



Episode 355 – Taekkyeon | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hello thanks for coming by, welcome! whistlekick martial arts radio 355 today were talking about the Korean martial art Taekkyeon. My name is Jeremy, I'm your host for the show, the founder at whistlekick. I love martial arts, that's really what it comes down to, I've been training my whole life and I believe that martial arts makes people better so that's what whistlekick is all about, growing the martial arts by bringing new people in and keeping people in it. Anything that does one of those two things is part of our business. Really something that we'll consider doing so thank you for the opportunity to do that. If you want to check out what we make you can find that stuff at whistlekick.com use the code `podcast15`, save 15%. If you want to show notes including a transcript of this and honestly we're transcribing every episode going back, whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. Share this or another episode with your friends help us grow this. We're attracting bigger and bigger guest, the bigger the show is, the bigger the guest we get. If there's some dream guest you want to see on the show interviewed, the best way to help us get there is to help the show grow. So thank you for everyone who has helped thus far and those of you who will continue to help or help in the future.

Let's talk about Taekkyeon. Taekkyeon which let's face it, it's written in Korean so there's a bunch of different ways we can spell it but they all pronounce the same. Taekkyeon is a martial art from Korea it's known for its fluid in dance-like movements, it employs poombagi or stepping on triangles footwork, the aim is to trip an opponent without causing a ton of damage, it's a game. If you are familiar with capoeira and it is similar. Taekkyeon techniques utilize both hands and feet simultaneously to take down an



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opponent however, it's not really effective as a ground fighting system. The techniques focus on strikes that include kicking and punching, and arm strikes. To complement these strike techniques Taekkyeon also incorporates throws and takedowns, grappling techniques like in Judo. The exact period of Taekkyeon's origin is unknown but their various sources proving its existence at least a few hundred years ago. Although there is some speculation might be a few thousand years old. I'll give you some overviews of a few accounts of the proof that we have Taekkyeon's existence in the past. Taekkyeon was mentioned in an old book called Jaemulbo also called Manmulbo which was authored by Lee Sung Ji in the late 1700s. Taekkyeon is depicted in a painting by Hyesan Yu Suk called the dae kwai do from 1850 it shows matches between two people using Ssirium which is Korean wrestling on the top of painting and then below is Taekkyeon. And there's some interesting cultural stuff showing that different people of different cultures were spectating at this event it was likely at a fair and I'm not gonna dig into all this stuff to some of it just doesn't really translate as well reading it, so this is where you might want to check out the transcript whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. In 1895 a book called Korean games with notes on the corresponding games of china and japan terrible title right? Mentions Taekkyeon as a living martial art, a current martial art. A lot of the credit for the popularity at that point goes to Song Duk-ki to key lived from 1893 to 1987, man, there's a missed opportunity not that long ago. Song was taken on master who studied under gentleman named Lim Ho and he co-authored a book called the traditional martial art Taekkyeon and in the book he says "it cannot be said for sure when and how Taekkyeon and came into existence but until the end of the Korean kingdom, certain people did take them together." Taekkyeon as mentioned in a book written by Choe Yeong-nyeon in 1921 called Haedong Jukji and it was written as something that doesn't make sense to read to represent Taekkyeon and it translates to push shoulder. The writing system using the book was Edu and that represents the Korean language using hanjab, han the chinese characters. Taekkyeon however does not translate to push the shoulder even so, the arm techniques in Taekkyeon come from the shoulder and opponents can be pushed and pulled in many ways via the shoulder movements. The book also contains a poem about Taekkyeon that describes it as flying leg technique.

When Korea was invaded by japan in 1910, the practice of taking in all other martial arts styles was prohibited. The rising popularity of neo-Confucianism was also great factor from pretty much obfuscating Taekkyeon, getting people to forget it. And when the Japanese occupation ended in 1945 Taekkyeon was revived through in part the work of Song Duk-ki of the key who was secretly practicing the art during those times. Song particularly practiced the Widae, the high village style of Taekkyeon. On June 1,1983 song duk-ki was certified by the ministry of education of south Korea as [00:05:29.06] or living national treasure the same time when Taekkyeon classified as an important intangible cultural asset number 76 by the Korean government. As of this writing Taekkyeon remains the only martial art that receive such classification, interesting. Song Duk-ki key was strong and healthy even at an old age, at 89 years old he still taught students such as Master Doki Hyun and he only had a small house in lived alone because wife died and they had no children. He ultimately died in 1987 at the age of 94. Taekkyeon is recognized by UNESCO in November 2011 including in its intangible cultural heritage list.



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Taekkyeon is the first martial art to be placed on that list. Taekkyeon is distinguished by its dance-like movements where the fighter changes stance from left to right by stepping forward and backwards while the arms are on guard the techniques utilize hands and legs execute joint locks and throws head butts are also included primarily the techniques in techie owner divided into three categories: pum baugi [00:06:36.07] to step the pum, is the dancelike footwork that's executed in the triangle manner and is required to be used in competitions. [00:06:47.18] is using the hands and arms to defend yourself and to grab the opponent by the neck. [00:06:53.28] is a collection of foot techniques the kicks, that involve not just kicking the tripping and bringing opponents to the ground and creative and fun. All the movements and taking on are considered natural to human body. Including the low, the medium, the high kicks and each of these requires the entire body to be used. The gum sil or [00:07:15.21] jil movement, is the bending and stretching of the knees that is done constantly which gives Taekkyeon its distinct characteristic. Knee bending is never done abruptly but ungracefully together with arm motions. In competition the techniques that can be used are limited to grappling and kicking. Head butts and arm strikes especially those that are dangerous or allowed points are earned when the opponent is thrown to the ground, pushed out of the ring or kicked in the head that is without intentionally causing an injury. For example kicks to the head are usually fatal, I'm gonna say no on that one but I'm going off the script here, we've pulled a lot of information from a lot of places, but players do not execute it in full force. Moreover, players do not deliver heavy body blows against each other unlike boxing or Muay Thai Matches are usually decided when a player scores two points first. In an interview with Taekkyeon master Do ki-hyun, he explained the nature of martial arts especially Taekkyeon and here's a summary of some of what he said: the characteristics of martial arts are the same but the characteristics of the country where they originated for example, the way the chinese designed the roofs is very technical and graceful. This is also evident in operas where actors have colorful faces and clothes and their movements are very graceful. Similarly, the chinese martial arts are technical and graceful. In the case of the Japanese culture it can we notice that their style is very strong and quick. Japanese roofs for example very straight and simple unlike the chinese. The Japanese like the colors white and black the chinese are very colorful the Japanese are also simple and very systematic. The Korean culture on the other hand sits in between that of china and japan. While, it is also true geographically the green roofs are designed somewhere in the middle with a slight curve. Aside from that, the Korean culture is strongly influenced by nature and the ancient times of Korea, people had many gods. They have gods for almost every object that they saw nature. Trees, water, rocks this is the reason why Korean martial arts very natural and comfortable it can be seen and taken on as one of the traditional martial arts from a very long time ago. The masters the art also passed on the original techniques to later generations changing almost nothing from the art. The greatest development of tycoon is as I already mentioned when was classified as an important intangible cultural asset number 76 by the Korean government in '83 together with the recognition of Grand Master Sung Duk-ki as a living national treasure, and the fact that UNESCO did something similar honesty is kind of mind blowing.



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There are a few authorized taking on organizations the Korea traditional Taekkyeon association, the Korea Taekkyeon federation, the [00:10:05.06] Taekkyeon association and the world wide Taekkyeon organization. Taekkyeon's been established in a bunch of different countries and to be honest, I've got a feeling that it's growing. As we've expanded the internet we've expanded our love of different and older things. If it wasn't for the internet historical European martial arts would be anywhere near as popular as they are now. But [00:10:34.13] growing rapidly and it's good stuff. And of course you know me, I love all martial arts of the fact that people are bringing Taekkyeon back just makes me excited and that's what we got on Taekkyeon, if you know the history of tae kwon do, you know that Taekkyeon is an important piece tae kwon do. So I want to thank you for listening. If you want to check out the show notes, the transcript, all kinds of other cool stuff find out at whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. This is episode 355, if you head on over to whistlekick.com, you can sign up for the newsletter you can buy things, support the show, support our efforts at whistlekick, and use the code `podcast15` to save 15%. Email me if you want, jeremy@whistlekick.com or follow whistlekick on social media. We are @whistlekick on YouTube, Instagram, Facebook and twitter that's all I got for you today, until next time train hard smile and have a great day.