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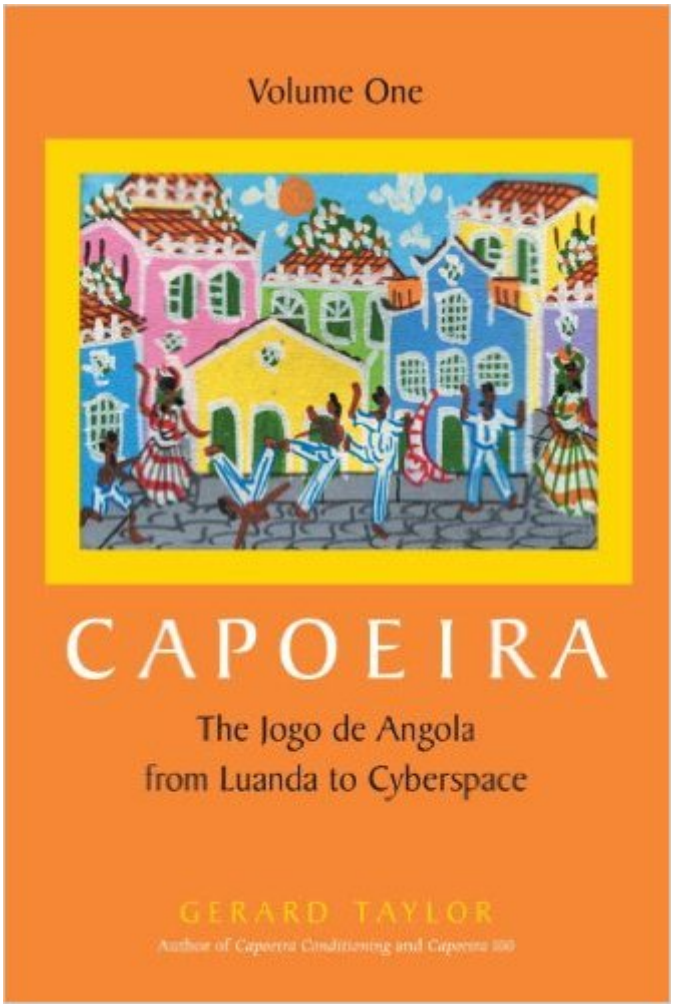
Capoeira: The Jogo De Angola From Luanda To Cyberspace



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Synopsis

The first in a two-volume series on capoeira, Volume One traces the origins of the popular martial art and dance form from the beginning of the slave trade in the Americas in the 1500s to the early years of the Brazilian Republic in the 20th century. Focusing on the people and events that shaped the art form in Brazil prior to the "academy" period of the last century, Capoeira: The Jogo de Angola from Luanda to Cyberspace explores the subject from many vantage points. Author Gerard Taylor explains how the fighting techniques of African forces laid the groundwork for capoeira movements. He shows how work songs, religion, and various percussive traditions and instruments shaped capoeira music over the years. Drawing on archival sources and historical accounts, the book paints a vivid picture of capoeiraâ ™s dramatic evolution from the sugar plantations of Pernambuco through the brutal backstreets of Rio and the Minas Gerais goldmines on its way to becoming a world-class practice.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This first part of two by Gerard Taylor is less about capoeira per se than it is about helping the reader understand the environment in which capoeira evolved. The author’s stated intent for the second half is to invest much more narrative to the subject of capoeira itself in the modern world. Given this, I’m not terribly disappointed that Volume One is mostly about the histories of Brazil and Portuguese Africa as they relate to the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the evolution of capoeira in Brazil. However, prospective readers should bear in mind that Volume One really is a book on

history, albeit one worthy of inclusion in the syllabus of a collegiate Portuguese history class.Taylor covers a great deal of time and space in 450 pages of text, from the Portuguese exploration of West Africa in the 1400's to the mid-Twentieth Century in Brazil. His focus is on the people who would give birth to capoeira: slaves from West and Central Africa. The Portuguese of Brazil play a key role in that they created the conditions under which Africans were brought to Brazil as slaves. According to Taylor, many of the slaves who were transported to Brazil from Central Africa between 1500 and the late 1800's were prisoners of war who were sold to the Portuguese. As a result, large numbers of fighting men schooled and experienced in the way of Central African war were included in the body of slaves. Some of the slaves who escaped and fled to the edges of Brazilian society were military men. These warriors brought experience with the Central African fighting techniques to villages called quilombos where escaped slaves formed new communities.

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