

Kong Sang Koon Hyung

Kong Sang Koon Hyung is one of the most well-known and favorite hyungs in the martial arts community. It is practiced among Korean, Japanese, and Okinawan martial arts. Here we will examine the history of the hyung from its creation to its inception into the Moo Duk Kwan curriculum.

History

Kong Sang Koon was named after a Chinese military man, who was also an expert in So Rim Kwon Bup (Shaolin Chuan Fa). Kong Sang Koon, also known as Kushanku or Kwang Shang Fu, was sent on an envoy to Okinawa in 1756 during the Ming Dynasty. He settled there for about six years near the current city of Naha.

During his stay in Okinawa, Kong Sang Koon chose a disciple named “Tode” Sakugawa (佐久川寛賀 – 1733-1815). Sakugawa was also a martial art student of Takahara Peichin. After studying with Kong Sang Koon for six years, Sakugawa compiled what he had been taught into a hyung, naming it after his master, Kong Sang Koon. Though the major influence of the hyung is based on the teachings of Kong Sang Koon, it is likely that there are also elements of the teachings of Takahara Peichin as well.

Sakugawa’s martial posterity runs through Mr. Idos (Master Yasutsune “Ankoh” Itosu), who is credited with creating the Pyong Ahn forms or also known as Pyung Hwa. The Pyong Ahn forms, especially Pyong Ahn Sa Dan, was influenced by Kong Sang Koon Hyung. Many sequences are found in both Kong Sang Koon Hyung and Pyong Ahn Sa Dan.

Kong Sang Koon Hyung was adopted into the Moo Duk Kwan curriculum in its early years when Kwan Jang Nim Hwang Kee decided to integrate Tang Soo Do (Korean Karate) into his Hwa Soo Do system.

Meaning and Characteristics

As a part of the Moo Duk Kwan curriculum, Kong Sang Koon Hyung evolved according to the laws of Ryu Pa into a hyung that is unique to Soo Bahk Do practitioners. It is important for Soo Bahk Do practitioners to understand the history behind Kong Sang Koon in order to have a better understanding of its characteristics.

For example, the meaning of the term “Kong Sang Koon” could be “to view the sky.” This would explain the beginning movements of the hyung and why Kwan Jang Nim Hwang Kee decided to correlate Kong Sang Koon Hyung with the eagle. The eagle is not only in the sky, but has excellent vision. By “viewing the sky” and examining the eagle, one can get a better understanding of the characteristics and energy of Kong Sang Koon Hyung.

It has been said that Kong Sang Koon Hyung was designed to be done at night, in a large field, and with multiple attackers. It uses many spontaneous and deceptive techniques to gain a dominant position against a mob. It consists of 67 movements varying from techniques on the ground, in the

air, and everywhere in between. Much like the eagle, the form requires agility to be able to move and attack from earth to sky.

Since its creator was well trained in Kwan Bup, Kong Sang Koon Hyung is influenced by the Ha Nam area of China and is a Weh Ga Ryu hyung. The form should be performed with quick, alert, and spontaneous movements. There should also be a presence of power and majesty when performing the hyung, while maintaining grace and beauty.

Perhaps the best way to characterize Kong Sang Koon Hyung is with its opening move. Both hands lift up towards the sky in an upward arc, eyes gazing up to the night sky. The hands form a symbolic “moon-shape” between the sky and earth. Then swiftly, the hands separate in a quick, spontaneous movement. The hands then slowly trace a perfect circle down to your dan jun. Now the true spirit of Kong Sang Koon Hyung can be demonstrated.

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