

CAPOEIRA SELF DEFENCE BY INSTRUCTOR ANTONY EARLY

Sources say that Capoeira developed from the combat techniques/games of Angolan warriors who were enslaved after becoming prisoners of war, and then transported to Brazil around the end of the 16th century.

There is no doubt that Capoeiristas used it to fight: the Velha Guarda (top masters of the time who offered to body guard Princess Isabel, who abolished slavery), Zuavos Bahianos (A troop of people from Bahia who, after being promised freedom for military service against Paraguay, distinguished themselves as formidable hand-to-hand fighters).

Today Capoeira is a game but it is a game with many facets, many styles of play. It accommodates and allows interaction with people who have different attitudes to life.

A goal of the game is to play it your own way. If you achieve this, then you have played well. It is you who choose which way to play it. You maintain your focus, your spirit, your self.

Master Pastinha once said:

...the martial art is very cunning and full of cleverness, that we have to be calm. Capoeira is not an attacking martial art, it waits. The good Capoeirista is obligated to cry at the foot of his attacker. He is crying, but his eyes and spirit are active.**

Capoeira teaches you self awareness, spatial awareness, and psychological awareness. Under good teachers you are pushed beyond the limits that you have set yourself, mentally and physically. **It develops “I’ll try” over “I can’t”.**

Respect the person you are playing with, whether it is a grand master or a beginner. If you lose this caution then you lose the humility to be aware that they can kill you. **Capoeira is a non-contact martial art, but only if you are aware enough to get out of the way of the other person’s strikes.**