

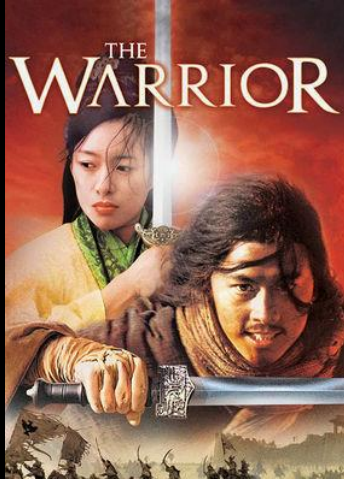
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Introducing the Muhyeop Film: About the Terminology



Musa: The Warrior (Kim Sung-su, 2001)

- More or less “official” term for the genre
 - *Muhyeop* = Korean reading of *wuxia*
 - “Martial Arts”
- Often confused with “historic” or “period drama” films
- More emphasis on history compared to *wuxia*

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Introducing the Muhyeop Film: The “Warrior” Behind the Silver Screen

- No distinct warrior figure as model for *muhyeop* films
 - Multiple sources of inspiration
- *Hwarang* – type of warrior from the Silla Dynasty (57 BC-935 AD)
 - Code:
 - Loyalty to one’s king
 - Respect to one’s parents
 - Faithfulness to one’s friends
 - Courage in battle
 - Justice in killing
- Korean military history: Emphasis on *gungdo* (archery), especially the mounted archer



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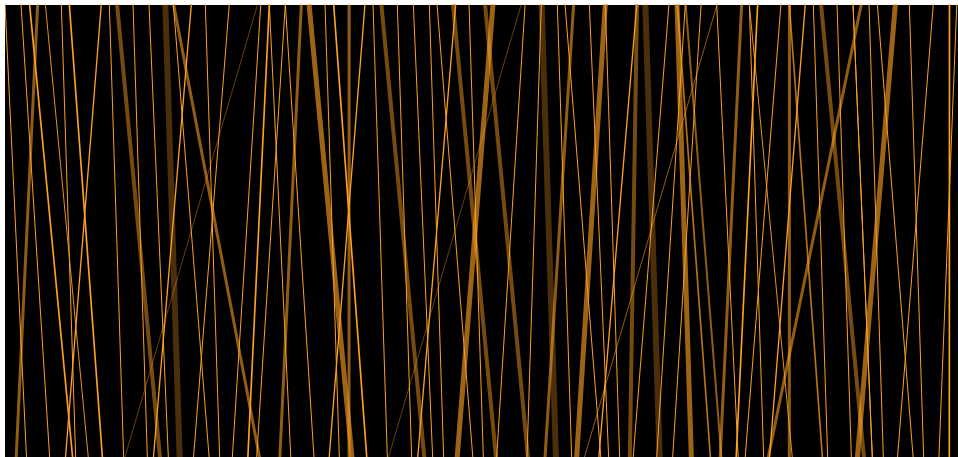
Introducing the Muhyeop Film: History of the Genre



A Swordsman in the Twilight (Chung Chang-wha, 1967)

- *Muhyeop*: Initially a literary genre
 - Closely resembled *wuxia* novels, some were even translated works
- First *muhyeop* film in 1926
 - 1930s: *Muhyeop* genre as a threat to modern society
- *Come Drink With Me* (King Hu [Hu Jinqian], 1966)
 - First Hong Kong film ever released in Korea in 1967
 - Best Foreign Film of the Year
- “Martial Arts Craze” in Korea
 - No films in 1967, 9 films made in 1968, 18 made in 1970
- Continued to import *wuxia* films, King Hu & Chang Cheh (Zhang Che) mostly
- Lasted until mid-1970s
 - Interest in Bruce Lee & Hollywood
- *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (Ang Lee, 2000)
 - Released in Korea in 2001

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Defining & Developing the Muhyeop Film

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Defining & Developing the Muhyeop Film: Influenced by Wuxia



The Restless (Jo Dong-oh, 2006)

- Inspired by *wuxia* novels and films
 - Female “knight” warriors
- Imitated imagery & action
 - Many films: fight choreography by China/Hong Kong/Taiwan

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LET'S TRY: Wuxia or Muhyeop?



Shadowless Sword (Kim Young-jun, 2005)
Yoon So-yi & Lee Ki-yong

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LET'S TRY: Wuxia or Muhyeop?

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Reign of Assassins (Su Chao-pin & John Woo, 2010)
Jung Woo-sung & Shawn Yue

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Defining & Developing the Muhyeop Film: Plot/Themes

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War of the Arrows (Kim Han-min, 2011)

- Stronger emphasis on actual historical events
 - Joseon Dynasty (1392-1897) most popular
 - Plot heavily dictated by historical events
- Conflict resolved through some sort of combat/duel
 - Not necessarily the sword
- Rarely contains element of fantasy/supernatural powers
 - The Restless (Jo Dong-oh, 2006)
- Romance a common theme
- Often faced with "outside" threats or times of revolution/rebellion
 - China, Japan, Mongols...

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Defining & Developing the Muhyeop Film: Characterization

- Struggles with “outside” threats – in reference to Korean history
 - “We are Korean”
 - Not generally viewed as a symbol for nationalism/national pride like with the samurai
- Often fights for some form of justice
 - Rarely for only personal reasons
- Presence of the Female Warrior
 - Often some romance element or is the romantic interest



Duelist (Lee Myung-se, 2005)

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Defining & Developing the Muhyeop Film:

One of the biggest motion pictures in
Korean cinema history



Musa: The Warrior (Seong-soo Kim, 2001)

Musa: The Warrior (Kim Seong-soo, 2001)
Jung Woo-sung, Joo Jin-mo & Zhang Ziyi

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New Trends in Muhyeop Films

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New Trends in Muhyeop Films: “Samurai-Action” Inspired



Memories of the Sword (Heung-shik Park, 2015)
Memories of the Sword (Park Heung-shik, 2015)
Kim Go-eun

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New Trends in Muhyeop Films: Less History, More Action

MISSISSAUGA



Age of Blood (Hong-sun Kim, 2017)

Age of Blood (Kim Hong-sun, 2017)
Jung Hae-in

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New Trends in Muhyeop Films: Renewed Interest in “Fantasy”



Rampant (Kim Sung-hoon, 2018)



Monstrum (Heo Jong-ho, 2018)



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Questions?

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Shadowless Sword (Kim Young-jun, 2005)

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THANK YOU FOR JOINING!

Next Week: Samurai Films Today (Japan)

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Hara-Kiri: Death of a Samurai (Miike Takashi, 2011)

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