Ce este CAPOEIRA ?

Alemar Capoeira prezinta
BUCURESTI·2013·ROMANIA
CAPOEIRA workshop
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Invitati speciali:
Instrutor Camarão
&
Grupo Capoeira Brasil Romania.
Antonio Dos Santos (Dansez pentru tine)
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Instrutor Camarão

Capoeira (/ k æ p u ɛər ə / ; Portuguese pronunciation: [kapuejrɐ] in English
cap-oh-ay-ra)) is a Br
azilian
martial art
that combines elements of
dance
and
music
. It was developed in
Brazil
mainly by Africans beginning in the 16th century. It is known by quick and complex moves,
using mainly power, speed, and leverage for leg sweeps.

The word *capoeira* probably comes from the Tupi language , referring to the areas of low
vegetation in the Brazilian interior.

Origins

Capoeira is believed to be connected with tribal fighting, called Engolo, from the Benguela
Highlands
region of
 Angola
. In many tribes in Africa, a tradition exists where people fight each other in order to acquire a
bride or desired women. They fight body to body, without weapons, and are held inside a circle.

In the 16th century , Portugal had claimed one of the largest territories of the colonial empires
, but lacked people to colonize it, especially workers. In the
 Brazilian
colony, the Portuguese, like many European colonists, chose to use
 slavery
to supply this shortage of workers.
 Spanish
and
 English
colonists enslaved other europeans such as the Irish and French.

In its first century, the main economic activity in the colony was the production and processing
of sugarcane . Portuguese colonists used to create large sugarcane farms called *engenhos*,
which were dependent on the labor of enslaved workers. Slaves, living in inhumane and
humiliating conditions, were forced to work hard and often suffered physical punishment for any
small misbehavior.
[1]

Even though slaves outnumbered the Portuguese colonists, the lack of weapons, the colonial law, the disagreement between slaves coming from different African cultures and the lack of knowledge about the new land and its surroundings usually discouraged the idea of a rebellion.

In this environment, *capoeira* was born not as a fighting style, but as a hope of survival. It was a hope of survival because they would say they were dancing when a colonist came along but really they were practicing fighting and preparing to fight back. A tool with which an escaped slave, completely unequipped, could survive in the hostile, unknown land and face the hunt of the *capitães-do-mato*, the armed and mounted colonial agents who were charged with finding and capturing escapees. So although they were outnumbering them without weapons they were hopeless but once they had learned how to fight they could break free.

Soon several groups of slaves would gather and establish quilombos , settlements in far and hard to reach places. Some
quilombos
would soon increase in size, attracting more fugitive slaves, Brazilian natives and even Europeans escaping the law or
Christian
extremism. Some
quilombos
would grow to an enormous size, becoming a real independent multi-ethnic state.
[2]

Everyday life in a *quilombo* offered freedom and the opportunity to revive traditional cultures away from colonial oppression.   [2] In this kind of multi-ethnic community, constantly threatened by Portuguese colonial troops,
Capoeira
evolved from a survival tool to a martial art focused on war.

The biggest of the *quilombos*, the Quilombo dos Palmares , consisted of many villages which lasted for more than a century, resisting many colonial attacks. This
quilombo
resisted at least 24 small attacks and 18 larger colonial invasions. Portuguese soldiers sometimes said that it took more than one
dragoon
to capture a
quilombo

warrior, since they would defend themselves with a
strangely moving fighting technique
. The governor from that province declared "it is harder to defeat a
quilombo
than the
Dutch
invaders."
[2]

Urbanization

In 1808, the prince and future king Dom João VI , along with the Portuguese court, escaped to Brazil to flee the   invasion of Portugal by Napoleon's troops. Formerly exploited only for its natural resources and commodity crops, the colony finally began to develop as a nation.
[3]

The Portuguese monopoly effectively came to an end when Brazilian ports opened for trade with friendly foreign nations.
[4]

Cities grew in importance as a result. Brazilians finally had permission to manufacture common products once required to be imported from Portugal, such as glass.
[3]

Registries of capoeira practices existed since the 18th century in Rio de Janeiro , Salvador and
Recife
. As a result of the growing urban development, more slaves were brought to cities and the increase in
social life
in Brazilian cities gave
Capoeira
prominence and allowed it to be taught and practiced among more peoples. In Rio the colonial government tried to suppress it, as they considered the martial art subversive to their control. They established severe physical punishments to its practice.
[5]

Ample data from police records, dating back to the 1800s, is available, demonstrating that many slaves and free coloured individuals were detained for practicing capoeira:

"From 288 slaves that entered the Calabouço jail during the years 1857 and 1858, 80 (31%) were arrested for capoeira, and only 28 (10.7%) for running away. Out of 4,303 arrests in Rio

police jail in 1862, 404 detainees—nearly 10%—had been arrested for capoeira."

** wikipedia