Ancient Military Manuals and Their Relation to Modern Korean Martial Arts

Manuel E. Adrogué, LL.M.[1]

▲▼▲

Introduction[2]

In the 1960s and early 1970s, when Korean martial arts first started having an impact in the Western hemisphere, many martial art students turned to books in order to obtain additional information to that provided by their teachers. Today, many of these books are considered classics. Such books were mainly "manuals," most of them available in English, as those written by Choi Hong Hi, Son Duk Song, Sihak Henry Cho, Rhin Moon Richard Chun, and Hwang Kee. Spanish speaking readers will also probably remember Lee Won Il's book. Students in those days could also refer to specialized publications dealing with Korean-style forms (among the first, Jhoon Rhee's "Chon Ji" series, and Kim Pyung Soo's "Pal Gwe" series). Most of the classic manuals, as well as the majority of those written since that time, echoed and helped to foster among martial artists an acceptance of a number of historical affirmations as facts, despite their being devoid of any verifiable connection with the Korean history as described by other sources. Among the clichés used as evidence for the pretended antiquity of today's Korean martial arts were the following:

1) The combat fierceness and dexterity of Hwarang and Sonbae warriors.
2) The promotion in rank that the king gave to military men taking into consideration their fighting performance in championships and festivals.
3) The archeological remains illustrating guardians or "strongmen" (k., *ryuk sa*; ch. *li shi*), as found in drawings, murals, and stone sculptures.
4) The successful repulse of the Japanese invaders in the 16th century.
5) The military texts that included combat training without weapons.

Nowadays, lack of interest in martial arts history is used by the industry's establishment to make up fables that only people unacquainted with Korea's historical facts can believe. On the one hand, there are leaders of technically young martial arts (Tae Kwon Do,* Tang Soo Do, Hapkido) who claim an antiquity for their styles of at least a thousand years; on the other hand, there

* EDITOR'S NOTE:
IT IS THE JOURNAL'S EDITORIAL POLICY TO USE "TAEKWONDO" AS THE GENERAL SPELLING FOR THIS ART. SOME PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS PREFER USING "TAE KWON DO." BECAUSE OF THE AUTHOR'S PREFERENCES, WE HAVE USED THE LATER SPELLING.

are people who say that they have personally created what clearly existed before them. In other words, any person claiming that the tire is ancient and pretending to back up this assertion by showing old drawings of wheels is actually wrong, and anyone who affirms that he has invented the wheel because he has improved the tire design is giving himself credit he doesn't deserve.

Whereas historical ignorance is the rule in today's general martial arts environment, academic-related circles (spearheaded by the *Journal of Asian Martial Arts*) have made important progress. During the last five years, many authors have made some previous "ancient myths" of the martial arts bite the dust, and many interesting findings have been unearthed.

This article attempts to update and summarize the more recent scholars' work and their relation to individual efforts by a few of today's martial art grandmasters to rescue Korea's forgotten martial past, with emphasis on the way in which item 5 above has influenced the modern disciplines of Tae Kwon Do, Tang Soo Do, and Ship Pal Ki.

All photos courtesy of M. Adrogué, except where noted.

A SYNOPSIS OF KOREAN HISTORY

From a schematic point of view, the history of Korea can be divided into a legendary period, three classic periods, and two "modern" periods.

Pre-Historic or Legendary Period

It is believed that about 7200 BCE twelve tribal groups may have founded a league called Han Kuk in the Korean peninsula and the surrounding areas. There is archeological support indicating that by 3898 BCE Han Kuk consolidated as the small state of Bakdal formed by the Dong Yi ethnic group from which the Koreans, Jurchen (Manchu), Mongols, Kithans and Xiongnu (Huns) descended. In 2333 BCE, Dan Gun, said to be the son of the eighteenth king of Bakdal, formed the Choson dynasty.[3] Since that time, Koreans have believed that Dan Gun, mythic founder of their nation,[4] was begotten by the divine son of the solar deity, Hwan Ung, and a bear-turned-into-a-woman. These beliefs were fostered and intensified during nationalistic periods, and the Dan Gun name was used by the Korean sovereigns in the state-city of Choson who performed religious and political functions in the surroundings of Pyong Yang (modern North Korea's capital city) until 194 BCE, when important political changes occurred.

The Three Kingdoms Period (57 BCE–935 CE)

In addition to Choson, other "state-cities" located in the area now occupied by both Koreas and Manchuria started to organize themselves into independent realms. Koguryo (37 BCE-668 CE), Paekche (18 BCE-663 CE), and Silla (57 BCE-935 CE) were the most important kingdoms, although there were other minor realms such as the Kaya league. The three principal kingdoms fought against each other, and Silla entered into an alliance with the Chinese Sui (581-618) and Tang (618-907) dynasties in order to prevail. A timely breaking of the alliance by Silla when alien forces had already occupied a great part of the territory allowed Silla's king, Moon Moo, and his warriors to succeed in expelling Chinese forces from the peninsula, which prevented the Korean people from becoming extinct by 700.[5] In those days, Buddhist doctrine had already entered into the Korean peninsula, as the monk Sundo had introduced it into the Koguryo kingdom by 372 CE, and the monk Won Hyo had achieved its popular acceptance within Silla by 686 CE.

Koryo Period (918–1392)

The Koryo period occurred as the unification and consolidation of Korea as a nation matured (this period gave its name to "Korea").[6] Along with the flourishing of the fine arts and the reorganization of the state, it maintained a strong military presence in view of the permanent conflict in the period between the Sung (960-1279) and the Qing (1644-1912) dynasties within neighboring China.

In 1230, after disruptions within Koryo's dynastic succession, Genghis Khan's Mongol hordes subjugated all Asia and established the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368) in China. They dominated Koryo with extreme cruelty, including

forming lines of enslaved children with ropes passing through their hands.

With respect to martial arts during this time, the Korean royal court adopted some Mongol habits, such as methods of horsemanship, archery, and wrestling. Lacking naval experience, the Mongol's drive to conquer the Japanese isles at the eastern extreme of Asia relied on Koryo's expertise. The Mongols forced Koryo to provide a military base for their plans to invade Japan in 1274 and 1281. The first invasion was initially resisted by the Japanese and was later halted due to severe climatic conditions. The second was frustrated by a typhoon which was considered by the Japanese as a "divine wind" (j. *kamikaze*). In the following decades, Koryo overcame this domination and asserted its sovereignty against the dictates of the Yuan (1279-1368) and the early Ming (1368-1644), until an internal coup ended the Koryo dynasty in 1392.

The Choson (Yi) Period (1392-1910)

An intellectual elite came to power and tried to put an end to the blemishes in the previous administration of the country by adopting Neo-Confucianism as the basic state philosophy. Such doctrine was led by an intelligentsia which esteemed intellectual effort and endeavors and despised manual labor and military affairs, trying to establish a meritocracy geared towards popular welfare. This caused contempt for the Buddhist clergy and the military men, who were deemed responsible for all the political vices of the previous years. During this period, many of Korea's Confucian scholars believed their country should culturally submit to China, the cultural center of the Eastern world.

The positioning of Korea under the cultural dictates of China coincided with the abandonment of military preparedness with the remarkable exception of King Se Jong (1419-1450), a tireless genius who spread an independent and genuinely national culture among the people. Besides his fame for creating the Hangul phonetic "alphabet," King Se Jong was a driving force behind the military use of gun-powder which had been extensively employed by the Chinese.[7] However, his efforts were not enough to stop the disdain of following rulers for all military matters.

In 1592, Japanese naval forces invaded Choson by surprise. The Koreans were clearly lacking in military readiness. With few resources, the Korean military and rural militias organized by monks heroically repelled the attack with some effective support from the Ming Chinese. Five years later, a second Japanese invasion found Choson duly prepared, and Korea achieved a sound victory.

Other than isolated compilations such as the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji*, the following centuries were times in which the military and clergymen's contribution during those war years were forgotten, and Choson sank into an imprudent decline in military preparation. Across the Eastern Sea for centuries, Japan's military steel was tempered by permanent wars between feudal lords, which shaped their society into a warrior culture. In contrast, Korea would pay a heavy price for being militarily weak during the 20th century.

Complete Illustrated Martial Arts Manual *(Muye Dobo Tong Ji)*

During initial contacts with the West, while Japan was opened to trade with America and Europe, Korea decided to isolate itself and became known as "the hermit realm." This situation represented another disadvantage for the (then renamed) kingdom of Choson.

Japanese Occupation (1910-1945)

In 1907, the expanding Japanese Empire found a weak Korea lacking international support. Upon the basis of a fake "Protectorate Treaty," Japan occupied Korean territory and in the following years turned it into a colony. Western countries preferred to remain distant. Their sanguinary treatment of people—including tortures and abuses of the civilian population by Japanese soldiers, their insistance on the adoption of Japanese names and habits, the prohibition of the use of the vernacular language, and the expatriation of 500,000 men to work in Japan as slaves for the pre-war heavy industry—were part of an attempt to eliminate all traces of Korean culture. Such actions irremediably destroyed a great part of the past's relics. All these happened notwithstanding numerous resistance movements in international forums as well as guerilla resistance. Japan's defeat by the Allies with the atomic bombs of 1945 marked the end of this horrendous period.

Reconstruction (1945 to Today)

A few years after Korea gained its independence, the peninsula turned into the first battlefield in the international confrontation between capitalism and communism. The bloody Korean War (1950-1953) counted up to four million casualties dead and wounded, and arbitrarily divided a country that had not yet been able to find its feet. Since then, after successive military governments, the democratic system has gained some strength in South Korea during the last decade, but in North Korea a pitiless Stalinist regime still oppresses its people. Still, many South Koreans view a gradual withdrawal of U.S. military forces from their country as a precondition for the full political maturity of the divided peninsula and the achievement of unification. Not a matter to be solved easily, the threat of North Korea's nuclear power seems to call for a strong military "dissuasive" presence in the region, which the U.S. government feels obliged to provide.

IMPORTANT ANCIENT MILITARY MANUALS

With the general sketch of Korean history as presented above, we can now take a closer look at important military manuals that have had an impact on Korean martial arts as viewed today. There are some historic references that indicate that by the time of the Three Kingdoms—that is, much before General Qi's *New Books of Effective Methods* (*Ki Hyo Shin Su*)—Koreans practiced a combat form called *Su Bak* (k.), probably related to the Chinese *Shou Bu* (ch., "hitting hand").

The Chinese *New Book of Effective Methods* and General Qi

Due to persistent raids by Japanese pirates who devastated Chinese coasts, in 1559, Chinese General Qi Jiguang (ch.; k. Chuk Kye Kwang) was appointed to put an end to the problem. He was put in command of 10,000 men and he warned them that any soldier's cowardice in battle would mean death for all his battalion. He also promised monetary rewards to every soldier bringing an enemy's head. According to British specialist Harry Cook (1998),

Qi trained his men with long weapons (spears, halberds and staffs) instead of depending on projectile weapons, such as the bow and arrow or the harquebus—the latter was less reliable because it frequently exploded in the hands of those who used it. Employing 12-man formations with special combat tactics based on the different function of each member of the group in accordance to his assigned weapon, Qi prevailed against the enemy. In the following years to meet other military challenges, Qi developed new battle tactics using war carts and different types of response to Mongol attacks coming from the north (one tactic consisted of spearmen attacking riders while other foot-soldiers annulled their mobility by cutting the horses tendons). In 1561, during his stay at the coast, General Qi wrote a troop training manual, the *New Book of Effective Methods* (ch. *Jixiao Xinshu;* k. *Ki Hyo Shin Su*). It consisted of eighteen chapters divided into six sections, including a chapter on barehanded combative training under the title of "Boxing Methods." The author considered that, although this type of training had little value for large-scale battle, it was nevertheless useful training for body flexibility, reflexes, hand speed, quick yet solid footwork, and jumping capacity—all of which were very valuable for a warrior. In his brief comment on combat without weapons, General Qi mentioned classic Chinese boxing methods as the Six Steps Style, Monkey Boxing, Eagle Claw, and, among the weapons he referred to, was the Shaolin staff.

New Book of Effective Methods
(ch. *Jixiao Xinshu*; k. *Ki Hyo Shin Su*)

Introduction of the *New Book of Effective Methods* in Korea

The first big Japanese invasion of Korea was in 1592. On April 13th, the forces of Hideyoshi Toyotomi disembarked with 200,000 men at the port of Pusan. Although the local forces were unprepared, things would have been worse if it were not for the courageous deeds of the rural people who were trained and organized by the monks Choi Hyong Ung and his disciple Sa Myong Dang.[8] After an ill-omened beginning, Korea received military support from China. The 300,000 soldiers sent by the Emperor Ming had been trained according to General Qi's *New Book of Effective Methods*, and they successfully repelled the invasion.

In 1597, Han Kyo, a governmental official considered to be an impelling force for martial arts in Korea, was put in charge of the Department of Martial Arts Training. Following a suggestion of Chinese Admiral Nak Sang Ji (k.), he prepared a course on combat technique, assisted by Chinese Master Jang Kuk Sam (k.) and ten other experts. This course trained 70 selected military men in battlefield combat technique—mainly, the use of saber, lance and multiple-headed spear—to turn them into combat instructors. Present day martial art authority and president of Korea's Ki Do Hae, In Sun Seo (1999), considers this to be the first martial arts training hall ever recorded in Korea's history.

According to highly reputed martial arts authority, Dr. Kimm He Young (May 1999), after graduation those instructors were sent to different places in the country to recruit and train soldiers. As an admission test, applicants were required to jump over a three to four foot-high fence while carrying a heavy rock. Once inducted, the recruits were trained in weaponry (including archery), running, jumping, swimming, and diving. They were also trained in sailing, strategy, and spying rudiments. These previsions, and the valuable participation of Admiral Yi Sun Shin, Korea's naval hero who defeated 133 Japanese ships with only 12 vessels,[9] caused the total frustration of the second and last invasion of Hideyoshi.

The Illustrated Martial Arts & *The Book of Military Preparation*

Illustrated Martial Arts
(k. *Muye Jebo*)

Han Kyo later wrote the *Illustrated Martial Arts* based on the Chinese *New Book of Effective Methods*. It had an added value since, for its preparation, the techniques were tested and provided with comments and illustrations. The book consisted of six sections that referred to the use of infantry combat weapons. Barehanded combat was not included, and Han Kyo stated in the introduction that the Chinese techniques of "killing hand" (k., *sal su*) and its "spinning like the wind, and progressing and retreating like lightning" could be hardly put into pictures to describe their position or methods. Han Kyo also made contact with Chinese commander Hu Yu Kyok (k.) who explained to him some aspects of "yin-yang hand" (k., *um yang su*), an aspect of martial arts that included strikes, kicks and throws, and those tactics applicable to the use of weapons. It is interesting to note that modern Hwarangdo founder Lee Joo Bang claims to have learned the ancient "um-yang kwon" combat skills in So Kwang Temple during the 1940's from monk Suahm Dosa, reportedly a lineage holder of the Hwarang warrior tradition.

Book of Military Preparation
(k. *Mubiji*; j., *Bubiji*)

In China, during the first half of the 17th century, Mao Yuan Yi (k., Mo Won Ui) wrote the *Book of Military Preparation* (k. *Mubiji*; j., *Bubiji*) with 240 chapters. Contemporary authors disagree with respect to the publication date. Harry Cook (1999) and Patrick McCarthy (1996) state that it was published in 1621 whereas, according to Kimm He Young, it was published in 1644. Cook states that even though they share the same name, this is not the *Book of Military Preparation* known in Okinawa and very much appreciated by later karate greats, Miyagi Chojun, Funakoshi Gichin and Mabuni Kenwa. The Okinawan *Book of Military Preparation* is considered to be derived from a work written in China's Fujian Province based on the Yongchun village White Crane boxing style (according to Kinjo Akio, the place and system where Seisan karate kata originated), and does not include the use of weapons but describes techniques, vital points, herbal medicine and tactics (Yang, 1993). So, whereas the *Book of Military Preparation* written by Mo was a military manual (an essential precedent to the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji*), another book became known under the same name in Okinawa which was strictly on southern Chinese boxing. It is interesting to note that (i) both versions are of Chinese origin, and (ii) the version spread in Okinawa, in this author's opinion, has been more influential on Korea's modern Tae Kwon Do and Tang Soo Do than the Korean-adopted version (despite grandmaster Hwang Kee's efforts).

Mo's version included information on the *Bon Kuk Kom* (original national saber, from Silla), a weapon that became famous due to Kwan Chang Rang, son of Silla Hwarang General Pum Il, whose attempt to murder the Paekche king ended with his life in the 7th century. Kwan Chang Rang was famous for his ability with the saber and the enemy's king demanded a demonstration. During the demonstration, Kwan thrusted his blade into the monarch's chest with a swift and unexpected movement. Silla warriors organized a saber routine in his memory in which the player wears a mask to represent the sacrificed young man. This tradition has been kept alive in Korea's rural festivals until today.[10] In this way the tradition of this saber is preserved, whose remote origins are to be found in China, according to Yi Duk Mu (k., also Lee Dok Moo), and it might be the predecessor of the famed Japanese sword.

The Silla saber technique's effectiveness and the sober elegance of it in motion, devoid of any superficialities, attest that its preservation for many centuries was not simply due to the region's folklore, but it was considered a valuable defensive weapon. The inclusion of the Korean saber in a Chinese manual would reveal the importance that it had gained in the region in the old days. When analyzing the saber technique by its description in the referred manuals, Della Pia (1995) asserts that although some Chinese influence can be perceived, there is a strong case for the origin of the weapon and its techniques in the Korean peninsula.

Toward the end of the 17th century, King Suk Jong gave impetus to the re-establishment of combat arts by organizing festivals that included wrestling and archery competitions (mounted and on foot) and by forming a special group of elite warriors called the *Byul Kun Jik* in 1694. He appointed Kim Che Gun as part of a diplomatic mission to Japan. Kim eventually received instruction in the local saber techniques and he remained abroad until he had learned four saber styles. His acquired knowledge was reportedly transmitted orally until its incorporation into the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* a century later.

The Muye Shinbo, Muye Dobo Tong Ji, and the *Eighteen and Twenty-Four Military Techniques*

A New Illustrated Martial Arts Manual (k., *Muye Shinbo*)

In 1756, on behalf of King Yung Jo, Prince Regent Se Ju Sa Do ordered the preparation of *Muye Shinbo*, a manual based on the *Muye Jebo* but that included twelve additional weapons and techniques. It took three years to prepare this book, which included eighteen sections in total. Due to the way the prince referred to it, this military manual became famous as the *Bon Jo Muye Ship Pal Ban* (k., "The Eighteen Martial Art Categories of the Yi Dynasty"). People who had some formal instruction in martial arts were reputed as knowledgeable in the "Eighteen Techniques" (k., *Ship pal ki, Ship pal ban,* or *Ship pal jon*).

In 1789, King Jung Jo requested the preparation of a new military manual because differences in technique and concept among the officers made it difficult to teach the troops using the *Muye Shinbo*. Unlike the previous books, which were mainly referential, it has been said that this manual was meant to be a practical guide to all military technique, and should encompass everything known about training warriors at the time. In the foreword, King Jung Jo stated that:

> Through diligently practicing these methods and mastering the strategy of the dragon and the tiger, the soldiers protecting the capital and the talented military officers will become agile warriors and loyal soldiers who will not abandon their country. My true intention of publishing this expanded volume of military tactics is to record this instruction for posterity.

Yi Dok Mu, considered its main author, assumed the task of gathering, comparing and commenting on the bibliographical background. Park Je Ga was in charge of the manual's structure, and Park Dong Su's responsibility was the testing of the techniques. The result, called the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* (k., *Complete Illustrated Martial Arts Manual*) was published in 1790. It took as its principal basis the *Mubiji* and the *Muye Shinbo*, and it added six new sections, all referring to weapons to be used on horseback, probably related to the Mongol experience. The new manual was much more than a simple digest. It was a recollection of most of the military precedents in the Far East, and its thoughtful comments made this an extraordinary work. Although contemporary martial art experts, Hwang Kee and Kimm He Young, had done research and produced publications on the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji's* "boxing" chapter, trying to interpret its arcane content (the former, by the 1960s, and the latter, in the 1990s), it was not until 2000 that Tae Kwon Do authority Sang H. Kim published a complete translation from the ancient Chinese used in Korea into the English language, thus making its knowledge available to the world's English speaking enthusiasts.

Complete Illustrated Martial Arts Manual
(k., *Muye Dobo Tong Ji*)

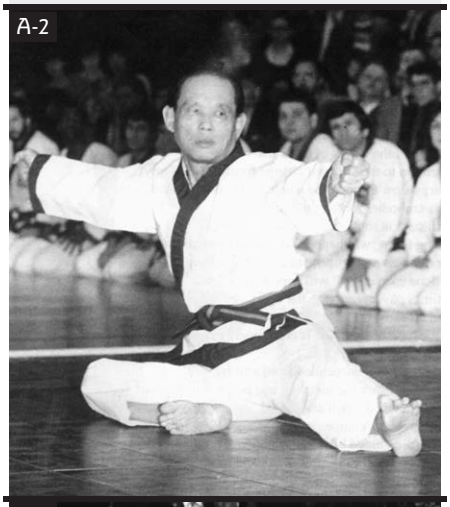
The manual is divided into four volumes and includes 24 training sections: six sword methods, one sword training system, one shield and blade method, nine long battle weapons, five weapons to be used by riders as well as a ball game on horseback, and a boxing section. Each section illustrates a practice routine that depicts the ways to use each weapon. With slight variations, each section has the following structure:

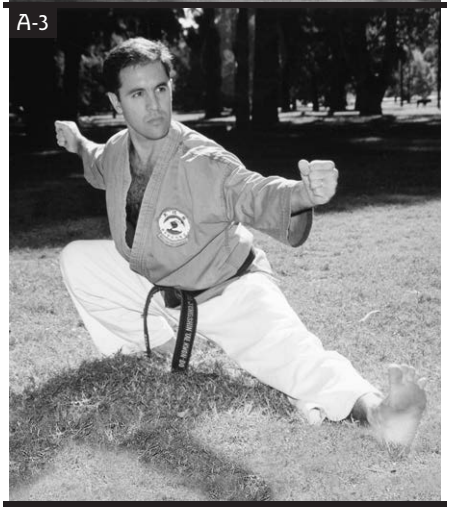
a) Weapon illustration—including the Chinese, Korean, and Japanese version as the case may be.
b) The explanations originally given by General Qi and Master Han Kyo with comments on the subject from Mo's work and historical or practical references by Yi Dok Mu.
c) Illustrated description of the routine with technical instructions for solo execution. It should be noted that sometimes it is difficult to follow the instructions on how to get from one position to another, because there are no illustrations of the transitions.
d) Diagrams of each routine, with its movements indicated by their names.
e) Diagrams of movements using human figures. For the Japanese saber, a section with combat applications is also included.

We emphasize that, traditionally, archery had been a highly developed warrior activity ("the national art of Korea," according to the introduction of the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji*, which reminds us of the saying, "the saber in Japan, the bow in Korea, and the spear in China"). However, this weapon was not

included in the books mentioned in this article. This can be related to General Qi's idea of giving more importance to close-quarters combat training, and it is also a hint that strengthens the hypothesis that these manuals were based on Chinese models. Such circumstance leads us to conclude that these manuals do not include all the combat techniques of the time, since they only include those that were considered useful for training military men in large formations for mass warfare.

A-1) "Ambushing Posture" (*mae bok seh*) described and illustrated in the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji*.
A-2) Hwang Kee adopts this posture while performing Hwa Son hyung.
Photo from Hwang, K. (1992).
A-3) Author showing the same posture in the way recreated by Kimm He Young interpreting the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji*'s instructions and drawings.

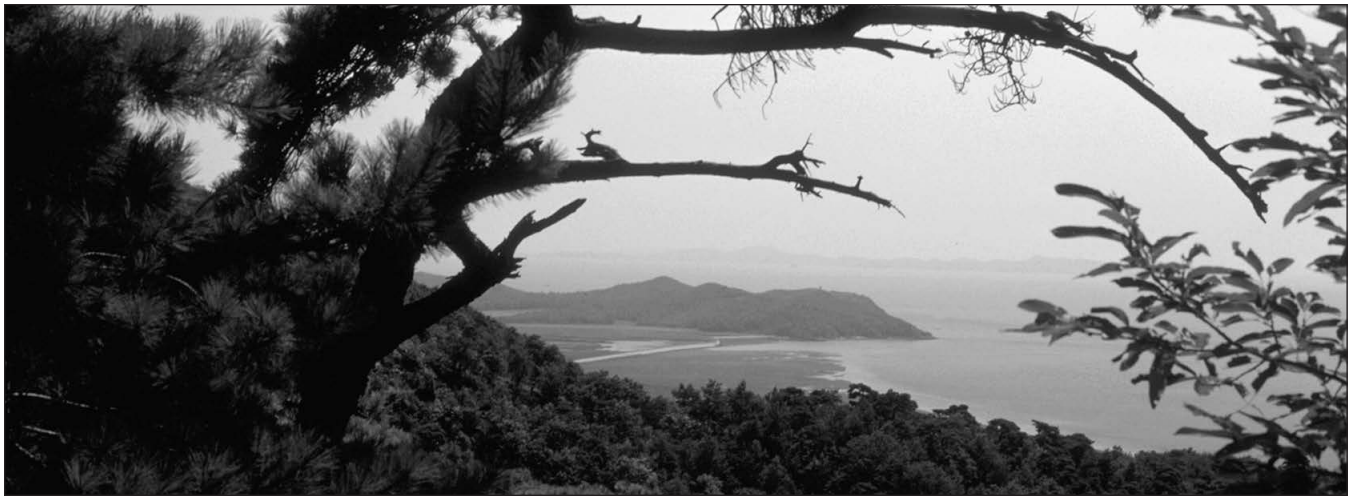




B-1 & 2) "Double-handed defense" — a characteristic hard style movement found in modern Tae Kwon Do and karate. It is a technique that resembles the old "seven star fist posture" of the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* (refer to original drawing). There is controversy on whether it was originally a block or a fist strike.

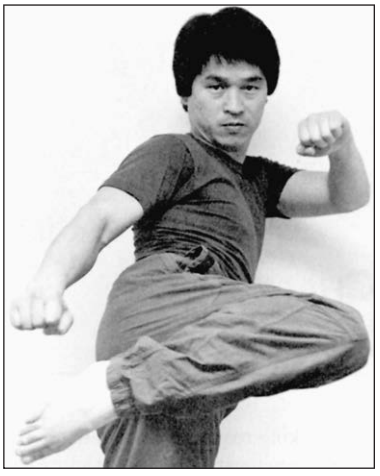
The following chart, based on Sang H. Kim's works, enumerates the training specialties included in the above-mentioned military manuals using the order provided by the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji:*

MUYE JEBO (6)	MUYE SHINBO ("Ship pal ki") (18)	MUYE DOBO TONG JI Vol. (24)	DESCRIPTION
Jang Chang	Jang Chang	I. 1. Jang Chang	Spear About 5', flexible wood, used during the recovery of Pyong Yang in January 1593.
----------	Juk Jang Chang	2. Juk Jang Chang	Long Bamboo Spear About 20', flexible.
----------	Ki Chang	3. Ki Chang	Flag Spear About 9' 2" blade; the flag and its fast changes made it a deceptive weapon.
Dang Pa	Dang Pa	4. Ki Chang	Triple-bladed spear Trident, 7' 6" to 18'; defensive usage.
----------	----------	5. Ma Sang Ki Chang	Spear on Horseback About 15'; used to charge against enemy.
Nang Son	Nang Son	II. 6. Nang Son	Wolf Spear About 15', iron or flexible wood, used to dismount riders.
Ssang Su Do	Ssang Su Do	7. Ssang Su Do (Jang do; Yong Kom; Pyong Kom)	Two-handed Curved Saber About 6' 5"; powerful, maybe originated in the Japanese *fora tachi* of earlier centuries and then adopted by Koreans and Chinese.
----------	Ye Do	8. Ye Do (Dan Do; Hwan Do)	Short Saber about 4' 4"; originally from China, it was preserved in Korea and Japan.
----------	Wae Kom	9. Wae Kom	Foreign Sword (Japanese) The reputation of the Japanese saber determined its inclusion circa 17th century.
----------	Kyo Jon	10. Kyo Jon	Partner Sword Training Kim (2000) mentions that, according to Japanese manuals, it was to be used for double-edged swords; in Korea it was adapted for single-edged sabers.
----------	Je Do Kom	III. 11. Je Do Kom	Admiral's Straight Sword Developed and successfully used by Yi Yu Song, based on spinning when surrounded by many enemies.
----------	Bon Kuk Kom	12. Bon Kuk Kom	Original National Saber (from Shilla) Ancient technique used by Korea's Hwarang.
----------	Ssang Kom	13. Ssang Kom	Twin Swords About 4' 4"; used alternating for attack and defense.



----------	----------	14. Ma Sang Ssang Kom	**Twin Swords on Horseback** They were usually short, but the legendary Ji An fought with a 7' saber in each hand.
----------	Wol Do	15. Wol Do	**Moon / Crescent Sword (Halberd)** Mostly considered a training weapon.
----------	----------	16. Ma Sang Wol Do	**Halberd on Horseback** Used during the Japanese invasions.
----------	Hyop Do	17. Hyop Do	**Narrow Bladed Spear-Sword** Similar to the Japanese naginata, it was rarely used in battle as it was not considered strong enough.
Dong Pae	Dong Pae	18. Dong Pae	**Shield** Rattan or branch woven, sometimes covered with leather. It was used with the *ye do* sword or the articulated staff to fend off throwing weapons; widely used in China (*t'eng pai*); in Okinawa (*tin be*) it was made up of turtle shields.
----------	Kwon Bop	IV. 19. Kwon Bop	**Fist Method** Chinese origin.
Kon Bang	Kon Bang	20. Kon Bang Chang	**Long Staff** 7' long; it sometimes had a 2" blade on one tip; used to thrust and strike, it was considered the basic weapon.
----------	Pyon Kon	21. Pyon Kon	**Whip-Staff** Articulated, a long section of 8' was linked by chain to a shorter 2' section. It was used to defend fortresses against climbers.
----------	----------	22. Ma Sang Pyon Kon	**Whip-Staff on Horseback** The chain was longer, and the short section used to have iron nails.
----------	----------	23. Ma Sang Kyok Ku	**Competitive Sport Riding** Riding training in a competitive sport similar to polo which was appreciated as a spectator sport by the court.
----------	----------	24. Ma Sang Jae	**Equestrian Acrobacy** Riding skills that included hiding at the horse's side, standing atop, or pretending to be dead.

HAN MU DO FOUNDER AND MARTIAL ARTS SCHOLAR, KIMM HE YOUNG, POSES WITH MASTER LIM DONG KYU. MASTER LIM IS THE FOREMOST AUTHORITY AND TEACHER ON THE ANCIENT KOREAN TWENTY-FOUR WARRIOR TECHNIQUES. *Photo courtesty of Kimm He Young.*



SANG H. KIM, RENOWNED AUTHORITY IN THE KOREAN STYLES AND HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT, TRANSLATED THE *MUYE DOBO TONG JI*. HERE HE EXECUTES A ROUND KNEE KICK (*MURUP CHAKI*). *Photo courtesy of Turtle Press.*

Nowadays, the teaching curriculum of the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* is preserved by the Korean Kyongdang education organization based in Kwang Ju, South Korea and lead by folk martial arts expert Lim Dong Kyu. This organization aims to educate the youth using the physical, and intellectual military standards of the Choson Dynasty. It teaches the *Muye Eeshipsa Ban* consisting of 1204 techniques in the 24 specialties, including a sword with a length of 53" (1.35 meters) that weighs 5.5 pounds (2.5 kilograms) and lances that vary from 6.5 to 19 feet in length (2 to 6 meters).

THE "BOXING SECTION" AND MODERN INTERPRETATIONS

The task of translating the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* represented ten years of work for Sang H. Kim, a Tae Kwon Do, Hapkido and Junsado master who lives in Connecticut. As an authority in martial arts training, Kim admits that the book does not have enough details to precisely reproduce the forms that it contains.

In the boxing section (which bears the same "Kwon Bop" title as its forerunners), the manual provides names and some background information about older martial arts teaching. Among others, it states that fist art training is based on pre-established patterns (k., *hyung*), but it should be applied disregarding them. There are also tales about a Wudang Daoist master's prowess, and the superiority of internal over external styles. After mentioning that there were eighteen types of footwork, Yi Dok Mu points out that there was a system organized into six patterns (k., *yuk ro*) and ten levels (k., *ship dan kum*).

In the introductory part, the manual describes the performance of numerous techniques. According to one of them: "*Du Mun* is performed by lowering the left shoulder and fist and punching upward while the right hand pushes out horizontally to the front and bends outwards." After many similar instructions, the author concludes that: "the *yuk ro* is similar to *ship dan kum*. In general, *yuk ro* methods are used to develop bone strength in order to inflict immediate damage in a combat emergency, whereas the *ship dan kum* is for inducing a delayed reaction."[11]

After other instructions of a similar nature, the authors state that extreme emphasis in teaching a specific technique to overcome another (such as those found in the Okinawan *Bubishi*, "phoenix spreads its wings wins against dragon spits pearls," explained as "if a person throws a short punch at you, trap the attack and gouge his eyes") had taken all naturalness from practice, depriving it from its own essence, and turning those actions into nothing more than a game. When looking at the commented illustrations, the modern martial arts scholar will find some familiar positions such as "seven stars fist posture" (*chil song kwon se*, similar to "supporting block," *momtong koduro bakkat mak ki*), "single whip posture" (*yodan pyon se*, similar to "vertical ascending punch," *pande ollio sewo jirugi*), "crouching tiger posture" (*bok ho se*, similar to "mountain leaning side block," *palmok santul makki*), "high block posture" (*dang du pose*, similar to "pushing concentration block," *balwi mil ki*) and "ambushing posture" (*mae bok se*, a low and stretched position).

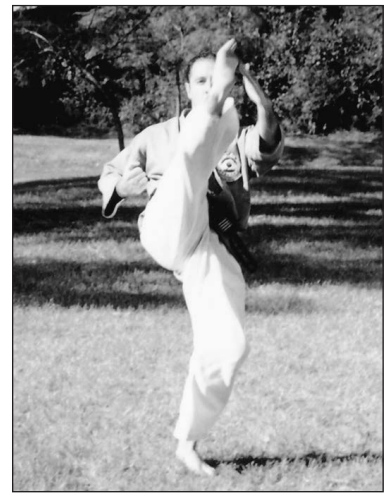
I should emphasize that these and many other positions have not reached the 20th century martial arts as a result of master-to-student transmission throughout generations, but modern organizations have included

them in their forms, maybe sometimes even imitating ancient illustrations and thus "reviving them," trying in this way to gain an ancestral pedigree disguising the fact that modern Tae Kwon Do has no direct relation with the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji*. The aforementioned techniques are superficially similar to the original, but their purpose seems to be different. The illustrated routines (k., *hyung*) in the manual are very skimpy in the use of kicks, mostly limited to a few mid-height front and fan (crescent) kicks, and the fist techniques are not similar or related to any modern Korean martial art style. The "genealogical" relation of the techniques shown in the manual with those currently practiced in Tae Kwon Do or Tang Soo Do seems to be, to a large extent, a product of wishful thinking.

JUMPING DESCENDING FIST ATTACK (*TWIMYO NERYO CHON KWON JIRUKI*)—A TYPICAL MOO DUK KWAN FIGHTING STRATAGEM THAT COMBINES THE AGILITY, AGGRESSIVENESS, AND UNPREDICTABILITY OF KOREAN STYLES WITH THE LINEAR FIST TECHNIQUES CULTIVATED IN JAPANESE KARATE.

Martial art manuals reveal different "trends" of the Chinese boxing systems that arrived to Korea. In the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji,* we can find the inward crescent kick, directed to the rival's solar plexus, which is practiced hitting against the kicker's opposing palm (k., *an pyojok chaki*, found in today's Han Soo, Yoo Sin and Ul Ji Tae Kwon Do forms). This kick, of gymnastic value but questionable combat effectiveness, is very frequent in Shaolin styles, and was introduced to Okinawa karate from southern China. During the early 20th century, this kicking technique voyaged from Okinawa to Japan through *Ro hai* (j.) / *No pae* (k.) and *Sei san* (j.) / *Ship sam* (k.) (or j. *Han getsu* / k. *Ban wol*) routines, and from there to Korea, where it is currently performed at head-height. In other words, the presence of this technique in today's Tae Kwon Do is not a result of genuine Korean ancestry; it comes from China in an odyssey which, as a relevant milestone, in most cases includes the Shotokan karate as practiced by Funakoshi (Gigo) Yoshitaka around 1940, the Japanese style upon which the great majority of the present formal "Korean" forms were built (Cook, 2001). While Chung Do Kwan, Moo Duk Kwan, Song Moo Kwan and Oh Do Kwan were influenced by Shotokan, Chang Moo Kwan was based on Toyama's Shudokan, and Ji Do Kwan's post-1950 technique was built on Yoon Kwe Byung's Shito-ryu training. The softer and more flowing Chinese and indigenous Taek Kyon systems, although frequently credited as sources for Tae Kwon Do, did not provide any material technical influence on modern Tae Kwon Do and Tang Soo Do forms.

The recently deceased Grandmaster Hwang Kee, the founder of Moo Duk Kwan and pioneer of Tang Soo Do (who refused to use the Tae Kwon Do name), admitted that when he found the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* in the National Library of Seoul in 1957, a whole new world within the martial arts opened for him. The impact of this discovery was so strong that he decided to change the name of his Tang Soo Do martial art into "Soo Bahk Do" because the Su Bak appellative is used in the manual's boxing section as the name of a bare-handed combat style. Hwang Kee was truly the first internationally renowned Korean martial arts exponent who paid serious attention to the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji*.



A HIGH CRESENT KICK (*SANDAN AN PYOJOK CHAKI*), FOUND IN THE ANCIENT KOREAN MARTIAL ART RECORDS AND INCLUDED IN FORMS OF MODERN TAE KWON DO, TANG SOO DO, KARATE AND SHAOLIN-DERIVED STYLES.

During the years following his discovery, Hwang Kee studied the Kwon Bop section and revived (as far as it was possible) a series of six routines called *Yuk Ro* and another series of ten routines called *Ship Dan Gum*, apart from the *Hwa Son* (k.) routine, which he officially presented in November 1982. The Yuk Ro techniques include forward stances ("bow and arrow," according to the Chinese tradition) with circular simultaneous strikes to the front and back in a windmill action, horizontally as well as vertically, and sudden direction variations and weight shifts, pushes to the front with the palms and open-handed parrying movements. Master Hwang Hyun Chul, son of Hwang Kee and world-class technical authority in his own right, describes the routines recreated by his father from the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* as a combination of hard and soft movements of profound content.

The resemblance of many movements within these (presumed Korean) forms to northern China's Long Boxing (ch. *Changquan*; k. *Jang Kwon*), which is considered the ancient predecessor of Shaolin, is remarkable. In addition, it should be noted that Hwang Kee included in his school curriculum a series of seven routines which he created called *Chil Song* (k.), generally translated as "seven stars," or more precisely, "the seventh star,"[12] probably taken from the Chinese martial arts teaching that he learned during his stay in Manchuria.

Some critics doubt that Hwang Kee was ever in a position to learn a true Chinese style when, after 1931, Manchuria was a puppet state with the Japanese name of Manchukuo. However, Hwang Kee never hid the fact that he had studied a book on Japanese karate during the late 1930s and provided informaton to verify his Chinese martial art training. In this connection, he revealed his Manchurian master's name (k. Yang Kuk Jin), and stated that he learned "steps method" (k. *seh bop*; ch. *pu fa*), "discipline method" (k., *ryon bop*, hardening), "twelve steps of spring leg" (k. *dham toi ship ee ro*, ch. *tam tuei*, a basic Long Boxing form), and some *tae kuk kwon* (k.; ch., *taijiquan*). It is difficult to determine how many of these Chinese practices influenced Tang Soo Do, except for the circular and wide trajectories of the karate techniques he redesigned, and the heel-against-the-floor/toes-up mantis sweeping technique which Hwang preferred to the more popular Japanese *ashi-barai* sole sweeping style found in standard Tae Kwon Do (adopted, for instance, by General Choi in the Tae Kwon Do *Sam Il* and *Moon Moo* routines).

Furthermore, Hwang Kee's inclusion of material from the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* was overshadowed by Moo Duk Kwan/Tang Soo Do's precocious reputation as an effective combination of Japanese karate with Korean kicking skills. When Hwang Kee introduced techniques from the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* (and the information contained within them) to the style, Moo Duk Kwan had already made a name for itself and an important number of instructors had left the original (Tang Soo Do) nucleus, in many cases joining Tae Kwon Do groups. Hence, such additions did not reach or attract the majority of those practicing the Moo Duk Kwan style. In other words, these forms arrived too late to have substantial influence over the style's already mature character. In any case, there is no doubt that Professor Hwang Kee must be credited as a precursor in the study of the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji*. The culmination of this effort was realized in his development of contemporary Soo Bahk Do Moo Duk Kwan.

In 1999, Dr. Kimm He Young presented to the martial arts media his recreation of the illustrations and explanations of the book, the *Kwon bop bu hyung* (k.), consisting of 42 complex movements. According to Kimm, the first 28 movements are for solo practice and from number 29 on, a training partner is needed and the form is performed by two men, similar to practice methods used in Chinese styles and, their imitation, in Doshin So's Japanese Shorinji Kempo (j.). Henning (2000), a precise and thoughtful author, asserts that the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* illustrations are based on those of General Qi, except for the escape and seizing techniques, which might be either original, or more probably, derived from other sources, such as another Chinese manual. Dr. Kimm's movements lack the sudden focus (muscular contraction and snap action) found in Tang Soo Do and Tae Kwon Do, and his form does not include postures which have become common in modern karate-related martial arts, even though there are some techniques that can be recognized (front kick, inward crescent open palm kick, side mountain block, and various fist strikes). In this author's personal opinion, the way Dr. Kimm performs his routine seems to be very close to the original, since his personal background in Korean "softer" styles (Kuk Sool, Hapkido, Yudo) has prevented him from introducing more recent Japanese karate-like (abrupt) kinetic characteristics in his reconstruction of the old forms.

HWANG HYUN CHUL PERFORMS A TWO-DIRECTION FIST TECHNIQUE FROM A *MUYE DOBO TONG JI* DERIVED HYUNG. NOTICE ITS RESEMBLANCE TO CHINESE LONG FIST.

Photo courtesy of Hwang Hyun Chul.

As we have already stated, the ample forward and backward strikes shown in the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* illustrations seem to follow the Chinese Long Fist technical guidelines. In respect to the characteristic of simultaneous multidirectional actions for which Long Fist is known, Adam Hsu (n.d.) comments:

> No, it is not an exotic training in which the apprentice learns to knock two rivals at the same time, one smaller in the front and the taller by the rear. This is mental training and can be found in all the movements of the Long Fist forms... The tunnel vision is a variation of the single direction approach, overly exclusive and restricted. The apprentice's attention is reduced even more to a specific area such as the rival's fist that approaches him or to his own leg prepared to attack. However, when somebody hits with his foot in Long Fist, he must keep one arm ahead and the other arm behind in the exact position... As the apprentice moves to superior levels and starts to feel the movement as part of his body, he must learn to direct his attention to the torso, pelvis and legs.

According to Hsu, by the time the student reaches a higher level, the wide and complex movements of Long Fist shall have given him "the ability to concentrate on his rival and, simultaneously, to be alert of his surroundings with a powerful multidirectional conscience."

These benefits, as well as the special capacity that the movements of Long Boxing have for preparing the apprentice for the use of weapons, may have recommended it to General Qi and Master Han Kyo as training for the military.

SHIP PAL KI SEQUENCE BY PARK JOON HYUN AND PORTALEA IN 1980. C-1) GUARD STANCE. C-2) ATTACK WITH ROUNDHOUSE KICK (*DOLLYO CHAKI*). C-3) JAM, TRAP, AND SECURE THE KICKING LEG. C-4) COUNTERATTACK WITH A LOW CROSS KICK TO GENITALS.

Photos courtesy of Miguel Hladilo and Yudo Karate magazine.

ABOUT THE EIGHTEEN TECHNIQUES (*SHIP PAL KI*)

It is noteworthy that in Hwang Kee's *Soo Bahk Do Dae Kam* manual (1978) there are two different lists of eighteen techniques. They are both described as "Ship Pal Ki" and neither coincides with the list of the *Muye Shinbo*. Even though one of Hwang's lists does show some similarity to the latter—such as, different types of lances and sabers for battle—in the descriptions by Hwang there are weapons such as the bow, crossbow, and whip. Any attempt to fully analyze such lists is very difficult, as in Hwang Kee's book they are in Chinese ideograms only, and many of such characters refer to old weapons that are no longer in use. We have identified only a few of them and we have not been able to find their meaning in Chinese-Korean dictionaries.

An additional series of Eighteen Techniques, also different from those listed in the *Muye Shin Bo,* has survived to our time. It is the series taught by Yoo Sam Nam, a Ship Pal Ki (which he has romanized as "Sipalki") martial art master who has lived and taught in Argentina for more than thirty years (Yoo, n.d.). Yoo includes the following specialties in his teaching:

1. *Ho Sin Sul*: Self-defense
2. *Kyo Yon*: Pugilism, one against many
3. *Kwob Bop*: Pugilism, one against one
4. *Nang Kon*: Articulated sticks (short and symmetrical) also called *ssang jol kon* (c., *nung cha kung;* j., *nunchaku*)
5. *Dan Bong*: Short stick
6. *Bong*: Long staff, also called *jang bong*
7. *Kom*: Saber
8. *Dan Kom*: Short sword (knife)
9. *Ssang Kom*: Double sword (knives)
10. *Chung Ion Do*: Sword (*ion do* means "dragon sword," a name used in ancient China)
11. *Bang Pe*: Shield
12. *Ssan*: Belt /sash
13. *Pyon Sul*: Whip
14. *Chang*: Spear
15. *Chong Kom*: Bayonet (j., *ju ken,* literally "long saber")
16. *Jwan*: Brass knuckle
17. *Doki*: Axe
18. *Kung Sul*: Archery

What are the reasons behind the difference between Hwang Kee's and Yoo Soo Nam's lists and those of the *Muye Shinbo* digest? We must take into account that in Korea, after the publication of the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* in 1790, large scale battles against mounted invaders had lost importance as probable combat scenarios (Henning, 2000, states that many sections of the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* had already lost all practical value by the time of its publication). Following the success of the campaigns against the Japanese invasions, and after that danger had been overcome, a decline and abandonment of military training was the norm in Korea, even though many former soldiers continued practicing martial arts within their families. Logically, most techniques designed to face mounted enemies were replaced by infantry weapons, techniques, and martial arts training concentrated on these things.

Battlefield combat training gave way to personal combat training, and other weapons became more important (i.e., short stick, double short stick, articulated sticks). Likewise, according to Suh In Hyuk, many Korean improvised arms—as the cane, rope, or fan—were developed or improved by the

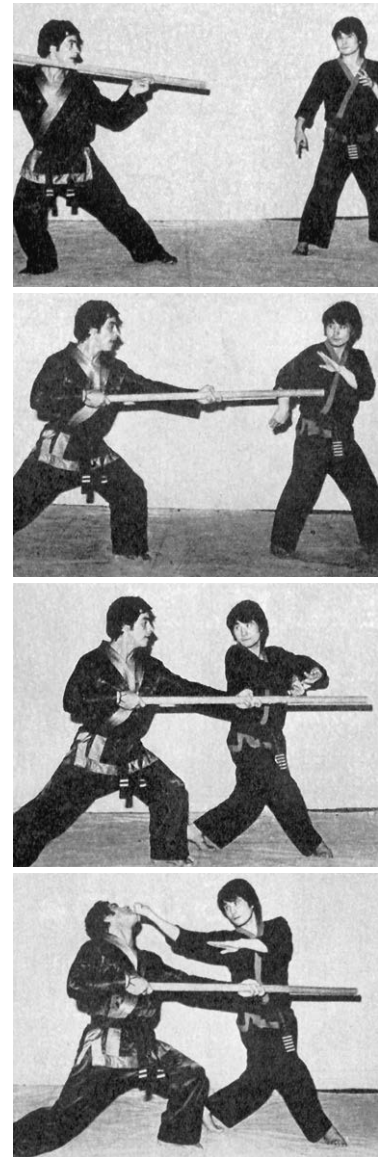
court's guards due to their need for effective combatives in places where no weapons were allowed. In 1958, after decades spent learning from his family and many other instructors, Grandmaster Suh In Hyuk, whose grandfather, Suh Myong Duk, had been a Royal Court instructor, organized the arts of the Kuk Sool Won (k., "National Techniques Academy") to preserve the Korean national martial culture that existed before the 20th century Japanese occupation. His approach was intended to rescue the Court's martial arts, Buddhist martial arts (which he went to temples to learn), and the folk martial arts (as the paradigmatic case of Yoo's family). Kuk Sool has movements and weapons whose continuity, circularity, and positions show an important Chinese influence.

We should note that other "small" or "personal" weapons (such as those used by bodyguards, policemen or martial artists outside the army), which were historically used in southern China, the Ryukyu archipelago, and Indochina, were also used in Korea. The available evidence credits China as their most likely origin, but it is not a clear matter. Those weapons include the articulated sticks (j. *nunchaku*), the side handled trungeon (j. *tonfa*) and the short trident (j. *sai*). In Okinawa, due to the prohibition of weapons production, police and palace guards imported those weapons from Fuzhou. Even nowadays many people wrongly believe that the efficient Chinese personal weapons are rural Okinawa tools, but this is true only for a few of them, such as the sickle and the oar.

In Korea, miliary activity stagnated in the isolation and emphasis of Confucianism during the 18th and 19th centuries. However, families in some villages preserved the old combat techniques. At the beginning of the 20th century, they were polished by those who knew them in order to transmit these fighting skills to their sons to protect themselves against Japanese oppression. This explains situations such as the Yoo family's (holders of the *Ion Bi Ryu* "flying swallow branch") Ship Pal Ki family tradition, that kept a core of centuries-old knowledge and its name (Ship Pal), and somehow managed to keep the number eighteen while including modern weapons (such as the bayonet) and discarding those that had become outdated.

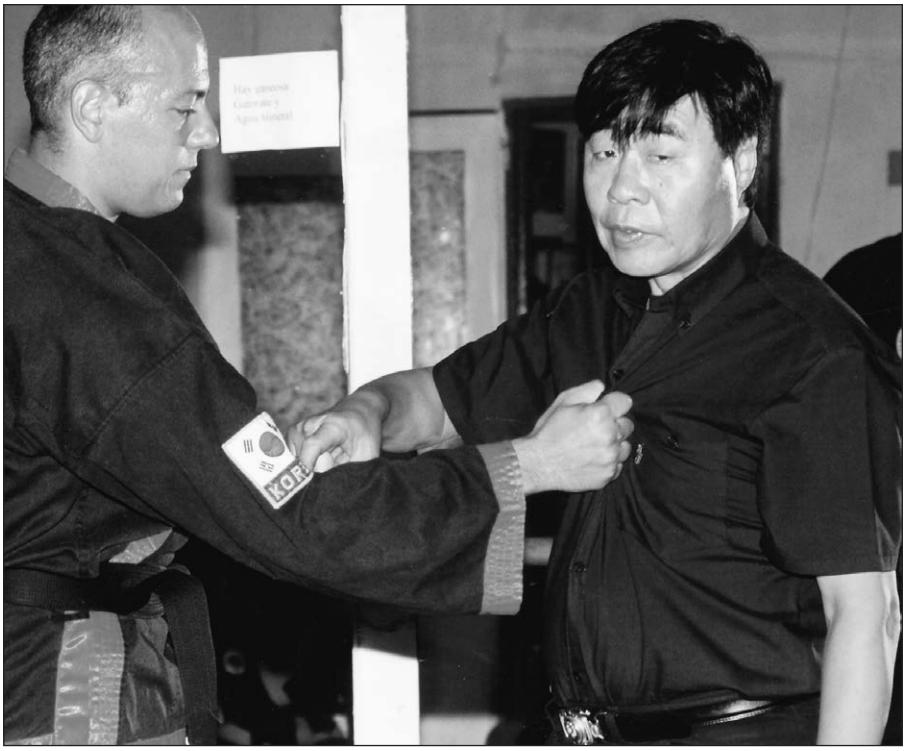
Another beneficiary of the Ship Pal Ki martial legacy is Professor He Young Kimm, who learned Ship Pal Ki from his master, Kim Swang Sub, and Professor Baek Wu Hyon, chief instructor of Jun Mu Kwan of the Korean Association of Ship Pal Ki. The Eighteen Techniques taught in this Association are not described in this article.[13]

During the 19th century, these Ship Pal Ki techniques, originally developed for training troops in the use of weapons, maintained combat effectiveness as they were transformed into "familiar" arts, but were not absorbed by barehanded martial arts of Taek Kyon or Su Bak, both which have been depicted as distinct, weaponless, combat disciplines. Taek Kyon mostly converted into a popular athletic kicking and tripping folk game which has survived until our days (Ouyang, 1997). Su Bak is a reportedly lost combat art that had turned into military sport before fading away during the Choson period. Such distinctions are elaborations of often repeated information lacking verifiable sources and therefore remain questionable. Although the Ship Pal



SHIP PAL KI SEQUENCE BY PARK JOON HYUN AND PORTALEA IN 1980.
D-1) GUARD STANCE WITH STAFF.
D-2) DIRECT STAFF ATTACK, AND SIDESTEPPING CHECK DEFENSE.
D-3) PROGRESSION IN DEFENSIVE MANEUVER CROSS STANCE (*KYO CHA JA SEH*).
D-4) BACK-KNUCKLE COUNTERSTRIKE (YI-KWON CHIKI).

Photos courtesy of Miguel Hladilo and Yudo Karate magazine.



Yon Bi Ryu Sipalki Grandmaster Yoo Soo Nam from Buenos Aires, Argentina, showing a pressure point on an attacker's arm.

Ki (weapons-dominated) trend is not known to have mixed with these hand and foot fighting systems, it is probable that any Korean soldier with knowledge of both trends would have merged them.

To understand the probable way Ship Pal Ki combat training evolved to the present time, we should consider the training received by modern members of the special forces (Cremona, personal interview, November 2001). They practice shooting with long weapons; physical conditioning; swimming; diving; close-quarter bare-hand and bladed weapons combat; explosives instruction; indoor combat tactics; urban and open field (including forest and jungle) tactics; rappel training; parachute basics, etc. This relates the fundamental ideas behind ancient Ship Pal Ki to survival of a certain family group, according to its leading authority in Argentina. Ship Pal Ki included a series of different combative skills—mostly related to weapons—that set this discipline apart from the more popular naked-hand combat arts. Ship Pal Ki techniques never became "overspecialized" in any single ability, in the same way that special forces members are not extraordinary swimmers, champion marksmen, or accomplished martial artists, but are highly functional in each area to make up extraordinary human weapons. This martial art continued its evolution keeping the ability to deal with life or death situations at the core.

Staffs and swords are out of place in modern society, and the increasing lack of reality in their practice (which was Ship Pal Ki's original goal) may have caused Master Yoo's Ship Pal Ki school to concentrate on practicing bare-handed combat skills. Among its features are a peculiar strategy of surprise and fierceness, a wide-range of technical resources (circular hand motions and footwork unusual for karate-derived traditions), the extensive use of grabbing while striking, an emphasis on combat against multiple opponents, and the use of the fingers to hit sensitive areas with rapid movements. These make up the arsenal of this Korean style as taught in Argentina (Yoo, n.d.).

During the last thirty years, the Yoo Soo Nam Ship Pal Ki system has also incorporated kicking techniques found in other Korean systems, enlarging and giving more detail to the weaponless one-on-one combat practice (without losing the weapons techniques), thus trying to preserve the effectiveness and original *raison d'être* of this martial art.

EPILOGUE

Research for this article was conducted in the hope of finding a realistic explanation connecting historical development to the technique of Korean martial arts as they are performed today. From an historical perspective, it becomes apparent that any appeal to the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* as evidence for the antiquity of any Korean modern art is unacceptable today. The nationalistic arguments that have so frequently distorted the historical truth can no longer be accepted.

A TAE KWON DO JUMPING TWIST KICK (*TIMYO BIT-URO CHAKI*) DEVELOPED ON THE BASIS OF TAEK KYON'S *JAE CHA KI* (WHICH STRIKES WITH THE INSTEP), BUT USES THE METATARSAL AREA OF THE SOLE FOR CONCENTRATED IMPACT.

It is clear that, in the past, national borders had little importance if any in the development of martial arts of the Far East. Although the concept of "style" is not new in combative training, the idea of different "martial arts" as separate activities networking with affiliated instructors and followers all-around the world is indeed a novelty which has both positive consequences (i.e., access to organized knowledge which might otherwise be difficult; standardized curriculum, etc.) and negative side effects (i.e., excessive focus on the style's identity and its methods, unawareness of alternative ways used by other systems to solve the same problems).

The larger the group, the less frequently the head of a martial art system will be able to train and personally instruct a significant proportion of his students. In these cases, there is a tendency for such a system to have fewer changes than one in which the group is closely bound. As in the first case, the style will probably have difficulties going beyond the understanding of the essential concepts that give distinct identity to that style. The smaller the group, the more rapidly changes will be introduced. A clear example is Bruce Lee's backyard style which evolved at incredible speed.

Another feature to be taken into account is the focus of the technical central authority of the style, and the (distant) instructor's priorities. In widespread styles, it is frequent to see important divergences between the ideas supporting a style and the mindset of some of its instructors (Is the style, as taught by the central authorities, geared towards keeping a tradition? Is it about cultivating a sport? Is it mainly for self-defense? How do these categories relate to the proposed style, and to the way classes are taught? Are the students conscious of what they are getting, or do they have a distorted or fantastic image?)

The ancients had no trouble in accepting foreign teachings when their security depended on it. When doing so, they were careful to learn from specialists in those martial arts—a wise and humble attitude, unlike the common behavior of intending to gain knowledge from other martial art systems by the do-it-yourself "copy-and-paste" system. On the other hand, as survival seems not to be an issue in most present-day martial arts, many profitable pseudo martial arts "corporations" have developed on the basis of convincing speeches and dubious techniques. The very basics of bare-handed training

ACKNOWLEDGMENT
In gratitude to my teacher Pedro Florindo, his instructors masters Lee Chong Seo (Moo Duk Kwan) and Yang Dae Chol (Ji Do Kwan), and those preceding them. If not for their commitment to the martial Way, I would have not received such a wonderful gift, which I get to open, enjoy, and share every day. I also want to thank my right-hand man instructor Leo Di Lecce and my other students, specially the Discioscias (father and son) and Diego Cruz.

according to the Korean manuals—to boost courage in the battlefield by providing the soldiers with strong, agile and well-balanced bodies—seems to be fading away. Each instructor is responsible for what he teaches to his students, and he must decide whether to follow Master Han Kyo's example of making an effort to study in order to give his troops the best training available, or to abrogate that responsibility to a "federation" headquartered many miles away, whose interests may be other than the authenticity and combat value of what is taught in class.

If we learn from history, the past will prove useful for our lives. If we as martial art instructors make the right decisions, it will be our technical and moral contribution to this Oriental martial art legacy. In other words, our work as instructors, if only to a small extent (but noticeable to our students), will have improved the world we live in.

NOTES

[1] Regarding terminolgy used in this article, "k." stands for Korean; "j." for Japanese; and "ch." for Chinese terms. Other than certain terms referring to weapons used in southern China, for which their Cantonese name is shown with a "c.", all Chinese terms are Mandarin. Korean and Japanese terms are written without following any standard romanization system, as they have been available from different sources derived from their phonetic version. Okinawan weapon names are referred by their widley known Hogen dialect, labeled as Japanese.

[2] This work has been largely based on the illuminating studies on the ancient Chinese and Korean manuals and related subjects authored by Kimm (1999), Kim S.H. (2000), Young (1993), Henning (2000), Della Pia (1994, 1995), Pieter (1994), Cook (1998, 1999, 2001), and McCarthy (1996).

[3] This kingdom is nowadays called "Ko" (old) Choson, as opposed to the modern Choson period running from 1392 to 1910 CE.

[4] For that reason, Dan Gun is the name of the International Tae Kwon-Do Federation's (ITF) second pattern.

[5] For this patriotic deed, Moon Moo is the name of the ITF's 21st pattern.

[6] The 9th WTF form bears this name.

[7] In his honor, the ITF's 23rd pattern is called *Se Jong*.

[8] Choi Hyong Un became known as So San, and his name is remembered in the ITF's 22nd pattern.

[9] Admiral Yi was called Choong Moo, after whom the ITF's 9th pattern was named.

[10] For very diverse descriptions of the *hwarang,* refer to Pieter (1994), and also Lee Joo Bang (2000).

[11] Both Yuk Ro and Ship Dan Kum are names currently designating Soo Bahk Do forms recreated by Hwang Kee; Du Mun is the name of the first of the six Yuk Ro forms.

[12] According to Hayes (1999-2000), seventh star of the Big Dipper (Ursa Major) that points to the North Star in the Little Dipper (Ursa Minor).

[13] One of the advanced forms taught at the Korea Taek Kyon Association is an empty handed sequence called *Yon Dan Sip Pal Soo,* which provokes more questions on the true origin of number 18 in Korean martial arts. Furthermore, Anne Loo (1984: 25) was introduced during her youth to "a Korean version of Shaolin Kung Fu called Sip Pal Ki Sorim Kwan in Korean." In China, Shaolin monks are said to have adopted 18 weapons from Tang Dynasty (618-907) officials before expanding their repertoire, and by the Song Dynasty (960-1279) referring to the "18 military weapons" had become common usage, these weapons subject to different listings according to the different times and accounts. So the Shaolin connection remains a possible ancestor to some modern Korean Sip Pal Ki lineages, and would prove an alternative to the Sip Pal Ki of the *Muye Shinbo* military manual.

In connection with Taek Kyon's barehanded Sip Pal form, it is hard to imagine a relation with a set of 18 weapons, either Korean or Chinese. In Chinese martial arts there exists the "18 hands of the enlightened" (ch. *Shi Ba Luo Han Shou*) taught by some as a martial art in itself (DeMarco, 2003), and by others as a set of exercises believed to preserve the roots of Bodhidharma/Damo's original teachings at the Shaolin Temple (López, 2002). Taek Kyon seems to be closer to the shamanistic folk practices of inner Korea than to any Buddhist tradition, which would suggest that chances for it being related to Shaolin are slim. Still, a study of their similarities and differences and their historical relation, if any, awaits further research.

GLOSSARY

Chinese Characters Listed by Korean Pronunciation

- Bon kuk kom: Indigenous sword of the country (Koreans referring to Silla's sword). 本國劍
- Bong: Staff (j. *bo*) 棒
- Chang: Spear. 倉
- Choson: "Morning placid"; name for Korea during the Yi period (1392-1907). According to Samguk Yusa records of Korean legendary times, that was the original name Dan Gun adopted for his country in the 24th century BCE. 朝鮮
- Chuk Kye Kwang: Korean name for the Chinese author of the *Ki Hyo Shin Su*. 戚繼光
- Do: Blade, saber (j. *to;* ch. *dao*). 刀
- Hankuk: The "Han" country/people. Korea. Reportedly meaning "bright/optimistic country/people". 韓國
- Hwarang: "Blossom/flower youth/boy." Organized group of young men in Silla during the 7th century. According to some accounts, it was a selected group of noble teenagers that received instruction in martial and fine arts and Buddhism to serve as officers in the country's army, resulting in heroic and ferocious deeds in battle. Traditionally, Korean martial art proponents have compared Korean Hwarang to Japanese samurai. For a revisionist perspective on the nature of the Hwarang, refer to Pieter (1994). 花郎
- Hyung: Form (ch. *xing;* j. *kata*). 形
- Jang kwon: Long fist/boxing (ch., *changquan*). Northern Chinese martial 本國劍

system that is believed to be the basis of the original Shaolin technique.

正祖 • JUNG JO: Korean king who ordered the preparation of the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji*.

高句麗 • KOKURYO: Name of the largest realm (lasted from 37 BCE-668 CE) of the Korean "Three Kingdoms age."

劍術 • KOM SUL: Sword art/technique (j., *kenjutsu*). Although from the ideographic analysis "kom" refers to a double-edged blade, it became a generic term used for single-edged sabers as those used in medieval Japan.

棍 • KON: Club (ch. *gun;* j. *kon*).

空手 • KONG SU: "Empty hand" (ch. *kong shou;* j. *karate*), alternative characters to the original writing for "karate" adopted by Hanashiro Chomo and Funakoshi Gichin when such Okinawan art was introduced to the Japanese ethnocentric society of early 20th century.

高麗 • KORYO: Korean historical period from 927 to 1394.

弓 • KUNG: Bow (j. *kyu*).

拳法 • KWON BOP: "Fist/boxing methods" (ch. *quanfa;* j, *ken po*), the Korean version of the most widely used name for Chinese-derived weaponless martial arts in eastern Asia.

茅元儀 • MO WON UI: Korean name for the Chinese author of the *Mubiji*.

武備志 • *MUBIJI: Book of Military Preparation* (ch. *Wubeizhi;* j. *Bubiji*) Chinese 17th century manual written by, Mao Yuanyi; also name of a southern Chinese White Crane boxing manual of unknown author, fundamental to Okinawan karate.

武道精神 • MU DO JUNG SHIN: Righteous Spirit of the Martial Way.

武德館 • MU DOK KWAN (Moo Duk Kwan): "House of the Martial Virtue" (ch., *wu de quan;* j. *bu toku kan*). The name of Hwang Kee's dojang. For a serious treatment on the morality historically associated with Asian fist arts refer to Yang (1996).

武藝圖譜通志 • *MUYE DOBO TONG JI:* An illustrated martial arts manual written circa 1790 in Korea by Yi Dok Mu with collaboration of Park Je and Park Dong Su by order of King Jung Jo.

百濟 • PAEKCHE: Name of one of the "Three Kingdoms," which lasted from 18 BCE to 660 CE.

八卦 • PAL KAE: "Eight hexagrams" (ch., *ba gua*). According to Daoism, the eight primary manifestations of the creative interaction of *um* and *yang* (ch., *yin* and *yang*) represented by hexagrams.

鞭 • PYON: Whip.

十八技 • SHIP PAL KI: "Eighteen Techniques." Name by which the *Muye Shinbo* Korean manual was popularly known. It currently identifies certain folk-derived Korean martial arts out of the mainstream styles.

新羅 • SILLA: Name of the smallest of the "Three Kingdoms" from 57 BCE to 935 CE.

少林寺 • SORIM SA: "Little Forest Temple" (ch. *Shaolin Ssu;* j. *Shorin Ji*). Name of the monastery in Henan Province, China, in which Indian Buddhist missionary Bodhidarma is believed to have introduced *Dyana* (j. *Zen*; ch. *Chan*; k. *Son*) around 530 CE and in which reportedly his yogic teachings merged with previous Chinese fighting methods creating a legendary martial art. Okinawan karate styles have kept this name.

手搏 • SU BAK: "Hitting hand" (ch., *shou bu*). Name used for weaponless martial art in the Chinese-based *Muye Dobo Tong Ji;* also thought to be name of ancient

Korean barehand martial art (the characters shown correspond to those used in the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji*).

- TAE KUK: "Great principle" (ch., *taiji;* j., *tai kyoku*). According to Daoism, the underlying principle of existence. Adopted as the name for a Chinese martial art system. 太極
- TAE KWON DO: "Way of the fist and feet." Name proposed by General Choi Hong Hi in 1955 to replace the *tang su* / *kong su* names that were used for karate derivatives in Korea. Along with this change, he proposed a number of technical modifications that in the aggregate resulted in a new martial art system which are believed to reflect many features of the Korean people. 跆拳道
- TAEK KYON: "To push shoulder." Taek Kyon (also called *gak hi,* k.) is considered by many to be the only original, Korean martial art (Ouyang, 1997); proponents of this theory argue that the name has no associated Chinese characters. The characters shown (and respective meaning) are provided by Henning (2000), according to whom this martial art is also Chinese-related, and suggests the modern Korean pronunciation "Taek" replacing "Tak" may be the result of a deliberate or casual vocal change that suited supporters of Taek Kyon's Korean origin. According to Pieter (1994), Chinese characters for *gak hi* are available, meaning "foot-play." It should be noted that present-day Taek Kyon does not have any technical resemblance to any known Chinese martial art. 托肩
- TANG SU: "Tang (dynasty) hand"; "Chinese hand" (ch. *Tang shou;* ok. *Toudi;* j. *karate*), along with kenpo, was one of the names by which Chinese boxing became known in Okinawa. 唐手
- WAE KOM: Name ("foreign sword") used in *Muye Dobo Tong Ji* for the Japanese sword. 外劍
- WOL DO: Moon blade. 月刀
- *YI DOK MU:* Name of (Korean) author of the *Muye Dobo Tong Ji*. 李德懋
- *YON BI RYU:* "Flying swallow lineage" (j., *Em Pi Ryu*). Ship Pal Ki family tradition inherited and led by Yoo Soo Nam from Argentina. 燕飛流

BIBLIOGRAPHY

CAPENER, S. (1995). *Problems in the identity and philosophy of T'aegwondo and their historical causes*. Available: www.bstkd.com/caoeber.1.htm.

CHO, SIHAK H. (2000). *Tae Kwon Do: Secrets of Korean karate*. Tokyo: Tuttle.

CHOI, HONG HI. (1991). *Taekwon-Do. The Korean art of self-defense*. USSR: International Taekwon-Do Federation.

CHUN, R. (1983). *Tae Kwon Do: El arte marcial Coreano*. Spanish language edition. New York: Harper & Row.

CLARK, R. (1992). *Martial arts for the university. A textbook for basic judo, ju-jitsu, karate, Tae Kwon Do, Modern Arnis, and vital points*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co.

COOK, H. (2001). *Shotokan karate: A precise history*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Dragon Times.

COOK, H. (April 1998). Ch'i Chi Kuang and the Chi Hsiao Hsin Shu. *Traditional Karate*.

COOK, H. (Summer 1999). The Bubishi. *Dragon Times*, # 14.
CREMONA, M. (November 2001). Personal interview with close quarters combat instructor and personal conditioning instructor of the Albatros Argentine special forces corps.
DELLA PIA, J. (1994). Korea's *Mu Yei Do Bo Tong Ji*. *Journal of Asian Martial Arts, 3*(2), 62-71.
DELLA PIA, J. (1995). Native Korean sword techniques described in the *Mu Yae Do Bo Tong Ji*. *Journal of Asian Martial Arts, 4*(2), 86-97.
DEMARCO, M. (2003). Taiwan, teachers & training: An interview with Yang Jwingming, Part II, *Journal of Asian Martial Arts, 12*(3), 74-88.
GILBERT, G. (May 1984). The evolution of the small weapons of China and their adoption by karate. *Karate Illustrated*.
HANHO (1992). *Combat strategy – Junsado: The way of the Warrior*. Hartford, CT: Turtle Press.
HAYES, C. (Winter 1999/2000). Letter published in *World Moo Duk Kwan Newsletter*.
HENNING, S. (2000). Traditional Korean martial arts. *Journal of Asian Martial Arts, 9*(1), 8-15.
HSU, A. (n.d.). Entrenamiento mental: El arma secreta del Puño Largo. *Cinturón Negro,* Year XII, 123. Madrid: Budo International Publishing.
HWANG, K. (1978). *Tang Soo Do (Soo Bahk Do)*. Edited by the U.S. Tang Soo Do Moo Duk Kwan Federation.
HWANG, K. (1992). *Tang Soo Do Moo Duk Kwan, Volume 2*. Edited by the U.S. Tang Soo Do Moo Duk Kwan Headquarters.
HWANG, K. (1995). *The history of Moo Duk Kwan, celebrating the 50th anniversary*. Edited by Hwang Kee.
HWANG, HYUN CHUL (December 1999). Personal interview with R. Longinotti.
IN, SUN SEO (1999). *Dae Han Ki Do Association* [On-line]. A general outline of martial arts and a brief history of Korean native martial arts. Available: http://www.kidohae.com/ history.htm.
KANG, WON SIK, & LEE, KYONG MYONG, (n.d.). Modern history of Tae Kwon Do [On-line]. Available: http://www.martialartsresource.com/anonftp/pub/the_dojang/digests /history.html.
KIM, PYUNG SOO (1973). *Palgwe 1.2.3 of Tae Kwon Do hyung*. Los Angeles: Ohara Publications.
KIM, SANG H. (2000). *Mooye Dobo Tongji: The comprehensive illustrated manual of martial arts of ancient Korea*. Hartford, CT: Turtle Press.
KIM, SANG H. (June 2001). (Interview by Robert W. Young). Ancient wisdom: Korea's 211-year-old combat manual and its meaning for modern martial artists. *Black Belt*.
KIM, SANG H. (Sept. 2001). Korea's traditional weapons. *Tae Kwon Do Times*.
KIM, UN YONG (with Uhm Woon-kyu, Hong Chong-soo, Lee, Chong-woo, Han Seung-jo, Kim Young-hwan, Kim Soon-bae, Park Hae-man, et al.), (2000). *Kukkiwon Tae Kwon Do textbook*. Seoul: O Sung Publishing.
KIMM, HE YOUNG (1985). *Kuk Sool: Korean martial arts*. Louisiana: Andrew Jackson College Press.
KIMM, HE YOUNG (1985). *Han Mu Do: Korean intellectual martial arts*.

Louisiana: Andrew Jackson College Press.
KIMM, HE YOUNG. (May 1999). Korea's oldest hand form: Kwon Bub Bo. *Tae Kwon Do Times*.
KIMM, HE YOUNG. (November 1997). Bon Kook Kum: Korean native sword form. *Tae Kwon Do Times*.
LEE, JOO BANG (July 2002). *World Hwa Rang Do Association* [On-line]. History and background of the art. Available: http://www.hwarangdo.com.
LEE, KI BAIK (1988). *Nueva historia de Corea*. (Spanish edition translated from *A New History of Korea*, 1st English edition, Ilchokak Publishers, Seoul, 1984) Buenos Aires: EUDEBA.
LEE, KYONG MYONG (2001). *Taekwondo: Philosophy and culture*. Seoul: Hollym.
LEE, YONG BOK. (2001). *Taekkyon, videos I and II*. Hartford, CT: Turtle Press.
LOO, A. (Fall 1984). The need for Taekwon-do. *Traditional Taekwon-do*. pp. 25-26.
LÓPEZ, G. GARCIA. (2002). Las manos de los dieciocho Luohan y las artes marciales. *Luohan Qigong* [On-line]. (The hands of the eighteen Luohan and the martial arts). Available: http://www.luohan.com/html_castellano/artemarcial_luohan.html.
MCCARTHY, P. (TRANS.) (1996). *The bible of karate: Bubishi*. Tokyo: Tuttle.
OUYANG, YUNG. (1997). The elevation of Taekkyon from folk game to martial art. *Journal of Asian Martial Arts*, 6(4), 76-89.
PARK, HAE MAN (November 2000). Personal interview.
PARK, JOON HYUN (April 1980). Interview on Sipalki. *Yudo Karate Magazine* N° 75, pp. 32-33.
PIETER, W. (1994). Notes on the historical development of Korean martial sports. An addendum to Young's history and development of Tae Kyon. *Journal of Asian Martial Arts, 3*(1), 82-89.
RATTI, O. &WESTBROOK, A. (1994). *Los secretos del Samurai: Una investigación sobre las artes marciales del Japón feudal* (Spanish Edition translated from *Secrets of the samurai: A survey of the martial arts of feudal Japan*, Charles E. Tuttle, 1973) Madrid: Alianza Editorial.
SHIM, SANG KYU. (December 1997). Understanding the spirit of Tae Kwon Do through the history of Korea (Part I). *Tae Kwon Do Times*.
SHIM, SANG KYU. (January 1998). Understanding the spirit of Tae Kwon Do through the history of Korea (Part II, III, & IV). *Tae Kwon Do Times*.
SWIFT, J. (July 2002). *Fighting Arts.com* [On-line]. Roots of Shotokan: Funakoshi's original 15 kata, Parts I, II and III. Available: http://www.fightingarts.com.
WORLD JIDOKWAN FEDERATION. World Jidokwan Federation [On-line]. Jidokwan History. Available: http://www.worldjidokwan.co/history/the_history_of_jidokwan.html.
YANG, J. (1996). *The essence of Shaolin White Crane: Martial art power and qigong*. Jamaica Plain: YMAA.
YOO, SOO NAM (n.d.). *Sipalki-do, el arte marcial de Corea*. Buenos Aires: Sempai Editora (M. Hladilo), Colección Yudo Karate.
YOUNG, R. (1993). The history and development of Tae Kyon. *Journal of Asian Martial Arts, 2*(2), 44-67.