

History of Martial Arts

Some things in the world, which are sort after by many, are often vague with its information or not easily found. One such subject is the history of martial arts. The origin of martial arts has been an intriguing matter and a lot has been said and discussed about it by far. The most popular of beliefs and facts known are spilled over here in brief for the soul of the readers.

Originating in Asia, Martial arts is a collective term for various types of self defense or fighting arts. The prominent styles prevalent and practiced extensively today have been a source from China, Japan, and Korea, among which Japan was most influential in spreading the style among the western counterparts.

Many of the Japanese emigrants who emigrated to Europe and the United States to seek work towards the end of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th Century, brought with them jujitsu and judo. The West became fascinated by these fighting methods which enabled a single or weaker person to combat with mightier or multiple attackers. Before World War II, only a small number of people in the West were proficient in this art. In 1945, after the war, many of the western armed forces occupying Japan started studying martial arts. On returning, besides judo and jujitsu, these servicemen brought with them the techniques of karate, aikido, and kendo. After the end of the Korean war in 1953, U S soldiers stationed in Korea and studied the karate techniques such as tae kwon do and t'ang-su do which broadened their horizon. Chinese techniques of martial arts, such as Kung-Fu systems as Shaolin-chuan , praying mantis, and tai-chi chuan, which had maintained a level of secrecy till then were exposed in 1960's after the relaxation of the U.S. immigration quotas which bought in large number of Chinese immigrants efficient in these styles.

It is also believed that what we know today as oriental martial arts have its roots in India since the yoga and the breathing techniques that originated in India have great similarities between those and many other modern martial arts too. Evolution of karate is dated back to 5th and 6th Centuries BC when Indian Zen Buddhist monk Bodhidharma known as Da Mo or Ta Mo in Chinese and Bodai Daruma or Daruma in Japan wrote two classic books namely Yi Jin Jing (Muscle/ Tendon Changing Classic) and Xi Sui Jin (Marrow /Brain Washing). Bodhidharama's name stands out amongst the entire Buddhist enlightened people second only to Gautama Buddha. Arriving at the Song mountain the home of the Shao Lin Monastery , Bodhidharma saw that the priests there were weak and sickly, so he shut himself away to ponder the problem. The books are the result of nine years of self seclusion and meditation which taught the priests how to build their IQ to supernatural levels and use it to improve health and strengthen their physical body. When these exercises were integrated into martial arts forms, it increased the effectiveness of their martial arts techniques.

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