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The origin of hand-to-hand combat probably dates back to the beginnings of man. Throughout the centuries, soldiers and civilians have had to use their bodies to defend themselves against attack when weapons were not readily available.
b. The first attempt at organizing and developing the techniques of hand-to-hand combat is believed to have originated in China as a means of unarmed defense against outside invaders. Not much is known about subsequent development; however, historians believe similar systems of fighting were developed by Buddhist Monks around A.D. lOOO as a defense against the numerous robber bands of that time. Judo and Karate are modern forms of these ancient self-defense systems.
c. Judo is basically a form of wrestling, and the history of its development is clouded.
d. Karate is basically a form of boxing and evolved from the Okinawa technique (Okinawa-Te or Okinawa Hands) of unarmed combat. Okinawa-Te, in turn, is believed to have developed from the Chinese art of Kempo (fist way).
(1) According to Chinese legend, Kempo was originated by an Indian Buddhist monk. The monk had traveled from India to teach Buddhism to Chinese monks at a monastery called Shaolin-szu; however, the pace and discipline set by the monk was so physically demanding that his students fainted from exhaustion. The Indian monk recognized that the objective of Buddhism was salvation of the soul; but his students were in such poor physical condition, they were not able to perform the mental practices necessary to attain spiritual enlightenment. So he developed a set of exercises designed to improve the physical and mental condition of his students. In time, the discipline they practiced evolved into Kempo and the Shaolin-szu monks became the most feared fighters in China.
(2) Okinawa is located near mainland China, and much of its early cultural development can probably be traced to Chinese influences to include the introduction of Kempo. The early adaptation of Kempo to Okinawa-Te has not been accurately documented, but old stories generally say it began about 400 years ago. At that time, so the stories go, the Ryukyo Islands (Okinawa) were conquered and united into one kingdom. To ensure his rule, the king confiscated and banned possession of weapons by people other than his troops. A second ban on weapons was instituted by Japanese conquerors approximately 200 years later. These two incidents are generally credited as the cause for the intense development of the empty-handed fighting techniques of Okinawa-Te. In the early 1900's, an Okinawan demonstrated Okinawa-Te techniques in formal exhibitions in Japan as part of a Japanese-sponsored exposition on physical training. From there, modem karate was born, became popular and eventually was introduced to the Western World. Karate, meaning empty hands, is a term that has been adopted to generally cover the various Okinawan and Japanese fighting styles. Tae-kwon-do, meaning the way of fist and feet is Korean and covers the various Korean styles. The basic techniques of Okinawan, Japanese, and Korean styles are the same and are the techniques presented in this manual.

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