *When we are here* [in the training centre].
> Ferdinand: *Yes.*

From my dialog with the children, it can be interpreted that children played Capoeira inside the *roda* between themselves only on rare occasions. They did not use a real berimbau and they only

knew one song. Thus, this was perceived and experienced by them as not a proper Capoeira *roda*. Thus, for being a legitimate *roda* de Capoeira, this must be practiced in the training centre. This probably means for the children that a legitimate *roda* must be practiced with the original instruments, knowing a variety of songs sung in Brazilian Portuguese and maybe also organized and led by adults.

7   DISCUSSION

Following Qvortrup (2002) childhood is constructed in relation to adulthood and in the same way, the experiences given by child to the art is also related to adult *capoeiristas'* experiences, because both in a relational stance give meaning to their experiences. In this discussion chapter, I will try to respond the research question that has guided this thesis:

How do children who practice regularly Capoeira experience this syncretic Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestation in Norway and Spain?

Accordingly I focus on children who experience their childhood in the social and physical space constructed inside Capoeira. Thus, together children and adults with their practice of Capoeira co-construct the childhood-Capoeira social space, whereas also many other social structures, which I do not analyze here, influence. Keeping this in mind, I will then concentrate on answering the principal research question by focusing in the discussion on Capoeira as a social space in interaction with different childhood(s), on children's agency and adults' control, and on the embodied *habitus* that children experience.

7.1   Capoeira as a Social Space for Children

Capoeira has been historically an urban practice in Brazil (Röhring , 2005). According to IPHAN (2007), the *roda de Capoeira* was originally played in streets, parks and squares. Traditionally men have used public spaces while women and children used private spaces. However, women (Pires de Oliveira & Pinheiro Leal, 2009) and children have also participated in Capoeira in the streets (Coêlho de Araújo, 2005). During the period of fieldwork, especially in Barcelona, I observed many "street *rodas*" and trainings organized in squares and parks with an active participation of men and women. In Norway, despite the fact that I did not observe outdoor Capoeira practices during fieldwork, I can state that is also the case during the warmer summer time. Thus, through YouTube I found Capoeira *rodas* performed outdoors in important cities like

Oslo, Bergen, Stavanger and Trondheim in Norway, and Madrid, Barcelona, Sevilla, Santiago de Compostela, Málaga and Cádiz in Spain. However, children were notably absent by their absence from this social space, which that has been observed "as an unacceptable or unhealthy environment for children" (Panter-Brick, 2002: 148). Moreover, this practice is till nowadays repressed by the police. I got to know that the group I was doing fieldwork with in Barcelona received a fine because of practicing Capoeira in a square[84]. Anyway, besides children's participation in international meetings and workshops in hotels and theaters, the social space offered to children in Capoeira in the context of Norway and Spain was predominately in terms of their participation in organized trainings. This way, children's experience Capoeira as an "exotic-gymnastic cultural" after school leisure activity inside a local sport or dance centre.

According to Frønes (2009), in post-industrial societies there is a general frame that correlates leisure activities with scholastic development. From the institutionalization of Capoeira by *mestre* Bimba in the 1930's, Capoeira has been related to the academy (Röhring, 2005; Taylor, 2007). In this sense, since children started their participation in the Capoeira-academy space during the 1980's (Capoeira, 2002), they related to the art through their practice in this institutional setting. Thus, children's experience of Capoeira is related to an organized activity scheduled and controlled by the teachers. This was the situation I was able to observe through my fieldwork in Norway and in Spain, and probably is also holds true in the settings in Denmark and Portugal.

According to James, Jenks, & Prout (2006) childhood as a social space is nowadays related to a modern and complex globalized world under an important impact of a capitalist process of production, structures that are manifested in children's experiences:

> "Spatiality … has various aspects besides that of region including distance, movement, proximity, specificity, perception, symbolism and meaning: and space makes a clear difference to the degree to which, to use realist terminology, the causal powers of social entities (such as class, the state, capitalist relations, patriarchy) are realized" (cited in James, Jenks, & Prout, 2006: 40).

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[84] "Today (12/07/11), the police from Barcelona interrupted again an artistic cultural/movement (Capoeira) that is taking place already since four years in --------------------. They took our instruments, did not give any plausible or coherent explanation and gave me a fine. The police could not even tell if the activity was illegal or not. How long will we have to endure this?" (Personal Communication).

Children experienced Capoeira as a foreign cultural manifestation taught by their diasporic-Brazilian teachers in the cases of the rural Catalonian town and the Balearic Island in Spain, and as a mix of a diasporic and transnational social space in the case of the city in Norway. For the children, the practice of Capoeira was observed as just as another leisure activity like any martial art, football or gymnastics, inserted in their daily lives in the global north which had, according to them "*some influence*", "*little*", though "*it makes a difference. It is much better to do capoeira than to not do it*". As observed in the analysis chapter, children initiated their participation in the activity because their parents presented them the art and after seen it, they thought that the movements were "*cool*".

Children were not always sure if the teacher was a national or not, although they spoke with accent, used different words or had a distinctive look. To describe an activity simply in terms of what people do in certain space is to overlook the meanings of these activities (James, Jenks, & Prout, 2006). In the case of the school, the curriculum contains choices, rules, selections and issues of power, identities and philosophies that generate world-views. Accordingly, in the case of the Capoeira trainings for children in Norway and in Spain, there was no formal curriculum. However, there was a schedule and children practiced through diversity of games and other methodologies preferably physical exercises. They practiced playing instruments, other dances like *maculelê*, *puxada de rede* and *samba de roda* and heard stories about battles and slavery days in which old *capoeiristas* participated. This way, although not written and planned like in the school, there certainly were social and political structures and assumptions that were informally and orally taught and learned, becoming embodied by the children.

The Groupo de Capoeira Angola Pelourinho from mestre Pastinha in Bahia, promotes a "citizenship" that creates "awareness of one's rights and responsibilities, and a critical apprehension of social conditions that oppress individuals, especially Afro-Brazilians" (Downey, 2002: 12). Through the practice of Capoeira, an "invisible curriculum" embodies solidarity and "preserves both memory and a cultural legacy of Afro-Brazilian resistance to racist oppression – slavery, exploitation, and the persecution of Afro-Brazilians' distinctive culture" (Idem, 2002: 12-13). Accordingly, Capoeira in Norway and Spain, and in the rest of the world represents this tradition. Thus, these ideas are expressed through the differences established within the

embodied rhythms, the movements, by making music while playing "exotic" instruments and by singing the lyrics in Brazilian Portuguese language. This way, children and adults produce and re-produce Capoeira's philosophical values and beliefs.

7.2 Children's Embodiment of Capoeira

For Frønes, (2009), leisure activities constitute part of ideological transfers, a space that can be used for children's autonomy and subversiveness against the system. According to him, the freedom in these kind of activities raise the possibilities of developing new cultural activities and lifestyles. As globalized syncretic art form Capoeira can impact on children in the creation of an insurgent cosmopolitanism (Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012) and a way to be citizens (Candusso, 2008). Thus, leisure and cultural activities help to create social distinctions between their participants and in this sense, activities like Capoeira can give tools to the children to create or confirm their own identity. Furthermore, this kind of activity is relevant for the social maintenance of traditions as well as of changing possible pre-figurative patterns (Frønes, 2009).

This means that after a certain time of practice, children embody the experiences generated in a specific social space. However, at the same time they influence in it with their agency. In other words, children "are defined by the space and are nevertheless the defining consciousness of that space" (Ardener, 1987; cited in James, 1993).

The social space of Capoeira as a place where all the syncretic Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestation is expressed and is embodied by the children is a hard task to be described shortly. The knowledge is transmitted "in a scaffolding-imitation process through enculturation" (Downey, 2008) From this perspective, the relation between the teacher and the apprentice student is crucial to the process of embodiment of Capoeira:

> "Between apprenticeship through simple familiarization, in which the apprentice insensibly and unconsciously acquires the principles to the "art" and the art of living –including those which are not known to the produce of the practices or works imitated, and, at the other extreme, explicit and express transmission by precept and prescription, every society provides for structural exercises tending to transmit this or that form of practical mastery" (Bourdieu, 1997:88).

Following Bourdieu, it can be said that the movements practiced while dancing or fighting in the *roda de Capoeira*, while observing or training in a more or less playful/monotonous way, can be sometimes unconscious or explicit and thus embodied. Not all the arenas related to the syncretic art were present during training, nor applied the teachers with the same intensity. As was described through the analytical chapters, the focus was more on the physical aspects than in the philosophical one. There was no written curriculum, and the trainings varied in time and place. For example, famous "[m]estre João Grande, when explicitly asked, expressly denied that he used any structured pedagogy at all" (Barbieri, 1993; referred to in Downey, 2008: 210). The teachers had freedom to teach and children said they enjoyed Capoeira, especially the acrobatics, the martial arts and the music.

Mestre Acordeon told in an international meeting I participated during my fieldwork in Barcelona: "[t]*he best thing that I tell you in terms of Capoeira, to learn Capoeira, is to practice Capoeira as much as you can, with the commitment that you can go. When I say commitment, sometimes the students misunderstand the point, they say 'I have another life, I have kids, I have a job to go, I have to do that', so, we are not talking about 24 hours of the life of a person, what we are talking about the moment that you have to dedicate to Capoeira you are 100% there*".

I noticed during fieldwork and through conversations, that practitioners started to practice the movements in different places outside the training space. In Copenhagen for example, during the realization of an international meeting I accompanied *mestre* Puma to take a subway and while we were waiting on the platform, we practiced for around 5 minutes a movement called *queixada*[85]. As said above, when buying at a Supermarket in the Balearic Island, *mestre* Dedé was playing the *berimbau* and singing Capoeira songs. The same happened when I accompanied him once to a beach, and although it was full of people sunbathing, he was playing and singing undisturbed, as if he was there alone. In an informal conversation with an adult *capoeirista* and teacher from the group in Norway, he told me that he practiced the movements everywhere. "*Once I practiced the bananeira while waiting for an airplane in the airport, that position relaxes me with the head on the ground*". Probably children in my study have not acquired a Capoeira *habitus*, but this is a matter of time.

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[85] It is a popular Capoeira regional kick.

Olav (11 years, Norway) said to me in an interview that "*one time there was a movement I had learnt almost fully, so I cleared space in the living room and practiced there right after training*". Other children told me that they practiced movements in their rooms, in the garden, during school time or when being with friends. Perico (10 years, Spain) said "*sometimes when we are doing a competition with friends that live far, running, sometimes I do a Capoeira movement and it makes me very happy*". This can be interpreted as a remembering of Capoeira because children embodied the movements and thus they use the movements in other spaces.

However, I did not follow children that practiced Capoeira all the time, so I only include the situations that I was able to observe and what they or their parents told me. However, sometimes I observed distracted children from the class who, maybe unconsciously, started to dance according to the rhythms of the Brazilian music that came from the speakers. They moved their bodies in ways that were not originally from Spain nor from Norway. Instead they were embodying foreigner ways of moving it. Laila (mother, Norway) said that she felt that her daughter was learning to move her body in another way than the "*stiff*" Norwegian way of doing it. According to Lewis "most capoeira players themselves see the lessons and skills learned in the game as helpful in, and usually central to, the proper conduct of everyday life" (Lewis, 1995: 228).

From this perspective, it can be argued that the regular practice of Capoeira, in all its syncretic ways, impacts in a certain way the base of schemes of perception and appreciations that children have and thus it can influence their *habitus*. Accordingly, Downey (2008) states, that a closer study of the processes involved in the experience of Capoeira can lead to a better understanding of culture through practice and time (Bourdieu, 1997). Perico (10 years, Spain) said about Capoeira,"[*f*]*or me, well, it is like a game of movements, well, which are not the normal that you do. Instead, they are things, movements that you don't do when you start, rather you must be practicing and then you do them*". Thus Capoeira, through its patterns of training, can provoke variations in different arenas of the human development, like behavioral, neurological and physiological, which are socially and cultural constructed.

As it has been stated above, Capoeira is related to ideas or resistance against the system, freedom from slavery and oppression, and as an insurgent cosmopolitanism. These ideas are related to the ones expressed by the "indignados[86] movement" of Spain. The movement has focused its strikes especially against the bipartisan political system, claiming for a real participatory democracy and for the end of the financial speculations of the international banking system, among other demands.[87] Thus, it was not a surprise when while conducting my fieldwork there, I encountered many times groups of *capoeiristas* supporting the movement through their performances in different squares. According to Höflig (2007), especially the *angoleiros capoeiristas[88]* in particular are carving out an empowered space in Brazil through their movements and songs, the *roda de Capoeira* ritual and their playing. They are using their agency to become the protagonists of history through the music and movements of Capoeira.

Finally, I want to highlight that all the groups of children I made participant observation with, attended Capoeira classes that were considered a leisure activity and where the parents had to pay a monthly or semester fee. The amount varied between Norway and Spain, being a cheaper in the Nordic country. Nevertheless, all the parents I talked to said that it was a reasonable price or even a cheap price as some parents told me in Norway. Nonetheless, following Leversen (2012), to increase the perceived and the real availability of organized activities like Capoeira, the focus should be placed on shrinking the differences in participation. According to her, this is possible by reducing factors such as gender stereotypes, and social, cultural and economical exclusions.

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[86] Outraged.

[87] Also known as "movimiento 15-M" because it emerged the 15 of May of 2011, it was and still is, the most important citizens' movement after Franco's dictatorship in Spain. It found inspirations in the book written by Stéphane Hessel "Indignez-vouz!"(Time for Outrage!) "Take over, outrage! Those in positions of political, economic and intellectual responsibility and the whole society must not give up, neither let ourselves be overwhelmed by the current international dictatorship of the financial markets, which is such a threat to peace and democracy" (Hessel, 2010: 2). The movement is related to the Occupy Wall Street Movement in the United States and others new social movements around the world (See: Ruiz Ligero, 2011; Castañeda, 2012; Halvorsen, 2012; Taibo, 2013).

[88] Is the *capoeiristas* that follows the tradition founded by *mestre* Pastinha. They claim to practice the real original Capoeira.

7.3   Agency & Children's Control Inside the Social Space of Capoeira

The central issue to be explored in relation to childhood's social space is control (James, Jenks, & Prout, 2006). I will focus now on the discussion of how Capoeira, as a specific social space, has a particular mode of control over children. According to the authors, it is through a diversity of modes of control that children's bodies and minds are regulated. These regimes of discipline are learning, development, maturation and skill. For Speier (1976), children are no entitled to control their own lives without the essential supervision of adults who organize their activities. According to the findings of my research, children and adults shared the social space in Capoeira in different dynamics of control. They occupied different social positions, though sometimes, especially while playing Capoeira, they occupied a very similar one.

According to the thesis of Coêlho de Araújo (2005), it was first thanks to children's observations and then to their imitations of the adults "street *rodas*" in a playful way that Capoeira became the game that is world known today. According to the author's ideas, children would be thus the most important social actor, which through their agency probably rescued the art which maybe without this fundamental transformation would have disappeared. This means that children although at times "invisible", can be great agents who shape and construct their social environment.

> "The knowledge that comprises the curriculum instances humankind's selection from and control of its world; its replication and repetition in paradigmatic styles instances the control of others through the constitution of the child's body and consciousness into the form of an education identity" (James, Jenks, & Prout, 2006: 42).

In Capoeira there was no schedule with a prescribed progression, children followed the teacher in what had to be done in a more or less spontaneous way. Thus, as there was no rigid plan, it is probable that it was easier for children to exercise their agency. However, the mestre/*instrutor* occupied the leading role and children were not usually asked about what to do. This way, although in many instances Capoeira allowed children's active participation, they did not have so much to say when it came to choose the contents of the training. Hence, children choose Capoeira following their parents invitations freely as a leisure activity, though once they made

the choice, it turned to be a compulsory space controlled by the leading adult. Thus, children had to do what the adults said.

Following Foucault (1991) the exercise of discipline over the body in the modern times is applied to children and childhood especially through the school system. Schrumpf has even stated that "the modern child is a child of the school" (Schrumpf, 1997). Though this discipline applies also to Capoeira, which was taken from the streets and established inside specialized spaces like the academies. In a disciplining move, children and Capoeira were eradicated from the streets and controlled. "[D]iscipline is cellular. It localizes and places individuals, separates, isolates or combines them, thereby regulating individuals precisely according to space" (Sheridan, 1980; referred to in James, Jenks, & Prout, 2006: 44).

Thus, Capoeira was reallocated from the public street to the private academy space, and this movement, at least as experienced during fieldwork, has been more intense for children, occupying the academies space most of the time. The space of Capoeira, which was organized through a hierarchical structure related to the level of skill of the *capoeiristas* symbolized in the different colors of the belts, was however, occupied in a similar way by children and adults. This means, the space was organized, not by the most experienced individual in skills, instead by the one that was best in transferring the Capoeira embodied knowledge. Although when children practiced, the training became more playful and games were introduced, compared to when adults *capoeiristas* trained, the hierarchies still operated. Children felt that between them these distinctions did not work so well:

> MK: *Is the belt important for you?*
> All Children: *Yes.*
> Olav: *Yes. It is important to have a belt.*
> MK: *Why?*
> Line: *Because it's cool.*
> Olav: *It's fun to show to the people that I am doing Capoeira and that is a cool thing.*
> Ferdinand: *It's fun to achieve a red belt, but not to suddenly achieve it.*
> MK: *That's the Master's belt.*
> Ferdinand: *It would not be good to just be handed the belt.*
> Olav: *It is more fun when you earned it, when you really work for it and then you get it.*
> MK: *Do you make distinctions between yourself because of the belts?*
> Susan: *Sometimes, but not often.*
> Line: *I wish we did it more.*
> Olav: *Since the blue and white belts mean you have learned more than others and then it is a bit boring if you have to learn everything all over and over again.*

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For example, when training through the *formação* method, all the children imitate the teacher who was standing in front practicing the different movements. This methodology is related to the traditional occupation of the space were the mestre/teacher are in front observing and communicating what and how it should be done. This formation in rows and columns is also a disciplined system of control. It is very interesting to highlight that children and adults were trained through this methodology, though children spent much more time on playful activities than adults. Thus, the group was also divided sometimes into specialized activities were they could practice individually, in pairs or small groups.

Children (as well as adults) are introduced this way to a machinery of sculpting their bodies through the practice of the movements, but they were not asked about what they want to learn. Children said during the group interviews that they wanted to learn more about Capoeira's history, or they wanted to play more music, thus the teachers should listen to them and provide them with materials so that they can develop that side of the art. If they want to improve their capacities to write songs or to learn Portuguese, the teachers should be able to help them in what they need to develop in their own rhythm and according to children's own perspectives.

8 CONCLUSIONS

In this final chapter I first present a summary of the principal findings of this exploration about children's experiences related to Capoeira, in the second part, I provide suggestions for further research on the topic.

8.1 Findings from the Field

Capoeira is a syncretic Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestation (Wulfhorst & Vianna, 2012) difficult to define because of the multiple perspectives that it represents. For practitioners it is a dance, a fight, music, theater and poetry, even a philosophy, and for some it represents a way of life. In a similar stance, there does not exist an official institutional definition nor a single organization that represents Capoeira. As there are no studies about the perspectives and perceptions of children to the art, with the exception of Anderson (2001), in this research I explored their relation to it. Thus, I was initially able to describe children's Capoeira training through participant observation. Then, with the incorporation of interviews, I went more in depth into children's perspectives and perceptions, allowing me, to a certain extent, to get into their experiences.

After following Capoeira through all the different settings, one principal finding is related to the characteristic that children experience the art as a leisure activity that takes place inside a training centre or academy. This is a situation that children would change, especially during the warm summer days in the rural Catalonian town in Spain, preferring to practice outdoors on the grass. In all settings, Capoeira forms part of the functional differentiation of children's activities. In urban areas, as well as in rural areas as I observed during my fieldwork, Capoeira generally belonged to the kind of activities that are offered to children as "islands" (Zeiher, 2003). This means that it is a specialized place which is regularly spatially and temporally fixed for children, adults are foreigner in these places. So children went from home to school, and then to capoeira.

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It must be highlighted though, that many children lived close to the training centre and thus, they related easily to the environment.

In general terms, Capoeira was adjusted to children through a time-scheduled activity program that fulfilled children's needs and tailored the trainings to particular ages. Hence, children tended to have a specific training time where they were segregated from other children groups and/or adults *capoeiristas*. However, as referred to in the analysis chapter, there occurred also interesting thresholds between adults and children. In this sense, Capoeira appears as a very dynamic space and there were multiple instances were children and adults converged. Furthermore, in the research of Anderson (2001) made in Copenhagen and as I observed during fieldwork in the Balearic Island, there was also regular institutionalized common training without age segregation. In the enclave, there was also segregation, though the criterion was not age, instead it was the level of skill of the *capoeiristas*. I observed during other adults trainings in Norway, and also in international meetings and workshops in Barcelona, Copenhagen, Lisbon and Oslo, that the *capoeiristas* were separated depending on their skills. Many times children had their own activities and afterwards participated in other activities along with adults. Age and the distinction between childhood and adulthood were commonly utilized as categories of division during trainings, though there were usually also instances where they joined the practices. These situations were reported as "*great experiences*" by children and adults. While training together and especially when playing in the *roda*, Capoeira situated children and adults in the same position, at the same level. Age as a social category did not affect their ability to participate in the *roda*. This fact was related to their biological growth, because it is harder to play Capoeira with smaller persons and thus related to a matter of skill. Actually, during fieldwork I met children who played better than many experienced *capoeiristas*. Some adult capoeiristas told me that for them it was difficult to play with children because they felt that they could unwillingly

The hierarchic dispositions symbolized in the color of the belt or rank (e.g., *mestre*, *contra-mestre*, teacher, disciple) were accepted by the children. Some children in Spain felt that it was a privilege to be able to train with a Capoeira mestre, because normally children are taught by adults with lower rank. Moreover, they perceived these distinctions as desirable if gained with effort and due to merit. Additionally, they felt it was "*cool*" to have a colored belt, because this

gave them the possibility to show friends and other children outside the trainings that they were practicing Capoeira. Notwithstanding, they perceived that these distinctions had almost no effect on their training because although they knew more or had developed more skills, many times they had to repeat the same movements when new children started training. They thought that this was a result of not having enough teachers. Furthermore, the children in almost all settings complained about the monotonous repetition of the movements.

Children normally had a good time during Capoeira, and they perceived the group as nice and a place where they met friends and peers. They liked to go the trainings, though as in every activity, sometimes they felt tired and preferred to stay home. They perceived that Capoeira had a small impact in their lives, because they trained only once a week, though it was much better to practice Capoeira than not to do so. A child told me in an interview that sometimes he did not want to go to the class, but after when he was there he did not want the class to be finished. He said that it was like taking a bath, you do not want to get in, but when you are in you do not want to get out. For the children the training was normally a mixed space composed of times of play and class. Thus, on one hand when they sometimes did not want to do something, they felt weak and perceived it as compulsory. On the other hand, when they liked the activity, they participated enthusiastically and with joy.

The teachers and *mestres* observed the trainings with children as distinct from the ones with adults. Thus, they often incorporated different types of traditional and local games to make the training more playful. Consequently, they lead and organized the games, but also took a participatory role, playing with the children as if they were just another child. However, they had control over the situation and generally incorporated Capoeira movements into the rules of the games, so the children practiced them. The children liked these games, and above all they enjoyed the challenges and the possibility to improve. They were delighted to practice martial art movements and acrobatics. One thing children, teachers and parents perceived as positive was that Capoeira was a game without winners and losers. However children had fun competing against each other in the various games, maybe because it was a game and not a "real competition". They also felt that the music lifted them up. They enjoyed listening to Capoeira music and playing with the foreign instruments. The *berimbau,* the *agogô* and the *pandeiro* were

they favorite instruments. Although it sometimes hurt, children liked to play the *atabaque*. They perceived that they should learn more to play the instruments and perhaps also to sing in Portuguese.

The practice of Capoeira, as with other cultural manifestations, is embodied by its practitioners (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). In this sense, when children leave the space of the training centre, they take their experiences with their bodies to the other spaces the go. Accordingly, children told me in group and individual interviews that they sometimes practiced capoeira in the school, at home, in the garden and with other friends and that it make them feel happy when they did so. If practiced for longer periods of time, the capoeira movements, music and philosophy can become part of their *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1996). The teachers usually had Afro-Brazilian music as background while training the acrobatic or martial arts movements. During fieldwork I noticed that children asked the teachers to play the music or increase the volume when they forgot. Additionally, at times children consciously or unconsciously danced, moving their bodies to the rhythms of this music. Another aspect that caught my attention was that girls sat on the lap and gave kisses to the *mestre* and that there were many embraces in the rural Catalonian town. In Norway, body proximity was not as close between the children and the teacher; however, hugs were quite normal among adult capoeiristas. These are relevant matters that show the embodiment of the Afro-Brazilian culture which can become a *habitus*. "To play *capoeira* successfully, beautifully and pleasurably, men and women who grew up in Europe or North America have to lose their *cintura dura,* literally 'hard waists'" (Downey, 2005; referred to in Delamont & Stephens, 2007: 4). Moreover, according to the authors, "[t]his is partly a physical, bodily quality: the opposite of the *cintura dura*: but more importantly it is a metaphor encapsulating an attitude to everyday life: a way to face challenges with wit, cunning and mental agility" (Idem, 2007: 4). "[C]apoeira's unique street-smart inner philosophy – a form of "body knowledge" [or embodiment] that develops through practice and overflows into the apprentice's way of dealing with people, the world, and life itself" (Capoeira, 2006: iv). In this fashion, it is the practice that impacts the schemes of perception becoming a *habitus*.

Children used their "agency in different ways" (Corsaro, 2005), like feigning injury or relocating themselves inside the space to achieve what they wanted. In general children obeyed the

teachers' instructions, thus when they challenged the control, normally the teachers accepted and shared it, strengthening the children's participation in the training. However, the training was regularly an activity lead by the *mestre* or teacher, and children were not asked what they wanted to practice in the training. When I asked if they wanted to learn also other expressions of capoeira besides the physical, they said that they would like to know more about the history because this would give more meaning to their practice, listen to more music and feel challenged when playing with adults.

The *roda de capoeira* is the authentic expression of the art (IPHAN, 2007). Notwithstanding, children practiced the movements more under a scaffolding methodology (Downey, 2008) than through playing inside the *roda*. They had experiences participating in *rodas* that were part of public shows performed in hotels and theaters. This was a situation to which they had to adapt. The first times they felt "*afraid*" and "*small*", they "*hide from the audience*", though after training and trying it a couple of times, they felt confident.

Finally, answering the question that is formulated in the cover of this thesis and that somehow has been answered throughout all this study, do children play Capoeira? After all this work I can only state, that this varies and depends on the social and individual circumstances in which Capoeira is practiced. However, children in general, this means through all this exploration, had a good time during the trainings and while performing in the *roda*, especially when adults also participated. Thus, following Maturana & Verden-Zöller (2008), depending on the emotioning produced by the *jog*, this could be also an embodied experience of love.

8.2   Recommendations for Future Research

Through this (not that) multi-sited research (Hage, 2005), diversity of dimensions of children's experiences about capoeira were explored. Due to its syncretic characteristics, the art is complex to study. Therefore, a suggestion for future research is to focus on children's embodiment of their experiences in 3 relevant areas: movement, sound and philosophy. Thus, it would be interesting to explore how children experience these dimensions and transfer them into their everyday life.

In addition to the focus recommended above, further research should continue with a methodology that allows cross-cultural explorations of children and childhood as a structural form. Moreover, it should relate these childhood(s) with other social structures like social class, political systems, cultural systems, the economy, nationality, ethnicity, religion and gender. Children can experience relevant changes in their perception depending on these structures, especially when comparing a capoeira in a middle class context in the global north to children living in a low class or difficult circumstances in peripheral countries. "Whoever knows the capoeira world knows that it opens a big and diverse range of action for the player. It shapes his mind and body and gives him/her the tools to survive and earn money anywhere" (Capoeira, 2006: xx). If this is true, it could be used as a tool to improve children's lives, as it is been used in recent times around the world by multiple NGOs. Thus, through their agency they can contribute to broadening Capoeira even further. The oral tradition opens the possibilities for teachers and for practitioners to re-construct their practice, meaning creating more opportunities for change like incorporating new songs with local lyrics and stories maybe in the local language. Finally, children's agency should be explored with deeper attention, because whether capoeira will continue developing as a diasporic or transnational cultural practice depends mostly on the actual children who practice the globalized art. The children are the mestres of tomorrow!

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10   A LITTLE AFRO-BRAZILIAN CAPOEIRA DICTIONARY

Abadá: Is the name given to the white Capoeira trousers used in the roda and in during training in the academies. It was introduced like a uniform by *mestre* Bimba.

Adão: Is the Portuguese version of the name Adam. Interestingly, it coincides with the first character of the Bible.

Angoleiro: Is the *capoeiristas* that follows the tradition founded by *mestre* Pastinha. They claim to practice the real original Capoeira.

Agogô: Is a typical Capoeira instrument made by wood or metal, normally it contains two metallic bells or made with coco nuts. Is an instrument that belong to the *bateria* and many children enjoy it.

Apellido: It means nickname, and it is said it was introduced in the Capoeira world to protect the capoeiristas' identity.

Atabaque: Is an Afro-Brazilian wooden drum , similar to the djembé or the conga drums and normally is played with bare hands. During the research a child complained that her hands hurt when she played this instrument.

Aú: Cartwheel.

Axé: Energy.

Bahia: Refers to the Brazilian State of Bahia, were it is said Capoeira is originally from. *Mestre* Bimba and *mestre* Pastinha developed their Capoeira styles and , traditions, and academies in the capital city Salvador, historically known as São Salvador da Bahia de Todos os Santos, in English: "City of the Holy Saviour of the Bay of all Saints". Nowadays Salvador is the largest city on the northeast coast of Brazil.

Bananeira: Literally it means banana tree in English, though in Capoeira it usually refers to handstands.

Bateria: Is the percussion and singing group in the *roda*, the Capoeira orchestra normally it is formed by three *berimbaus*, two *pandeiros*, one *atabaque* and one *agogô*.

Batizado: Directly translated into English it means baptism and it refers to the ceremony where the initiated is recognized as *capoeirista*, in its very first level, inside the community.

Batucada:	The *batucada* is an Afro-Brazilian ensemble conformed by percussive instruments like the snare drum and the djembé.
Berimbau:	It is the characteristic one string bow- shaped instrument of Capoeira. It establishes the speed and the style of the jôgo de Capoeira.
Berra-boi:	*Berra-boi* or *gunga* is the berimbau that has the biggest *cabaça* and produces the lowest tone.
Biriba:	Rollinia Deliciosa is a flowering plant that is known by its edibles sweet fruits in South America and because from this tree the wood to construct the berimbau is taken.
Bossa Nova:	Is a world know Brazilian music style which means directly translated into English "new trend". It was popularized during the 1950s-1960s.
Boneca:	Doll.
Brincar:	Or *brincadeira* refers to playfulness, is a moment of having fun.
Cabaça:	Gourd, in Capoeira it refers to the resonance piece of the berimbau, which is constructed with a dried gourd.
Cadeira:	It refers to chair and also to a Capoeira movement.
Candomblé:	Is an important Afro-Brazilian religion which has influenced samba and even the famous Carnival in Rio de Janeiro.
Capoeira:	It is believed that Capo-eira originally refers to two Tupí-Guraní words. These refers to a grassy place in a forest, a free space from trees and bushes where a war dance was practiced.
Capoeiragem:	Means Capoeira, putting emphasis in its philosophical aspects.
Capoeirista:	A person, adult or child, who regularly practice Capoeira.
Chapa:	Is a generic word for diversity straight kicks with the sole or heel of the foot.
Chula:	Is a Capoeira rhythm used in the reverently in the *roda*.
Cintura dura:	Directly translated into English concept means hard waists and it refers to the accepted social construction that observes the European as less able to move their bodies when compared to Afro or Latin people.
Cocorinha:	Refers to a Capoeira protection position.
Coelho:	Rabbit.

Contramestre:	Level immediately below *mestre*, it is the second highest level a *capoeirista* can achieve.
Corridos:	The *corridos* are an overlapping call and response typical of African singing.
Cordão:	*Cordão* or *corda* means belt or rope and is the symbol which represents the level of mastery and skill that the *capoeirista* has inside his Capoeira Group.
Discípulo:	It means disciple, student and pupil, sometimes the word apprentice is also used.
Esquiva:	It refers to a Capoeira movement to avoid an attack, it is an evasion technique.
Favelas:	Brazilian shantytowns.
Formação:	Formation, drill formation it refers to a Capoeira teaching method, through a scaffolding and imitating process..
Formatura:	It means graduation, the moment when the *corda* is changed and the level of skill is acknowledged by the *mestre* or teacher.
Forró:	Is a typical dance of Brazil and popular among capoeiristas, it resembles the bachata.
Fundamentos:	The foundations or characteristics are defined in many ways, they related to the philosophical principles of Capoeira.
Ginga:	To swing, is the basic footwork in Capoeira.
Gunga:	See: Berra-boi.
Indignado:	Outraged.
Instrutor:	Means instructor in English and is the first official teacher level in Capoeira, commonly followed by the stages of *profesor*, *contramestre* and *mestre*.
Jôgo:	Game.
Ladainha:	The *ladainha* means "litany" and it refers to a solo often sung by the most senior member present in the *roda* and is usually only accompanied by the playing of one *berimbau*.
La Serpiente:	Is a Spanish word that means cobra in Portuguese and snake in English. It was a game introduced during classes by *mestre* Puma.

Lúdico:	Playful.
Luta:	Fight.
Maculelê:	Is an Afro-Brazilian war dance.
Malandragem:	It refers to the lifestyle and actions of the *malanadro*, the "bad boy".
Malícia:	It is considered the essence of the game and the main Capoeira *fundamento*.
Meia lua:	A *meia lua* or *meia lua de compass,* means literally "compass half moon". It is an attack and also a defensive movement, therefore some say it is the true embodiment of the philosophy of Capoeira.
Médio:	It refers to the "middle", it is the berimbau with the middle seize *cabaça,* and thus it produces the *méio* tone.
Mestiço:	Maroon.
Mestre:	Highest graduation level a *capoeirista* can achieve. Nowadays it can take more than 20 years of practice to achieve this level of mastery.
Movimento:	Movement.
Orixás:	It is a spirit or God inside the Yoruba spiritual or religious system, very popular in Bahia.
Pandeiro:	Is an instrument similar to a tambourine.
Paralelas:	Is a teaching method, means parallel.
Portunhol:	Or Portuñol in the Spanish speaking countries, it relates to the mixed use of Portuguese and Spanish.
Profesor:	Literally it means teacher, is the second level inside the teaching levels in many Capoeira groups, it is recognized as a level between *instructor* and *contramestre*.
Puxada de rede:	It means to "pull the net" and is related to a scenic representation of the work that fisherman did when they pulled the nets to get their fishes. Nowadays children and adults in Capoeira represent this tradition during the meetings, workshops and festivals.
Quilombo:	It means a maroon village composed by free and escaped slaves.
Queixada:	It is a popular Capoeira regional kick.

Reco-reco:	Is an instrument which consists of an open-ended wood, gourd or metal which has parallel incisions in one side and is played by scratching a stick.
Roda:	Roda de Capoeira refers to the social and physical space where the jôgo develops.
Roda de rua:	Is a *roda* that is performed preferentially in the streets.
Samba:	Samba is a world famous Afro-Brazilian dance and music rhythm original from Bahia.Is the traditional genre performed to the Carnival in Rio de Janeiro.
Samba de roda:	The *samba de roda*, related to the Capoeira circle became a UNESCO Heritage of Humanity in 2005.
Saudade:	Typical Brazilian emotion, being nostalgic and homesick longing.
Tesoura:	It means scissors and is a popular Capoeira, especially among children, is a movement performed close to the ground.
Urso:	Bear.
Viola:	Is the *berimbau* that produces the highest tone.

11   PICTURES[89]

11.1   Balearic Island

Picture 1: Here is an example of children playing music with adults. In a regular basis, all *capoeiristas* played the *berimbau*, as the picture shows, always at the starting of the classes in the Balearic Island.

Picture 2: However, in the Balearic Island the instruments were always available for the capoeiristas. The child in the picture just took a berimbau and started to play with it alone. Notice the size differences.

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[89] All pictures were taken by me during fieldwork. All faces were blurred to anonymized them. Furthermore, also logos that could be distinguished or writings in the pictures were also hidden.

Picture 3: The in the Capoeira group in the Balearic Island performed in a square to support the neighbors, that were protesting against the government in the context of the Indignados Movement in Spain. However, no Capoeira children participated from this public performance.

11.2 Barcelona

Picture 4: Children performing *maculelê*, other Afro-Brazilian dance related to Capoeira and typically performed in workshops, meetings and festival. It is also part of the class, although I almost did not observe this practice. In this case it was in the context of an international meeting in Barcelona.

Picture 5: Children performing *maculelê* in front a public of between 50 and 80 persons. Many spectators were *capoeiristas* themselves or part of the family of the children.

Picture 6: Exceptionally a child performed with an adult during an "open steet *roda*", in this case the situation occurred in Barcelona and the child was the son of one of the *capoeiristas*.

11.3   Rural Catalonian Town

Picture 7: The teacher and the children playing together, imagining that they are on a boat in search for adventures. The children and the adult were part of an imaginary world where the girls challenged the authority and power of the adult. When the teacher exclaimed "I got 1 fish!", one of the girls screamed I got 50.000!"

Picture 8: The circuits where the children practiced Capoeira movements was one of their favorite activities. Children could build their own circuit and plan their own practice, thinking where they would practice which movements.

Picture 9: Drawing utilized during the group interview with children between 5 and 10 years in the Catalonian rural town. Here in the left side is the *mestre* and in the other a young girl.

11.4 Lisbon

Picture 10: A big Capoeira *roda* in Lisbon Portugal. There, it was organized a huge *batizdo* and a *formatura*. Many children initiated as *capoeirstas*, after receiving their *corda* and their *apellido*. They were officially part of the Capoeira community.

11.5 Norwegian Urban Area

Picture 11: *Mesrte* Todau made a visit to the urban area in Norway and children and adults participated from a music workshop together.

Picture 12: A Capoeira workshop took place inside a fancy hotel in Norway. Children were very enthusiastic. Also parents join children's workshop. However, it was a strange feeling to think that this once persecuted cultural manifestation in Brazil was now entertaining, children in a global North context.

12   APPENDIX

Appendix 1 – Physical Characteristics of Capoeira in Norway & Spain

The movement of capoeira as a cultural manifestation with origins in the streets of Salvador da Bahia, spreading through Brazil and many other nations has been possible on one hand thanks to the mestres who left Brazil, and on the other to the creation of the academies (IPHAN, 2007; Taylor 2007). Most of children's experience related to Capoeira, as I observed in Norway and Spain (Rural Catalonian town and Balearic Island), occurred inside a training centre or a Capoeira academy. The classes I observed were delivered in two training centres and in one capoeira academy, with locations spread among an urban area in Norway, a rural town in Catalonia and a Balearic Island respectively. The distinction I make is due to the fact that the academies are mostly exclusive for the purpose of practicing Capoeira, while the training centres are shared spaces with other activities like dance, theater, music or sports. Almeida (1986), better known as mestre Acordeon, states that although teaching in other places gave him energy and inspiration, he missed the magic of the *academia de capoeira* as they exist in Brazil.

The training place in Norway is a scenic dance centre which allocates and manages facilities to the promotion of dance in the region. It consist of a ballroom with sound and lighting equipment, a small warehouse, two dressing rooms with showers and toilets, wardrobes and an office. The dance hall can be booked by choreographers and dance companies who want to work with dance productions, though it can also be used for smaller performances, for teaching, seminars and workshops during evenings and weekends. The space has an area of around 135 m2 (9 x 15 m) and a height of 3 meters. It is located at approximately 20 minutes walking from the city center, in an alternative district that can be described as a gathering of houses in a little place. The neighborhood is regulated today, after many years of political struggle between its inhabitants and the city, by two committees, were the city and the locals elect the composing members. The place has free shops and free music festivals which appeal to the social inequalities in world and it shares characteristics with anarchist, communist and socialist communities in other cities of Scandinavia.

In the case of the rural town in Catalonia, the lessons are taught in a training centre that has a huge hall for indoor sport activities like football, basketball and volleyball. This hall is around

1.350 m2 (30m x 45 m) and 12 m high. In the first floor there are toilets, dressing rooms for two teams, a warehouse with different sport and gymnastics elements, an office and a reception. Along one side of the building, there are bleachers. On the second floor, which is over the first floor rooms, there is a fitness studio, a computer room and a dancing room seized around 150 m2 (10m x 15m) and 3 m high, where the Capoeira classes took place. The sport centre includes also an open air swimming pool, a clay tennis court and a professional football pitch. The view from dance hall looks to vineyards that almost surround the leisure facilities and which is 1 minute walking from the town center.

The Capoeira academy in the Balearic Island was a space almost exclusive for the practice of Capoeira. It was located in the middle of a city, but close to the Mediterranean Sea and consisted basically on different training rooms inside an old building. When entering to the place there was a distribution hall with pictures that showed the mestre's biography and remembered important historical events like *batizados*, *formaturas*, international meetings, diplomas and acrobatic movements. The principal Capoeira room was around 150 m2 (10m x 15 m) and 3 m high and had the name of the organization and the Spanish and Brazilian flags hanging from the wall. On one long side there were only windows and in front there was a glass separation to the fitness studio. On the narrow sides there was the entrance and the opposite side was full covered with mirrors. One corner the berimbau's were hanging on the wall and all the instruments were available for the students all the time. The place had also a special room for practicing the acrobatic movements and two dressing rooms, office, a kitchen and a dance room among others.

Appendix 2 – Consent and information letter

Dear moms, dads, caregivers in general and children,

As I explained when I first meet the most of you in_____, I am a Master student of Philosophy in Childhood Studies (sociology of childhood) at the Norwegian Centre for Childhood Research (NOSEB), University of Science and Technology (NTNU).

I am researching Capoeira and Childhood and my project name is "Exploring the experience of children that practice Capoeira and their adjustment to this Afro-Brazilian cultural foreign manifestation in Spain and Norway". The object of my study is to investigate the perception of children about Capoeira in general, and how this occurs fitting art, dance, philosophy of life and a foreign culture.

For this, the methodology is based primarily on participant observation of Capoeira classes, informal conversations and semi-structured individual and group interviews, with children, parents and teachers.
The role of informants (children, parents, teacher and guardians) is to participate in the project until you want, telling your stories about your personal experiences, views and relationships with Capoeira. Of course the study will also be explained to children in a manner appropriate to their age.

Participation in the study is always, from an ethical point of view, voluntary and participants may leave the study at any minute, without justifying or giving any reason. If this is your desire, please communicate this as soon as possible. I remind you that this study is sociological and not psychological, this means that the focus is the group as a whole and not their individuals. In addition, all information collected will be treated confidentially and the participants will not be able to be recognized in the final outcome of the investigation, neither the group of Capoeira. In this sense, all the gathered information will be anonymous.
Here you can find more information about the ethics in research:

 http://www.nsd.uib.no/nsd/english/index.html), but I can translate in case anyone is interested and do not know English.

If you want to tell me something, or want to contact me, please call me to my mobile phone + 47 91159752 or write me at this e-mail knustdra@stud.ntnu.no. If you and your child agree on participating on this research please sign both, the next box.
Best regards and see you soon,

Matías Knust

	Complete Name	E-mail contact	Telephone	Signature
Adult				
Child		---------------------	------------------------	

Appendix 3 – Overview of the methods used during the research in "units"

Country	Research Method	N Participants								Amount of participant observations units		Total units
		Capoeiristas						Parent/Adult				
		Children		Mestre/ Teacher		Adults				Class/ Other	International meeting	
		F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M			
Norway	Participant observation									23	1	24
	Group interview with children 1	2	1									3
	Group interview with children 2	1	2									3
	Group interview with children 3	2	2									4
	Individual interview with mestre 1				1							1
	Individual interview with parents 1							1				1
	Individual interview with parents 2								1			1
	Group interview with parents 1							1	1			2
	Individual interview with teacher 1			1								1
	Informal recorded conversation	1	3	1	1	2	6	1	3			18
Portugal	Participant observation										1	1
	Informal recorded conversation			1	3							4
Denmark	Participant observation										1	1
	Informal recorded conversation	1							1		1	2

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Country	Research Method	N Participants								Amount of participant observations units		Total units
		Capoeiristas						Parent/Adult		Class/ Other	International meeting	
		Children		Mestre/ Teacher		Adults						
		F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M			
S p a i n	Participant observation									10	2	12
	Individual interview with child 1		1									1
	Individual interview with child 2	1										1
	Individual interview with child 3		1									1
	Group interview with children 1	2	2									4
	Individual interview with mestre 1				1							1
	Individual interview with mestre 2				1							1
	Individual interview with parents 1							1				1
	Group interview with parents 1							1	1			2
	Group interview with parents 2							2	3			5
	Informal recorded conversation				3	2	2	2				9
Participants v/s units		9	12	3	11	4	8	9	10	33	6	105

Appendix 4 – Example of Questions Semi-structured group interview guide with children

This is an example with some of the questions that guided the semi-structured group interview with the children:

What do you do during the Capoeira training? Do you play, fight or dance Capoeira?

What do you think about the Capoeira belt?

Do you play Capoeira with friends besides the training? Where?

When it is a roda here, what do you feel, think?

How was your experience participating in the show last Saturday?

What do you do feel when you perform in front many people? Do you like it?

What do you think about the location of the gym?

How did you come to the idea to start practicing Capoeira?

How long have you been training now? How much time will you continue?

What do you like most from the class? What do you dislike?

Can you tell what Capoeira means to you? What do you think about the Capoeira music? History?

You like to learn how to use your body in new ways?

What about the familiarity, you feel a sense of group or community in Capoeira?

What role plays Capoeira in your everyday life? Do you want to tell me something special about the Capoeira class?

You talk, play Capoeira with other friends?

What did you feel when you were at the batizado the first time?

Appendix 5 – Example of Questions Semi-structured interview guide with group of parents

These were a few of the questions that guided the one group interview with the parents.

What is a good childhood? Bad childhood?

How is the relation between you? Do you join activities together?

Why did your children start to train Capoeira?

What is Capoeira for you?

Do you know what the children do in the training?

How has Capoeira impacted the life of your children?

What will be the impact in the future of your child?

What do you think about the children performing in the roda in the streets, class, show?

How is the relation between your children and the teacher and vice-versa?

You feel Capoeira as an exotic practice? Do you have a connection with Brazil?

Do you know or think there are people who do not practice because they cannot afford it?

What do your children do outside Capoeira? Do they join other leisure activities? Free time?

What do you know about Capoeira? Music? History? Philosophy? Slavery? What do you think about this?

Do your children practice Capoeira movements at home or other places sometimes?

Do your children relate to the other children from the Capoeira group in other spaces?