

# **CENTRAL CANADA MARTIAL ARTS ASSOCIATION**

## **GENERAL HISTORY OF KOREAN MARTIAL ARTS**

Korean martial arts history dates back for centuries. In fact much of their influence came from the Chinese. A good example of this would be the Han dynasty. If you look up ancient maps they actually held most of Korea for the time period. In fact in modern times I have interviewed many Korean people during an interaction at a local event in which they stated very clearly they are the Han people. This being said many of the Chinese martial arts influenced there martial arts early on. Some evidence of this is such places as a shaolin related temple and many Buddhist temples in Korea. Also the military support of the time would have also likely trained troops or had troops stationed in which would have developed families with lineages sharing their arts. This created such ancient arts as Subak-Ke, Hwa Rang Warriors, Taek Kyon and some remote temple arts which were those responsible for teaching much of this to the prior when deeply researching the histories. Later in Korea's history you can see the Muye Dobo Tonji Appear. This wonderful text is a condensed version of the Chinese military text including not just the Chinese weapons and military training but also the Korean and Japanese influences. This once again shows its origins. I would like to note Sang H. Kim provided a beautiful translation of this text for all to view and it shall be listed in Founders text section as an ancient manual. This being said I will continue to break down some of the major points of Korea's main original arts. Traditionally they had the Hwa Rang warriors who were a select elite group of fighters who trained in the mountains and were taught by the monks of the time period. They spent there day's practicing martial arts. Music, poetry and any other fundamental arts that would expand their mind and push their skill were trained regularly. Over in the government end of these they had what was known as Royal Court martial arts. These master fighters were trained in the military arts and specialized in rope techniques and tie up skills. The average peasant practiced the once common sport amongst the wealthy and the military, the ancient art of Taek Kyon. This traditionally was a game between two people with combat scenario's often practiced by military in contest situations. Naturally these people would have taught their family members such arts and eventually wealthy aristocrats gave up on this art and left it with the people. Also like Japan, Korea had an even more elite group of individuals known as Salsa Warriors. They used similar tools and techniques as their Japanese counter parts the Ninja. As all countries in all time periods there is always a group of elite that work for espionage purpose. This being said it lays the basic history of where Korean martial arts should come from. Ironically very little of this survived. At the beginning of the 1900 AD Japan began to make their way with modern military into Korea and eventually Annexed the country. This brought strict rule to the general population with a Ban of Korean style fighting arts. Naturally Kara-Te and Judo along with Kendo, the modern

Japanese arts eventually sprung schools. Many Koreans even went to main land Japan just to learn these arts. There was in many Tae Kwon Do mythologies rumor of Taek Kyon masters hiding in such manners so that they could practice and keep skill up without being noticed. This would be the beginnings of three of the main splinters off the Japanese arts. We now call them Tang Soo Do, Tae Kwon Do and Hapkido. These arts were spawned out of this time period directly. For example the founder of Tang Soo Do in most stories of him is to be described as finding Gitchen Funakoshi's book in a railway library and teaching himself from a book. Other stories to his credit vary and sometimes do not include this version claiming he created the system and all the forms included in it. However this is unlikely since in the Japanese and Okinawan arts they actually have the author's names to these forms in which are identical to Shotokan in almost every way. The founder of Hapkido also learned Japanese style martial arts. He was a master of Aiki-Jitsu . Combining this with Korean martial arts skills mainly skills similar to Tae Kwon Do and Tang Soo Do he eventually developed this style which had off shoots such as Kuk Sool Won an art that claims to be the ancient Royal Court art, Hwa Rang Do a modern remake of the lost mountain warriors and even very minor systems like Dahn Moo Do which is a combined family art created from the modern day arts. This leads us to Tae Kwon Do. The original art which the military was impressed with due to a tile break performed by a great master known as Nam. In those days it was known as Odo Kwan a Korean military system taught to the troops. Historically this break impressed Korean government officials and General Choi took advantage of this to promote the art and promote himself by gaining the rank of general. Historically General Choi Hong Hi was a Korean who fled to main land Japan due to a bully he once feared. This led him to gain a black belt in Shotokan Kara-Te. Eventually after his service in the Japanese Military and by the end of the war he came back to Korea where he met Nam and another master known as Park. Nam was also a Kara-Te black belt and held a much higher rank than General Choi did for the time period. There is an old story of him where he was fighting during the Korean War and survived trench warfare using his skills by punching and kicking people to death to the point he fell weary and slept without realization on the corpses of those he killed. These three men created the system we call Tae Kwon Do. Nam and Park were the technical advisors when you truly research this art and General Choi was the spokes rep who got it to become famous. From the Malaysian period where they designed the forms or hyung, to the 1967 lesson with Mas Oyama these three continued to promote and refine this art into a lethal killing system. In the early years it was truly a devastating art which contained all the ranges of fighting needed to survive a real situation. They even once included 72 tactical points they taught the students as well as hand conditioning on Makiwara which General Choi demonstrates himself if you look into him a bit further. It should also be noted the founder of Hapkido used to tour with them on their world demo tours and would even perform his schools alongside them including his 20 cane specialty skills. This is why in some respects these two arts are considered sister arts and in some ways look identical except for the forms used in Tae Kwon Do. Somewhere in the 1960s/1970's General Choi unfortunately began to lose it according to some stories and eventually became branded a traitor after going to North Korea to demo his art. After

this he redesigned a new pattern Juche and dropped the hyung Kodang in place of the North Korean named set he also modified many of the other sets several times to the point top black belts began to drop out and go independent of him and the ITF. He eventually made it to Mississauga Canada. Park had his school set up in Toronto and quite popularly at the time. This is where General Choi set the head of the International Tae Kwon Do federation up until his move to Germany when extradition laws could of taken him away. Park continued to teach in Canada however and from my own experience has schools down town Toronto. Nam the man who performed the famous Tile Break however is reported to live in California and has nothing to do with the art as far as our research has shown to date. After this period it led to the development of the World Tae Kwon Do Federation and the development and use of two main hyung or as they refer to as Poomse. The first of this is the Pal Gwe system sometimes refered to as Chang Moo Kwan. This system had two developers from some historical points one of which was a Taek Kyon master who ended up disappearing over enemy lines during the war in Korea and the other was a Shotokan Black belt who teamed up. Eventually according to the story the later completed the set of patterns and left the last two forms to the system as the black belt patterns. However there is a more standard set of history that states in 1967 when Choi departed they needed to fill the gap and replace the ITF forms. In 1967 two sets of patterns were designed. The Pal Gwe system and the black belt poomse were these two sets. According to Richard Chun this is what occurred during this time period when a panel of Kwans got together and designed them to gradually train you rank by rank to a higher proficiency level. In 1972 however they decided it still looked too much like Karate and the older ways so they regrouped a panel of all the major Kwan's again and designed the Tae Guek patterns based more off the sparring tactics of the time shortening the stances and making many adjustments. This is also when they changed the pattern Koryo to what is taught in modern times. For a more detailed history of this occurance I would recommend reading the books a Tae Kwon Do a Killing Art as well as the book Richard Chun and Doug Cooke put out on Original Koryo. Relatively speaking after these time periods all of the more modern Korean martial arts are just remakes of the prior by splicing favoured items from one another or making "ancient" systems which usually occur to have a lot of Hapkido and Tae Kwon Do. A lot of these systems will try to splice weapons forms which are usually taken from Kuk Sool Won and ancient manuals which were previously mentioned in this text. In 1988 Tae Kwon do however did make it as an Olympic sport and in the 2000's became a medal winning sport however this is no longer a military style of Tae Kwon Do and is purely for competitive sparring purpose.

Although CCMAA accepts all Tae Kwon Do and Korean Martial Arts Hyung/Poomse/Tul the following is our list of our favoured sets between the ITF and WTF patterns.

ITF Hyung:

Choong Jang (Grand Master Gary Powell's preferred ITF Pattern)

Choi Yong (Grand Master Justin Powell's Preferred ITF Pattern)

Kodang (Both Grand Master Gary and Justin Powell's favoured ITF Pattern)

Yoo Shin (Grand Master Gary Powell's favoured ITF Pattern)

Tong Il (Grand Master Justin Powell's Favoured ITF Pattern)

Although there are many patterns in the ITF we feel that these sets contain the most technique without replications for black belt patterns. Also notable sets are Chung Moo and Kwang Gae for those who are becoming black belts and the form Hwa Rang which was rumoured to be created by Nam himself. We preserve all of the original sets in our curriculum for students to learn to preserve the historical version taught long ago.

Chon Ji, Tan Gun, To San, Won Hyo, Yul Kok, Cheon Gun, Toi Gye, Haw Rang, Chung Moo, Kwang Gae, Po-eun, Kae Bek, Eui Am, Choong Jang, Kodang, Sam il, Yoo Sin, Choi Yong, Yon-Gae, Ul Ji, Moon Moo, Sosan, SeJong, and Tong Il are the complete listing of the original ITF Patterns,

WTF Poomse:

Pal Gwe Sets (Grand Master Gary Powell favours these colour belt sets)

Original Koryo (Grand Master Gary and Justin Powell both favour this pattern as it is historical and unique)

Pyongwon (Grand Master Gary and Justin Powell both Enjoy this pattern)

Hansoo (Grand Master Gary Powell enjoys practicing this set as a higher level form)

Chonkwon (Grand Master Justin Powell enjoys practicing this set as a higher level Form)

Asides from these patterns the WTF does contain the Tae Guek sets which train people for close spaces and more sparring tactics. We preserve all of the WTF forms old or new in our system to preserve the advancement of the art.

Tae Guek 1-8, Pal Gwe 1-8, Koryo, Original Koryo, Kuemgang, Tae Bek, Pyongwon, Sip Jin, Jitae, Chonkwon, Hansoo, Ilyo are the listing of WTF Patterns.

**Founded by Grand Master Gary Powell**

**As Taught By Grand Master Justin Powell**

**All Content Is Owned By Central Canada Martial Arts Academy**

**If You Wish To Learn Powell's Personal Combat System Or Are Interested In Teaching  
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Please note that the above information is CCMAA personal view of the history explained and might vary from other schools and is not out to insult or cause conflict between schools but to give a general history to its own students. All Information explained is the oral traditions as taught and explained by Grand Master Gary Powell who requested this to be marked down for all his students to remember for generations to come.

Please note all references will be listed in recommended reading PDF We appreciate all information provided from any text we may have viewed over the last 30 to 45 years as well as oral traditions we have gained from interacting with other martial arts masters from around the world.