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Developing Mastery: Korean Codes for Culture

by

Christopher Peter Barr, B.A. Hon.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Masters in Arts

Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
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submitted by Christopher Peter Barr B.A. Hon.

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

Chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Thesis Supervisor

Carleton University
April 22/2002

Abstract: As a result of the violent and materially destructive history of the Korean peninsula, Koreans have come to perceive that there has been a distortion of Korean traditional identity. This study is an examination of the Korean traditional martial art of Haidong Gumdo as a case study of a Revitalization Process. This examination of Haidong Gumdo describes a symbolic process whereby developing mastery in Haidong Gumdo may facilitate shifts in personal world-view and experience that Koreans believe reflect traditional cultural themes. This research will contribute to our understanding of the function of transformation of the initiates experience resulting from participation in rites of passage that are an essential part of Korean martial arts pedagogy.

Developing Mastery

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Chapter 1

Developing Mastery

Within the discipline of Anthropology there is a strong tendency for the valuation of cultural authenticity. We often lament the decline of traditional systems and the sense of identity that they provide to the people who claim membership. As anthropologists, we examine ways in which those people maintain such systems in the face of overwhelming external cultural influences. Within an increasingly integrated global economy, traditional systems are exposed to such influences. With the concepts of “identity” and “traditional” being contested territory many member cultures we study seek a strategy by whereby reclamation of such territory can be achieved. Martial artists understand that traditional martial arts systems provide a vehicle for what they are taught are connections to traditional culture. Through participation in a traditional martial arts system, they believe, a practitioner has the opportunity to connect both conceptually and viscerally with the traditional themes encoded in an expression of culture.

My decision to venture into a discussion of the Korean interest in the preservation traditional culture was inspired in me during my stay in Korea (1996-1999). Almost immediately upon my arrival I became aware of an extreme reverence for “traditional identity”. Continuously I found the concept of tradition included in conversations with my Korean hosts. Further, this idea was not limited to conversations but I found to be reflected integrally in the way they approach their surroundings. Observations that I was

able to make came from a variety of interconnected sources and in thus support each other. Input from my contacts within the World Haidong Gumdo Federation, both in Korea and Canada has been invaluable. I was hesitant to rely solely on any single source. I always sought confirmation from other areas. Because I was a teacher within the Korean public and private school systems, I was able to interact with educators and students, at great length. Informants often introduced the idea of 'tradition' to be predominant in our discussions. One co-worker commented that she envied the fact that I had some success in a Korean traditional activity as if it gave me substance or credibility in Korean terms.

Reverence for 'traditional identity', is integral to Confucian concepts and is very important to most Koreans. An example of this can be found in the family record of lineage that many Korean families maintain. The Han Chinese, as we will discuss later, who introduced Confucianism after their capture of P'yongyang in 108BC until the beginning of the Three Kingdoms period in 35BC, also revived the practice of maintaining a detailed record of lineage (Henthorn 1971, Ha 1972, Chung 1979, Maliszewski 1992). Later, I will discuss how Confucianism began a long tradition in Korea. Important to Confucianism are concepts of filial piety and loyalty, as I will also discuss later. The Confucian practice of maintaining a family record of lineage traces family ancestry along many generations (Chai 1973). These family ancestral records often document thirty or forty generations, dating from a time when a family was a member of the aristocracy, or "Yang-bang". This Confucian practice, very much a part of Korean society suggests the root of the Korean interest in traditional identity as well as indicates

on its integral nature within Korean identity.

The conception of “Korean traditional culture”, within contemporary Korean society, has been shaped by an unusual degree and persistence of violence and material destruction. There are however persistent themes that are traditional to Korean society. Here I will begin to outline influences on traditional systems that contain characteristics that I see as central elements in their concept of a traditional system. A tradition may be defined as a particular symbolic system that embodies certain themes that collectively are believed to embody “culture”. I will explore Haidong Gumdo with regard to its embodiment of such themes by examining it as a symbolic system. The influences of Confucianism and Buddhism are historically integral and contemporarily intertwined with Korean culture. It is these philosophies that, for many Koreans, reflect the idea of what is ‘traditional’. Centuries of conflict cultural suppression and destruction of material-culture infrastructure have produced a fierce determination in that society to “connect” with their traditional identity. For many Koreans, the desire to connect to traditional identity, through traditional expressions of culture, is a cognitive one. My informants were almost uniform in their perception of Haidong Gumdo as an activity that could, through participation, promote personal embodiment of traditional themes. It should be noted that this traditional interest does not preclude other aspirations or benefits perceived or sought by practitioners. However, the desire to construct access to traditional culture as personal performance text is indeed a major goal of the practitioners of Haidong Gumdo.

While today's external pressures are more commercial than military, this desire to share a connection with their Korean ancestry has produced a movement for revitalization of traditional culture. My classmates suggested that there is a sense among Koreans that, while not expressed as a loss of culture, they felt that the destruction of so many historical objects robbed them of that historical connection. That destruction my informants suggested, generated a need to reconstruct those lost connections. Koreans employ a number of strategies to achieve that sense of connection to traditional identity. A wide ranges of activities reflecting an interest in participating in traditional activities is evident in Korea. My classmates and teacher suggested that this resurgence includes the reintroduction of the 'ham-bok' or Korean traditional clothes for example. Informants from Haidong Gumdo as well as high school teachers and university students that I was able to talk to include an interest in traditional games such as "Yute Nori", and "Paduk", or art forms such as calligraphy, interest in traditional Korean mask theater called "Tal-chume", and Korean folk music as forms of traditional expression. A further example of a resurgence for an interest in traditional identity is that of Korean martial arts (Dela Pia 1995: 92). Dela Pia notes in his discussion of the Muye Dobo Tongji,

"Today in the Republic of Korea there a great resurgence of interest in the arts and culture suppressed during the (Japanese) occupation. Many arts previously thought lost have reappeared, secretly recorded or passed on orally by a few practitioners..."

Tae Kwon Do and Hap Ki Do, the most internationally known Korean martial arts, are but two examples. Other forms such as Haidong Gumdo, Tae-Kyun and Kuk-Kung, while less known in the West, are now growing in popularity within Korea and abroad. After a long period of decline, these martial arts are gaining stature as bastions of culture, a means by which Korean people can access a sense of their own traditional identity. Korean martial arts are shifting their battleground from geographical to cultural territory.

The goal of this thesis is to examine the role of Haidong Gumdo as a case study that exemplifies a Revitalization Process of traditional identity among Korean people. I will discuss its role as a symbolic process designed to promote an experience of central qualities of Korean identity. Further, I will conduct an examination of the symbolic equation whereby developing mastery in Haidong Gumdo may facilitate shifts in personal world-view and experience that reflect contemporary constructions of Korean “traditional” cultural themes.

To develop this discussion so as to include all the necessary contributions will require some patience on behalf of the reader. I will proceed in, what may seem to be a piecemeal fashion but I assure you that all of the pieces of the puzzle will fit. In this chapter I will outline the models that I will use as well as review the literature relating to this topic. Following will be a historical section dedicated to describing historical influences on Korea and how they conditioned the interest in the revitalization of traditional themes. To discuss this movement I will provide commentary on the history of

Korea and Haidong Gumdo. I will discuss several factors that precipitated the current movement for the revitalization of traditional identity. In particular, I will look at the impact of historical conflicts, both internal and external. I will discuss, as has been suggested by my informants, that the effect of conflict has instigated within Koreans a perceived distortion of traditional identity. Internally, conflict has been common, ranging from the protracted struggles of the Three Kingdoms period and the subsequent bloody unification of 668 AD to the devastating Korean civil war that began in 1950 and remains technically unresolved at the writing of this thesis. Korean history is rife with examples of external conflicts. The ancient invasions of Han, Wei, Sui and T'ang Chinese were followed by determined invasions and colonizations by the Japanese. More recently and subtly, the rapid urbanization and industrial development of the last half of the twentieth century have distanced people from their families' places of origin and tradition both in geography and lifestyle. My informants, themselves express regrets concerning the impact of cultural change. They suggest that their perception of traditional identity has suffered due to violent cultural interference historically. I also will examine the historical text of the 'Muye Dobo Tongji' (Kim 2000, Dela Pia, 1994, 1995) which documents ancient Korean martial arts and places Haidong Gumdo within the Korean historical landscape.

In chapter three I will discuss the ideas that are used to express the practice of Haidong Gumdo and exemplify traditional themes to practitioners. Following this discussion of factors antecedent to Koreans' perception of the need for a revitalization of tradition, we will examine models of the processes whereby the experience of such

traditional identity is constructed. In particular we will discuss the role of martial arts and how the understandings of symbolic expressions of central themes of “Korean traditional identity” are developed within the martial arts practitioner. Korean or any other “traditional identity” is a construction of both the past and the present because histories invariably reflect the concerns and interests of the time and cultural content in which they are written. Further Korean traditional identity is more a construction in the present than most, due to the widespread destruction of historical institutions and tradition.

In chapter four I will provide an ethnographic account of engagement in the process of development within Haidong Gumdo. I will comment on the organization of the facility, the structure of training sessions and grading systems. I will be able to discuss my own observations, as well as those of my classmates and teachers. Here I will employ the models outlined in this chapter to discuss how connections to traditional identity can be produced in practitioners which alleviates their perception that their Korean cultural performance is distorted because of Korea’s turbulent and often violent history.

Muye Dobo Tongji

The Muye Dobo Tongji (Kim 2000) is a historical illustrated manual of Korean Martial arts. This manual is important to this study in that it provides a historical record that tracks the narrative of Korean martial arts. The manual was commissioned in 1790 by King Jungjo (1776-1800). The Muye Dobo Tongji was compiled by Yi Duk-moo, Park Jega, and Pak Dong-soo. While it is generally accepted that it was compiled at this time,

the Muye Doo Tongji was a text that was derived from several earlier historical texts. The roots of the Muye Dobo Tongji are attributed (Kim 2000) to be in a text called the Muye Jebo. The Muye Jebo, or the 'Martial Arts Illustrations' was compiled after the Japanese invasion of Korea (1592-1598). King Sunjo (1567-1608) was forced to reexamine the views of the aristocratic 'Yang-bang', which considered martial arts to be distasteful and discouraged them. The "Yang-bang" considered physical endeavors to be inappropriate for aristocrats and so, it is not surprising that martial arts suffered in this climate. This view of the martial arts resulted in archery, or Kuk-Kung, being the primary martial art of the Chosun dynasty. The Muye Jebo was compiled by one of the King's Military officers who journeyed to meet with the Ming Chinese and gained access to a copy of a Chinese manual called 'Kihyo Shinsu'.

The Kihyo Shinsu was indeed a Chinese document but this does not detract from any contemporary legitimacy of Korean martial arts. This original Chinese text was not the only basis or point of origin for martial arts in Korea. As the Ming Chinese had experience with confronting the Japanese martial arts, their advice was valuable. As we will see as we continue this discussion further styles were added at each replication of the manual that eventually developed into the Muye Dobo Tongji.

While Chinese martial arts influenced ancient Korean martial artists, this was not the full extent of their tool kit. This Chinese influence was not perceived by my informants to be "cultural contamination". Instead of perceiving it as negative or positive,

my informants suggested that in historical times soldiers did not have the luxury of making the distinction between techniques on the basis of nationality. Instead they expressed the sentiment that historical martial artists used what worked for them, and the martial artist who refuses to adapt to unfamiliar or innovative strategies will not survive for very long. Combatants invariably adapt to the strategies of their opponents, often incorporating them.

The fact of the level of cultural interaction from China to the Korean peninsula is well documented with the exposure and adoption of aspects of Chinese culture being quite extensive in Korea (Chung 1979, Henthorn, Ha 1972, Maliszewski 1992). As I will demonstrate, the use of the Chinese alphabet, philosophy and the inclusion many of aspects of Chinese, and other Asian cultures were quite common for the Korean people. Further instances of martial arts being borrowed from other cultures is extensive. The use of the bow and light horse was borrowed from Mongolian opponents, and became the premier martial art in Korean for centuries. Tae Kwon Do, the best known of the Korean martial arts, is based on the Chinese martial art 'T'ang su' or the 'fist of the T'ang'. The point of this is that, the Korean origin of their martial art was not integral to Korean martial artists for its being considered a traditionally Korean martial art. The integral characteristic, however, would be the adaption by Korean martial artists of the imported style to their own interpretation. Through their interpretation they would express it from their own perspective and thereby encode Korean traditional themes within the transpersonal communication of the art-form through generations of artists.

King Sunjo, having heard that the Chinese had some experience in combating the Japanese, sought their advice, and received a copy of the Kihyo Shinsu manual. Based on the Kihyo Shinsu was The Muye Jebo, which recorded six styles of Chinese martial arts. The system contained within the Muye Jebo was perpetuated and eventually expanded by King Youngjo (1724-1776). The Muye Jebo was renamed the “Muye Shinbo” and was expanded to include an additional twelve styles. King Jungjo added an additional six styles and renamed the manual the “Muye Dobo Tongji”.

Within the Muye Dobo Tongji, through the images and documentation that it contains, there is sufficient information to provide content for a discussion of the discipline of Haidong Gumdo within the context of Korean historical landscape. The name Haidong Gumdo was attached to the discipline in 1982, with the establishment of the first contemporary Haidong Gumdo training facility. The World Haidong Gumdo Federation was established in 1998 in order to promote the martial art outside of South Korea. These dates do not, however, reflect the origins of Haidong Gumdo. The current World Haidong Gumdo Federation is a modern entity that promotes the ancient discipline of Korean swordsmanship. Included within the Muye Dobo Tongji is a wealth of information on everything from horsemanship to weapon and armor construction, to the proper organization for a military camp, and a variety of weapons techniques. For our purposes here, we will be concerned with the inclusion of examples of Korean, Chinese and Japanese sword styles and how they reflect on the practice of Haidong Gumdo. In chapter two I will outline the impact of the various styles on Korean swordsmanship and

discuss how they affected the development of the modern Haidong Gumdo.

Korean traditional themes

Among the many virtues practitioners of Haidong Gumdo claimed during the interview process, is the value of the practice within a Korean movement for the revitalization of traditional culture. While far from the entirety of the revitalization process, Haidong Gumdo is an excellent example of the symbolic strategies used by Korean people to construct a sense of identity based on traditional concepts. The traditional Korean themes to be discussed include the philosophy of Confucius and concepts provided by the Buddhist understanding of the mind and consciousness. Academic references on this topic are indeed plentiful and document the relationship between these influences and Korean people historically (Ha 1972, 1969, 1958, Han 1970, Henthorn 1971, Choy 1971, Joe 1972, Janelli 1982, Palmer 1984, Yum 1987, Hoare 1988, Nahm 1989, Deuchler 1992, Maliszewski 1992, Nelson 1993, Kim 2000). Through discussions with my informants I have perceived a very strong tendency to express an interest in conforming to a conception of traditional identity. Further my informants explicitly believe that traditional martial art styles can facilitate this. The identification with of Confucianism and Buddhist thought was not arbitrary. Related to this Confucian and Buddhist conception of traditional themes are the specific symbolic equations employed by Haidong Gumdo. The symbolic equations of “Chun-Chi In Tul Mu-Guk” and “Choong Hyo Aye Euye”, express this conception of Korean traditional themes. When pressed to explain traditional themes, my informants would refer to the

philosophy of Confucius and the teachings of Buddhism. I will deal with the symbols and equations that they compose in explaining how these expressions are encoded with traditional themes, in the third chapter.

Confucianism

The Chinese have always played an important role in the affairs of Korea (Ha 1958, 1959, 1973 Chai 1973, Kalton 1994, Maliszewski 1992, Chung 1995,). The desire to control this area was a goal for many of the Chinese dynasties. The aspirations of the Han Chinese met with short-lived success (108BC-35BC), due to the emergence of the Korean, 'Three Kingdoms'. The successors of the Han, the Sui, tried to conquer Korea and failed. The successors to the Sui, the T'ang, on a number of occasions attempted to take control of Koguryo. Since the influence of the Han Chinese came prior to the Three Kingdom Period (35BC-668AD) with the conquest and subsequent annexation in 108 BC we can be confident that Confucian philosophies were widely incorporated in the area of the Han (Korean) peninsula before there was an emergent Korean identity.

The Three Kingdom period refers to the period of Korean history starting 35BC (Ha 1958) and continues until the Shilla Unification of the peninsula in 668AD. Situated between the other two of the three kingdoms and the Chinese, Koguryo was regarded as an obstacle for conquest to all peoples in the area. Peckje, situated in the south west portion of the peninsula, developed extensive relations with the Japanese Empire. Shilla, the third of the Three Kingdoms, would eventually form an alliance with the T'ang

Chinese and unify the Korean peninsula in 668 AD.

The Han dynasty of China took the Ko Chosun territories of Korean peninsula in 108 BC. After the uncontested capture of the capital Pyongyang, the Chinese Emperor divided the area into four provinces and established Confucianism as the basis for government. The people who would eventually form Koguryo originally expanded from Puyo, first into Southern Manchuria and then across the Amnokkang river. The expulsion of the Chinese, from the Korean peninsula, began in 12 AD and was accomplished in 313 AD. The duration of the Chinese occupation therefore provided a window of opportunity of 421 years for Confucianism to be adopted by the people of the Three Kingdoms (35BC-668AD).

The concepts of Neo-Confucianism arose during the Sung period of Chinese dynastic history (960-1279 AD) (Chai 1970). Neo-Confucianism, which attempted to incorporate many Buddhist and Taoist influences which had spread to Korea. Cosmological and metaphysical qualities were incorporated into the original Confucian teachings in order to compete with rival schools of thought. The focus of Neo-Confucianism was still on the development of “Jen/In” or humanitarianism, but was separated by two schools of thought. The Rationalist Neo-Confucian perspective leaned heavily on Taoist principles (Chai 1970, Kalton 1994, Chung 1995), with a dialogue of the interaction of the virtues of *righteousness* and *proper etiquette*. The rationalist seeks “stillness that is constant activity and activity that is constantly still” (Kalton 1994).

Discussed in the Rationalist perspective is the “above and below shapes” of mind and consciousness, which refers to attention to the development of consciousness through the interplay of *righteousness* and *proper etiquette*. The Idealist school leans toward Buddhist precepts not unlike the Zen Buddhist tradition in Japan that resulted from the incorporation of Buddhism and Taoist ideologies. For the Idealist personal investigation of the human condition is the key to elevation towards true humanitarianism or “Jen/In”.

Confucian concepts are reflected in Haidong Gumdo through the symbolic expression of Choong Hyo Aye Euye. The Confucian concepts reflected in this equation are loyalty, filial piety, proper etiquette, and righteousness. Predicated on a Buddhist progenitive framework, this expression sees the resulting human form developing through constant attention to virtues of *righteousness* and *proper etiquette*. Similar expressions can be found in Haidong Gumdo and concepts in the rationalist neo-Confucian school of thought. This topic will be discussed at length in chapter three so I will not discuss it in depth here.

Buddhism

The Samgak Yusa, written 1206-1289, by a Korean historical scholar, Ilyon was translated by Ha Tae Hung (1972). The Samgak Yusa records that in 372AD Buddhism was brought to Korea following the fall of the Han dynasty, when a monk named Sundo brought a Buddha image and scriptures to the Koguryo King Sosurim.. The other Kingdoms were also influenced by Buddhism shortly thereafter. A monk from India

called Marananta arrived in Peckje in 384 AD., from Koguryo. He was welcomed by the King, who issued a decree that his subjects could seek Buddhist teachings. Shilla, internally indecisive in its position, resisted much more than its neighbors, but the Samgak-Yusa states that in 479 AD a young monk named Ado healed the King's daughter and was rewarded with royal support (Ha 1972). The influences of Buddhism on Haidong Gumdo are reflected in the symbolic equation of Chun-Chi In Tul Mu-Guk.

With Confucian ideals arriving with the Han Chinese and the rise of Buddhism during the Three Kingdom Period we can understand its position to influence Korean cultural expressions. With the understanding of how traditional martial arts can communicate and reflect traditional cultural themes within Korean society, we can see their potential to be relied on, by practitioners, to connect them conceptually and experientially to those traditional themes. As the initiation rites within the art of Haidong Gumdo work to promote shifts in personal world-view and through experience of central themes of Korean identity we will be able to understand its value within a movement for revitalization of traditional Korean identity.

Theoretical Foundation

My first premise is that the process of development within the discipline of Haidong Gumdo can provide a means of achieving a sense of connection to traditional Korean identity. The concept of "traditional" is associated within the symbolic system of the martial arts through the existence of "traditional themes" encoded within the practice.

Traditional themes within the symbolic system reflect perceived characteristics of a traditional identity. I also suggest that although these contemporary constructions are formed in the minds of living people, this does not preclude the traditional veracity of the practice. Further, I echo Given (1993, 2001) when I suggest that initiation rites work to transform cultural themes, through symbolic penetration, into the currency of individual experience and that the contemporary construction may well be quite similar to historical constructions produced by the same practice.

To view Haidong Gumdo as an example of the movement in Korea toward a revitalization of traditional identity, I turn to Wallace's (1970) important discussion of this process. The process of revitalization will provide a framework for discussing the motivation by which Korean people seek a connection to a traditional identity. This will set the stage for a discussion of the anthropology of experience (Turner & Bruner 1983). The Anthropology of experience will provide the conception of how replicating expressions of culture can promote an experience of a traditional theme. After a brief discussion of the anthropology of experience I will turn to an examination initiation rites (van Gennep 1909, Turner 1969, Turner & Bruner 1983) and discuss how they can move a practitioner toward a sense of expression of traditional themes. Biogenetic structuralism (Laughlin McMannus d'Aquili 1990) and its model of symbolic penetration (Webber 1980) will help us to see how traditional themes, embodied within expressions of culture, can be simulated within a practitioner. Given (1993) provides insight into the workings of rites of initiation and ritual control of experience. The graduating disclosure of controlled

information, on the assumption that advanced techniques may be misunderstood or harmful to the participant is integral to the process of development. Instruction may take the form of “the manipulation of subjective reality through the psychotropic use of ritual control strategies and supporting hermeneutics” (Given 1993:96-97). Without the prescribed mode of instruction supplied by an instructor, the practitioner might misunderstand the system, or lack of proper preparation for the experience might be dangerous. Conceptions of martial arts as a macho and violence-oriented activity, as promoted by western popular culture is an obvious example of such misunderstanding. The premise that techniques might be dangerous without proper preparation is easy to accept in martial arts. The flexibility and strength required to perform technique might not be instilled in the participant very possibly resulting in injury.

The concept of “partial views” (Given 1993), used to describe Buddhist Tantric teachings was also applicable when discussing traditional martial arts. The faceted conception of “truths” that condition further experience was also a concept relayed to me by my Haidong Gumdo teacher. On one occasion while watching a movie with my teacher he used the video images to convey an explanation of this concept. The characters in the story were using digital imaging equipment to enhance the resolution of details of a photograph. As the equipment isolated the area of interest to be enlarged it began improve the pixel quality. The resolution was improved in a wave like fashion moving from top to bottom. Each time this process occurred the resolution of the picture increased until the image became clear. My instructor commented that development of traditional martial

arts is done in much the same way. Each time we improve our understanding we are provided with a stronger premise for further development. This idea of “partial views” is not unlike Poincare’s (1972) premise that sum of early equations becoming the premise for further questions. Further Given suggests that initiation rites work on two levels, they work for the status of the individual and authorize the use of ritual tools for the production of extra-ordinary experience. I will also refer to Turner (1973), who discusses on multi-semantic properties of central “principle symbols” within ritual. Through the use of these perspectives I will construct a model that will be used to elucidate and provide analysis for participant observation and interview data.

The Process of Revitalization

The process of revitalization (Wallace 1970) is a model that discusses the passage of a group from a period of relative prosperity into a period of relative decline. The decline results from a radical change in environment, or biota. Disease, loss of a food supply or war result in disillusionment with society and a perceived distortion of self-identity. This disillusionment with society and distortion of self-identity creates an intolerable stress on the people of that group. The process of revitalization is one possible reaction to this intolerable stress that permits in some way a recovery of the self-perception associated with the greater prosperity of earlier times.

With the recognition of development of the desire to connect to a traditional identity, the stage is set for the process of revitalization to develop. The revitalization

process consists in several stages. First, a code that embodies the themes that are integral to the traditional identity will be derived and will be communicated to others. Should the movement attract enough like-minded people, they will become organized within the movement. With that organization it will become necessary to set boundaries that reflect the 'code' of the group. These boundaries will be set and maintained to reflect the tenets of the code of the movement. Assuming that the code of the group is being satisfied, the intolerable stress will dissipate and there will be a return to a 'steady state'.

I will use the concept of revitalization to discuss Koreans' fascination with traditional identity. This perspective will also provide a context to describe how this symbolic system provides for the needs of its practitioners. The distortion of perceived identity resulting from environmental changes, in this situation results from protracted conflict and material destruction throughout Korean history. The code for the movement for revitalization of traditional identity is a contribution from traditional themes. Wallace (1970) supposed that a code for a movement for revitalization of culture would be derived through trance or dream states. The fact that the code for a Korean revitalization of traditional identity is not dependant on such a creation. Instead, the important quality of the code is that it provided legitimacy by a higher source. Confucian and Buddhist themes which speak with an ancestral voice provide this code with the required legitimacy. This ancestral voice is the siren's song that attracts practitioners to the movement. Within this movement, interested parties are organized to how they pursue the goals of the movement, whether it be through traditional martial arts or other expressions of culture

that reflect Korean traditional themes. Through constructing a connection to these traditional Korean themes the practitioner comes to form an identification with those themes. Through this connection the individual alleviates the effects of the protracted violence and destruction of material-cultural infrastructure that typifies Korean history and returns to a state of equilibrium.

The Anthropology of Experience

The anthropology of experience (Turner & Bruner 1986) is concerned with how cultural expressions can come to convey an understanding of culture to practitioners. The anthropology of experience describes cultural expressions with reference to series of symbolic actions. These processes provide the medium for acquiring an understanding of the intentions contained within the expression of the culture.

The notion of experience and expression is basic to anthropology of experience. Experience is the understanding based on the sensory data that we receive. When we are witnesses to an event, we see, hear, smell, taste, and feel it first hand. In order to fully understand something, it is most efficient to engage in the activity oneself. Expressions are the communication of cultural information. Within the cultural expressions there are themes that are intended by the practitioners to have a specific connotation. Both experience and expression are means by which we can communicate cultural information, but the totality of sensory data that can be collected through experience can never be adequately communicated.

Within the definition of experience, we can make a distinction between types of experience (Bruner & Turner 1986). The idea of time plays an important role within this definition. Ordinary experience is mundane activity that is not intended to be an expression of intentional themes. Ordinary experiences cannot be marked within a time frame of beginning and ending and do not generally attract attention. Extraordinary experiences, on the other hand, are distinctive in that they convey a meaningfulness that is not perceived through ordinary, mundane experience.

The concept of “expression” describes how we can perform actions that reflect cultural themes. The anthropology of experience is performance oriented. It supposes that through performing ritualized behavior one comes to experience the key concepts embodied within the performance. It is the concept that through the experience of performing a cultural expression a performer can come to understand themes embedded within the expression that is of most importance here. In addition, the conceptual distinctions between experience, expression and ordinary and extraordinary experience will be important in discussing how one can lead to the other.

Initiation Rites

For a discussion of the process of rites of initiation I will address the rite of passage model as outlined by Arnold van Gennep (van Gennep 1909) and the continuation of that work through Victor Turner and the liminal process (Turner 1969). Rites of passage are ritualized actions that are intended to mark the passage of an

individual from one role or state within a group to another. Rites of passage are described by Turner as containing three distinct stages, separation, liminality and reincorporation. In the first stage, separation, the subject of the rite is disconnected symbolically from the group. With this separation comes the second stage of liminality. At this time the subject of the rite has no position within society, holding neither the vestiges of his/her old position, nor the position to which s/he aspires. With the end of the liminal process the subject is returned to the community with the acceptance of his/her new status.

The main theoretical mechanism employed here is the assumption that initiation rites can transform the experience of the expressions of traditional cultural themes into an experience of those themes. The concept of initiation rites, placed in the context of the anthropology of experience provides a mechanism that can permit an individual to develop a sense of connection to traditional identity. This description also will be facilitated by contributions from biogenetic structuralism and the process of symbolic penetration.

Biogenetic Structuralism

Biogenetic structuralism (Laughlin McMannus d'Aquili 1990) places the seat of understanding human behavior in the universality of the human morphology. It is this physical base line that provides a foundation to approach this discussion. Again, in biogenetic structuralism there is the premise that the influence of repetition and replication of an action provides a venue for deeper understanding of symbols embedded

in the object of intentionality, in this case a cultural expression. For biogenetic structuralists, the cognitive construction of the object is continually reassessed in light of symbolic entrainment. For this perspective there is a great emphasis placed on how interpretation can greatly influence cognition.

Biogenetic Structuralism (Laughlin McMannus d'Aquili 1990) holds that human behavior is rooted in the brain. It is in the development of the organizational structure of the brain that human behavior can be understood. Biogenetic structuralism is interested in the development of the structure and organization of neurology. By 'structure', the authors refer to developing organization of neural networks within the brain and how that development meets the requirements of growth and adaptation.

The developmental basis for understanding through Biogenetic Structuralism is grounded in the concept of 'Neurognosis'. Neurognosis, refers to genetically constrained neural networks that provide the individual with rudimentary knowledge about themselves and the world around them. This atavistic, hypothetical knowledge provides the basis for questions which will be tested through experience. As the neurognostic models are tested through experience, connections are made between neurons and canalization of neural networks occurs. Through a process of equilibration biogenetic structuralism provides for the necessity of growth and adaption for neurological structure.

Canalization refers to the organization of neurological structures, responding to

the effect of equilibration on a neurological network, prompted by environmental pressures. Equilibration, occurs as the functioning of neural networks takes place within the organization of neurological networks. The activity of experience, that is the functioning of neural networks, equilibrate within the system and transforms the dendritic-axonic-synaptic interconnections within neurological structure to a higher level of complexity in response to environmental pressures. The effect of experience of environmental pressures, on a functioning neural network, facilitates equilibration, and thereby produces transformation of canalized networks to affect the organization of neurological development.

Model of Symbolic Penetration

The model of symbolic penetration (Weber 1979, Laughlin McMannus d'Aquili 1990) describes how an understanding of a symbolic system can be mediated in an individual neurophenomenology. Integral to this model are the biogenetic structuralism terms of 'operational environment' and 'cognized environment'. The operational environment is composed of all variables that impinge upon the organism. The cognized environment leads to potential experience based on response to environmental pressures mediated by neurology. The cognized environment is the metaphor that neurology uses to present experience. It is in the cognized environment that an individual will maintain replications of what is perceived through the operational environment. Experience is the common ground between the cognized and operational environments and is the neurological metaphor created that allows us to conceptualize both ourselves and the

world around us.

The term 'intentionality' refers to the object that is recreated within the consciousness of the individual. It is assumed (Laughlin McMannus d'Aquili 1990) that consciousness is "of something". That is consciousness is dependant on there being a mental object to hold. Further, intentionality includes a variety of symbolic connotations entrained on a symbol. When invoked, the various meanings entrained on the symbol providing a variety of possible interpretations. The meanings entrained on a symbol connect to produce the metaphor that neurology uses to present experience. Experience is the outcome of the interaction of the cognized and operational environments. Through manipulation of the intentionality of the participant, controlled influence over the cognized environment can be achieved. Repeated experience of symbols within the cognized environment, through a process of equilibration, will come to more accurately resemble the core symbols embodied in the symbolic system.

Ritual, Phase Shifts and the Anthropology of Experience

Ritual provides a method whereby the intentionality of participants can be guided to objects and events of cultural significance. Through controlled shifts in the phases of consciousness, transformations within consciousness can be facilitated. With shifts in phases there are discernable transformations of consciousness based on objects of the individual's intentionality.

Ritual with the use of driving mechanisms such as drumming chanting, dancing, et cetera, serves to 'retune' the autonomic nervous system through simultaneous discharge of both the sympathetic system and parasympathetic system. The product of the discharge of the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems produces a shift in the phase of consciousness within the individual (Laughlin McMannus d'Aquili 1990). The shift in the phase of consciousness facilitates rapid cognitive reassessment of what is being perceived and how it compares to the replication of the object in the cognized environment. Further, there is development of the complexity of the perception of the individual. As the participant develops focus, intent on specific objects, their receptivity to the object increases.

Through a process of equilibration, an object of intentionality is mediated through interconnected neurological structures and is replicated in the experience of the individual. With a change in phase of consciousness the individual will reflect on their own cognitive construction of that object. This allows the object of consciousness to be replicated with increasing complexity with repeated reflections.

In Turner's anthropology of experience (Turner & Bruner 1986) there is a distinction between "ordinary experience" and "extraordinary experience". As I have mentioned, extraordinary experiences are those that convey a sense of deep meaningfulness. It is during this extraordinary experience that participants can be increasingly conscious of themselves and receptive to cultural themes within objects that

contain expressions of culture. As stated before, the anthropology of experience supposes that through performing ritualized behavior one comes to experience the key concepts embodied within the performance. The model of equilibration (Laughlin McMannus d'Aquili 1990), the reflective quality of phases of consciousness, the concepts of intentionality, and their similarities to the anthropology of experience provide us with a convergence between the two approaches.

Education for experience and the cycle of initiation

The idea of the cycle of initiation (Given 1993) provides additional understanding of the initiation process. This additional understanding is found in the assertion that "knowledge changes the mind of the knower" (Given 1993:96). This is to say that through the transformations predicated by experience, the individual becomes prepared and receptive to further, "higher", or more integrative experience. Without proper preparation instruction, it is suggested, that practice of advanced techniques could be misunderstood or actually dangerous to practitioners. These "Partial views" are incomplete understandings derived from early experience. With multiple experiences, the practitioner can develop a clearer conception of the symbols that are the objects of focus. With the development of "higher" experience the practitioner is authorized in the use of "powerful ritual tools designed to facilitate the production of non-ordinary states of mind" (Given 1993).

Mutual Legitimization

Through experiencing a system of symbolic expression, I assert that the individual, as a participant in this process, is legitimized through successive rites of passage. With the legitimization of an individual is ascribed a proportional authority, which the individual then reinvests in the system by exercising authority and attracting more responsibility. In this fashion, the individual comes to represent the system itself as the lines between the metaphorical 'horse and the rider' begin to blur. It is in this sense that a practitioner can integrally reflect the symbolic system in their own experience.

The idea of making this kind of connection to traditional identity is the point of developing this form of understanding. With the individual's dialogue with a system of symbolic pedagogy, comes a commitment to engaging with the unfamiliar in an attempt to find reason. Peripheral benefits such as a sense of community, appreciation of the aesthetic, or self-gratification are derived from this main goal. Achievement comes when the individual is able to review his/her experience and draw lines of meaning and order from the symbolic bulk that was once unintelligible and confusing. An understanding of the system becomes evident when the symbols that once were a source of intimidation become a source familiar comfort.

Multivocality of Symbols

Turner (1973) discusses the multiple semantic properties of symbols within ritual. For Turner, ritual seeks to promote culturally proscribed behavior through the configuration of symbols. Individually symbols serve as reference points for those

involved in ritual. These symbolic references that guide experience and lead the individual to make connections, that draw lines of meaning through what was once unfathomable. The concept of multivocality provides a framework for the discussion of multiple symbolic “voices” in ritual. Turner advises that multiple levels of meaning must be addressed. Three levels of meaning are outlined by Turner. One level of meaning is the “indigenous meaning”, or the interpretation of the informant. Operational meaning is interested in how that symbol is used. Positional meaning recognizes that symbols may vary in meaning dependent on the context in which they are situated in the ritual. That is, a symbol might appear at different stages in the ritual with different references implied. As we will see in chapter three, the Confucian concept of “Jen/In”, integral to the explanation of Haidong Gumdo to participants, appears in a symbolic expression reflecting meanings of humanitarianism and the human form. Additional to the types of meaning provided by Turner, I would like to add “transpersonal meaning” as a fourth (Laughlin McMannus d’Aquili 1990:19, Webber 1980). Through the model of symbolic penetration and the shifts in consciousness that it promotes, the derivation of transpersonal meaning is possible through experience.

Summary of the theoretical model

At this point I would like to review some concepts and link them through the theoretical models above. When I discuss the traditional system, I refer to Haidong Gumdo. This system is encoded with traditional themes and is therefore constitutes a repository of those themes. Through this repository of themes the practitioner is provided

with a vehicle for identification with those themes. The basis for this attribute of 'traditional' is based on a reflection of traditional Korean themes of Confucian and Buddhist thought and practices. It is through the entrained models embedded in the expressions of 'Chun-chi, in, tul, mu-guk' (Sky, Earth, Humanity, Framework of training, Boundless Potential) and 'Chung Hyo Aye Euye' (loyalty, filial piety, proper etiquette, and righteousness), that Haidong Gumdo constructs a connection to traditional Korean identity. It is through symbolic penetration that a series of initiation rites can turn experience of traditional themes into a sense of connectedness to those themes. With the impact of historical conflict and rapid urbanization there has developed a sense of "hyper-reverence" (Given 2000) within Korean society towards concepts of traditional identity.

The history of Korea and Haidong Gumdo will be the topic of the second chapter. This discussion will outline major instances of conflict and dissolution of traditional modes of life in Korean history. This is not meant to be considered the full extent of influences exerted in this narrative. It is but a sample of important occasions that have provided an opportunity for the increase in intolerable stresses that promote a distortion in the Korean's perception of identity. This discussion must begin with the effects of intolerable stress, due to a change in biota. It is this distortion that provides motivation for a revitalization of traditional themes in Korea. This chapter will also detail the introduction of Confucianism and Buddhism and discuss their historical availability in the area.

In chapter three I will discuss the traditional themes embedded in Haidong Gumdo that connect to traditional themes of Confucianism and Buddhism. We will discuss how the practice of Haidong Gumdo is explained to its practitioners reflects traditional values and how, through symbolic penetration, practitioners can experience a connection to that traditional identity.

Research on the Martial Arts

Academic literature on the martial arts has been limited in its coverage of the topic of the martial artist's experience. The pursuit of understanding in this field by western academics has been restricted to the tangible results of a practice, to studies of historical lineage. That is not to say that there is no meeting of the minds between the academic and martial art stakeholders. Academic work includes contributions from the aggression literature (Lamarre,& Nosanchuk, 1999; Nosanchuk & Catherine MacNeil, 1989; Nosanchuk, 1981). The literature on aggression shows a correlation between participation in traditional martial art systems and a decrease in aggressive behavior. However, academe has neglected to provide descriptions of phenomenological changes involved in the development of mastery, changes that practitioners say are an important part of their pedagogical strategies (Given 2001).

The translations of Korean historical texts into English are adjunct to contemporary academe. These historical texts range in their usage and the lines between pop culture and academe blur as these texts are reapplied to fulfil the needs of a variety of

groups. Reapplications of historical texts are most common within the business world (Hurst 1982). Mussashi's Book of five Rings and Sun Tsu's The Art of War, for instance, have been recognized by many western business leaders both for their strategic and tactical insights and as tools for instructing and motivating employees. With the use of these texts to cultivate a desired perspective within a workforce they have begun to influence a mainstream audience. These examples illustrate a shift of perspective with respect to the environment in which the literature is used. Other texts, such as the Muye Dobo Tongji (Dela Pia 1995, 1994, Kim 2000) and Samgak Yusa (Ha 1972), provide additional touchstones for historical accounts and contextualization of contemporary forms.

More substantial reflection on the experience of martial arts training can be found in mainstream work (Dreager 1973, 1974) intended for consumption by English speaking practitioners of martial arts. These mainstream works usually try to provide an explanation of a martial art system to an audience outside the martial art subculture. Such works tend to ask an extremely focused contemporary question based on implied ancient and enduring theoretical frameworks. These are often historical accounts interested in lineages of different forms that imply a diffusionary model not explicit in the text (Given 2001).

Another popular form of martial art literature is of a philosophical nature. Anthropologist John J. Donohue (Donohue 1998), author of Herding the Ox: Martial arts

as moral metaphor, has written academic work for mass consumption. Often these works discuss philosophical perspectives of the martial arts themselves. These are attempts to put into text the teaching of a system to its practitioners. In these works the authors invariably choose not to make distinctions of a pan martial arts nature, but instead choose to focus the discussion on one culturally specific context. Within this thesis I will discuss specifically the discipline of Haidong Gumdo. Additionally comments herein on the topic 'traditional martial arts' will provide insight into traditional martial arts irrespective of the underlying cultural themes.

Methodology

My sources of data for this project include my original translations of Korean language materials, data derived from participant observation from my continued involvement in Haidong Gumdo and traditional martial arts in Korea and Canada, and my own experiences of moving through the ranks and rituals of Haidong Gumdo to become a fourth Dan practitioner with the title of "Master". I am also informed by published materials and I will consider lengthy interviews with my instructors and fellow students, and I will review historical materials that are concerned with this topic. Interviews to be considered are predominantly with my instructor Master Cho Kyoung Ik, my classmates, as well as other instructors within the Kwangju area.

The participant observer experience that I have accumulated relevant to this project is extensive. I entered into this process at the end of my undergraduate career in

1996. My undergraduate experience in anthropology altered the way that I would perceive the world around me and it was with the perspective of an anthropologist that I entered this experience. In trying to understand more complicated aspects of my martial arts training, I find myself in need of my anthropological training. Through taping discussions with my instructors and fellow students and then translating the materials later, I have been able to understand more deeply the principles that concern me. This also serves to provide me with an amount of useful data.

Further, I entered into this process in the same way as any student of this martial art. I continued, developed and was evaluated as was any other student. My movement from the mainstream of the student body into the more exclusive domain of the instructor has proceeded as it would have with any other practitioner who chose to move in this direction. The fact of the matter is that, except for being one of the first non-Koreans to proceed to the level of instructor, my involvement and development in Haidong Gumdo were quite unextraordinary when compared to other practitioners. According to my informants, the understanding that I have developed on this topic has been developed to their standard. This, I feel, lends credence to my observations.

My past and continued involvement in Haidong Gumdo provides a wealth of personal experience and anecdotal material. Throughout my life I have had an interest in Martial arts. At age six, I had my first instruction in the Japanese discipline of Judo. Over the years I have had the opportunity to explore a number of martial art styles of various

nationalities. I began my training in Haidong Gumdo in 1996 in Chumdan Chi-gu, Kwangju South Korea. The Master was Cho Kyoung Ik, and until my departure in 1999, I had the opportunity to be immersed in this martial-art form. To become an instructor within the discipline, I was required to follow a strict training schedule. For the first six-months of my training I was required to attend five hours of training per week. This amount of time was the standard for all people within the school. Beginning in the mainstream class is useful as it enabled me to form what would be long term relationships with my class mates. Often I would attend successive classes within an evening as my thirst for this style grew. Because of my Korean language skills were in development, but not fully functional as yet, I was linguistically segregated within the mainstream class structure. I would often be forced meet with various teachers within my school to review technique and its explanation in a slower paced setting.

With the attainment of my second Dan and the understanding that I was moving toward developing mastery, I began as my Master's training partner. At this time my program expanded to include more arduous and often extreme training sessions. My training expanded to include information and technique that is reserved for the instructor. Discussions and practice of the proper maintenance of a school were carried out. Instructional methods are provided to would-be instructors, called 'Sabaum'. Further, an expectation of the adherence to exhibit 'proper behavior' was expected. This would include caring for one's elders including the Master, students and school.

I recall one occasion during my training when an apprentice to my master returned from his Dan grading. As he entered the school I could see that he could barely disguise his indignation. I asked why he was upset and he told me that he had not been given an award for exceptional ability. This award, called a 'Gumsang', is awarded officially for an outstanding performance during a Dan certification test and supplements the regular accreditation. Unofficially I have been told by my informants that there is another, behavioral component. It is assumed that a pious and disciplined mind, humbled by the martial arts will also exhibit similar pious discipline and humility in everyday life. I myself, have received two of these awards in my career, and my master has received three. They are not at all common and most practitioners never receive one. I asked my master how this had happened and he replied that the apprentice had come to expect, as a matter of fact, his successes. Further, the apprentice had come to see his expected award as a confirmation of his innate superior ability. Although the apprentice's technical action left little doubt as to his prowess, his ego and the expected rage he felt at his being rebuked was the rationale for his denial of accreditation. Through formal certification examinations, and more importantly one's ability to abide and satisfy expectations concerning a teacher's public behavioral, authority can be achieved.

Further requirements with which I was required to satisfy were in respect to teaching experience. In order to proceed, it was expected that I would be given opportunities to lead the class. Leading a class is much different from teaching one. Leading a class involves conducting warm up exercises as well as repetitious basic

exercises for the purposes of building strength and endurance. Actual instruction and exposure to technique is solely in the hands of the master of the school. This experience was intended to prepare me to eventually teach outside of my Master's school. Of course, my early attempts were disastrous and exceedingly brief in duration, but as my linguistic and experiential repertoire increased, so did my opportunities to lead classes.

In the last eight months of my training, I had left my place of employment to pursue my studies of Haidong Gumdo full-time. During this time I was given many opportunities to lead and eventually teach students within the school. At the end of this period, before my departure for Canada, I was invited by my Master to accompany him to a variety of formal events. One such occasion was participation in a Dan grading. It was at this test that I was presented, somewhat to my surprise, as the first non-Korean Master of Haidong Gumdo. Officially within the World Haidong Gumdo Federation, of which I am now an accredited member, full instructors' certification arrives with the establishment of a Gumdo-jang, or sword school. This statement placed some legitimacy to my actions as well as aroused expectations of me within the Haidong Gumdo community. Since that time I have returned to Canada and have been accredited with the title of 'Master of Ottawa in Canada', where I maintain a training facility. This allows me to gain and maintain relationships with my Korean colleagues trained in Haidong Gumdo as well as practitioners of this martial art around the world.

I will make use of traditional Korean texts, modern Korean publications,

interviews with certified masters of Haidong Gumdo, interviews with Korean students of Haidong Gumdo and my own transpersonal participant observations, to produce an ethnographic narrative of this process of initiation in Haidong Gumdo and its role in the movement for revitalization of traditional Korean identity .

So far, I have provided the basic components of what will be discussed in later chapters. I argue that the Korean traditional martial art of Haidong Gumdo is a case study of a process of revitalization. It has role as a symbolic process in promoting an experience of central qualities of Korean identity. Developing mastery in Haidong Gumdo may facilitate shifts in personal world-view and experience that reflect traditional cultural themes. This research will contribute to our understanding of the function of transformation of the initiates experience resulting from participation in rites of passage which are an essential part of Korean martial arts pedagogy.

Through discussion of both the similarities and differences between the broad experiences and relevant hermeneutics among Korean and non-Korean practitioners I can describe my own experience more fully. On one level my experience is quite similar to that of my classmates. Together we participated in the same ritual experiences, were uniformly instructed and subsequently promoted. Further, my instructors accredit in their terms, the understanding that I have developed sufficiently to warrant the description of mastery within the contemporary organization of Haidong Gumdo. However, there is a major difference that separates my experience from that of my classmates. I am not

attempting to connect viscerally to Korean traditional identity as, for me, there is no lost connection to be replaced. For non-Korean practitioners the motivations for development in Haidong Gumdo must lie elsewhere.

In Chapter two I will present an account of Korean history and the corresponding history of the Samurang. This account will serve to provide an orientation of Haidong Gumdo within Korean history. I will conduct a comparison between traditional styles detailed in the *Muye Dobo Tongji*, and contemporary Haidong Gumdo techniques. Correlations between not only technique but the terminology used to describe the techniques suggests a relation between the two. With this historical account I will discuss the introduction of traditional Confucian and Buddhist themes, that will be important later. Most importantly this historical account will provide examples of instances which promoted a perceived distortion in Korean traditional identity.

In Chapter three, I will be concerned with the specific symbolic equations of “Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk” and “Choong Hyo Aye Euye”. I will discuss these expressions and the themes that are embedded within them. Further, I will connect these expressions to traditional Confucian and Buddhist themes and I will outline how expressions within Haidong Gumdo form a basis for the communication of those themes.

Chapter four will be concerned with describing the process of development within the traditional martial art of Haidong Gumdo. I will describe a process where through extraordinary experiences, shifts in the practitioner’s phase of consciousness (Laughlin

McMannus d'Aquili 1990) is promoted by physical exertion and rhythmic qualities of training which in turn promotes an experience that reflects traditional Korean themes. Through symbolic penetration (Webber 1980) expressions of Korean traditional themes can affect the practitioner through equilibration of neurological networks (Laughlin McMannus d'Aquili 1990: 56). Through the symbolic expressions used to explain the practice of Haidong Gumdo, "Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk" and "Chung-Hyo-Aye-Euye", the practitioner comes to experience those central Korean themes in a progressive fashion. The initiation cycle assists in discussing the series of tests employed in training that produce and recognize an increasing complexity of understanding within the discipline (Given 1993). Mutual legitimization marks the pinnacle of this relationship with the practitioner increasingly embodying the system.

Chapter 2

Historical Developments and Perceived Distortions of Identity

Motivation for the Korean movement to revitalize traditional identity is based on a Korean cultural theme of survival, wherein it is widely believed that the perception of Korean identity has been greatly distorted by centuries of warfare, conquest and resulting devastation. This chapter will discuss Korean history and its impact on Koreans' beliefs about their shared sense of identity.

Perceived distortion of traditional identity is a concept drawn from Wallace's process of revitalization (Wallace 1970). A perceived distortion of identity flows from a group's inability to meet an individual's expectations and needs. This failure tends to be based on a radical environmental change such as the loss of a food source, the presence of disease or warfare. The resulting sense of disillusionment within society, provides the motivation for a process of revitalization, as individuals who have come to feel disconnected from their group seek ways to construct an alternate conception of identity that is more gratifying.

The history of the Korean people abounds with radical changes in biota resulting from almost perpetual conflict, both inter-Korean wars and those involving foreign powers interested in dominating Korea's strategic location (Maleszewski 1992). These radical changes prompted a widespread sense of disconnection, among Koreans, from what is popularly held to be their traditional concepts of identity. I will review relevant events in Korean history to show how repeated instances of destructive conflict and

colonization resulted in a perceived distortion of Korean culture. In the following pages, I will review the history of the tradition that produced the martial art of Haidong Gumdo, to place it within the Korean historical landscape and discuss its potential to provide a way for individuals today to identify with Korean traditional themes.

The history of Korea, especially that of the Three Kingdom period, has been well recorded. Translations of the *Samgak Yusa* (Ha 1972), *Samgak Sagi* (Ha 1969) and other current texts (Choy 1971, Dela Pia 1994, 1995, Ha 1958, 1970, Han 1970, Henthorn 1971, Malesewski 1992, Nelson 1993, Kim 2000) have provided a means of exploring the damaged Korean material historical record.

Compiling a history of Haidong Gumdo through archival sources is more difficult. Even within Korean sources, for instance, there are few references to the Samurang. The martial art that is promoted by the World Haidong Gumdo is based on sword styles attributed primarily to the Samurang of the Koguryo dynasty. The lack of reference to the Samurang can be attributed to their visibility and the level of historical material damage. In the climate following the Shilla Unification in 668, martial arts and their practitioners ceased to be valued by the Korean people. My informants provided that it was this public sentiment that encouraged the Samurang to maintain a level of secrecy in order to avoid the risk that came with public visibility at that time. As we have discussed before, most of the original Korean language documents that are integral to the material record were lost during the various conflicts that have defined Korean history. In order to recompile these documents, they were reintroduced from sources held in other countries. The result of this process is that, beside the fact that much has not been retrieved, there are issues in

translation that would have found the noun “Samurang” expressed in other terms such as swordsman or martial artist. The information that has been compiled concerning this topic has been acquired by me through an oral tradition within a very specialized community. With respect to the historical accuracy of information accumulated in such a way, however, I would follow Given (2001) and suggest that the actual history is less important, for understanding contemporary trends in Korean society, than the popular history. This is not to say that I feel that the narrative provided to me is inauthentic in any way, but rather that the question of historical accuracy here is superfluous, for my purpose. It is on the popular history that the construction of “traditional identity” is based.

In particular, nostalgia for ‘golden days’ is often based on romanticized conceptions of earlier periods of glory. The fact that Richard Coeur de Lion and Robin Hood were not contemporaries does not prevent their meeting in numerous tales of their exploits (Given 2002). The actual historical conditions are often far removed from such idyllic conceptions. I would suggest, however, that such constructed conceptualization is more than a superficial daydream or whim. It represents an experiential blueprint for the movement for revitalization. Through this blueprint “Traditional” themes may enable disconnected individuals to ground themselves once more within a consensus pattern of culture.

Commonly the history of Korean identity is rooted in the establishment of ‘Koryŏ Chosun’ or old Chosun is derived from several smaller states including Puyo, Chinhan, Okcho, T’ongye (Ha 1972). The Chinhan, through concurring the neighboring Okcho,

T'ongye and Puyo established a progenitive Korean dynasty. This dynasty would endure until the conquest of King Wu-ti of the Han Chinese. When discussing the historical establishment of Korean identity, many Koreans point to the period of Ko Chosun.

In 109 BC, the Chinese Han Dynasty began an occupation of the Korean Peninsula (Ha 1972). The campaign achieved an uncontested conquest of P'yongyang and did little damage to the countryside. Military conflict was confined to the north-western section of the peninsula, away from the majority of the population. The result was that Koreans on the whole were not arbitrarily hostile toward the occupying forces. In fact, there is a certain nostalgia associated with Chinese influences from that time. This nostalgia was reinforced by the high degree of cultural exchange that took place during this period, including language and philosophy.

Han control of peripheral regions was generally insecure, however (Ha 1972). To ensure peace with non-Chinese local powers, the Han court developed a mutually beneficial "tributary system" (Ha 1972, Chai 1973). Non-Chinese states were allowed to remain autonomous in exchange for symbolic acceptance of Han over-lordship. Tributary ties were confirmed and strengthened through intermarriages among the ruling class and periodic exchanges of gifts and goods. It was during this time that Confucianism made roots in Korean soil. Recent to this time the Han dynasty had begun to place renewed interest in Confucianism (Chai 1972). Confucianism was again drawn on for the basis of government and that influence was extended to the new Korean colonies.

The Han Chinese, under the famous King Wu-ti (140BC-87BC) (Chai 1972)

maintained a precarious hold on the territory into which they expanded (Ha 1972).

Arguably, the tributary system that developed was advantageous to both peoples. The Korean people were allowed to remain autonomous in exchange for the acceptance of Han overlordship. Colonies were established and governors were appointed for each. The province established by the Han was called “Lolang” and was composed of the colonies of Nangnang, Chinbon, Imdun and Hyont’o. Intermarriage and reciprocity of gift giving strengthened these ties. King Wu-ti (Chai 1972), introduced Confucianism as the basis for government throughout the colonies under Han control, including those in Korea.

Because of Chinese internal strife, the precarious hold over the Korean Colonies weakened until outright rebellion took place. It was at this time that the hold of the Han Chinese control officially ended on the Korean peninsula. In 82BC the colonies of Chinbon and Imdun fell, shortly to be followed by Hyont’o in 75BC. Nangnang would endure, as we will see, until the second century.

The influence of Chinese culture on the Korean people is undeniable. Until the fifteenth century, when King Saijong created the written Korean alphabet, Han-gul, Chinese characters were used for written expression. Because of the vast number of pictographic characters in the Chinese language, only affluent people could afford the time to become literate. Literacy therefore became an indicator of both wealth and of social standing.

During the Three Kingdoms period, the most influential force was the Kingdom

of Koguryo, whose ruling dynasty lasted from 37 B.C. until 668 A.D. This kingdom centered around the Amnokkang River and occupied the northernmost position of the three. Koguryo troops, known for their martial abilities, were extremely efficient and their kingdom quickly expanded. Its expansion eventually included a large territory taken from the Chinese to the north that later became the Kingdom of Parhae.

We can point to a birth of sorts for Haidong Gumdo during this period of Korean expansion and triumph. My instructor informed me that in the third century that General Yu-Yu of the Koguryo Dynasty formalized a training regimen for the military of Koguryo, called “Jega-sung Jay-do”. The name “Jay-do” refers to a social system, or lifestyle, something that is integral to the nature of the community, instead of the usual “do” associated with art forms or methods. This regimen included the physical and mental training required for horsemanship, swordsmanship, hand-to-hand fighting and archery. The mental training included behavioral conditioning of students that encouraged them to embody etiquette appropriate to their tradition. The dialogue between the martial arts system and other domains of Korean experience is two way. The expansion of martial arts experience develops an understanding of traditional themes that are not restricted in value to participation of martial arts. The values encouraged by traditional martial arts extend and to connect to other aspects within Korean society. As practitioners identify with themes within traditional martial arts, and as those themes reflect the larger cultural entity, practitioners through their involvement come feel represented by society as a whole. Explicitly in the promotion of Haidong Gumdo I have

observed the expectation that the discipline will instruct and promote respect for elders, teamwork and other concepts that reflect traditional Confucian values. Thus it is the martial arts system, based on traditional themes that extends back into the domain of Korean society.

In the second year of the 16th king of Koguryo, Kogukwon, about 333 AD (Ha 1972), according to my informants, Sulbon Sunil, a famous martial artist of the time, extended the training of General Yu-Yu and introduced the title of Samurang. This title was bestowed to recognize distinguished martial artists who had defended the kingdom. It was accorded great reverence and respect from the people of the kingdom, at least as long as the Samurang remained successful in the kingdom's defense. Sulbon Sunil then named a group of his best students as his successors and called them the Haidong Mussa. The Haidong Mussa were obligated to open schools and train students, a sort of "noblesse oblige". The training regimen established by General Yu-Yu was used by the Samurang and would remain the core of the tradition as it evolved over the years.

It is important to note several aspects of the relationship between the Samurang and the Koguryo Kingdom. My informants suggested that the Samurang were an autonomous body, but supported by the Monarchy. They defended the kingdom and in return the kingdom provided them with the resources to perform their training. They were vassals of the Koguryo king but the leader of their organization was not of the royal family. Support from the king came in terms of funding, land grants, and referrals for students. Using these resources, the Samurang were able to create and maintain a

formidable force that was highly successful. With the Shilla Unification of 688 AD., the Koguryo dynasty was ended and supplanted by the Shilla government. Without the support of the king and his people, the Samurang could not hope to maintain their organization. That is not to say that the Samurang ceased to exist with the loss of royal backing. Although they were not able to maintain their previous stature the Samurang continued. Some of the Samurang returned to the Pecktu mountain range and many others moved to the lands of Parhae.

The peak of the relationship between the Samurang and the Koguryo Dynasty was seen between 391-412 A.D (Ha 1972). This was when my informants suggested that the Samurang aided King Kwanggaet'o in expanding the kingdom's territory to include the northern region that later became the kingdom of Parhae. Further, they argue that the Samurang successfully turned back a series of Chinese invasions during the Wei, Sui and T'ang dynasties (Ha 1972).

I would like to make a jump ahead in time at this point so that I might outline fully the Chinese attempts at conquest in Koguryo. It is important to outline the Chinese invasions of Korea due to the impact that violence these wars had on the perception of Korean identity. The Wei invasion of 246 A.D. (Ha 1972). Ultimately had little effect, but later incursions were more substantial. Both the Sui Dynasty and the T'ang sensed an opportunity on the Korean peninsula and attacked. In the first major invasion of Koguryo, in 612 AD (Ha 1972), during the Sui Dynasty, General Ulchi- mundok and the Koguryo army repulsed a much larger invading army. My informants suggest that the seemingly invincible Sui with over a million were defeated at Sal-su by Ulchi-mundok, a Koguryo

General, and twenty-thousand Koguryo martial artists (Ha 1972). While considering the numbers involved in this well-known historical engagement, I would like to recall our earlier statements concerning the necessity historical accuracy to the tradition that participants hold.

Then in 644 A.D., Taizong of T'ang (Ha 1972) led another Chinese invasion against Koguryo. Like their predecessors, the T'ang were routed, this time at Ansi Fortress. Unlike their predecessors, the T'ang would have another opportunity to achieve their ambition of dominating the region, one that took advantage of the internal politics of the Han peninsula.

The threats to Koguryo came not only from foreign aggression. Within the Han Peninsula, the linguistically and culturally linked kingdoms of Shilla and Peckje had territorial ambitions of their own, leading to innumerable border skirmishes between the Three Kingdoms. Koguryo was the largest of the three and perhaps at the height of its glory might have been able to defeat the other two. However, my Korean informants argue that the geographic location effectively made it the barrier to Chinese expansion, but the recurring battles with Chinese invaders prevented Koguryo from achieving dominance over its brethren.

When I speak of nostalgia for the Samurang I refer to a modern conceptualization of a particular historical period characterized by increasing Korean strength and the security that was provided. This is nostalgia for conceptions of growth and strength experienced by Koguryo that peaked during the reign of King Kwanggaet'o (391-413

AD.) (Ha 1972). It is nostalgia for a sense of invincibility, or Korean indomitability that attracts the hearts and minds of Korean people.

In the wake of the huge northern expansion by King Kwanggaet'o, the kingdoms of Shilla and Peckje joined in a military alliance in 433 A.D.(Ha 1972) Beginning with this alliance, Shilla then set in motion a chain of events that resulted in their unification of the Han peninsula.

In 532 A.D., Shilla began a gradual conquest of the tiny kingdoms of the Kaya (42 AD-562AD) (Ha 1972), the least known of the ancient kingdoms. In 551 AD., Shilla then broke its alliance with Peckje and expanded into that kingdom, moving as far as the Han river. Shilla then decided to return its attention to Kaya, completing their annexation by 562 A.D.

With the addition of the lands of Kaya, Shilla felt it had a strong enough base to make a bid for control over both Peckje and Koguryo. This led to another invasion of Peckje, and this time, Shilla's aim was nothing less than total conquest (Ha 1972). To reinforce its effort, Shilla proposed an alliance with the T'ang Chinese that would result in a joint invasion. The T'ang, having been repulsed once but still desiring to move into the Han peninsula, accepted. In 660 A.D., the Shilla and their T'ang Chinese allies attacked together and quickly defeated Peckje (Ha 1972). Shilla and T'ang did not find so easy a foe in the Samurang of Koguryo. For eight more years, the Samurang succeeded in staving off armies from both north and the south. Only in 668 A.D. did

Shilla and the Tang finally defeated Koguryo. This resulted in unification of the peninsula and ended the reign the last King of Koguryo, Wang Pojang.

After the Shilla unification, my informants supply that, the Samurang found themselves warriors without a banner. Those who remained behind in the traditional Korean territories found themselves in a hostile environment. No longer did they enjoy wealth or status as defenders of the nation. Even more damaging to them was a growing perception that military technology and numbers had become more important to military success than a select group of highly trained martial artists. With their source of income gone, their student body dwindled, schools disappeared and members of the group scattered. Some continued to teach in seclusion on Mt. Pecktu, on the new border between China and Shilla Korea. Others went to Parhae, which was founded as a distinct kingdom in 698 A.D. which would survive until 926 A.D.

Meanwhile, it was Shilla's turn to be betrayed by its allies. The T'ang Chinese, no longer satisfied with their original agreement with Shilla, decided to try to add all of the former kingdoms of Peckje and Koguryo to their territory. It was not until 671 AD., that Shilla was able to drive the T'ang out of the former Peckje kingdom, and it took a further five years, until 676 A.D., for Shilla to defeat the T'ang completely and established hegemony over most of the peninsula. The final border between the Korean and Chinese people was established within the boundaries of the traditional lands of Koguryo.

The narrative of the Samurang, provided by my informants, becomes somewhat obscured at this time. It seems that the passing of the Samurang from the public eye and

into relative obscurity served to also prevented documentation of the people who continued to practice in the tradition of the Samurang. The eventual reappearance of the descendants of the Samurang will be made later in this chapter. I will continue with my discussion of the conflicts in Korean history with the intention of detailing the events that will be argued prompt the perceived distortion of Korean traditional identity.

The next major foreign invasion did not come until 1592-98, when Japanese forces invaded the Korean peninsula (Han 1970). Again we see Korea's strategic location attracting unwanted attention, as Japan sought to use Korea as a staging area for even greater ambitions on Chinese territory. The impact of the Japanese invasions, however, went far beyond military destruction. Unlike the Chinese, the Japanese were not at all concerned with existing in relative peace, and their occupation is still remembered by many Koreans as particularly bloody despite more than five hundred years that have elapsed. Japanese occupation forces set about colonizing Korean territory and expropriating craftsmen and other skilled artisans. While this Japanese invasion never did encompass the entirety of the peninsula, the brutality of the occupational forces became widely known, breeding an enduring resentment that was compounded by the much later Japanese occupation and colonization in the twentieth century.

The Japanese invaded again in 1905 which in 1910 turned to outright colonization (Han 1970, Ha 1977). This had numerous devastating effects on Korea. First and foremost was the end of the Chosun Dynasty and the loss of the last Chosun ruler, King Ko-jung (Ha 1972). Japanese policy included a concerted attempt at assimilation and the extermination of the Korean culture. The Japanese government made the Korean

language and culture illegal. Schools were taught in Japanese and students were forced to accept a Japanese-styled name in lieu of their own. Japanese martial arts were taught in schools, replacing traditional Korean styles (Malesewski 1993). Physical hardship also was used to soften Korean identity, and Korean resources such as rice and other foodstuffs were taken to feed the Japanese war machine, resulting in massive deprivation across Korea. A list of horror stories committed by the occupying forces would be long indeed but are an important part of Korean discourses on history and identity.

Probably the most horrifying example, noted by my informants, was the Japanese occupational policy of sending young Korean females to serve as “comfort women” for the Japanese military throughout Asia during World War II (Byun 1997). Compounding this atrocity was the practice of the Japanese military when in retreat to abandon ‘nonessential’ assets such as the Korean women. The result of this was that many Korean women found themselves alone and destitute in foreign countries, unable to contact their families. Even during my stay in Korea in the mid-1990s, I would see newspaper articles announcing the repatriation of another Korean woman who had lived in exile for decades. One result of this is that outrage over these historical events is still quite evident within Korean society.

Despite a Korean armed resistance movement against the occupying forces, a government in exile, and many martyred resistance members inside the borders of Korea, the Japanese occupation continued until August 15, 1945, when the Japanese unconditionally surrendered to the Allied Forces to end World War II (Han 1970). At this

point, the members of the Korean resistance movement were able to re-establish an independent country.

Following the success of the Korean independence movement, however, peace lasted for only a short time. Once again, Korea's strategic geographical location attracted unwanted foreign interest, this time in the context of the Cold War. The establishment of a Communist-backed faction in the North and a democratic/capitalist-backed faction in the South set the stage for the most materially destructive war in Korea's history. On June 25, 1950, the Communist regime in the North began an all-out offensive against the South (Han 1970). During the ensuing conflict, the vast majority of the peninsula was flattened and multitudes were left homeless. Even after the fighting ended with an armed truce in 1953, the demilitarised zone left families fractured. And with many people separated from their homes, destitution was widespread.

Beyond their human and economic toll, the conflicts of the past century have involved widespread cultural devastation and thereby limited the ability of future generations to form a conception of Korean traditional identity. In Kwangju, for instance, where I studied Haidong Gumdo, there is a road called 'Kum-nam-no'. This road is a major thoroughfare in the downtown core. It was built on the site of a palace dating to the Three Kingdoms period. In an attempt to remove vestiges of Korean culture the occupying forces demolished this cultural icon. This is just one example of many sites that were destroyed. These sites were objects that combined to provide information on the Korean historic record. Every time one of these objects was destroyed, a strand of connection to the past was broken.

It was not an uncommon occurrence in my research to be stonewalled while trying to discern historical connections. Often, when I would ask my informants for historical records to support what I was being told, they would indicate that the evidence had been destroyed. Many historical texts such as the Muye Dobo Tongji (Kim 2000), have been recompiled in other languages and painstakingly translated back into the original Korean. Antiquities that could provide insight into our discussion of Korean history would be a very rare and valuable indeed. My informants suggested that if artifacts had survived, they would undoubtedly be held by a private collector. Further my informants were convinced that such collectors would be unlikely to divulge its existence on the fear that the item would be expropriated by the authorities. Antiquities of this level of cultural importance would undoubtedly attract unwanted official attention.

In addition to the loss of such physical connections to traditional identity, the process of economic recovery created further strains. The cease-fire from the Civil War was followed by rapid industrialization. Many Koreans blamed their earlier isolation for the success of the Japanese invasion. To compensate for this perceived mistake, South Korea adopted a strategy of rapid change, industrialization and aggressive international trade.

With the help of Korea's Western allies, this process moved extraordinarily fast in South Korea, and the speed of change itself exacerbated the usual effects of industrialization on cultural behavior and norms. Urbanization always results in a strain or loss of relationships with those who remain in traditional rural locations. Industrialization and urbanization are not often conducive to maintaining traditional

systems and structures. People tended to lose the sense of connection with the past that comes from living in an ancestral home.

Relocating to accommodate a job market is a common practice in industrialized Korea. As people are required to transplant themselves, many of the traditional patterns of life are threatened. Within Korean society, for instance, there are two times of year that require people to return to their traditional lands. The first is 'Chu-sok' and the other is 'Sola'. Chu-sok is a commemorative Day for one's departed ancestry. Families gather, graves are tended, and family members are remembered. Sola commemorates the lunar new year and is also an occasion for families to gather. Koreans connect to the idea of traditional lands on a deeper level than nationalism. With the reverence for ancestry that is so much a Confucian ideal, the land where ancestors are buried provides an intimate connection between individual and the ancestor. During periods of Chu-sok and Sola, you can almost hear a pin drop in major cities because so many people have left to visit their ancestral homes. But with the growing concentration of the population in urban areas, travel becomes increasingly difficult. Traffic jams at these times of year are legendary as everyone tries to go somewhere else. The result is that these celebrations of traditional values and identity become sources of considerable stress on the Korean people instead a source of comfort.

Through a combination of damage that was a product of historical Chinese attacks, the Japanese invasions, subsequent civil war, and the following rapid industrialization of the country we can begin to appreciate how a high level of perceived cultural distortion might have occurred. This perceived cultural distortion of identity has

resulted in a “hyper-reverence” (Given 2001), a sacralization of the previously mundane, for the remaining traditional structures. It also has created an environment receptive to the revitalization of a connection to traditional identity.

It is in the face of the destruction of material culture that Korean people see a real value in traditional martial arts. With the loss of so many material aspects of the cultural record, the best means of connecting to a traditional symbolic system is to rely on the record contained within a living oral medium. Traditional martial arts have the ability to convey an understanding of traditional themes in cultural expressions, even though material records of those traditional themes have been lost. Even in the face of material devastation, an important means of discussing traditional identity has been preserved.

It should be acknowledged here that Haidong Gumdo is a construction of traditional identity. While this is true it should also be noted that a construction is not always a recreation. Considering the uniformity of human form, method of understanding, and objects that are used to convey traditional themes it is reasonable to suggest that the system constructed will closely resemble, if not match the desired traditional identity.

In 1961, according to historical information provided by the World Haidong Gumdo Federation, a descendant of the Haidong Mussa, Master Jang Baek San, passed on his knowledge of the art to Master Kim Jeong Ho at his school in the Kwanak Mountains near Seoul. It was with this knowledge and authority that Kim Jung Ho was

able to establish the World Haidong Gumdo Federation in 1988, the official, contemporary entity of the tradition of the Samurang. This organization is dedicated to expanding and disseminating the martial art of Haidong Gumdo. The tradition of the Samurang, as stated before is rooted in the training regimen established by General Yu-Yu of the Koguryo. The martial art of Haidong Gumdo has been expanded to include the swordsmanship of Peckje, represented by the “Sang-su Gum-baup” (two handed sword techniques), and the Shilla, Bon-guk gum-baup, to the existing Koguryo technique repertoire. “Sang-su Gum baup”, or two handed method, is reminiscent of the styles of Japanese traditions and is derived from techniques associated with the kingdom of Peckje. This is not surprising in that Peckje was known to have had the best relations with the Japanese Empire. On several occasions, scholars from Peckje would be employed to instruct the Imperial children (Ha 1972). The relationship was so strong that the Japanese mounted an unsuccessful attempt to reinforce their allies in Peckje during the Shilla advance that produced the unification of 668. “Bon-guk Gum-baup”, my informants tell me, is a derivative of a term for Korean martial artists, given by the Chinese during the three Kingdoms period. The term has been also been affiliated with the Shilla Dynasty by my informants. With the inclusion of these various styles to form this pan-Korean sword style, the interest as an authentic Korean martial art has not dissipated. In fact this inclusiveness is seen as a strengthening of the style, incorporating the full variance of Korean swordsmanship.

Empirical data to support the magnitude of the proliferation of this martial art is

available. As a certified master within the World Haidong Gumdo Federation, publications that will assist in providing insight into the scope of the organisation, are available to me. For example the directory of the various masters and their schools throughout Korea can provide insight into how many Korean people have chosen this path. At the time of printing of my copy (2000), the World Haidong Gumdo consisted of three hundred listed Korean schools. Considering the short time that this federation has been in existence, it is reasonable to suggest that it is in a state of rapid growth. In my own instructor's school there were anywhere between one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty students in training. On my fourth "Dan" certification is noted how many of those certificates of that nature exist at that time. The number on my certification marks me as the seven hundred and thirty second person to graduate to that level. This means that there are at least seven hundred and thirty two people who have the certification to open their own training facilities. Disregarding schools outside of Korea or the potential for the increase in numbers of schools within Korea over time, it is reasonable to say that participation in Haidong Gumdo is an activity on a national level.

The alleviation of perceived distortion of traditional identity

A motivation for engaging in Haidong Gumdo is often an attempt at a constructing a connection between the individual and symbolic system. This practice promises that development provides a means of identification with traditional themes that I assert alleviates the perceived distortion of traditional identity. To assess whether or not this system accomplishes this, my informants responded that through being involved in

the practice of traditional martial arts they are exposed to specific historical narratives that provide a conception of traditional Korea. This conception is composed of a history that portrays Korean historical society in terms of pride and strength. Through exposure to these historical narratives, my classmates feel they have become a repository for this kind of conception. That is, through participation in the practice of Haidong Gumdo they feel that they develop an understanding that would not have otherwise been available to them in mainstream of Korean society.

Support for my informants' explanation is provided through observations that I was able to make. One of the qualities that are promised by Haidong Gumdo is the ability to instil a sense of traditional etiquette in participants. As this promise attracts would-be practitioners and as this organisation continues to expand I assert that there must be a general sense that this practice does lead to the alleviation of a perceived distortion of Korean traditional identity.

This chapter discussed Korean history and its impact on the self-perception of Korean identity. As stated before, motivation for the Korean movement to revitalize traditional identity is based on a perceived distortion of Korean self-identity. Within this chapter we have noted the influence war experienced by the Korean people and how those conflicts impacted on the material connection to Korea's historical identity. Further, we have reflected on contemporary Korean society and how the rapid economic development and urbanization, affects the connection to traditional identity.

With the destruction of the material threads that tie Koreans to a sense of traditional identity, and the straining of others, oral or performative expressions of culture gain a special importance. It is in this light that I will proceed in the following chapter to explore the martial art of Haidong Gumdo as a culturally appropriate symbolic strategy for producing what many Koreans believe to be an authentic experience of Korean traditional identity. I will examine the symbolic equations, and the symbols that compose them that are integral to Haidong Gumdo and which represent Korean traditional themes provided by Buddhism and Confucianism. I will discuss how, through a model of symbolic penetration, how practitioners of traditional martial arts can come to make a connection to Korean traditional identity.

Chapter 3

Symbolic Expressions of Korean Traditional Themes

In this chapter I will examine the concept of 'traditional themes', to put into perspective the symbolic expressions within Haidong Gumdo that many Koreans see as the means for preservation or revitalization of tradition. To detail the symbolic expression of Haidong Gumdo, I will examine the symbolic equations of "Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk" and "Choong-Hyo-Aye-Eyue", which are used to explain to the practitioner the process of personal development within the martial arts. Further, I will link these symbolic expressions to traditional Buddhist and Confucian themes. It is through these connections to traditional themes that Haidong Gumdo is tied to Korean traditional identity and conveys a particularly Korean understanding of those themes to the practitioner.

Martial arts are usually associated with the development of potentially destructive skills. However, the limits of "traditional" martial arts are not set in their applicability. Historically, martial arts were required to train and prepare in order to defend oneself, one's family or national interest. While, in contemporary society, the use of traditional martial arts to settle disputes through violence is almost unthinkable, there will always be elements in society who will misuse traditional teachings. These misunderstandings do not reflect the conception of traditional martial arts that was taught to me and is described here. Previously I have defined traditional martial arts with reference to the expression of traditional cultural themes. I would expand it to include those systems that not only

espouse traditional teachings, but embody them in action as well. It is in the process of personal development associated with martial arts, which promotes the development of those skills and ideologies for their own sake, that my informants found value in the practice.

When one engages in the kind of preparation associated with meeting a life or death struggle there are certain disciplines that must be acquired. The conditioning of the body and the disciplining of the mind provide strength and control over the practitioner's developing abilities, while determination and focus enable individuals to develop. Such qualities however are useful not just to those preparing for conflict. Physical aptitude and mental discipline are two sets of qualities that may be construed in terms of general personal development. It is this utopian goal of self-development that is emphasized and may have redirected the perspective of contemporary martial artists away from violent use of traditional teachings. The traditional martial artist strives to develop mentally and physically not for the purpose of defending their homeland but for the more individual benefits of "traditional" personal development. To develop an understanding of this concept of development I would like to turn this discussion to specific symbolic expressions within Haidong Gumdo.

Expressions of traditional themes

The introduction of these expressions of traditional themes to practitioners will be discussed in detail in chapter four at length. I will provide discussion of how expressions

are specifically communicated, at that time. For now I will point out that practitioners are exposed to these expressions at the outset of their training. Expressions of traditional themes are explicit in the ritualized agenda of the training sessions and explanations given by the instructor. Additional expressions are conveyed through physical symbolic expressions displayed in the training area.

The basis for the discussion below are based in part based on my participant observation experience. In preparation to instruct this martial art, I have been able to receive instruction in the interpretation of the process. Interview data from taped sessions discussing my observations with Master Cho Kyoung Ik, provide a Korean interpretation of my experience.

I will begin this discussion with an examination of symbolic expressions in Haidong Gumdo that reflects traditional themes. In order to discuss the connections between Haidong Gumdo and traditional Buddhist and Confucian themes I will rely on others (Schumann 1973, Chai 1973, Chung 1995, Kalton 1994, Given 1993, 2002, Rahula 1959, Turner & Bruner 1982).

Chun Chi In Tul Mu Guk

“Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk” describes a process by which the practitioners of Haidong Gumdo symbolically express their experience. With this process comes a sense that human power, or “Ki”, is generated, and an understanding that it continually

recreates both itself and the practitioner's mind and body. The cultivation of "Ki" allows individuals to exceed boundaries that they had been previously thought to be unattainable.

The first two symbols within the motif of "Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk", are "Chun-chi". The combinations of these two symbols provide a basis of the power that is provided by the existence of life. "Chun" is the symbol for sky. Huge in its expanse, Sky provides the respiratory sustenance that is essential for human survival. When practicing abdominal breathing exercises, practitioners of Haidong Gumdo are encouraged to visualize inhalations as being incandescent with "energy" derived from the environment. With the symbol for sky "Chi" is bundled the symbol for earth, or "Chun". This symbol provides another form of "energy" to the practitioner. With the exclusion of the air we breathe, the earth provides all the necessary sustenance that produce the natural energy that the human form requires. Through "Chun-chi" provides for energy that we derive from our environment.

Within this symbolic motif lies the potential of directing that energy. The instrument of directing this living energy, is represented by the symbol, "In". The symbol "In" represents a person as a nexus, as a focusing device for the energy provided by the environment, or "Chun-chi". It is here that the uniform nature of the human form reflects the universal commonality with the possession of Energy or "Ki". It is this raw energy of Chun-chi, expressed as "Ki" within the individual that is the basis for the beginning of

training. Becoming aware of this energy and desiring to cultivate it marks the beginning of the process. With this awareness comes the prospect of gaining influence over the application of this energy. My teachers suggested that through persistence, and understanding of the factors involved, a measure of control can be asserted.

The next symbol in the equation is “Tul”. “Tul” translates as a framework or window. For the purposes of Haidong Gumdo, “Tul” represents the model for the conditioning represented by Haidong Gumdo. It is through this framework that the “Ki”, contributed by the “Chun-Chi”, can be taken under control and directed under the practitioners’ will. It is this development of control that allows the final sequence in this progression to emerge.

Given (1993) provides us with a model of a symbolic control system. Symbols used to express traditional symbolic systems develop a symbolic representation, which is considered appropriate for the production of extra-ordinary experience (Turner & Bruner 1986). A mechanism of a symbolic control requires that first a “symbolic paradigm” (Given 1993) be established by the practitioner. It is based on this paradigm, through repeated exposures that the paradigm comes to be more progressively approximated within the practitioners’ experience.

“Mu-guk” is a symbol that refers to the fulfilment of a boundless potential. It describes the surpassing of boundaries. Focused by the practice of Haidong Gumdo, the

“Ki” derived from the “Chun-chi” energy finds its nexus in the practitioner, is taken under control and then enables the practitioner to move beyond previously perceived limits as these limits continuously recede and are redefined through practices based upon the new model.

Traditional themes embedded within the symbolic equation of “Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk” reflect Buddhist and Confucian concepts. One prominent reflection is of the concept of “conditioned origination” (Schumann 1973), also known as “conditioned genesis” (Rahula 1959), interdependent origination (Given 2002), and dependent origination (Massanari 2001: 248). This concept is a premise for understanding the process of the individual in the cycle of life. This process begins with the individual being unaware of the underlying currents in their existence. The perception of these underlying processes in the individual is the first step. It is the awakening to the chaotic process that gives birth to questions of how these chaotic processes might be controlled. Through prescribed actions the practitioner can come to be conscious of and attempt to navigate the tides and eddies of his or her own existence. Within the concept of conditioned origination is the idea that each moment pre-conditions the moments that follow it. That is, conditions that we experience are guided into existence by the conditions that preceded them. This is not to be taken as a fatalistic, deterministic view, but rather purports to state a natural law of cause and effect [Karma] and implies that through continuous effort the preconditions of existence can be consciously herded by the individual toward desired conditioning of following moments. With continuous effort the individual develops

awareness through following a specific method that builds an increasingly complex understanding of the preconditions of their experience.

Buddhist themes are syncretically embedded within the symbolic system of the martial art of Haidong Gumdo. The symbolic equation of “Chun-chi In Tul Mu-guk” reflects process whereby one moment pre-conditions the next (Schumann 1973). Awareness of “Ki”, and its development motivate the experience of the participant. The “Chun-chi” that culminates as the practitioner, continually is modified through effort and the boundaries of the perception of ability recede.

For Confucian scholars the human quality of “In” also carries special importance. “Jen”, the highest form of humanity is synonymous with “In” (Chai 1973) in Korean discourse on the topic. This is important here because of the implications concerning the nature of humanity in Confucian literature. This literature suggests that people are generically disposed towards maintaining social organization and that it is only a lack of preparedness for the trials of life that result in deeds contrary to the good of the whole.

The triad “Chun-chi-In” equation marks an inexperienced state of life. In this equation the raw energy of life exists in a state of ignorance of itself. In the first flickers of awareness, the resolution of Chun-chi-In, the following symbols are prompted into action. Like the Buddhist gaining awareness of suffering as a premise, Haidong Gumdo also holds that development within the symbolic system begins in awareness of “Chun-

chi-In” or “Ki”. With the beginnings of an awareness of “Chun-chi-In”, the syllogism “Tul” is prompted.

As Given (1993) notes in relation to Buddhist Tantric teachings and the topic of the Inner Body Mandala, I would suggest that “Tul” also offers a similar vehicle whereby one’s phenomenological world may be recreated. “Tul”, the framework that guides experience, is a symbol that promises change and whispers of future possibilities. Buddhism holds that through continuous effort, we can develop our understanding of the cause of suffering. “Tul” shares this premise. It is through continuous application of the system embedded in “Tul” that development is possible. The framework, or “Tul”, of Haidong Gumdo is reliant on the equation “Choong Hyo Aye Euye”. Orientating on “Choong Hyo Aye Euye”, in the process of developing in Haidong Gumdo, allows traditional Confucian themes to be communicated to practitioners. Through development pre-conditioned and guided by “Chun-chi-In-Tul”, “Mu-guk” is achieved.

“Mu-guk” is a symbol that represents receding boundaries. Through “Chun-chi-In-Tul”, individuals develop awareness of the underlying currents of Ki, and attempt to learn to guide it. The concept of higher-order models (Given 1993:97) is based on the premise that models created become the basis for further “higher-order” models. By focusing on specific symbolic objects within the system, production phenomenology that is prerequisite to the production of further experiences at a higher level of integration takes place. This is by no means a cataclysmic effect but a cycle that is continuous and

builds upon itself to produce a gradual development within the practitioner of the phenomenology and world-view upon which Haidong Gumdo training is predicated. The goal of this process for Buddhism is the cessation of the suffering that is believed built into composite and impermanent existence or “Samsara” (Given 2002). For Haidong Gumdo the goal of this process is development, cultivation, and understanding for its own sake. Both systems share the quality that through continuous effort the practitioner can enact guided incremental developments towards a goal of awareness and growth.

The symbolic equation of “Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk”, rooted in a shared history with Buddhism, reflects a symbolic syncretism with respect to their common themes. It is a process concerned with development of awareness, based on the premise that existence is pre-conditioned by the effect of past actions. Neither system is fatalistic in the assumption that we are at the whim of the composite results of past events and actions. There is the acceptance that the conditioning of further events can be guided, through continuous effort, towards desired results.

While Confucianism and Buddhism share what seems to be common goal of personal development of consciousness, there is a difference in the desired effects of their respective goals. Korean Buddhism based on the Mahayana school of Buddhism is oriented toward the consciousness and development of the individual in an inward fashion, irrespective of society. With Confucianism there is an interest in development, but concerned with outward relationships among individuals in society with social order

as the priority. Korean society as a whole is not uniform in the choice of integration of these influences. Both influences can readily be seen as traditional themes exclusively, but the combination of the two themes is not essential for a traditional designation. Haidong Gumdo includes and integrates, both Confucian and Buddhist influences in its representation to its practitioners. I would make the case that Haidong Gumdo syncretically integrates Confucianism and Buddhism at different levels of training. The expression of “Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk” describes the root, method and extent of individual development. This process is situated in a realm exclusive of society and unconcerned with the development of exterior relationships, and reminiscent of Buddhist interests. The equation, “Choong-Hyo-Aye-Euye”, clearly demonstrates Confucian influences in its predisposition for the maintenance of proper relationships. It is in the method by which these two traditional influences are overlaid to produce a narrative that mutually discusses development of the individual as well as how that development must be guided by the need to maintain relations for the common good.

Choong Hyo Aye Euye

A discussion of the symbolic equation of “Choong Hyo Aye Euye” will help us to understand the influence of Korean traditional Confucian themes. The teachings of Confucius, integral to Koreans’ sense of “traditional identity”, are concerned with the maintenance of *proper relationships* within society. Though cultivating “Jen” (Chai 1973), or “human-heartedness”, proper relationships can be maintained, resulting in a peacefully utopian society. “Jen” is the quality that is humanity, or humanitarianism.

“Jen” suggest a humanitarian interest in working for the common good of society. It is the emphasis upon society being ultimately important that is basis of Confucian thought. According to Confucius, at the heart of the human condition are four human “virtues”, prompted by four “beginnings” as well as seven human “passions”. It is by developing the four human virtues and suppressing the seven passions that humanity maintains order and that people are able to distinguish themselves as human.

The four Confucian virtues developed in the pursuit of “Jen” (humanitarianism) are benevolence, wisdom, proper etiquette, and righteousness. The development of the four virtues is rooted in “beginnings”. The virtue of benevolence begins with commiseration; wisdom begins with moral discernment; courtesy and modesty lead to proper etiquette; shame and dislike breed righteousness. Benevolence expresses a sincere interest in the good of all society, an extreme form of civic mindedness. The virtue of wisdom, based on moral discernment, allows the individual to decide what action is appropriate in the interest of the society as a whole. Proper etiquette is a set of ritualized guidelines for the maintenance of relationships within society. Given specific situations, the individual is provided with activities that will provide prescribed responses to those situations. Righteousness is the drive to act in proper manner. The good intentions that are cultivated through the use of proper etiquette form the development of moral discernment of wisdom, and benevolence, that lead to an individual acting in the highest form of human behavior of “Jen/In”. While Confucianism requires developing the four virtues, it also prescribes the suppression of the seven passions of pleasure, anger, sorrow,

fear, love, hatred, and desire that obstruct development. Through this method, proper relationships are maintained within a society.

It is in the four human virtues of benevolence, wisdom, proper etiquette, and righteousness that we find a connection to the symbolic expressions within Haidong Gumdo. The symbolic equation of “Choong Hyo Aye Euye”, expressed by Haidong Gumdo, corresponds to the human virtues of proper etiquette and righteousness. In these virtues that there is a suggestion of the beginnings of development. The cultivation of these virtues will result in examples of filial piety and loyalty.

The symbol “Choong”, within symbolic system of Haidong Gumdo, represents *loyalty*, which is often expressed as *nationalism*. Under Confucianism, individuals have a moral imperative to act in the best interests of the group as a whole. By this reasoning, loyalty to the group to which they belong is essential. While not essentially corresponding to one of the four virtues, *loyalty* is based on concepts of *righteousness* and *proper etiquette*. It is loyalty that is the cohesive force that prevents the dissolution of society.

“Hyo”, or *filial piety*, the highest expression of human nature, requires respect for ancestry. Again, like the concept of *loyalty*, *filial piety* is an expression of concepts of *righteousness* and *proper etiquette*. Through *filial piety*, according to Confucianism, the individual comes as close as possible to achieving “Jen”. “Hyo” accepts that the existence of the individual is rooted in the ancestry that created it. Under this premise we cannot

own ourselves, we belong to our ancestry.

Historically in Korea, men would not cut their hair or beards because they did not want to intentionally interfere with the gift their ancestry had afforded them. Recalling my opening remarks in this chapter, I would suggest that the concept of filial piety demand peaceful reactions by traditional martial artists to conflict. It is for the preservation of the body that is derived from our parents that we refrain from damaging encounters. To engage in violence for personal gain or egotism requires jeopardizing our ancestral property.

“Aye”, corresponds to the idea of *proper etiquette*, proper conduct and attitude. Confucius argued that through the cultivation of proper conduct and attitude in society, in combination with the nature of righteousness, “Jen” could be achieved. The impact of “Aye” also promotes ceremonial actions for the proper maintenance of social relationships. Etiquette acts as a precursor for the development of the sentiments associated with the behavior, but the behavior itself produces social benefits even in the absence of the attitudes that purport to be antecedent to them.

“Euye” directly translates as *Righteousness*. According to Confucian thought, that righteousness is necessary for humanity to achieve the concept of “Jen”. Righteousness is an important unconditional moral imperative that guides the individual in their actions and thoughts toward conceptions of “Jen”.

The relation between the four Confucian virtues and the symbolic equation of Chung-Hyo-Aye-Euye is not direct. For a full expression of Confucian virtues I must turn to the “Haidong Gumdo In Ye Gil” (The way of Haidong Gumdo people). The English translation of this statement, currently published on all documentation of certification within the World Haidong Gumdo Federation, does little justice to the eloquence of the original Korean. However, it is necessary to discuss the inclusion of the virtues of benevolence and wisdom that is not apparent in the equation itself. This statement, while unique in its specific wording, clearly expresses Confucian themes.

The basis for a connection is rooted in the virtues of “Aye” and “Euye”, or *proper etiquette* and *righteousness*. It is through the practice of these virtues that impacts on development. *Loyalty* and *filial piety* are expressions of the virtues being developed within the individual. The virtues of *benevolence* and *wisdom* depend upon the early development of the virtue of *proper etiquette* and *righteousness*. With the *righteousness* being guided by proper action, moral discernment develops, leading to *wisdom*. With wisdom the student is able to commiserate with others, leading to the virtue benevolence that will enable them to truly work towards “Jen/In”, or *humanitarianism*.

To trace the influence of *benevolence* and *wisdom* I turn to “The way of Haidong Gumdo people”, as published by the World Haidong Gumdo Federation. This passage contains the equation of “Choong-Hyo-Aye-Euye” and expands on the virtues evidenced in the equation to provide for the development of the virtues of *wisdom* and *benevolence*.

Through this pledge practitioners are initially exposed to this symbolic expression of Korean traditional themes. The practitioner promises, as a descendant of the Samurang, to “follow truth and fear untruth”. This reference, my informants tell me, is to the virtue of wisdom. This moral discernment of truth reflects a discernment of the efficacy for the method to achieve desired goals. Benevolence is reflected in the passage that expresses sincerity in the interest in the good of all, “deep down in the heart”. Up to this point, the practitioner is concerned with the maintenance of proper relationships, within society, through cultivation of the four virtues beginning with righteousness guided by proper etiquette. This leads to moral discernment and wisdom, which in turn promotes commiseration and the sincere benevolence to act in a truly civic-minded way.

Considering the integral importance of Confucianism to Korean society, relations between the symbolic expressions and Confucian virtues, suggests an intentional syncretic integration of Buddhist and Confucian themes in Haidong Gumdo. In this chapter I have discussed the traditional themes embedded in Haidong Gumdo, expressed by the symbolic equations of “Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk” and “Choong Hyo Aye Euye”. It is through these shared traditional themes of Buddhism and Confucianism, that Haidong Gumdo makes available a connection to themes of Korean traditional identity.

In the following chapter I will have recourse to concepts from biogenetic structuralism, the anthropology of experience and literature on initiation rites. Haidong Gumdo expresses a syncretism of traditional Buddhist and Confucian themes as they are

expressed in the Korean construction of “traditional” Korean identity. I will discuss how the traditional Korean themes embedded in the symbolic expression of Haidong Gumdo can produce experiences for its practitioners that are believed to embody Korean traditional identity. Further, I will discuss how the connection between themes of Korean traditional identity and the practitioner, can facilitate shifts in phenomenology whereby those traditional cultural themes can be experienced.

Chapter 4

Traditional Martial Art Systems and Experience

The goal of this thesis is to examine the role of Haidong Gumdo as a part of a Revitalization Process of traditional identity among many Koreans. In this chapter, I will discuss the role of Haidong Gumdo as a symbolic process designed to promote an experience of central qualities of Korean identity. I will describe the process where the training method of Haidong Gumdo through shifts in consciousness promotes extraordinary experiences (Laughlin, McManus, d'Aquili 1990). Through a model of symbolic penetration (Webber 1980), deep experiences of Korean traditional themes are developed by the practitioner. Through the process of equilibration (Laughlin, McManus, d'Aquili 1990), central expressions of Haidong Gumdo are instilled in participants. Through the symbolic expressions used to explain the practice of Haidong Gumdo, "Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk" and "Chung-Hyo-Aye-Euye", the practitioner comes to experience central Korean themes in a progressively complex fashion. Initiation rites (Turner & Bruner 1986) are part of this process of development through a series of tests employed in training to assist in the production and recognition of an increasingly complex understanding of the practice (Given 1993:97). Mutual legitimization marks the pinnacle of this relationship between the practitioner and the system. In this fashion participants come to identify with traditional Korean themes. Haidong Gumdo provide a method for achieving a connection to Korean traditional identity through Korean traditional themes that it expresses to its practitioners.

I will begin this chapter with a description of the Haidong Gumdo school in which I was trained. I will describe the training schedule, the regimen itself, the organization of rank and the system of testing that facilitates it. Through this description I seek to more clearly represent my experience, and provide a description of the process in which I was a participant. Through this narrative I will be able to describe more specifically how an embodiment of traditional themes can be achieved by participants. This chapter will be based primarily on participant observation data that I have accumulated. The data detailed in this chapter provides detail for the analysis to come.

Training Method

To depict the process of training, I will describe in detail the organization and the practice within the Dojang of Master Cho Kyoung Ik, where I was trained. The training schedule included classes from five to six days a week. Regular instruction takes place on weekdays. Weekends are used for special events and additional specific training. Special events would include public demonstrations, which are considered important to promote the discipline.

Excursions for purposes such as “ching-gum” practice, or cutting techniques, at scenic locations such as rivers, or at facilities that specialize in specific techniques occur with some frequency. Because swords are restricted weapons in Korea, not all students within the school were permitted to own them. In order to receive the licence required to carry a sword in Korea, a practitioner must be of twenty-one years of age. As a result,

many participants under the legal age limit used “ka-gum”, which are nonfunctional replicas that simulate the balance and weight of a sword.

Given that only a minority of practitioners own swords, instruction on the technique of cutting different materials was conducted on excursions from the school. Often these excursions would be conducted near a source for the relevant material. The town of Tam-yang, for instance, is located near Kwangju, where I was living and training. As this town is well known for its bamboo production, we often would train there so as to have access to materials. Locations of natural beauty such as rivers or mountains were popular for these sessions. Field trips had a social aspect, as this often included eating together, they provided a venue to discuss topics related to Haidong Gumdo.

During the week, there are multiple regular classes throughout the day, and students are encouraged to attend class daily. When I began in Haidong Gumdo, the usual awkwardness and confusion experienced by most practitioners were multiplied by my lack of proficiency in the Korean language. As a result of my inability to clearly understand instructions, it was necessary for me to practice more than once per day. At my registration I asked if it would be possible to train in an intensive fashion to compensate for my special needs. I was told that I could attend more than one session per day, if I wanted, but to be careful as the training is quite arduous. The training was difficult, but I was able gradually to increase my training schedule to compensate for my linguistic difficulties. Korean students in the class obviously did not have these linguistic

limitations but that was not to say their initiation to the discipline was unobstructed.

Other concerns, such as occupational duties and family obligations, were often described by my informants as impediment to their training. As a result of these impediments, attendance varied among students.

Training sessions routinely were an hour in duration. The training hall comprised the majority of the building with the front doors leading onto the training floor. To one side of the classroom were changing areas for both men and women with showers and toilet facilities. The master's office was also adjacent to the training floor. The walls were painted black and adorned with symbolic expressions of the discipline. At the front of the training hall was situated a Korean national flag. Below the flag were the Chinese characters (Chinese characters have an archaic connotation for Koreans much like Latin for Europeans) for "Samurang" and "Haidong Gumdo". Other adornments included a plaque detailing the history of the martial art as well as the testing standards for the school. One wall was lined with mirrors so practitioners can evaluate their technique. Opposite to the mirrored wall was a sword rack where the wooden training swords were lined up vertically in two rows. The floor was comprised of foam mat surfaced in thick green vinyl. My instructor told me that this style of floor was most common as it was the most economical.

Generally class sizes varied in size and demographics. Early afternoon classes tended to be small with ten to fifteen students in attendance with pre-teens comprising the

class. Later in the afternoon to early in the evening marks the height of activity in the school. During these periods a variety of people from children to middle aged practitioners of both genders attend. Class sizes at this time would swell to twenty or thirty practitioners. Later evening or night classes marked a shift towards a very serious, predominantly older group. These later classes would be somewhat smaller with attendance reaching twenty or more students. The classes were not segregated in terms of level as it was considered important for the less experienced to be surrounded by more advanced examples of the technique and manner.

The class routine itself began with ritualized bowing to the Korean flag and the teacher. A warm up and stretching practice follows, led by the highest ranking student in attendance. Both of these practices ritually define boundaries for practitioners within the Dojang. After completion of the warm up, practice of the Ki-Bong-dong-jac (basic techniques) is conducted by the instructor. Following the basic techniques there is instruction and practice of pattern techniques called Kyo-gum (sparring techniques) and Gum-baup (extended patterned technique). The closing of the class proceeds with “Kay-une-ki-gong” standing meditation. Explicit in the meditation exercise is the repetition of the expression “Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk” accompanied by prescribed gestures that describe the process of development. The meditation is followed by cool down exercises and ritualized closing by bowing to flag, teachers, other students. Again the ritualized closing of the class serves to define roles and relationships between practitioners.

“Gum-baup” varies with Dan level. In order to test for first Dan, within the World Haidong Gumdo Federation, the student must replicate twelve “Sang-su” (two-handed sword techniques), and “Shimsang” (The Test). The patterns highlight specific techniques that are progressively developed in complexity, in later patterns. “Yedo” or short sword techniques follow the graduation to first “Dan”. “Bon-guk” technique, I am told by my informants, is a name derived from a historical reference to Korean martial artists by their historical Chinese adversaries. Both the third and fourth Dan levels are undertaken through learning these patterns. “Chang-baek” techniques are begun at fourth “Dan” and are required to test for fifth Dan. Further series include “Um-yang” (Yin-Yang: Cosmic dual forces), “Tae-guk” (The great absolute of Chinese Philosophy also seen in the Korean National Flag), “Haidong” (East sea: Korea) and “Sang” (Two sword technique).

The Muye Dobo Tongji (Kim 2000) also contains these terms. “Sang-su”, “Yedo”, “Bon-guk” and “Sang-gum”, as well as others are echoed within this manual.

Beginners working toward their first Dan are considered to be at an initiate stage. They are learning basic techniques, learning to move. During this time practitioners will be casually exposed to the history of the art and its symbolic expressions, but emphasis is placed on preparation of fundamental technique and physical development. Participation in Haidong Gumdo began for me as it has for many others. I have been interested in martial arts throughout my life. Finding myself exposed to a wealth of martial art styles in Korea, I was eager for the opportunity to study.

Unlike widespread styles such as Tae Kwon Do, however, Haidong Gumdo is little known outside Korea and foreign participants are rare even within the country. As such, I found myself without the assumed knowledge that even the children seemed to have accumulated from their experiences (not an uncommon experience for an ethnographer and arguably an instructive one). Growing up in Korean society children are exposed more commonly to martial arts etiquette. As the etiquette within the training facility is based on Confucian themes that are characteristics of Korean society in general, perhaps it is understanding of their own society that prepares them for life in the Dojang.

My early participation consisted greatly of learning how behave within the school. The etiquette appropriate to training sessions was easy to absorb through repetition of the ritualized behaviors, I observed in the other members of the group. The boundaries of these rules of conduct were more difficult to fathom of course. An example of this is in the proper sitting position to be maintained in the school. On one occasion, when visiting the school during off hours, I absent-mindedly rested on my elbow while having a conversation in the Master's office. This posture produced a tremendous negative reaction. The Master very tersely informed me that a relaxed posture signifies a lack of attention for those around you and as such was not acceptable. Proper sitting posture should be maintained at all times in the school for the benefit of junior students who might see it and be influenced by it. It was the fact that I was not Korean that prevented the severe punishment that would have been dealt to a Korean student. In effect I was let off with a warning, but the Master made it very clear that a repeat performance of this

behavior would not be tolerated. The traditional themes within Haidong Gumdo pervade not just the training but include every aspect of deportment.

In early training the practitioner is exposed to a code of conduct called “In-sa Baup”. “In-sa Baup” prescribes proper methods for ritualized actions concerned with the maintenance of relationships. This code of conduct helps comprise the ritualized behavior of the symbol “Aye” in the expression “Choong Hyo Aye Euye” and in this is the ritualized framework, in conjunction with righteousness “Euye”, that guides practitioners to develop virtues of wisdom and loyalty and eventually the humanitarianism of “Jen”. Entailed in the “In sa Baup” there is a proper method for bowing, posture, method of passing the sword to someone and handling a sword. There are sitting postures combined with breathing techniques to practice when not engaged in physical practice. The formation of the class is based on student level with the most experienced in the front right position. It is this student who generally leads the class in warm-up exercises.

“In-sa Baup” regulates relationships between students, governing through ritual the conduct of training sessions. The goal of the maintenance of relationships between individuals is one Haidong Gumdo shares with Confucianism. Further, it is in this way that Haidong Gumdo shows itself to be inseparable from Korean traditional themes.

Further integration of traditional themes into the practice of Haidong Gumdo can be found in the meditative practices used. Traditional Buddhist themes can be seen in the

interest of Haidong Gumdo in the maintenance of consciousness. From the first day of training the practitioner is instructed in and practices meditative techniques of “Kay-une-ki-gong” and “Tang-jung-ho-hoop”. Like physical techniques, it is through constant practice of these techniques that their development shows.

“Tang jung ho hoop” is an abdominal breathing method for developing “Ki”. The Tang-jung is an energy nexus in the abdomen of the individual. As the individual practices this exercise, they visualize an increase in power. This practice is conducted in a sitting or kneeling position. Through controlled abdominal breathing the practitioners develop breathing habits that are essential to the practice. This technique also develops the ability of the individual to focus attention through continuous effort.

My early experience of “Tang jung ho hoop” was guided by explanations at this metaphorical level. My instructor described the apparatus of the “Tang jung” or abdominal energy center. Further the teachers instructed us to limit our perception of the experience to specific sensations while practicing the breathing exercises. Early on I found it quite difficult to perform this task even for limited times. I was concerned with other more demonstrative aspects of the martial art. Having obvious phenotypical differences can have quite an effect in a homogeneous population, and the natural self-consciousness was exacerbated by the attention my size and pigment attracted me. Not until I left the mainstream classes and began more individual training did I begin to appreciate the benefits of this technique. The effects of this style of abdominal breathing

in producing shifts in consciousness are apparent to the practice. As well I found this technique developing my respiratory system which in turn augmented my physical practice through abdominal muscle strength and endurance.

“Kay-une-ki-gong” or “Clearing the clouds”, calms the mind and builds focus. This technique is conducted in the “Kim-ma-sae” (Horse riding stance). Assuming “Kim-ma-sae”, the practitioner begins by repeating “Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk” with hand gestures relating to each segment. This technique, is physically challenging and difficult to maintain for extended periods. Performance involves gestures that symbolically remove obstruction from the path of vision. This is done through crossing arms in front, making grasping gestures with the hands which lead into circular sweeping motions with the arms, from front to back. As the hands move from front to back, the practitioner inhales using the “Tang-jung ho hoop” breathing style. The hands reverse, and push from the abdominal tang-jung area while exhaling.

Like “Tang jung ho hoop”, “Kay-une-ki-gong”, appreciation for this technique came with experience of the benefits that it had to offer. At the outset of my training, as with the rest of my classmates, I was exposed to the technique and the explanation from the teacher. Development of these techniques proceeded one step at a time. On many occasions I would question the Master for clarification or refinement of my understanding. In the end it is in the realm of experience that these understandings become clear. The technique and explanation for it were described to me quite

painstakingly, but it was only through experience that I was able to validate the practice. It was as if the explanation of the practice was communicated explicitly in a two dimensional black and white image and then eventually experienced in three dimensional colour.

Ki-bong Dong-jac (the Basics) is an essential portion of the practice of Haidong Gumdo. It is here that we find the basic building blocks of the technique. Here we find the basic stances, movements, and sword techniques that will provide the foundation for advanced techniques. Progression in the technique is based on completing tasks of increasing difficulty. This adaptation to more complex application is facilitated by previous exposure to the technique in its more rudimentary forms.

All practitioners engage in this routine at the beginning of every training session. My early experiences were frustrating. I needed to learn how to learn, to become familiar with the routines, commands and etiquette. Two of my classmates, with whom I was able to share and contrast most of my experiences, echoed my experience. It would seem for all three of us we found this time to be a very insecure and self-conscious one. Within a couple of months this routine became familiar as anything else in my day. As my participation proceeded the basic techniques became a familiar and comfortable touch-stone as new movements and applications of technique were introduced.

Shim Gumdo

I assert that the rhythmic qualities of the training session as well as the physical exertion involved in this portion of the training contain the “driving mechanisms” (Laughlin McMannus d’Aquili 1990:146) that will promote extraordinary experience. Due to the homeomorphogenesis (Laughlin McMannus d’Aquili 1990: 192) of the human nervous system, somatic systems work inter-connectedly. Thereby, the activity in one system has an affect on other systems. Activity within neural systems not associated with the production of experience affect somatic systems that do produce experience. Further, activity within “a sensorial system may produce a non-sensorial effect on some other system”(Laughlin McMannus d’Aquili 1990: 193). That is, perceptual data can come to elicit non-cognitive responses within the autonomic system. This “retuning” of the autonomic nervous system may produce a shift in consciousness which leads to transformations of experience (Laughlin McMannus d’Aquili 1990: 147). With the shift in consciousness the practitioner is faced with an experience previously outside of their cognition. The incongruities in experience cause the individual to evaluate their experience in a higher state of awareness. It is the resulting self-sensitive awareness promoted by this form of experience that facilitates reflection by the individual of the example that they emulate.

A profound example of this within my own experience is documented within email correspondence with Dr. Brian Given, that I benefitted from while in Korea. The messages discuss the effects of participation in the training. The communication expresses experiences of feelings of powerfulness and mental clarity. Through physical

exertion, respiration and the rhythmic quality of the training, I was able to affect a dramatic shift in consciousness. I mention specifically clarity or “snapping into focus”. With this state comes a reflective phenomenon whereby the experience of the passage of time is altered as well. Often after experiencing a shift in consciousness, combined with familiarity with movement that has been replicated uncounted times before, I found that my perceptual and cognitive faculties required less and less time to perform the same task. The result is that perceptually, time seems to slow and reflection on the physical technique can almost take on a ponderous aspect. The basic techniques of Haidong Gumdo are truly the mechanics of the process. They provide not only the key elements that play forward into a practitioner’s technique, but also the tools for the development of consciousness and therefore experience.

“Gup” and “Dan” grading and rites of passage

Progression through Haidong Gumdo is punctuated by a series of rankings called “Dan”. Each “Dan”, is broken down further grades called “Gup”. Early experience of “Gup” tests prepares students for their eventual Dan tests. My first “Gup” tests were easily as stressful as my first “Dan” test. I remember being very conscious of myself during those experience, every mistake, no matter how small, perceptually seemed to be exaggerated. Through repeating the process of the “Gup” test, the experience at maintaining a perceptual focus in front of an audience is developed. In a way these “Gup” experience can be seen as a teaching device for performance, which prepares the student for the “Dan” test experience.

My “Dan” test was overwhelming, a perception shared by my Korean counterparts. My first Dan test was conducted in a small town about an hour away from Kwangju, where we lived. The rationale, given by my Master for convening the test there was to make it more central for all schools in the area. I observed to myself that this separation, while not reflected explicitly in their experience, for me suggested the beginnings of the liminal period (Turner 1967), associated with rites of passage. In my experience, students ready for their test invariably traveled to other another location, such as a school in a near-by city, for their grading. This is a trial in the form of the test, with reincorporation marked by the inevitable return, having passed or failed. After successfully passing to first “Dan”, “Gup” tests seemed to not be as intimidating as they were before the experience.

The day of my first Dan test, July 13th 1997, there were seven people from my school tested for their first Dan. One other practitioner was tested for his second Dan. The test included students from schools throughout the province and the total number of students being tested approached two hundred. I was extremely nervous about this test. I felt that I had to prove myself to the other practitioners even though they always supported my involvement. Perhaps it was because of their unflagging support that I felt the need to perform well. Observing that my nervousness would be detrimental to my ability to focus on the task at hand, my Master advised me to use “Kay une ki gong” to focus and prepare. I remember distinctly the calmness and detachment that I produced. This experience is important to me not only for the legitimization through graduation, that

I received that day, but further for the realization of the effectiveness of this particular technique. I believe that it was with the calming effect of the breathing exercises that, I was able to, not only pass the examination, but be awarded a “Gum-sang” award for a perfect performance.

Among students at this stage, a variety of motivations for training predominate. Interest in physical development or exercise as means of stress management are common motivations. According to my informants, however, many students also are motivated by a desire to establish a symbolic connection to traditional identity or at the very least to participate in an expression of traditional Korean themes.

Second Beginnings

The achievement of first Dan has been referred to by informants as a “second beginning” because the techniques that were acquired with the safety of the wooden training sword must now be reapplied while integrating the true sword. When tested through use of the steel sword, techniques that were thought acceptable, show minute deviation from the proper form. In this way the experience is much like beginning again. Much of the sense of awkwardness that was so prevalent in early training returns.

As I acquired my first Dan, I was sanctioned to begin training with a steel sword or a “Ching Gum”. Through my Master I purchased a sword for training purposes. When my sword arrived from the smith I was instructed to use it only in the presence of an

instructor. With that I began practicing drawing and sheathing of the sword in order to develop a sense of the weight and balance of a “live” blade. Repetitious overhanded strokes were used to increase strength to accommodate the new weight of the sword. Gradually I was increasingly allowed to practice forms with the steel sword. To assist the practitioner in gaining a sense of the way in which a sword reacts to different materials students also begin “cutting practice”. In this practice the practitioner has the experience of cutting materials such as bamboo, “chip-dan” (rice stalks bound in four to six inch bundles and soaked in water for three days), paper and fruit. “Ching Gum” techniques require close approximation of form to accomplish clean cuts in a variety of materials. Even slight deviation from the proper form, common among inexperienced practitioners, results in the sword not passing cleanly through the material. Considered by many Haidong Gumdo practitioners to demonstrate the finest point of the art, making clean cuts in a variety of materials requires acute focus. Combinations of materials or multiple objects is quite common, especially among demonstration teams. An example of one interesting form of this technique was an orange balanced on a vertical shaft of bamboo, obscured by a large sheet of newspaper. The technique is to quickly cut the paper in a horizontal fashion, then the orange on the reverse horizontal cut followed by the bamboo in a clean, low to high, stroke.

With the gradual integration of a steel sword or “Ching Gum”, students again are forced by their experience to reflect on their replication. The inclusion of a true sword requires that the teacher be satisfied as to the predictability of the practitioner. That is to

say that the practitioner has the mental and physical control to ensure that they can safely use this piece of equipment. As that competence builds the student will begin to use a true sword during “Gum-baup”, or patterned techniques.

Second “Dan” marks the individual as a mature practitioner. My informants suggested that understanding of traditional themes becomes more important at this stage. Further, demonstrations of etiquette associated with traditional themes equally becomes more important. Every day is seen as a test. It is a common expectation that the practitioners at this stage will distinguish themselves in terms of dedication and civic mindedness. Examples of this would be include assisting the master in maintenance of the school, tutoring lower level students and generally assuming intensifying leadership role within the group. The expectation is that with this intensifying leadership role, a second “Dan” practitioner will begin to be seen as an example to those around them. Practitioners at this level are permitted to begin to teach under observation of the head instructor.

After moving from the mainstream class environment to a more isolated training schedule I was given experience instructing. Coinciding with the completion of my daily training was the beginning of the junior classes. It was in this forum that my Master first lead me through the process of teaching students. As I became familiar with his teaching style I was permitted to teach while he observed. Eventually he reduced his presence to the point where I might have been able to believe that I was unobserved.

Some dedicated students at this stage, who wish to, may begin as “sabaum” or apprentices. This is the point of separation between would-be teachers and those with more recreational interests. Many sabaum live in the school in which they teach. Their instruction fees are waived and they are given a small allowance. Further, in many cases the teacher provides for the sustenance of the sabaum as well. In exchange, the sabaum assists the Kwan-jung (Master) in instruction of students and maintenance of the facility. I was told by my informants that they considered “sabaum path” to be difficult but that it would provide superior results through intensive training. With the decision to move into the realm of the instructor, the practitioner moves from the mainstream of the school population. Sabaum are demarcated from the regular school body as they are permitted to wear the grey and blue uniform of an instructor. Beginning students commonly wear black uniforms and first Dan and higher wear blue.

Third Dan practitioners, having progressed to a high level of experience, are given authority within the training facility. These practitioners may be allowed to teach instead of the head master for very short periods and emergency situations. This authority, however, is dependent on the demonstration of proper etiquette within the school. I never found myself needed to fulfill this role as there were always a variety of high Dan native speakers of the Korean language, to perform this role.

My experience at this point marks the time of greatest enjoyment. By this time I had become very familiar with life in the Dojang, and more importantly the people there

had become used to seeing me. The discomfort which dominated my early training dissipated somewhat and the focus turned from self-consciousness to self-reflectiveness. At this time I began to notice a shift in my own experience. With the commencement of my training I recall being resistant to suggestions that Haidong Gumdo would instruct good manners. I am interested in good manners but resisted such ideas due to a strong sense of individuality. At about this time I began to notice my reactions coming more to exhibit definite Confucian tendencies of concern with behavior and concern with the group as a whole. I found my reactions increasingly placing weight on the perspective of the group as a whole as opposed to the individual.

The fourth Dan notes a moment of great change for the practitioner. It is at this time the master is allowed to apply for membership within the World Haidong Gumdo Federation, open a school, and attract and train students who will be certified within the organization. With this graduation the practitioner is designated with the title of “Kwan-jung” or master. As the example to others, the master is expected to embody appropriate behavior. This stage does not mark the end of the process but it is an important step toward developing mastery.

Iconography and expressions of traditional themes

Surrounding the technique of Haidong Gumdo are the objects that assist in expressing traditional themes to the practitioner. Haidong Gumdo training facilities abound with expressions of traditional themes. As I mentioned before, at the head of the

training area, in large Chinese characters, is emblazoned “Samurang” and “Haidong Gumdo”. These symbols provide a sense of the ideal of the training and are ever present mental objects to be perceived while training. Associated with the Samurang are a sense of a heroic past of where Koreans recollection portrays a resolute and unmovable people. The use of Chinese characters furthers this sense of nostalgia. It was in the fifteenth century when King Sai-jong constructed the contemporary Korean alphabet (Han-gul) that Koreans abandoned Chinese characters to express their spoken language. Previous to this time the Korean language was expressed with Chinese characters. Chinese, a pictographic language required tremendous effort to acquire even rudimentary communicative ability. As a result it was only the richest and most affluent who could afford the time required to become literate. With the advent of Han-gul, I am told by a high school Han-gul teacher, that literacy rates soared, producing the first almost completely literate population. Further expressions of Confucian symbolism in the class include the Korean Flag. A Confucian symbol itself, “Tae-guki”, further serves to remind Korean practitioners of national identity. Further plaques discussing the history of Haidong Gumdo serve to elucidate the connection.

Equipment such as swords often carry traditional icons as adornment. My own swords portray traditional themes through the “Bamboo” and “Crane” icons that they display. Both of these swords, and indeed, all swords in use within the World Haidong Gumdo Federation, are contemporary in their manufacture. As they were produced specifically for me I can be fairly sure of the time of their manufacture within the last five

years. Most antique swords are found not found in public because of the official interest that they would attract. Further, such swords would be venerated as antiquities and not used.

Considering the advances in sword manufacture, contemporary swords are vastly superior to ancient blades. These contemporary swords exhibit iconography as expressions of traditional themes. The first sword I will discuss is a “Chang-do” or long-sword. This sword prominently displays a Bamboo motif. Engraved on the hilt and pommel are bamboo trees. The scabbard is wooden with a strip of bamboo inlaid. Bamboo, my informants suggested is reminiscent of ancient civilization and is a reference to traditional identity. My informants believed, bamboo could be found on the sites of ancient abandoned buildings. It is on this sense of antiquity that I base the connection between the bamboo icons and a sense of traditional themes. Additional meaning for bamboo can be found in the practice of cutting bamboo in Haidong Gumdo. Considered by many of my informants to be one of the most essential forms of the technique is the practice of applying skill to application. By cutting bamboo the practitioner can observe the accuracy of their technique. Should their technique be sufficient the cut will be clean. Should the practitioners technique be insufficient the impact of the sword will at least, splinter the bamboo, and at worst, the blade will be entangled in an uncut shaft. Considering the importance of bamboo in both the martial art and my classmates connections to traditional identity, the imagery suggests continuation of the past into the present.

The second example of a Korean sword containing imagery associated traditional themes is of a “Yedo” or short-sword. This particular sword displays a crane prominently forming the hilt. Traditionally the conception of the crane has been tied, by my classmates and instructor, to the concept of longevity (“whangsae” :longevity). This sword is a testament to the benefit of longevity resulting from training in martial arts, displayed in the form of a crane.

Further examples of Buddhist and Confucian imagery include more specific references. In one particular instance I observed an image of a Bodhisattva emblazoned on a scabbard. Confucian iconography, by far the most common, is identified through examples of Tae-guk, Um-yang and other Confucian symbols.

Certification and awards provided by Haidong Gumdo to its practitioners contain expressions of traditional themes. Currently all “Dan” certifications contain an inscription of what has been inadequately translated as the “Way of Gumdo People”. This pledge of sorts is quite elegant in the original Korean but has lost much of that elegance in translation. As discussed in chapter three, it is this “Way” that contains and fully develops as a Confucian principle the symbolic equation of “Chung-Hyo-Aye-Euye”.

Most importantly, discussion of the expressions of traditional themes is provided through the instructor. These kinds of explicit dialogues concerning the expressions associated with Haidong Gumdo were not conducted with all students. Considering the

multitude of motivations for training among the student population, discussions on traditional philosophy might not be welcome. Students who are interested, however can request and gain access to information on the underlying symbolic expressions from their instructors.

In this chapter I have outlined the method of training that I engaged in while I studied at the school of Master Cho Kyoung Ik, in Chumdan Chi-gu, Kwangju, South Korea. I have outlined the day to day regimen of the class as well as the organization of individuals within the school. Further, I have discussed the system of 'Gup' and 'Dan' graduation that marks progression within the system. Through the regimen associated with Haidong Gumdo, the tools for the development of consciousness are intertwined with the techniques for physical development. I have outlined the means through which individuals are exposed to expressions of traditional themes, encoded in 'Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk' and 'Choong Hyo Aye Euye', and how those themes facilitate the shifts in experience required to produce identification with those traditional themes within the individual. These expressions are derived explicitly from the method of training and explanation from the instructor, as well as the implicit expressions encoded in symbolic mediums within the training area.

Through maintaining focus (Laughlin McManus d'Aquili 1990) on these expressions as mental objects, the process of symbolic penetration allows the development these expressions of traditional themes to promote shifts in consciousness

within the individual. Based on the concept of homeomorphogenesis, non-experience generating neurological structures equilibrate with interconnected experience producing structures thus providing driving mechanisms which facilitate the required retuning of the autonomic nervous system. The process of symbolic penetration (Webber 1980; Laughlin McManus d'Aquili 1990), through retuning the autonomic nervous system produces a shift in consciousness that promotes extraordinary experience (Turner & Bruner 1986). This extraordinary experience emphasizes to the practitioner the meaningfulness of the event, resulting in a receptiveness for the symbolic expressions encountered. Through this receptiveness, propagated by extraordinary experience, the practitioner constructs a atavistic understanding of those expressions. Through continual exposures the practitioner creates higher order models (Given 1993) which in turn become the premise for even deeper explorations of those symbolic expressions. The process of graduating rank provide the practitioner with recognition within the system as well as authorization in the use of experience altering techniques. The practitioner proceeds in developing in this manner, further detailing their understanding through experience. This experience produces increasing interconnection between the practitioner and traditional themes encoded in the practice. This deep connection leads the participant to a visceral identification with Korean traditional themes.

In the following and final chapter, through reflection on the process of development within the traditional martial art of Haidong Gumdo I will discuss how this discipline offsets the perceived distortion of traditional Korean identity resulting from

protracted historical violence and material destruction. I will review my arguments and discuss how this traditional martial art provides a vehicle for a movement for the revitalization of traditional Korean identity.

Chapter 5

The Battle for Traditional Identity

The purpose of this thesis is to describe a process whereby Korean practitioners of traditional martial arts come to identify with traditional themes within the practice in order to offset a perceived distortion (Wallace 1970) of Korean traditional identity. This perceived distortion of Korean traditional identity is a result of long term historical violence and destruction of material-culture infrastructure resulting in a shift in environmental pressures. The change in environment is a result of the militarily strategic geographical location of the Korean peninsula, which has attracted the military ambitions of its neighbors. I have detailed the persistent foreign invasions from various Chinese dynasties, the Japanese Empire, and eventually a foreign backed civil war that irrevocably altered the environment for Korean people. Further the influence of rapid industrialization and urbanization has created a climate that is not conducive to the preservation of traditional modes of life. The resulting perceived distortion of traditional identity has produced a movement within Korean society for the revitalization of traditional identity.

The martial art known as Haidong Gumdo finds its roots in the tradition of the Samurang of the Koguryo Dynasty (37BC-668AD), during the Three Kingdoms period of Korean history. Formalized in the third century as “Jega-sung Jay-do”, this martial art was expanded later to include the titles of “Samurang” and “Haidong Mussa”. The Samurang took an active roll in the defense of Koguryo until the Shilla Unification in 668 AD. Following the Shilla Unification and the subsequent fall of the Koguryo Dynasty, the Samurang dispersed. Some of these martial artists returned to Pecktu-san and continued

to train in seclusion. It was a teacher, descendant of this secret tradition, Jang-baek-san, that in 1961 passed on leadership of Haidong Gumdo to Grandmaster Kim Jeong Ho. It is this tradition of the Samurang, which is expressed, in the traditional martial art of Haidong Gumdo.

From expressions of traditional themes found in Haidong Gumdo, practitioners construct connections to traditional Korean identity. Based on the expressions of 'Chun-chi-In-Tul-Mu-guk' and 'Choong Hyo Aye Euye', encoded within Haidong Gumdo, through symbolic penetration and a process of equilibration (Laughlin McManus d'Aquili 1990), the practitioner comes to construct an ever increasingly deep sense of identification with traditional cultural themes. This construction is facilitated by extraordinary experience (Turner & Bruner 1986), produced with ritualization and a repetitive format of the training sessions. Rhythmic and physical exertion provide the 'driving mechanisms' that fuel the production of shifts in the practitioner's phase of consciousness (Laughlin, McManus, d'Aquili 1990). This shift in consciousness prompts practitioners to examine in detail their experience, and guide it toward desired results. As this self-reflection occurs, the student will be witness to expressions of traditional Korean themes that play forward into the practitioner's cognition of what is being perceived within future experience. The rites of passage of "Dan" and "Gup" testing provide recognition of the practitioner's authority within the system to utilize the experience altering techniques. This authorization not only acknowledges achievement but permits the student to proceed with further instruction in the discipline (Given 1993). This process of developing mastery continues as the practitioner gains authority within the system. As practitioners gain authority within the system, they reinvest that authority and

mutual legitimization designates the practitioner as coming to embody the symbolic system.

During the initiate period of practice the student comes to internalize a set of symbolically expressed organizing principles, the operating range of which practitioners believe encompass all significant domains of experience.

Teachers of Haidong Gumdo believe the student who has internalized this code “a pedagogical stage usually marked by a first Dan” have now transformed the major themes that constitute “Koreaness” into the cultural currency of personal experience. The student who has achieved this level of internalization will then be expected to further deepen their understanding and experience of this code, in intense interaction with an instructor.

After this period of foundational advanced instruction the student is believed to have sufficiently restructured their, what Laughlin would call their cognized environment, such that this internalized template for perception and action may act as the guide in the absence of an instructor.

Haidong Gumdo acts on three levels of cultural participation. The fullest internalization of the Haidong Gumdo code is epitomized in the experience of the master. At a second level, hundreds of schools, with thousands of active students, tens of thousands of students who have participated in Haidong Gumdo training. Thirdly for millions of Koreans Haidong Gumdo is represented in popular culture as an embodiment of traditional identity. Because it symbolically integrates multiple levels of cultural

experience from popular culture to the development of mastery Haidong Gumdo must be recognized as an important component of the movement for revitalization of traditional identity in Korea.

Through identification with Korean traditional values by the individual we see the battlefield on which the repatriation of the contested territories of “traditional” and “identity” are achieved. It is this repatriation that offsets the perceived distortion of Korean traditional identity that has resulted from the violent and materially destructive history of Korea. This repatriation is the means by which Haidong Gumdo takes its place in the movement for the revitalization of traditional identity for Korean practitioners of traditional martial arts.

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Appendix 1

Glossary of Terms

A

Amnokkang River: (Yalu River, 790 km) Flows westward into the Yellow Sea. The Amnokkang, and Tuman-gang (Tumen, 521 km), originate from Mt. Pecktu-san and flow to the west and the east, respectively, along the peninsula's northern border, separating North Korea from China.

Ansi fortress- Site of T'ang Chinese defeat to Koguryo in 654 AD.

B

Bon-guk gum-baup, A name attributed to the Shilla contribution to Haidong Gumdo.

C

Chang-back- Advanced sword patterns native to Koguryo Dynasty

Chang-do- a long-sword

Ching-Gum- a true sword, steel sword

Chinhan- Korean ancestral tribal group

Chip Dan- bound rice stalks soaked in water

Choson Dynasty- Yi dynasty. Ruled Korea 1392 - 1910 AD

Chung Hyo Aye Euye- Loyalty, Filial Piety, Proper Etiquette, Righteousness. Symbolic expression of traditional themes within Haidong Gumdo.

Chu-sok- Memorial Day. Occasion when people return to their places of origin and attend to the graves of departed ancestors and relatives.

Chun Chi In Tul Mu Guk- Sky, Earth, Humanity as a focal point, Training, Boundlessness. Symbolic expression of traditional themes within Haidong Gumdo.

D

Dan- Degree of Black Belt.

Do- methods or arts

Dojang- Training facility

G

Gum- sword

Gup- incremental rank gradations proceeding between "Dan" levels.

Gumdo- art of the sword

Gumdo-jang- Swordsmanship training facility

H

Haidong Gum-baup- Advanced sword techniques.

Haidong Gumdo- East sea sword methods. According to my informants “Haidong” is an ancient name for Korea. This name is believed to be derived from the Chinese name for Korea during the Three Kingdoms Period.

Haidong Gumdo In Ye Gil- “The way of Haidong Gumdo people” Contains expressions of Confucian and Buddhist themes.

Haidong Mussa- Favorite students of Sulbon Sunil who were permitted to open schools to expand the discipline.

Han Kingdom- 221 - 265 AD

Hap Ki Do- Korean Martial Art involving armed and unarmed techniques.

I

In-sa-baup- Confucian oriented etiquette intended to promote proper relations between practitioners

J

Jay-do- Lifestyle

Jega-sung Jay-do- Martial style of the Samurang.

Jen- The highest form of human behavior according to Confucianism.

Jungjo, King of Chosun (1776-1800).

K

Ka-gum- unsharpened, untempered training sword for minors.

Kaya- (42 AD-562AD), the fourth, and least known of the ancient Kingdoms.

Kay-une-ki-gong- Clearing the clouds meditation

Ki- Energy derived from Chun and Chi that finds its nexus in the human form.

Ki-bong Dong-jac- the basic techniques of Haidong Gumdo

Kihyo Shinsu- Chinese text. The Basis for the Muye Jebo.

Koguryo- Home of the Samurang. Northernmost of the Three Kingdoms

Kogukwon- 16th King of Koguryo. In 371 AD Kogukwon killed during Peckje invasion of Koguryo.

Kuk Kung- Korean Traditional Archery

Kumsang- Award for exceptional performance at Dan examinations.

Kwanggaeto, King(391-413 AD.,) Eminent King of Koguryo. Oversaw the peak of the Koguryo dynasty

Kwan jung (nim)- Master of a school.

M

Mahan- Korean ancestral tribal group. 369 AD., Paekche eliminates Mahan

Master Jang Baek San, Teacher of Kim Jeong Ho. His school was located in the Kwank Mountains.

Master Kim Jeong Ho, 10th Dan. President and founder of the World Haidong Gumdo

Federation.

Muye Dobo Tongji- Comprehensive Manual of Martial Arts. Written by Yi Duk-moo, Park Je-ga and Park Dong-soo, in 1790, on the order of King Jungjo (1776-1800). Included within the Muye Dobo Tongji there is a wealth of information on everything from horsemanship to weapon and armor construction, to the proper organization for a military camp, to a variety of weapon techniques.

Muye Jebo- 'The 'Martial Arts Illustrations' was compiled after the Japanese invasion (1592-1598).

Muye Shinbo- 'New illustrated Manual' additional twelve styles to Muye Jebo.

Q

Okcho- Korean ancestral tribal group

P

Pak Dong-soo- One of three authors of the Muye Dobo Tongji.

Parhae - (698-926) The northern portions of the old Koguryo domains later became part of the Chinese/Korean kingdom of Parhae. The capital of this nation was near the city of Kirin in Manchuria. Much of the nobility of Parhae derived from the old Koguryo leadership. Parhae was destroyed in the fall of the Tang dynasty in the mid 900s AD. Composed mostly of people of Korean ancestry from the lands south of the Amnok (Yalu) River, with the fall of Parhae its citizens joined the new Korean Kingdom of Koryo.

Park Jega- One of three authors of the Muye Dobo Tongji.

Parhae- Parhae is interesting as their society was modeled after that of the Koguryo.

Peckje- Southwestern Kingdom of the Three Kingdoms.

Pecktu-san, Mountain (2,744 meters high on the northern borderline facing Manchuria). This extinct volcano, with a crater named Ch'onji, or the Heavenly Lake, on its top, is shrouded with a mythical aura as the site of the first kingdom in Korean history dating back some 5,000 years. The mountain is also noted for a rich repository of wildlife.

Puyo- Korean ancestral tribal group

Pyonhan- Korean ancestral tribal group

S

Sabaum- Master's Apprentice.

Samgak Sagi- (1146) Korean historical text. Tales of the three Kingdoms, compiled by the historian Kim Pusik in the twelfth century.

Samgak Yusa- (1206-1289). Written by Ilyon, translates as the History of the Three Kingdoms.

Samurang- Military sect that defended the Kingdom of Koguryo.

Sang Gum-baup- Twin sword techniques.

Sang-su Gum-baup- Two handed sword techniques, attributed to Peckje.

Shim Gumdo- Mental development associated with swordsmanship.

Shilla- Southeastern of the Three Kingdoms. The Shilla Dynasty, with the aid of the Tang Chinese, unified the Korean Peninsula

Sola- Lunar New Years Festival

Sulbon Sunil- Formalized organization of Samurang to include Haidong Mussa in the second year of the 16th King of Koguryo, Kogukwon, or about 333 AD.

Sunjo, King of Chosun (1567-1608)

Sui Dynasty- Chinese Dynasty (589 - 618 AD) Launched unsuccessful invasion of Koguryo in 642 AD.

T

Tae Kwon Do- Korean Martial Art. Derived from the ancient Chinese martial art, 'Tang-su', or the 'the fist of the Tang'.

Tae-guki- Korean National Flag

Tae Guk Gum-baup- Advanced sword techniques.

Tae Kyun- Korean traditional martial art that includes hypnotic movements to debilitate opponents.

Tam-yang- Town. Located near Kwangju in South Korea. Known for Bamboo production. **T'ang Dynasty-** Chinese Dynasty, 618 - 907 AD

Tang-jung -ho-hoop-Abdominal breathing meditation.

Three Kingdoms- Koguryo, Peckje, and Shilla Dynasties.

Tongae-Korean ancestral tribal group

U

Um-yang- Form of Gum-baup, also refers to Confucian concept of cosmic forces in balance.

Ulchi Mundok- General of Koguryo. During the Chinese Sui dynasty the power of Sui was overwhelming, but only Koguryo refused to obey. In the era of king Yongyang Wang of Koguryo, King Yang Ti of Sui went on campaign and invaded Koguryo with as many as one million two hundred thousand. Folk histories recount that General Ulchi Mundok of Koguryo said that heaven wished to defeat his enemy, and with only 20 thousand soldiers he succeeded.

W

Whangsae- Crane. Associated with longevity

Wei Kingdom- 220 - 280 Chinese Kingdom. Mounted unsuccessful invasion of Koguryo in 246 AD.

World Haidong Gumdo Federation- est. November 1988

Y

Yangbang- Aristocracy of the Chosun Dynasty

Yi Duk-moo- One of three authors of the Muye Dobo Tongji.

Youngjo, King of Chosun(1724-1776).

Yu Yu- General of the Koguryo Dynasty