

SOO BAK-GI AND TAEK KYON IN THE KORYO DYNASTY

In another interesting study. Dr. An Ja San has stated in his book of ancient Korea, "Chosun Moosa Yongoung Jun" the biography of Korean warriors, that the Yoo Sul school (which could now be considered Jujitsu) was known under the name of Soo Bak-Gi or Taek Kyon.

Annually during the month of May, the King, in person, held a match of this form of unarmed combat at the Kak Chon pavilion on Ma Am mountain. The winner of this contest was awarded a prestigious government post. The King also made the contest compulsory for all soldiers. Three of the winners of this annual contest—Lee Yi Min, Jang Joong Boo and Sa Kang Sung eventually became leading generals during the Koryo Dynasty. It appears that the King held more than a passing interest in the art.

These were twenty-five fundamental movements or postures used by practitioners. Their postures incorporated hand, leg, jumping, falling, rolling and pulling techniques. Below are listed the postures:

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|----------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| Chil Sung Kwon | Posture | Goo Yoo | Posture |
| O Hwa Yu Sin | Posture | Gum Nal | Posture |
| An Hyal Chok | Posture | Po Ga | Posture |
| Ro Doo Po | Posture | Hyon Kak Hu Sa | Posture |
| Yo Dan Pyon | Posture | Joong Sa Pyong | Posture |
| Il Lyong Bo | Posture | Jum Joo | Posture |
| Go Sa Pyong | Posture | Gyo Hang | Posture |
| Do Gi Yong | Posture | Do Chok | Posture |
| Mae Bok | Posture | Ki Go | Posture |
| Gwa Ho | Posture | Ha Sap | Posture |

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|--------------|---------|------------|---------|
| Bok Ho | Posture | Tarn Ma | Posture |
| Do Sap | Posture | Yo Ran Joo | Posture |
| Soon Ran Joo | Posture | | |

Certainly the Silla and Koryo Dynasties marked a flowering of the martial arts in Korea. Soon after, however, these dynasties acquired anti-military positions. Though this began a period of civil enlightenment, anything dealing with the military was debased. By the end of the Yi Dynasty the martial arts appeared to have ceased existing.

The final blow came with the Japanese occupation (1909-1945) when it was forbidden to practice any of the martial arts. Taek Kyon was secretly practiced by some dedicated stalwarts and passed on to a handful of students.

Proponents of the art, such as Song Duk Ki, Han Il Dong and a few others, managed to keep the art alive.

After the liberation of Korea in 1945, the new Republic of Korea Armed Forces was organised. On January 15, 1946, a young Second Lieutenant Choi Hong Hi, recently released from a Japanese prison camp, began teaching his martial art to some of his soldiers. The rest, of course, is history, resulting in what is today known throughout the world as Taekwon-Do.

In 1955, the name Taekwon-Do was chosen as the new name of the national martial art by a board of instructors, historians and other prominent persons. The name submitted by General Choi was unanimously selected for its apt description of the art; Tae (foot), Kwon (fist), Do (art). Not only did this new name bear a close similarity to ancient name of Taek Kyon, but the name gave a new sense of nationalism to the art, where as the prevalent names of Dang Soo and Kong Soo connoted Chinese or Japanese martial arts.

The years of research and development by General Choi resulted in the Chang Hun style (pen name of the author) of Taekwon-Do. Though this style is primarily referred to Taek Kyon and Soo Bak-Gi a myriad of techniques have been added, especially in the variety of hand techniques and perfection of foot techniques.

The Chang Hun style is based on twenty-four patterns, each perfected and polished by General Choi Hong Hi and his colleagues, from the white belt pattern Chon-Ji to the highest, Tong Il.

After 1,300 years, Korean martial art has reached full maturity and has spread from a small band of aristocratic warriors to practitioners in more than fifty countries with millions of students. The combination of the old classical techniques and new modifications have resulted in a form of self-defence and mental conditioning unrivalled in the modern world.

The above history was released in the weekly magazine of Chosun daily newspaper by Dr. Lee Sun Kun, President of Kyung Puk University in 1969 and one of Korea's most noted historians.