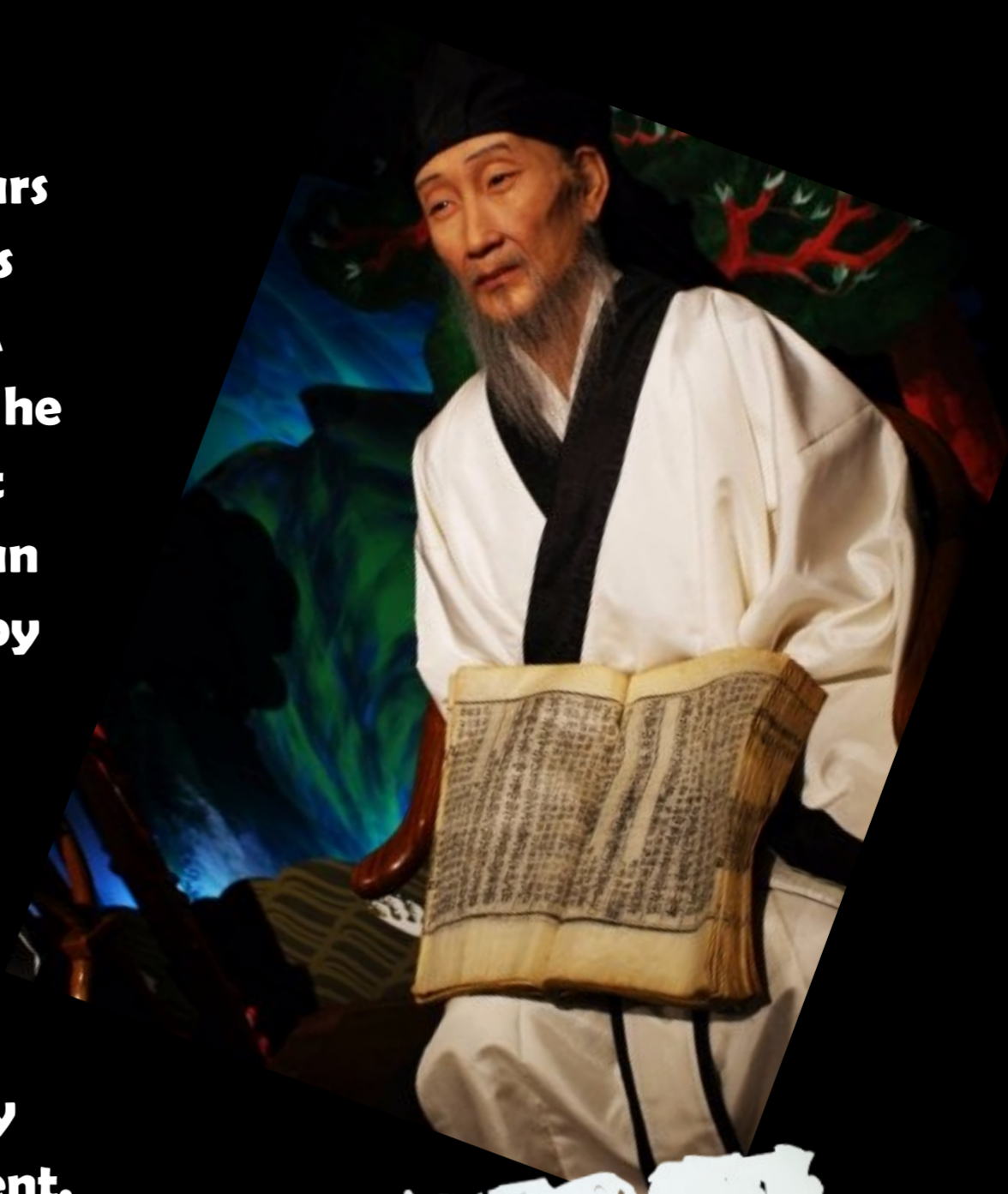


WHO WAS TOI-GYE?

Yi Hwang (1501–1570) is one of the two most prominent Korean Confucian scholars of the Joseon Dynasty, the other being his younger contemporary Yi I (Yul-Gok). A key figure of the Neo-Confucian literati, he established the Yeongnam School and set up the Dosan Seowon, a private Confucian academy. Yi Hwang is often referred to by his pen name Toi-Gye ("Retreating Creek").

Yi Hwang was very widely respected. He passed the civil service exams with top honors in 1534 and continued his scholarly pursuits whilst working for the government. Yi Hwang was appointed to various positions from the age of 39 and sometimes held multiple positions including the role of secret royal inspector in 1542. His integrity made him relentless as he took part in purges of corrupt government officials. On numerous occasions he was even exiled from the capital for his firm commitment to principle. On his death, Yi Hwang was posthumously promoted to the highest ministerial rank, and his mortuary tablet housed in a Confucian shrine as well as in the shrine of King Seonjo.

Toegye-Ro, a street in central Seoul, is named after him, and he is depicted on the South Korean 1,000 won note. In ITF Taekwon-Do, Toi-Gye is the seventh Pattern or Tul. Students learn that the 37 movements of the pattern represent his birth place on 37 degrees latitude and that the pattern diagram represents scholar.



TOI-GYE