



## Omsk Interview

The seeds for this interview were planted during Grandmaster Kim's [1994 visit to Russia](#) and his participation in the All-Russia Karate Tournament in Omsk.

Grandmaster's visit led to the publication in May of 2000 of the [first Martial Arts book in Russian](#), the arts having been outlawed during communism.

His book, combined with the reawakening interest in Martial Arts, led to this interview which became an article published in both the [Evening Omsk](#) (Siberia) and [Sports Weekly](#) newspapers.

## Foreword by Grandmaster Kim Soo

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Grandmaster Kim Soo, and I developed the International Chayon-Ryu Martial Art Association. Chayon-Ryu is the Korean term that means "The Natural Way." All things in the universe follow the natural path. If one follows this logical and reasonable path a correct result will be reached. However, if one commits a wrongful act, the result may eventually prove harmful. The same "natural way" philosophy also applies to the physical aspect of Chayon-Ryu. The student who lets his/her body flow naturally through a technique is far less likely to incur an injury. Furthermore, power generated from natural movements is far greater than from contrived moves.

Humans designed martial art, therefore, we must move as humans, not as animals. Many people talk about tigers, cranes, snakes, dragons and any number of fanciful creatures to make their system seem mysterious and secretive. This trickery is used to draw people in, but this teaching is false since humans cannot move like any of these creatures. People with no martial art foundation find this fantasy more exciting than plain and simple truth.

Chayon-Ryu teaches traditional requirements using a modern scientific teaching method. Chayon-Ryu promotes mental and physical balance by strengthening self-confidence, self-esteem, and determination.

It is a pleasure to write for your newspaper and I am happy to answer any questions you may have from my articles. As a martial art educator my perspective is for lifestyle martial arts. I cannot help you with any questions regarding tournaments or their champions. Martial art is for everyone, not just a talented few.

### Questions from Vladimir Pankov answered by Grandmaster Kim Soo:

**Grandmaster Kim Soo, you referred to Tae Kwon Do becoming an Olympic sport? Does it mean that the competitive element in martial arts starts to dominate**

Modern taekwondo was designed to be an Olympic sport since its inception in 1961. I don't consider Olympic sport to be Mu Sul. Mu Sul is martial technique as self defense with a warrior-like attitude: kill or be killed. Olympic sport is only a game for first, second, or third: gold, silver, or bronze. Taekwondo is a

**above comprehension of higher purposes? Roughly speaking Mu-Sul\* wins over Mu-Do\*\*?**

*\*Mu-sul refers to an orientation on just the physical techniques of kicking, punching, blocking*

*\*\*Mu-do refers to a pursuit mentally and physically united to achieve higher purposes than simply acquisition of physical skills.*

**There are not too many martial arts mentors of really high qualifications in Omsk. Proceeding from thoughts expressed in your "[Martial Arts Poison](#)" article, does it mean that it is better not to study martial arts at all, than to study them under the direction of a non-qualified master?**

sport of the Olympic Games. That says it all. Mu Sul and Olympic sport offer only physical aspects of martial art training, whereas Mu Do incorporates mental, physical and spiritual balance. Korea only has one channel, Olympic sport. For example, businessmen and housewives can't train in Korea because it is only for the physically talented, youths and children. Therefore, many people miss out on the benefits of martial arts training. Martial art training serves many purposes. Each person trains according to his/her own necessity. The physically talented tend to go towards martial arts as a sport, that is their line. Others train to develop a positive attitude because they are shy or lack confidence. Many parents want their children to learn discipline. Adults train for health and longevity, stress reduction, and physical and mental well-being. There have been many challenges in Russia since the end of communism, and martial arts training would help people overcome life's difficulties. Martial arts were originally designed for the public. As an educator, my purpose is to help many people, not just a talented few. Martial arts are a multipurpose activity and people must learn the true meaning.

Most people choose a martial arts school by location or cost. Or they like a particular name: taekwondo, karate, hapkido, kung-fu, or judo, although they do not know the difference between these arts. In choosing a school the most important aspect is the teacher. Essentially, all Martial arts are the same. The teacher and philosophy is the difference. In America, large cities probably have more than 100 schools. How can you tell the difference between 100 schools? As a beginner, you don't know the difference between a good and a bad school. The only way is to visit many schools and watch the teachers' style. Does the teacher emphasize sport, or mental and physical balance? Does he/she have a good mental attitude, and what is the atmosphere in the class? You should not judge a school by the number of

**The martial arts have centuries-old tradition in the Orient. It is possible to tell that this is one of the elements of traditional culture. Grandmaster Kim, is it worthwhile for Europeans of different cultural and mental traditions, to study martial arts of Japan, China and Korea?**

**Is it possible that sometime in Siberia will appear the present master, founder of own school, like Kim Soo, San Gee Tam, or Hirokazu Kanazawa?**

trophies, or if the instructor looks mean or has scars on his face. Even in Omsk, where there may be only 10-20 schools, you should follow these guidelines and look for a school that serves your purpose. That way you make an educated choice and are less likely to have regret.

Popular martial arts may have originated in Eastern cultures but you're not learning about Eastern cultures through your training. Through Martial arts training you are learning wisdom. You are learning what you need for your life. The ultimate use of martial arts training is by applying martial arts spirit to your daily life. I refer you to an article titled "[Modern-Day Martial Arts](#)" on our website.

The only part of Eastern culture that you may be following during martial arts training is bowing. However, bowing is the Eastern way of showing respect and humility, and showing that you appreciate your teacher and school, not culture. Likewise, Chayon-Ryu philosophy is based on the laws of nature. When you behave in the correct manner the correct result occurs. When you behave incorrectly a bad result occurs. This is a truth, an understanding, not culture. The Chayon-Ryu training oath (Dojang Hun) is as follows: Seek perfection of character, Live the way of truth, Endeavor, Be faithful, Respect others, Refrain from violent behavior. This also is philosophy, not culture.

(First answer; Grandmaster was unsure as to exactly what was being asked)

I studied Russian language and literature at Hankuk University in Seoul, Korea. I wanted some day to teach martial arts in Russia, but at that time it was impossible of course. However, I was in Omsk in 1994 with some of my students for a big demonstration and to participate in a tournament. At the time I tried to find the possibilities of opening a Dojang in St. Petersburg. I even visited the mayor's office with a recommendation from the Mayor of

Houston, Bob Lanier, but it wasn't successful. Nevertheless, due to the difficult economic conditions in Siberia, it is unlikely a great teacher would relocate permanently. I have taught in Houston, Texas for almost 33 years. I have been the rock in the river. Many people have come to the rock and moved on when their time dictated. But I have remained constant. That was one of the most important lessons I learned from my teachers. I had to follow them to wherever they were teaching. Sometimes a barn, sometimes a YMCA, sometimes in a government building. If I wanted to learn, I had to go where my teacher was located, it was not his responsibility to come to me. From these experiences I learned to open a Dojang in one place and keep it open. It takes a long time to learn, study and understand the martial arts core. To be a good martial art Instructor it is necessary to travel to the teacher and learn the basic fundamentals and principles. Probably someone videotaped my Omsk demonstration in 1994. While they may be able to imitate my movements, they would not be able to understand the principles just through imitation.

(Second answer to the question; after clarification)

Of course someone could come up through the Russian martial art system and become a great martial artist and leader. To achieve this it would be necessary to learn martial art principles from a reputable teacher. The only qualities needed are patience and persistence with training. It is also necessary to research and reflect on the principles. Teaching others is also important in reaching higher understanding. Nobody can truly become a Master if they cannot teach these principles to others. Just as Russia has had many great artists, musicians and writers, it is also destined to produce a great martial artist. It just takes time, practice and sincere training.

