

# BRIDGNORTH TAE KWON-DO



## Pattern Meanings – A Closer Look

There are much more detailed histories and context behind the short pattern meanings that we learn for colour belt theory. Here is just a taster - there is a lot more information out there! Anyone studying for a Dan grade needs to be doing their own research and digging into this topic. Please speak to your Instructors at Bridgnorth Tae Kwon-Do if you would like recommendations on text books for Dan grades.

### **Chon Ji**

"Literally means Heaven and Earth. In the Orient it is interpreted as the creation of the world or the beginning of human history, therefore it is the initial pattern learnt by the beginner. The pattern consists of two similar parts, one representing the Heaven the other the Earth".

- It is said that Korea was founded at the point of the highest mountain on the border between North Korea and China (Mount Peaktu). Mount Peaktu is an extinct volcano which over time has filled with water and formed what may be the world's deepest volcanic lake. The lake is called Lake Chon (Heavenly Lake).

- Mount Peaktu is sacred in Korea because it is said to be where the 'Son of The Lord of Heaven' (Dan Gun!) descended to Earth.

- Lake Chon is said to be so clear that heaven appears to meet the earth.

### **Dan Gun**

"Dan Gun is named after the Holy Dan Gun, the legendary founder of Korea in the year 2333 BC".

- When Heaven and Earth were one and animals could talk, a god (Hwanin) sent his son to build a new country. The son, Hwang-Ung settled in what is now North Korea. This was in approximately 2333 BC.

- One day a tiger and a bear appeared in front of Hwang-Ung and asked to be changed into human form. Hwang-Ung agreed so long as the tiger and bear understood it would not be easy and it would take much patience. The animals agreed. Hwang-Ung gave the animals twenty garlic cloves and some mugworts. They were told to eat them, stay in a cave and pray for 100 days.

- After 20 days the tiger was so hungry, he left the cave in search of food.

- The bear waited the 100 days and began to lose its fur. Its rear feet began to change and at the end of the 100th day the bear turned into a beautiful human woman.

- Hwang-Ung married the woman and they had a son, called Dan Gun.

### **Do San**

"Do San is the pseudonym for the patriot Ahn Chang-Ho (1876 to 1938). The 24 movements in this pattern represent his entire life, which he devoted to furthering the education of Korea and its independence movement".

- Ahn Chang-Ho was one of the first Koreans to emigrate to America, passing Hawaii where he began to call himself Do San ("Island Mountain")

- He created the Korean National Association which was a respectable community group for Korean immigrants hoping for national independence.

- In 1906 Ahn returned home because he heard of the Japanese 'Protectorate Treaty' which gave the Japanese the right to occupy Korea. He created an underground independence movement, encouraging independence through education, business and culture.

- In 1908 he set up a school to provide Koreans with an education based on national spirit. At the same time the Japanese were trying to eradicate education for the Korean people, creating an illiterate slave nation.

- Ahn was later imprisoned and only released from prison due to ill health. He died in 1938, the year he was released.

### **Won Hyo**

"Won Hyo was the noted monk who introduced Buddhism to the Silla dynasty of Korea in the year 686 AD".

- Legend has it that Won-Hyo was born under a sala tree, which is significant because the sala tree is usually only found in legends of highly revered figures.

- He became a philosopher and poet.

- Most sources agree that Won-Hyo became a monk aged 20. It is not clear which teachers taught him; and sources differ as to how he became a monk. Some say he simply shaved his head and went to live in the mountains.

- Buddhism was not popular in Silla at the time.

- One of the most famous stories around Korean Buddhism concerns Won-Hyo's enlightenment. One evening as he was crossing the desert, Won-Hyo stopped at a small patch of green with trees and water, and he fell asleep. He woke in the night, very thirsty, and searched for water. It was pitch black. He found a cup on the ground, picked it up and drank from it. It was delicious, and he bowed in gratitude to Buddha. The next morning Won-Hyo woke and saw what he had believed to be a cup. It was actually a skull and what he thought was water, was in fact blood. Insects crawled inside the

skull. Blood and flesh were still attached. Won-Hyo vomited and as he did, his mind opened. He understood. The night before, without knowing what he was drinking, he found the blood delicious and refreshing. It was not the taste but the thought that had made him vomit. He said to himself, thinking makes good or bad, life or death. Without thinking there is no universe and no Buddha.

- Won-Hyo died in the year 686AD.

## **Yul Gok**

"Yul Gok is the pseudonym of the great philosopher and teacher Yi I (1536 to 1584). He was nicknamed the Confucious of Korea. The 38 movements of this pattern refer to his birthplace on the 38th degree latitude and the diagram represents scholar."

- Yi I was a child prodigy. He knew Chinese script by the age of three. He passed the civil service literary exam at the age of 13.

- At the age of 29 he passed a higher civil service exam, with full marks, and started government service.

- He took the pen name Yul Gok and studied Confucianism.

- He temporarily secluded himself when his mother died, when he was 36. Following his return to society three years later, he wrote a book called 'The Essentials of Confucianism' in 1576. This was considered to be a most valuable book, showing examples of a good Confucian life.

## **Joong Gun**

"Joong Gun is named after the patriot Ahn Joong Gun who assassinated Hiro Bumi Ito, the first Japanese governor-general of Korea, who played a leading part in the Korea-Japan merger. The 32 movements in this pattern represent Ahn Joong Gun's age when he was executed at Lui-Shung prison in 1910."

- Hiro Bumi Ito, one of Japan's leading elder statesmen, masterminded a plan to occupy and take over Korea. Ito pressured the Korean government into signing a Protectorate Treaty, which gave the Japanese the legal right to occupy Korea. Ito arrived in Korea in 1906 and ordered all foreign delegations in Korea to withdraw, leaving Korea at mercy. The government then passed laws to allow Korean land to be sold to the Japanese. Much of it was taken anyway.

- Korean people were incensed by this and a number of guerrilla groups were formed, but they were defeated by the Japanese army which was much larger.

- Ahn Joong Gun formed his own guerrilla movement with a force of around 300. They raided the border with Manchuria which lead to many Japanese deaths.

- He planned the assassination after being incensed by Japanese and Chinese agreements which exploited Korean land and resources. Ito was shot by Ahn Joong Gun as he stepped off a train. Joong Gun knew he would be tortured if he was captured. He was captured, imprisoned and tortured.

- Others in prison said that despite this treatment Joong Gun's spirit never broke. This symbolised his loyalty and dedication to the Korean people.

### **Toi Gye**

"Toi Gye is the pseudonym of the noticed scholar Yi Hwang (16th century), an authority on new-Confucianism. The 37 movements represent his birthplace on the 37th degree latitude and the diagram represents the scholar."

- Yi Hwang was a child prodigy.

- He worked for the government for his whole life, including 29 different positions.

- He built a private Confucian academy offering education in classics. Unfortunately he died before it opened, although it remains in use today.

- After his death Yi Hwang was posthumously promoted to the highest ministerial rank.

### **Hwa Rang**

"Hwa Rang is named after the Hwa Rang youth group that originated in the Silla dynasty in the early 7th century. The 29 movements refer to the 29th Infantry division commanded by General Choi in 1953 where Tae Kwon-Do developed into maturity."

- The Hwa-Rang trained to improve their moral principles and military skills. They climbed rugged mountains and swam in turbulent cold water to harden their bodies.

- The hand to hand combat was based on Buddhist principles - the blending of hard and soft, linear and circular techniques. The common art of foot fighting was adopted and transformed in the Hwa-Rang. They intensified it and added punches too. This new art was called Taek Kyon.

- The Hwa-Rang were the first group of trained warriors to adopt a spiritual approach to warfare. It was from these roots that the Samurai tradition was eventually born.

- The Hwa-Rang won very bloody battles where a large percentage of the Korean population were killed. This did bring unification of the three kingdoms, but at a cost.

### **Choong Moo**

"Choong Moo was the name given to the great admiral Yi Soon-Sin of the Yi dynasty. He was reported to have invented the first armoured battleship, the kobukson, in 1592, which is said to be the precursor to the modern day submarine. The pattern ends with a left-handed attack symbolising his regrettable death. He was never allowed to reach his full potential as he was forced to be loyal to the king."

- Yi, Soon Sin was appointed as naval commander at the age of 47, after rising through the ranks. It was at this time that he invented the kobukson or 'turtle ship' - a galley ship decked with iron plating for protection.

- Yi was a critical part of many battles, after Japanese occupation. In his first battle Yi led 80 Korean ships against 800 Japanese ships. By the end of the day Yi had set 26 Japanese ships on fire and forced the rest to flee. As they did so, he sank more.

- Yi was considered courageous and a tactical genius. He was brave and once, when shot in the shoulder, he continued in battle without reacting to the bullet. When the battle was over he revealed his injury and demanded the bullet be removed.

- Yi led Korean to victory in what is considered the most important naval battles in history. His energy and patriotism were such that many men worked without pay.

- A Japanese spy befriended the Korean General, and convinced him that the Japanese were going to attack Korea with a huge fleet. He convinced the General to send Yi to lie in wait, but Yi refused as he knew the area and he knew it was too dangerous. Yi was arrested for refusing to obey orders. He was taken to Seoul in chains, beaten and tortured. He was spared the death penalty only because of his supporters. He was demoted to common foot soldier.

- With Yi out of the way, the Japanese attacked Korea with 140,000 men and thousands of ships. Admiral Yi's replacement led Korea to a humiliating defeat.

- Despite his treatment Yi was reinstated and beat 133 Japanese ships, using only 12 of his own. He spread them out under the shadow of a mountain, firing constantly to give the impression of a much larger fleet. The next day when the enemy fleet arrived, Yi sailed directly at them and sank 30 Japanese ships. The Japanese commander was killed and the remaining fleet fled in panic.

- Yi was soon in charge of strategy. He allowed the weak Chinese commander Admiral Chil Lin to take the credit. Yi did not care for glory so long as the enemy was destroyed. China appeared to be more successful and in returned they helped Korea with much needed aid.

- Yi was killed by a stray bullet in November 1598. He commanded that his body be covered with a shield so that his enemies could not see that he had fallen. He ordered his son not to weep for him, and to finish the enemy.

## **Kwang-Gae**

"Kwang-Gae is named after the famous Kwang Gae Toh Wang, the 19th King of the Koguryo dynasty, who reclaimed all of the lost territories and the greater part of Manchuria. The diagram represents expansion and recovery of lost territory. The 39 movements refer to the first two figures of the year 391 AD when he first came to the throne.

- During his reign Kwang-Gae conquered 1400 villages and 65 walled cities.

- He built 9 Buddhist temples.

- His accomplishments are noted on a temple in southern Manchuria.

### **Po Eun**

"Po Eun is the pseudonym of the loyal subject Chong-Mong Chu (1400) who was a famous poet and whose poem 'I would not serve a second master though I might be crucified a thousand times' is known to every Korean. He was also a pioneer in the field of physics. The diagram represents his unbending loyalty to his king and country towards the end of the Koryo dynasty."

- At the age of 23 Chong-Mong Chu took three civil service exams and gained the highest marks possible. He became an instructor in Neo-Confucianism whilst holding a government position. The king had great confidence in his judgment and knowledge; so Chong-Mong Chu was employed as a diplomat to the king.

- General Yi, Sung-Gae had grown in power during the late 1300s. Many of Chong-Mong Chu's contemporaries plotted to dethrone the king (King U) and replace him with General Yi.

- General Yi was ordered to use his armies to push the Ming armies out of the Korean peninsula. However, he knew the force of the Ming army. Knowing he had support from high-ranking officials, Yi protected his army by disobeying orders - instead he returned to the capital (Kaesong) and secured control of the government.

- Yi marched into the capital and defeated the forces loyal to the king. He did not take the throne immediately. Meanwhile the king and his family were sent into exile, where they would later be secretly murdered.

- Chong-Mong Chu remained faithful to the king, and he led the opposition to Yi. Yi threw a party for Chong-Mong Chu, knowing he was a revered figure but also an obstacle. On his way home after the party, Chong was murdered by five men on a bridge. The bridge is now a national monument. He was honoured 125 years after his death.

### **Ge Baek**

"Ge Baek is named after the General Ge Baek, a great general in the Baek Je dynasty (660AD). The pattern represents his severe and strict military discipline."

- Little is known about the life of Ge Baek.

- In 660 Silla and the Chinese invaded Paekche. Ge-Baek used a force of 5000 soldiers to meet the battle. He knew at the outset that his army was outnumbered and his efforts would be futile, but nonetheless he defended his country. Before going into battle he killed his wife and family to prevent them from falling into enemy hands; and so that he would not be distracted or falter in battle.

- Ge Baek's army was outnumbered ten to one and was completely destroyed.