



PYONG AHN HYUNG

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HISTORY

The **Pyung Ahn Hyungs** originated in China and exemplify the southern regional style (**Nam-Pa**). They were created by a Chinese military leader named **Jeh Nam (Ztu – Nan)** and were once known as the **Jeh Nam Hyungs** till late 1800.

At some point, these Hyungs were brought to Okinawa from the mainland, and about 1887, master Edos of Okinaa rearranged them into five sets of Hyungs. Shortly thereafter, they became known as the **Pyung Ahn Hyungs** (He`An in the Okinawan dialet), or Forms of Peaceful Confidence.

MEANING

The late Kwan Jang Nim, **Hwang Kee**, made the turtle the symbol of the Pyung-Ahn Hyungs. He also presented the Hyungs to reflect Moo Duk Kwan style in 1945. The turtle bears a special significance in Korea culture comparable

to that of the dragon in China. Throughout Korea, in gardens and temples especially, one sees turtle sculptures dating from historical times to the present. Its head represents the earth, its claw, the heavens, and its body, the water. As the intermediary between heaven and earth, water also represents humanity. These elements are also the three powers of the universe: **Chun, Ji** and **Inn**. Uniting these powers into the living whole, the turtle embodies **longevity**.

Wholeness is essential to the Pyung Ahn Hyungs, as it is the peaceful confidence for which they are named. In Soo Bahk Do, we find this wholeness in the interaction between Um and

Yang, an essential feature of **Ki**, or **vital life**. In Korean, the name for this interaction is **O-Heang**. The relation between **Um** and **Yang** is dynamic: **O-Heang** flows from the union of Um and Yang. Since Um and Yang also represent the earthy and heavenly aspects of **Ki (life)**, we can summarize the relationships between the turtle symbol, the elements, and three aspects of **Ki** in the chart in Table 1.

Our Moo-Do culture, like Pyung Ahn Hyungs embrace the **absolute integrity of nature** in all its aspects as the basis for human morality. The late Kwan Jang Nim Hwang Kee always reminded us to connect with the **great nature**. We can see how he valued the **Shim-Kong** aspects (**Duk**) on our art of **Soo Bahk Do**.

Turtle	Elements	Ki
Head	Earth	Um
Body	Soo (Water, humanity)	O-Heang
Claws	Heaven	Yang

Table 1

PURPOSE

The Pyung Ahn Hyungs have as their purpose the cultivation of harmony between **Um** and **Yang**, earth and heaven, in those who perform them. This entails more than knowledge of the physical movements involved. Physical techniques must be complemented by spiritual wisdom (Duk or Ma-Um), just as Um is balanced with Yang and earth with heaven, if we are to find peaceful confidence in practicing the forms. The goal of the Pyung Ahn Hyungs is precisely this integration of contrasting force-um and yang, earth and heaven, body and spirit-into a harmonious whole.



Many monuments in Korea use the Turtle as the base because of its cultural and philosophical significance. Figure 1