
**Nomination form
International Memory of the World Register**

Mu Ye Do Bo Tong Ji (武藝圖譜通志, Comprehensive Illustrated Manual of Martial arts)

ID Code 2016-88

1.0 Summary (max 200 words)

Taekwon-do, the Korean martial arts of empty-handed self-defence which is widely introduced to the world, was originated from the traditional martial arts that had been created and developed by Koreans themselves.

Korean traditional martial arts were created during the period of Kojoson, the first ancient country founded in the early 30th century B.C by Tangun.

Koguryo dynasty (277B.C~A.D.668) was the strongest country in the middle Korean history which encouraged traditional martial arts like horse riding and archery inherited from the olden times.

The Korean martial arts gave some influence on the development of neighbouring countries' with its long history and superiority.

Mu Ye Do Bo Tong Ji, printed on April, 1790, is a comprehensive martial arts book that explains, with respective illustrations, the Korean traditional martial arts which became the origin of Taekwon-do, the international martial arts of today.

Its name "Mu Ye Do Bo Tong Ji" means a manual of martial arts with illustrations.

The books were compiled by the order of King Jongjo (1777-1800), the 22nd King of Korean Feudal dynasty and were also prefaced by him.

They explain various kinds of military arts such as fencing, spearmanship, cudgelling, horse riding and boxing with respective illustrations.

Most of the fighting methods in the books are based on the Korean traditional martial arts but they are also combined with Chinese and Japanese which constitutes the basis of the East Asian martial arts.

The books have significance in studying the Korean traditional martial arts, the root of Taekwon-do but also East Asian martial arts which is proud of its superiority as the cradle of martial arts in the world.

2.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

Grand People's Study House (National Library of DPR Korea)

2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

Custodian

2.3 Contact person(s) (to provide information on nomination)

Kim Yong Ae, Section chief, International Exchange, Grand People's Study

House

2.4 Contact details

Name; Kim Yong Ae

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3.0 Identity and description of the documentary heritage

3.1 Name and identification details of the items being nominated

“Mu Ye Do Bo Tong Ji” preserved in the Grand People’s Study House is a collection of comprehensive martial arts books which summarizes precious traditional military art inherited in Korea and in East Asia.

The books were designated as a national treasure when they were first printed in 1790 since it was compiled by the order of the King who personally prefaced it.

This wood block printed book has 4 volumes altogether where comprehensive martial arts movements such as fencing, boxing, spearmanship and cudgelling are described. It has clear illustrations of every movement of not only Korean traditional martial arts but also those of neighbouring countries.

3.4 History/provenance

The nominated item, printed on April, 1790, is a kind of military book of Korean feudal dynasty.

It was compiled by combining the two former military books, “Mu Ye Je Bo” and “Mu Gi Sin Sik”. The “Mu Ye Je Bo” had been written in 1598 by Han Gyo, a military officer of Hunlyon Dokam (Royal military Training Agency) who compiled the book into 6 fighting systems. His book was revised into “Mu Gi Sin Sik” published in 1759 by supplementing 12 additional fighting methods. Fighting skills on horse were added to those two former books to form a comprehensive martial arts book and it was called “Mu Ye Do Bo Tong Ji”.

At first, only limited copies were printed in Gyosoguan, the national publishing house at that time and they were kept in a very few places: one in Gyujanggak, the central library; some in national and local archives like Manisan Archive, the national archive at that time (where national secret records like the annals of the Choson Dynasty were kept), and the rest were sent to the local military camps.

In 1908, the Japanese who took over Korea as a colony inhibited all militarism among Koreans such as martial arts competitions, while trying to remove all documents and records related to traditional military. They took a copy of “Mu Ye Do Bo Tong Ji” to their mainland and tried to remove other copies remaining in Korea.

The nominated item preserved in the Grand People’s Study House is the one donated by a person who is thought to be a son of a man who worked for the royal library or one of military camps. He sent the books to the state library (at that time) in 1952 just after the government’s appeal to look for and preserve national cultural heritages.

4.0 Legal information

4.1 Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)

Name: Grand People's Study House Address: Jungsong Dong, Central District, Pyongyang, DPR Korea

Telephone: (8502)18111-341-8 Facsimile: (8502)381-4427/381-21472 Email: nsj@star-co.net.kp

4.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details if different from the owner)

Name Address

Telephone Facsimile Email

4.3 Legal status

The Grand People's Study House has the legal and administrative responsibility for the preservation of the nominating documentary heritage.

4.4 Accessibility

The nominated item is preserved and can be accessed in the national old books stockroom of the GPSH under the strict rules.

For the long term preservation of the original copy and further access, the GPSH has a plan to create a digital copy of it while making some restrictions on using the original copy.

4.5 Copyright status

Its copyright is held by the Grand People's Study House, the national library of DPR Korea

5.0 Assessment against the selection criteria

5.1 Authenticity.

"Mu Ye Do Bo Tong Ji" was donated after the Korean War by a person who is thought to be a son of a man who worked for the royal library or one of military camps where it had been kept before.

The book has a signature of the donator, Kim Gon Ho with his seal and the date of donation as "30/12/1952".

He sent this book to the State Library, the origin of the Grand People's Study House.

The books had been kept and served under the strict rules in the specialised old rare books collection as it was proved to be the original by the experts at the time of the donation. And while preparing a nomination for MOW Asia & Pacific Register, its authenticity was re-studied and re-proved by the experts from the Research Institute of

5.2 World significance

Korean traditional martial arts was created from the ancient country founded in the early 30th century B.C and it developed its main structure and tradition during the period of Koguryo dynasty (277B.C~A.D.668), the strongest country in the middle Korean history.

Koguryo's martial arts had some influence on the neighbouring countries.

The Koreans' archery, swordsmanship and spearing were introduced to Japan and their fighting skills on horseback played important role in the development of Japanese horse riding skills. In 1635, the Japanese government asked Korea to send some people who are good at skills on horseback, and some Koreans were sent to Japan on several occasions. The Koreans made performance in Tsushima and Edo (Tokyo) catching the Japanese's admiration, and a Japanese martial arts man named "Shaiddo" created similar horse riding skills by imitating the Koreans'("日韓交通史" (History of Japanese-Korean exchange) Chapter 9;)

During the period of Koryo and Ri dynasty (918-1910), Koreans often participated in the international martial arts competition participated by other countries like China, where they displayed their excellent skills.

Taekwondo, one of the world excellent martial arts, was originated from Subak and Taekgyon, the traditional martial arts created during Koguryo dynasty.

The International Taekwon-do Federation (ITF), established on March 22nd, 1966, has 132 national members now and has been organizing regular championships once two years since 1974.

"Mu Ye Do Bo Tong Ji" is an old military arts book which explains Korean traditional martial arts like Korean boxing(the art of hand-to-hand fight), the historical root of Taekwon-do which has been introduced into more than 130 countries.

The book not only covered the Korean traditional martial arts but also had clear explanation and illustration of neighbouring countries' like China and Japan.

It has significance in studying the Korean traditional martial art, the root of Taekwon-do and also east Asian martial art which prides itself for its long history and superiority as the cradle of martial art.

The wood block printed book also holds significance in artistic aspect.

All the illustrations in the book were made by Kim Hong Do(1760~?), a famous realistic artist of Korean feudal dynasty. The pictures have detailed explanation of every movement with vivid expression of a man and his figure on a horse, even the hairs on horse's hoof. Some pictures, indeed, look like works of art.

5.3 Comparative criteria:

1 Time

"MuYeDoBoTongJi" was a very completed military manual at that time.

Pictures of all sorts of weapons and various fighting methods using those weapons were well printed from wood engraving. All pictures were very vivid in every aspect.

Especially, the illustrations of some fighting methods on horses look like a work of art, in which the detailed movements of a man on horseback and the movements of a horse are well described. Likewise, every movement of soldiers on land, their hands

and foot, and even their face expressions were well depicted.

Few old books have such illustrations and this is a good example which shows the Korean's printing technology developed at that time.

2 Place

The book integrated all Korean traditional fighting methods created from ancient country, developed and completed during the middle ages.

Most of the hand-to-hand fight methods in the book are the same or similar to Taekwondo which is widely introduced to Koreans and the world people today.

Therefore, the book provides evidence that Korea has a long history of martial arts.

3 People

The book was compiled by the order of 22nd King of Korean feudal dynasty and also prefaced by him, and all illustrations were made by Kim Hong Do, a world famous artist.

5 Form and style

The important characteristic of this book is that it has clear illustrations of all respective movements.

A movement is explained with several detailed pictures so that anyone can reproduce the movement by seeing the illustrations as if a musician can play at sight.

6 Social/ spiritual/ community significance:

The book has significance in studying the historical root of Taekwon-do and the East Asian martial arts.

6.0 Contextual information

6.1 Rarity

Mu Ye Do Bo Tong Ji is a book which a king was personally involved in its publication. Although it has been edited and reprinted several times after its first print, this nominating copy is the earliest and the best preserved version.

6.2 Integrity

There are no missing pages or parts in the books.

GPSH has a whole collection of the original books.
