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Beyond Martial Arts Tourism: Outcomes of Capoeiristas' Apprenticeship Pilgrimages

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SCIENCE ON TOURISM

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Abstract

Background and Problem. Globalization is creating new opportunities and challenges for scholars of martial arts. As instruction in specific martial forms extends beyond the boundaries of where such forms were developed, questions may arise about practitioners’ legitimacy. Travel to the source of an art or sport is one way to address these concerns – learning under the tutelage of a local master and being accepted by local martial artists confirms the foreigner’s identity as a legitimate bearer of that tradition. This is a phenomenon called apprenticeship pilgrimage. The present article examines the practices of non-Brazilian capoeiristas who make pilgrimages to Brazil for the purpose of training with a local master.

Method. An online survey-building tool (diagnostic survey) was used. 30 individuals participated in the survey, however only 19 of them had actually traveled to Brazil. Eleven of them were males and eight were females.

Results and Conclusion. Survey results confirm that the majority of capoeira pilgrims are satisfied with their journeys and with the interactions they have with local capoeiristas; however, there is some variability in this regard based on gender. Furthermore, the relationships pilgrims form with other non-Brazilians may be just as important as those they form with local capoeiristas, suggesting that the transnational relationships formed during apprenticeship pilgrimages should be an area of study for scholars interested in the various mobilities of martial artists.

Introduction

Performance traditions allow cultural knowledge to be passed from one generation to the next through the medium of the body. In the case of martial arts, students may learn about their predecessors’ physical and mental resistance against oppressors or their disciplined quests for spiritual enlightenment. In today’s globalized world, however, these students are often from different cultural backgrounds and ethnic groups than are the legends about whom they are learning. For example, during the colonial era in Brazil, African slaves used *capoeira* as both a real and metaphoric tool of resistance against their Portuguese captors. Because of its subversive potential, it was outlawed [Talmon-Chvaicer 2008]. Even after it was legalized, *capoeiristas* continued to be marginalized within Brazilian society and viewed as vagrants [Assuncao 2005]. The typical American or European *capoeirista*, has not had to suffer persecution for practicing the art, but *capoeira* is still considered a “secular ritual” and “narrative drama” encapsulating

Afro-Brazilians’ struggles against oppression [D’Aquino 1983: 6], which is used to inspire contemporary *capoeiristas* from many different backgrounds who are dealing with all kinds of struggles [see Griffith 2016]. Nonetheless, some martial arts students who live and train outside the homeland of their art may feel like they are outsiders, categorically excluded from being a direct inheritor of the tradition to which they are so attracted. In my research on *capoeira*, an Afro-Brazilian martial art that combines dance, music and sparring in a ludic spectacle, travel is one way that non-Brazilian can claim legitimacy within a social field that has historically been dominated by Afro-Brazilian men [see Griffith 2016].

Elsewhere [Miller 2010], I have written about the phenomenon of martial arts tourism. Indeed, it has become popular for martial artists to visit the famous sites associated with the origins or hubs of their craft. Although it is outside of the scope of this article to parse the difference between tourists and pilgrims [cf. Griffith, Marion, forthcoming], it suffices to say that some travelers feel offended by the use of the word ‘tourist’ to describe their

activities because they feel that it is trivializing. Given the seriousness with which these individuals treat their quest, it is more appropriate to use the term pilgrim. Although some scholars continue to debate the parameters of what counts as a pilgrimage [see Olsen 2010], it is becoming more widely accepted that within contemporary society, travel that is part of an identity-building project has assumed a similar role to that served by religious pilgrimage in more traditional societies [cf. Badone, Roseman 2004; Badone 2014; Digance 2006]. Apprenticeship pilgrimage is a subset of this broader conceptualization of pilgrimage, which I define as the practice of traveling to the source or major center of a sport or art for the purpose of gaining embodied expertise under the tutelage of a recognized master [see Griffith 2013]. Non-Brazilian *capoeiristas* who visit Brazil as part of their development within the art are but one example of this phenomenon.

Most studies of *capoeira* have focused on the art as it is practiced in Brazil [e.g. Downey 2005; Merrell 2005]. Those that have focused on *capoeira* as it is practiced outside of Brazil [e.g. de Campos Rosario, Stephens, Delamont 2010] have tended to look at how it is practiced in those specific locations without reference to the larger, international context in which local practice is situated. A minority of publications [i.e. Tzanelli 2015] allege that performance of *capoeira* in Brazil for foreign visitors represents a degradation of the tradition. My work, by way of contrast, focuses on *capoeira* as an international commitment system [Stromberg 1986] and focuses on the mutual influence Brazilian and non-Brazilian practitioners have on one another. Like myself, Strauss [2005] found that her study of the transnational phenomenon of yoga would be incomplete if she focused only on Indians studying yoga. To develop a comprehensive understanding she also had to focus on the Westerners, largely of her same demographic groups, who had gone to study yoga in its homeland. My approach to studying *capoeiristas* was similar.

During an approximately six-month long period of fieldwork in 2008, I used participant-observation fieldwork and interviews to better understand the experiences of non-Brazilian *capoeiristas* who traveled to Salvador da Bahia, Brazil to train with local groups [see Griffith 2016]. I argue that while traditional forms of cultural capital like one's nationality or race may make it somewhat easier for one to initially gain acceptance in a *capoeira* group, ultimately one's humility and openness is the key to becoming part of their community. However, this rapport is not in and of itself sufficient to be seen as a legitimate tradition bearer. Rather, one must leverage this rapport into a position of intimacy with the teacher from which he or she can learn the nuance of the form.¹ This is becoming increasingly important in

the era of mass classes, which differ from the traditional form of individual apprenticeship that once dominated in *capoeira*. Among the individuals I studied, visiting Bahia and participating in training sessions and *rodas* (performance events in which *capoeiristas* 'play' in one-on-one matches) was essential to their centripetal movement within this social field. However, because I was collecting data among individuals who were still in the midst of their pilgrimages, it was impossible to know what kind of long-term effect this experience would have on them.

The current study was conducted in order to understand the outcomes of apprenticeship pilgrimages for non-Brazilian *capoeiristas*. This responds to a gap in the literature on pilgrimage. Very few studies address what happens to individuals after their pilgrimage is complete [Frey 2004]. Collins-Kreiner [2010] calls for more research on the lasting outcomes of a traveler's experiences, be they sacred or secular in nature. In this paper, I highlight two major findings: (1) while most *capoeiristas* who visit Brazil are happy with their experiences, women's ability to reap maximum benefits from this kind of travel is limited by lingering machismo in Brazilian society at large and within local *capoeira* academies; and (2) the transnational relationships formed between martial artists from various locations around the world must become an area of focus for martial arts scholars if we are to understand how these social fields operate in this era of globalization.

Methods

Although completing a pilgrimage to Brazil is something that will eventually be expected (albeit informally) of most foreigners who reach a certain threshold of dedication to *capoeira*, these trips are often independently organized and there is no infrastructure to connect pilgrims after they return home as is the case for more institutionalized pilgrimages like the *Camino de Compostela de Santiago* [see Frey 1998]. Therefore, finding returned pilgrims to study was something of a challenge. Respondent-driven or snowball sampling would have been one way to recruit members of a hard-to-find population [see Bernard 2006]; however, knowing the role of social media in fostering an imagined community of international practitioners, I turned to Facebook as a recruitment tool.

In the spring of 2014, I created a Facebook page with the name "capoeira research." The stated goal is to connect scholars and *capoeiristas*. Though the majority of posts are in English, the page also includes the following

increasing his or her legitimacy within the context of the local academy by virtue of his or her charismatic qualities is akin to Cohen and Cohen's "hot authentication" whereas legitimization based on performance of correct form is most similar to "cool authentication."

¹ See Cohen and Cohen [2012] for a similar discussion on "hot" versus "cool" authentication. In my work, an individual

description in Portuguese: "*Um lugar conectar capoeiristas, acadêmicos e outros com interesse em compreender melhor o Jogo de Angola*" (A place to connect *capoeiristas*, academics and others with interest in better understanding the game from Angola (*capoeira*)). To build an audience for this page, I began posting links to my own publications on *capoeira* and invited other scholars to do the same. Unfortunately, only one other individual contributed his work. I also built interest by sharing videos and other new developments such as a summary of a presentation on *capoeira* I observed at the American Anthropological Association national conference and reports of *capoeira* being used to celebrate the African Diaspora and resist Euro-American hegemony during the 2015 Baltimore protests. I also paid to have Facebook advertise this page, which, along with my efforts to promote it within my own social network, resulted in more than 400 "likes" of this page.

After establishing a relatively large audience for this Facebook page, I launched a survey that was created using an online survey-building tool (Survey Gizmo). To encourage participation, respondents were offered the chance to enter in their email address if they wanted to be entered into a drawing for a \$25 Amazon.com gift card. The respondents in this study, therefore, are self-selecting and do not constitute a random sample. Therefore, the results are not generalizable to the entire population of *capoeiristas* who have undertaken a trip to Brazil. Nonetheless, the qualitative data yielded by this study provides insight into the experience of apprenticeship pilgrimage and could be used as the basis for future work with a representative sample.

The first portion of the survey collected demographic information about the respondent and asked how many trips the respondent had made to Brazil. If the respondent had not yet made a trip to Brazil, he or she was redirected to a thank you page and his or her data eliminated from the survey. Those who continued in the survey were asked about their travel experiences. Questions included how long they had stayed in Brazil, how long they had been training *capoeira* when they first went to Brazil, what motivated their trips to Brazil, and what kinds of activities they engaged in while in Brazil. They were also asked to describe the most meaningful aspects of their trip(s), their engagement with local *capoeiristas*, and the short and long term effects of their travel.

Although 30 individuals started the survey, only 19 of them had actually traveled to Brazil. All but one of them live in the United States; one lives in Germany. Eleven of them are males and eight are females. This relatively even gender distribution is reflective of what I observed of *capoeira* pilgrims while conducting fieldwork in Brazil on this subject in 2008 [see Griffith 2016]. In terms of ethnicity, the majority (12) identify as white, two as African American, one as Latino, one as mixed, and two gave idiosyncratic responses ("human" and "Texan"), and

one did not respond. Again confirming what I found while in the field, the majority of individuals (8) fall into the 25-35 year old age range, seven are between 35 and 45, two are between 18 and 24, and two are over 45. The median amount of time that these individuals have been practicing *capoeira* is 10 years, though this masks considerable diversity. While one individual has been practicing for 30 years, the sample also included four individuals who have only been training for two or three years. The majority of individuals in the sample (10) have made just one trip to Brazil. Five of them have made two trips. Two of them have made three trips, one individual has made four trips and another has made five trips.

In addition to these demographic questions, respondents were asked to reflect upon how various aspects of their experience matched their pre-travel expectations. They did so using a 5-point Likert scale. Respondents also indicated which activities they engaged in while visiting Brazil. In addition to the 15 options listed on the survey, they were also able to list additional activities in which they participated. Respondents were also given the opportunity to answer open-ended questions about the most meaningful aspects of their travel(s), the most disappointing aspects, things they wished they had done differently, and how their teacher and peers back home treated them upon completion of the pilgrimage. These questions were coded and analyzed inductively.

Results

The average length of time that individuals stayed in Brazil on their first *capoeira*-related trip was approximately two months. However, there was quite a bit of variability in these figures. While one individual had stayed for 14 months, others' visits were as short as a week or two weeks. The median length of this first visit was four weeks. Nine of the individuals in the sample had made two or more trips to Brazil. Three had made three trips, two had made four trips, and only one had made a fifth trip. The length of one's first trip did not predict whether subsequent trips would be longer or shorter.

The most common motivation for an individual's first trip was, perhaps unsurprisingly, to train *capoeira*. This was selected by eight of the respondents. The second most common motivation was to learn the historical or cultural context of *capoeira*. Six of the respondents indicated that this was a motivation. The third most commonly selected motivation was to learn Portuguese (5 individuals). After that, responses become much more idiosyncratic. Four individuals indicated that they were motivated to go because a *mestre* had invited them; an additional four indicate that they were motivated to travel because a friend or someone in their primary training group was also planning to go to Brazil. In no case did an individual indicate that their motivation included

both an invitation from a *mestre* and the fact that their group or a friend was already going. Therefore, in more than one-third of the cases, individuals went to Brazil because someone else had encouraged them to do so at that particular moment in time. A few individuals (3) said they were going to Brazil because they wanted to visit the source of *capoeira*. Three said they were going for social reasons (e.g. to visit friends in Brazil). Finally, two people indicated that they were going to Brazil for academic research or training. For example, one individual was going to Rio de Janeiro for an academic internship on the Theatre of the Oppressed, but combined this with *capoeira* training.

When asked what motivated their most recent trip to Brazil, the portrait was somewhat different. While training still ranked as a significant motivation (mentioned by 4 respondents), it was just as likely that individuals would travel for social reasons (e.g. to visit friends in Brazil). Two indicated that their most recent trip was motivated by an invitation from a *mestre*. As one respondent wrote, "it was an invite-only training-intensive trip for Mestre Acordeon's Cordao Azul students. You don't say no to that!"

All but two of the survey respondents indicated that they trained in a local academy while in Brazil. The two who did not train *capoeira* did observe and participate in *capoeira rodas* (performance/competition events) and also trained in other arts like dance or music. Of the 17 who trained in a local academy, seven of them also availed themselves of the opportunity to train one-on-one with a local *capoeirista*. All of the respondents participated in at least one *roda* during their visit. Sometimes this was within the context of the academy where they were training regularly, but they were even more likely to participate in a *roda* that was hosted by an academy where they were *not* a regular student. This is particularly interesting given the popular advice to avoid 'street *rodas*' and/or playing in an unfamiliar academy. Aside from training and playing in *rodas*, there are very few consistent patterns with regard to what activities these individuals engaged in during their trip(s) to Brazil. In fact, the only activity in which all 19 participated was going to the beach. The vast majority (16) also participated in general tourism activities like sightseeing. Fourteen of them visited another town in addition to the one where they were training *capoeira*. Seven visited a local library, seven attended a Candomblé ceremony, six engaged in some form of volunteer work, three took classes at a local university, three took language classes at a private language institute, and one had paid employment. In addition to these activities, some took advantage of unique opportunities not available to every *capoeira* pilgrim like dancing with a samba school during Carnival, participating in protests against the local bus companies, and performing in street theatre to call attention to human rights issues related to the upcoming World Cup event.

For the most part, respondents indicated that their overall experiences matched well with their expectations for their trip. Only three were ambivalent in this regard. As one person wrote: "There were difficult moments, but I can't point to any specific aspect that didn't live up to what I expected." Answers were more mixed, however, in terms of specific aspects of their experience. For example, roughly 27% of the respondents said that they spent less or significantly less time interacting with local *capoeiristas* than they had expected. By and large, their experiences with local *capoeiristas* were positive. Eight individuals felt that on most days, locals were excited about their presence. An additional seven said that on most days they felt somewhat welcome at the academy. Only one individual felt that their presence was not welcomed.

Making a trip to Brazil seems to have only a minor affect on one's commitment to *capoeira*. Of the 14 individuals who answered this question, only three reported that their commitment to *capoeira* increased dramatically. Five indicated that it increased somewhat. An additional five said that it remained the same. One individual indicated that it decreased somewhat. Interestingly, even though visiting Brazil did not seem to have a great affect on their commitment, 80% of the respondents indicated that they would be likely to return to Brazil in the future, suggesting that this pilgrimage continues to loom large in the *capoeira* imagination. The one individual who indicated that her commitment to *capoeira* had decreased following her visit was also the individual who said she would be unlikely to return to Brazil in the future. Significantly, she reported that right before visiting Brazil, she "had a huge personal rupture with *capoeira* and how women in general are treated and how [she] in particular was treated by [her] teacher. Training anywhere was an incredibly emotional and often painful experience." In this case, it was the misogyny perpetuated by certain individuals, and to some extent embedded in the structure of *capoeira* [see Griffith 2016], that led to her negative emotions rather than the pilgrimage itself.

Answers to multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions provide a snapshot of what these *capoeira* pilgrims experienced; however, a more nuanced picture emerges from analyzing their open-ended comments. Although *capoeira* is now a globalized commitment system, ultimate legitimacy has typically been reserved for Afro-Brazilian men [Griffith 2016]. Several individuals made comments that support the hegemonic dominance of Brazil in the global *capoeira* community. For example, participant #5 found it meaningful to discover that "what [he] had been learning at home was indeed the real thing." He was also excited to have his abilities complimented by local *mestres*.

Other individuals did not seem to give Brazilian *capoeira* special status, and instead commented on the international diversity of *capoeira* that can be experienced in Brazil because it is an international hub of practice.

For example, participant #4 indicated that he wanted to see the "different manifestations and perspectives" of *capoeira*. He prefaced this by writing: "After training... with many *mestres* in the US, I knew that the quality of capoeira and capoeira instruction was just as good [in the U.S.] as in Brazil, but a trip to the country would give me perspective on how capoeira formed and also give me historical perspective and perspectives of many more *mestres*." Participant #5 was impressed by "feeling the union of the different schools from all over the world. People from Europe, Brazil, U.S.A., Japan, China, [and] Mexico all singing the same songs and doing the same moves – even though they couldn't speak the same languages." Some even emphasized the benefits of this international exchange for the local *capoeiristas*. Participant #28 reflected positively on his experiences living in a *favela* and becoming friends with people who otherwise would not "have exposure to the global *capoeira* scene beyond their neighborhoods." Although this differs markedly from the attitudes of those who romanticize local, Brazilian *capoeira* and perhaps even idolize local *capoeiristas* (or at least local *mestres*), this *troca de informação* (information exchange) is highly valued by the local *capoeira* community (Griffith 2016). In fact, next to the economic benefits associated with foreign *capoeiristas* coming to train in Bahia, this was seen by my consultants in Brazil as the most important benefit of apprenticeship pilgrimage.

Still others seem undecided as to whether or not *capoeira* is the same everywhere it is practiced. Participant #16, for example, wrote: "I now believe that *capoeira* is entirely effected [sic] by the people, so Brazilian capoeira is no different than capoeira practiced in the United States, only the people change, but that changes the game. As a result I am trying to get more in touch with the culture of the various cities I visit."

The biggest regret most individuals in this sample had was not being able to do more in the limited amount of time they had available or not being able to stay longer. Several indicated that they had wanted to train more *capoeira* than they ultimately were able to do. Participant #4 wrote: "I didn't get to train as much capoeira as I would have liked and I didn't get to meet all the *mestres* I was hoping to, but that might always be how I feel. I can never get enough!" Participant #14 said she wishes she had been able to stay longer and do "more hard-core training."

Some respondents also reported discomfort with social and environmental conditions in Brazil. Some were bothered by the pollution they encountered, especially in Rio de Janeiro. Others were more troubled by social injustices that they saw on a daily basis. Respondent #28 reported that the most disappointing aspect of his trip was "seeing crushing poverty & ignorance every day and not being able to make meaningful changes for people." He also said it was hard for him to come to

terms with the fact that changing social realities "wasn't [his] job to do." In other words, he came to feel that social change needed to be instigated and implemented by local Brazilians themselves. Respondent #25 took a different approach. In part because of her involvement with Theatre of the Oppressed in Rio de Janeiro, she was actively involved in protests surrounding social inequities. In some cases, this led respondents to have a greater appreciation for the privileges they possess. Respondent #21, for example, reported that she is "more grateful for the small things [she] has in life" like clean, hot water. However, within this sample, it was only a minority of respondents who mentioned social justice concerns in their survey so it should not be assumed that encountering poverty, misogyny, racism, etc. necessarily changes one's attitudes or practices.

Respondents were mixed in terms of how they were received by their teachers and peers back home. While several indicated that their peers eagerly welcomed them back, were excited to hear about Brazil and were inspired by the pilgrim's experiences, others experienced jealousy or disinterest. A few were given more respect within their group as a result of having visited Brazil. Participant #15 writes: "I feel like my opinions carry a bit more weight now." However, this is not a universal outcome of having visited Brazil.

Not all teachers acknowledged their students' travel experiences, but those who did tended to comment upon them favorably. Participant #14's teachers, for example, said that she had "brought axe back from Brazil with [her]." Axe is a term used in Candomblé and *capoeira* that roughly translates as life-force. Bringing axe back from Brazil is indeed a significant complement. Participant #15 reported that her teacher now only speaks with her in Portuguese, which is a sign of insider status. Respondent #21 indicated a similar experience with her teacher.

In terms of how they have changed as a result of their travels, becoming a better *capoeirista* or a more fluent speaker of Portuguese was mentioned by respondents, but was given less emphasis than other personal transformations. In particular, participants noted an increase in their self-confidence and self-efficacy. Participant #5 wrote: "It has effected [sic] every aspect of my life: social understanding, quest for knowledge, self-confidence, physical abilities, openness in communication, broadened world-view, a better grasp of Portuguese." Participant #15 wrote: "I actually used to be extremely high strung before I went. I'm a much more relaxed person now. I'm more involved in music, dance, and language learning now. I feel like I learned a lot about myself." Participant #16 indicated that he "became more outgoing and more likely to try new things." He also said, "I am more aggressive and decisive than before. I feel like I matured a great deal. I am very comfortable being on my own and trying new things. Before I was much more timid." When becoming more fluent in Portuguese was mentioned, it

was typically mentioned in relation to a broader goal like connecting with others. Participant #23 explained that “as a non-native speaker, any opportunity to immerse [himself] in Portuguese helps to improve [his] language skills immensely.” He continues by saying, “my trips have given me a lot more comfort interacting with Brazilians in my community in their native tongue.”

Discussion

Most of the individuals queried, which it bears remembering did not form a random sample, were quite satisfied with their experiences in Brazil. Of those who had a negative experience, however, most were female. I argue that this is related to the machismo embedded in both Brazilian culture and the subculture of *capoeira*, which indeed runs counter to its ethos of egalitarianism [see Griffith 2016]. Participant #14, for example, wrote that she “loved [visiting Brazil], but was disappointed in the women training capoeira in Brazil. [She] felt like it was very flirty, and still a ‘man’s’ sport.” This echoes what I found during my 2008 fieldwork. While misogynist behaviors should not be excused and the men who treat female students as prey should be held accountable, it is also worth pointing out that in some instances, the male, Afro-Brazilian body has been fetishized and some female tourists (who are not serious *capoeira* students) seek out instruction with males precisely for this reason [see Hedegard 2013].

Speaking from my own personal experience as a woman training in Brazil, I found that the constant male attention restricted my mobility. Therefore, I found it unsurprising that two women in the present study commented specifically on how having a traveling companion would have made their visit to Brazil more pleasant. Participant #12 specifically indicated that she wished she had had more mobility while in Brazil and thinks that having a travel companion would have helped. Participant #25 said, “it would...be nice to go [to Brazil] with a couple other people who also wanted to play capoeira. Nice to arrive to a class or roda with someone. I experienced some cliquishness at some schools. Most of the capoeiristas who I connected with in or after class were others who were visiting. They were most helpful and friendly. Would have been nice to have connected more with local capoeiristas.” This comment is in some ways about the mobility that women have within a very male-dominated social context, but it also speaks to the degree to which apprenticeship pilgrims become integrated into the local community or fail to do so.

While there are a multitude of factors that will determine the extent to which one develops relationships with local *capoeiristas* (e.g. personality, scheduling, personal/professional commitments outside of capoeira, etc.), I found during my 2008 fieldwork that the non-Brazilians who I called apprenticeship pilgrims were more likely

to socialize with one another than they were with local *capoeiristas*. I continue to believe that one of the major goals of apprenticeship pilgrimage is to gain recognition by the martial artists who are from major hubs of practice, as was the case for several of the respondents in this survey like Participant #5; however, based on the responses of these individuals, one of the most desirable aspects of martial arts related travel is the ability to step outside of one’s home community and gain a broader perspective of how his or her martial art is practiced in other places in general. In this regard, it may be just as powerful for an American *capoeirista* to develop a relationship with a Russian *capoeirista* visiting Brazil as it would be for her to develop a relationship with a local *capoeirista*. This is an area of research worthy of additional study – namely, how do the transnational relationships formed within the context of apprenticeship pilgrimage alter both individual practice and the overall shape of the social field? While I anticipate that Brazilian *capoeira* will continue to retain dominance, these transnational connections represent a new phenomenon for which we will need to account in the future.

Conclusions

As martial arts are taught outside of their native cultural contexts, questions may arise about the legitimacy of the students who seek to embody those traditions. Does someone from a privileged ethnic group have the right to embody the resistance tradition of a historically oppressed group? Does someone from another cultural context even have the ability to correctly execute the form of another culture’s martial art? Will a foreigner ever be good enough to be accepted as an equal by people practicing an art in its homeland? All of these are familiar questions to those of us working on the issue of cultural appropriation [Grazian 2004; Harrison 2008; Johnson 2003; Lott 1993; Rudinow 1994]. There are no easy answers to these questions; however, we can identify specific strategies that individuals use to try and improve their position within contested social fields such as these. Travel to the origin or popularly recognized hubs of practice within a martial art is one way to combat charges of illegitimacy [Griffith 2013].

Although there are a number of popular books that recount individuals’ personal experiences training at renowned sites of martial arts practice [cf. Gleadall 2006; Polly 2007; Sheridan 2007], to date there has been little scholarly attention paid to these issues. The concept of apprenticeship pilgrimage allows us to understand why individuals would engage in this kind of travel [Griffith 2013]. Now, scholars are faced with the task of trying to understand what activities pilgrims engage in, to what degree they become integrated into the local community, and how their practice is ultimately affected by these relatively short interludes in their training histories.

The present work represents an initial attempt at recording these experiences within the international *capoeira* community. Because the set of individuals who could be labeled returned apprenticeship pilgrims is relatively small, a specialized methodology must be adopted. Social media is a useful strategy for reaching such a diffuse population; however, the respondents are self-selecting and therefore not representative of all individuals who undertake such travels. Further improvements should be made in this area.

In terms of findings, the activities in which these respondents reported engaging is very much in alignment with what I observed during my 2008 fieldwork among *capoeira* apprenticeship pilgrims in Brazil. What this study adds to our understanding of the apprenticeship pilgrimage phenomenon is how pilgrims feel about their experiences in hindsight. By and large, most pilgrims are satisfied with their experiences and while they may not report dramatic increases in their dedication to *capoeira*, they do report a continued interest in the art and most hope to make another journey to Brazil in the future. Given the number of individuals in this sample who had made return journeys, it is likely that apprenticeship pilgrimage is going to become a regular feature of training in the martial arts, at least for those individuals privileged enough to be able to afford to do so. With this will come an emerging transnational network of martial arts practitioners. While unlikely that certain sites, like the Shaolin Temple for kung fu practitioners or Bahia for *capoeiristas*, will ever lose their special status within the worldview of those martial artists, the relationships that do form between practitioners from very different parts of the world should become a focus of subsequent research on apprenticeship pilgrimage. The needs and desires of an evolving group of practitioners will most likely eventually come to influence the practice of these martial arts in their homelands. While some things may be slow to change, such as the machismo that limits the ability of female *capoeira* pilgrims to reap full benefits of their travels, other aspects of traditional practice may change with a rapidity to which both practitioners and scholars of martial arts will need to adapt.

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Wykraczanie poza turystkę sztuk walki: rezultaty pielgrzymek podejmowanych w celu doskonalenia sztuki walki capoeira

Słowa kluczowe: capoeira, turystyka, pielgrzymka, globalizacja

Abstrakt

Tło. W dzisiejszym zglobalizowanym świecie, nauka sztuk walki często odbywa się w kontekstach kulturowych znacznie różniących się od tych, z których pochodzi. Na przykład, *capoeira*, brazylijska sztuka walki, która została opracowana w obecnej formie przez Afrykańczyków, którzy próbowali przeciwstawić się uciskowi niewolnictwa, jest teraz nauczana w wielu społecznościach, w Ameryce Północnej, Europie, Azji, a nawet ponownie w Afryce. *Capoeira* praktykowana w tych nowych miejscach jest nie mniej „autentyczna”, niż jej odmiana praktykowana w Brazylii, ale w owych nowych kontekstach mogą pojawić się pytania o zdolność adeptów sztuk walki do wcielania w życie sztuki walki opracowanej gdzie indziej. W sztuce walki *capoeira* osoby, które nie podzielają tych samych cech demograficznych co oryginalni adepci, mogą czuć się wyalienowane. Podróż jest jednym ze sposobów by takie osoby

mogły zrekompensować sobie brak tych cech wspólnych.

Metoda. Na podstawie około sześciomiesięcznej obserwacji uczestniczącej w terenie w Brazylii w 2008 roku, autorka opracowała koncepcję rodzaju praktyk zawodowych w formie pielgrzymki, podróży do źródła głównego sztuki walki, gdzie student może uczyć się pod okiem lokalnego mistrza. Ta nowa koncepcja rozszerza ramy pielgrzymek nie-religijnych stworzonych przez kilku badaczy turystyki. Artykuł skupia się na wynikach praktyk zawodowych w formie pielgrzymek dla zawodników *capoeiry* niepochodzących z Brazylii. Stanowi to odpowiedź na zaproszenie Collins-Kreiner do prowadzenia dalszych badań na temat trwałych skutków zarówno religijnych, jak i świeckich pielgrzymek.

W niniejszej pracy autorka wyróżnia dwa główne wnioski: (1) podczas gdy większość *capoeiristów*, którzy odwiedzają Brazylię, jest zadowolona ze swoich doświadczeń, możliwości kobiet w zakresie maksymalnego czerpania korzyści z takiej podróży jest ograniczona przez męską dominację w brazylijskim społeczeństwie oraz w lokalnych szkołach *capoeiry*; oraz (2) międzynarodowe relacje utworzone pomiędzy praktykującymi sztuką walki z różnych miejsc na całym świecie muszą stać się obszarem zainteresowania dla badaczy sztuki walki, jeśli chce się zrozumieć, jak działają te dziedziny społeczne w dobie globalizacji.

Artykuł jest oparty na danych ankietowych 19 osób, które są zarejestrowane na stronie Facebooka pod nazwą „Badania dotyczące capoeiry”. Udział w badaniu był dobrowolny i nie był zaplanowany jako reprezentatywna próba wszystkich *capoeiristas*, niemniej jednak zawierał bezpośrednie doświadczenia respondentów, którzy przyjechali do Brazylii w celu szkolenia. Zadawane pytania dotyczyły ogólnych danych demograficznych respondentów (wiek, płeć, rasa/pochodzenie etniczne, narodowość i czas praktykowania *capoeiry*) przed zagłębieniem się w pytania o ich konkretne doświadczenia dotyczące podróży związanych z *capoeirą*. 11 respondentów to mężczyźni, a osiem to kobiety. Ten stosunkowo równomierny rozkład płci jest odbiciem tego, co autorka zaobserwowała wśród „pielgrzymów” *capoeiry* podczas prowadzenia badań terenowych w Brazylii na ten temat w 2008 roku. Większość (12) określiła się jako osoby rasy białej, stosunkowo młoda (8 było w przedziale wiekowym 25-35 lat i 7 w wieku 35-45).

Średni czas praktykowania *capoeiry* wynosił 10 lat, choć to maskuje znaczne zróżnicowanie. Podczas gdy dla jednej osoby ten czas obejmował 30 lat, to badanie obejmowało także cztery osoby, które szkoliły się od dwóch lub trzech lat. Respondenci uzyskali również możliwość, aby odpowiedzieć na pytania otwarte o najbardziej znaczące i rozczarowujące aspekty ich podróży, co zrobiliby inaczej, a także jak ich nauczyciel i rówieśnicy w domu traktowali ich po zakończeniu podróży. Pytania te zostały zakodowane i zanalizowane indukcyjnie. Średni czas przebywania w Brazylii w czasie ich pierwszych podróży związanych z *capoeirą* wynosił około dwóch miesięcy. Było jednak sporo rozbieżności wśród tych danych. Podczas, gdy jedna osoba przebywała na wyjeździe 14 miesięcy, to inne wizyty były krótkie, na tydzień lub dwa. Średni czas trwania pierwszej wizyty wynosił cztery tygodnie. Najczęstszą mot-

rywacją jednostki do pierwszego wyjazdu była, jak można się było spodziewać, chęć trenowania *capoeiry*, choć wyjeżdżający byli również bardzo zainteresowani nauką w kontekście historycznym i kulturowym. Przy ponownych wizytach motywacje społeczne, takie jak odwiedzanie brazylijskich przyjaciół, stały się coraz ważniejsze.

W większości respondenci wskazali, że ich ogólne doświadczenie pokrywało się z ich oczekiwaniami, co do podróży. Pośród tych, którzy mieli negatywne doświadczenia, większość stanowiły kobiety. Autorka uważa, że jest to związane z kulturą *macho* osadzoną zarówno w brazylijskiej kulturze i subkulturze *capoeiry*, która rzeczywiście jest sprzeczna z etosem egalitaryzmu.

Co ciekawe wydaje się, że podróż do Brazylii miała tylko niewielki wpływ na zaangażowanie w *capoeirę*. Spośród 14 osób, którzy odpowiedzieli na to pytanie, tylko trzy stwierdziły, że ich zaangażowanie w *capoeirę* gwałtownie wzrosło. Mimo, że wizyta w Brazylii nie wydaje się mieć wielkiego wpływu na zaangażowanie respondentów, to 80% z nich przyznało, że mogłoby wrócić do Brazylii w przyszłości, co sugeruje, że ten rodzaj pielgrzymki nadal absorbuje ich wyobraźnię.

Mimo wyraźnego znaczenia Brazylii w umysłach *capoeiristas* i chęci większości badanych do złożenia rewizyty, nie byli oni zgodni co do tego, czy *capoeira* praktykowana w Brazylii była lepsza lub bardziej autentyczna niż ta, praktykowana w domu. Podczas, gdy niektórzy z badanych z pewnością docenili możliwość upewnienia się, że ich umiejętności mieszczą się w brazylijskich standardach, inni mieli bardziej ambiwalentne odczucia. Zamiast przyznawania brazylijskiej *capoeirze* specjalnego statusu, niektórzy respondenci wyrazili uznanie dla możliwości zobaczenia, jak *capoeira* przyciąga różne osoby,

które przybywają do Brazylii, aby trenować w lokalnych szkołach. Autorka twierdzi, że jednym z głównych celów pielgrzymek dla celów praktyk zawodowych jest zdobycie uznania przez mistrzów z miejsca powstania sztuki walki, jednak, na podstawie odpowiedzi badanych osób, jednym z najbardziej pożądanых aspektów sztuk walki związanych z podróżą jest możliwość wyjścia poza własną wspólnotę i uzyskanie szerszej perspektywy na to, jak sztuki walki są praktykowane w innych miejscach. Autorka przewiduje, że brazylijska *capoeira* będzie nadal utrzymywać dominację; te koneksje transnarodowe stanowią nowe zjawisko, do zanalizowania w przyszłości.

Respondenci mieli mieszane odczucia jak zostali odebrani przez nauczycieli i rówieśników w rodzimych krajach. Niektórzy przyznawali, że ich rówieśnicy chętnie witali ich z powrotem, chcieli usłyszeć o doświadczeniach przywiezionych z Brazylii, inni zaś doświadczyli zazdrości lub braku zainteresowania. Niektórzy zyskali więcej szacunku w swojej grupie po odwiedzeniu Brazylii; jednakże nie był to uniwersalny wynik. Nie wszyscy nauczyciele chcieli się zapoznać z doświadczeniami swoich uczniów, ale ci, którzy to zrobili – wyrażali się pozytywnie.

Respondenci zwracali większą uwagę na fakty, iż stali się lepszymi wojownikami lub osobami bardziej biegłymi w języku portugalskim, niż na inne osobiste przemiany. Uczestnicy w szczególności zauważyli wzrost pewności siebie i poczucia własnej skuteczności. Wyniki te, jak i to, które grupy demograficzne mają największą szansę na osiągnięcie podobnych rezultatów, powinno stać się przedmiotem dalszych prac dotyczących wyjazdów w celu praktyki (studiowania) w różnych formach sztuk walki.