

Way of the Hwa-Rang

By Master Matt Survis

The Hwarang were originally young male aristocrats in Korea during the Silla Dynasty, over two thousand years ago. The term “Hwa Rang” means flowering knight, or flowering warrior. Historians do not agree on the actual accounts of this unique class of people, but the spirit of what was started long ago, has today evolved in to Hwarang Do, the way of the flowering warrior.

The term Hwarang Do was coined by Grandmaster Dr. Joo Bang Lee in 1960. There are four sections or parts to the Hwarangdo Musool (martial skills) system; 1)Naekong, internal (Ki) power 2) Wae Kong, external power, 3) Mugi Kong, weapons, and 4) Shin Kong, mental power. In addition Hwarangdo teaches 6 categories of healing arts 1) Ji Ap Sool (acupressure), 2)Chim Gu Sool (acupuncture), 3)Yak Bang Bop (herbal medicine), 4)Jup Gol Sool (bone setting), 5)Hwal bop (Special Aids), 6)and Ki Ryuk Sool (Ki Power healing). The Hwarang code of ethics or “Hwarang Oh Kae” is an integral part of this martial art. The three principles of Hwarangdo, Yu (water), Won (circle), Wah (Harmony) display the “Um and Yang” of the universe, from which all things flow. Dr. Lee also incorporated the “Nine Teaching Moralities” or “Kyohoon” in to Hwarangdo. They are 1) Humanity 2) Justice 3) Courtesy 4) Wisdom 5) Trust 6) Goodness 7) Virtue 8) Loyalty 9) and Courage. Hwarangdo training emphasizes on concentration, patience, endurance, sincerity in practice, speed, conservation of energy, respect and obedience, and humility.

All of the above is the framework for a very complete, traditional, effective, and unique martial art. Students of Hwarangdo learn to implement all of these aspects in to their daily lives, thus living the true meaning of Hwarang “DO” or the way of the flowering warrior. In ancient times, the Hwarang helped to unite a nation and laid the ground work for what today brings Musah from all over the world together in a common cause of peace through discipline and dedication to something greater than themselves. Relatively few schools teach Hwarangdo, for it is not for everyone. For those who do train and dedicate themselves to the study and use of the Hwarangdo principles, the rewards are limitless.

KI DO!