

Chapter 1

General Introduction

一般介紹

1-1. Introduction

The Chinese martial arts are quite new to the Western world, compared to their 4000 years of history in China. Their Western history probably began in the 1950's. Up until that time, although there had been a few masters teaching, they were virtually unknown to the general public.

After Master Cheng Man-Ching's Tai Chi book became available in the early 1960's, Tai Chi Chuan (Taijiquan) began its gradual rise to popularity in the United States. Although more and more people were experiencing the health benefits of Taijiquan practice, the enormous cultural differences between East and West kept it from being well understood, especially with regard to its internal components.

Then, in the late 1960's, the motion pictures of Master Bruce Lee brought enthusiasm for Chinese martial arts to a peak. His movies started to make the Western public aware of the potential of Chinese martial arts. Unfortunately, Bruce Lee died in the early 1970's, after only a few years in the public eye. Although his abilities increased the popularity of Chinese martial arts, his movies tended to give people a somewhat restricted view of Chinese martial knowledge.

In 1974, the American and Communist Chinese Governments established formalized relations. Since then, the concepts of acupuncture and Qi have gradually been introduced to the West. A byproduct of this is an increased understanding of the internal aspects of Qigong and the internal martial arts. In addition, cultural exchange programs have brought many Chinese martial artists and groups to the United States and Europe for demonstrations. This has resulted in many martial styles being introduced to the West for the first time. Many well known masters have since come over from mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong to the United States and Europe for seminars and lessons, and many young people have traveled to Asia for training. The most significant influence in this time of great change came from the many masters who were able to immigrate to the United States and Europe.

In the last decade, the Chinese martial arts have gained widespread acceptance in the West. A variety of external and internal styles have been introduced, and the health benefits of Taiji are now so well recognized that even Western doctors have begun recommending it to their patients. Because of the popularity of Taiji, people are gradually becoming interested in other internal martial arts such as Xingyiquan, Baguazhang, and Liu He Ba Fa. Although these styles are very different from Taijiquan, they are nonetheless beneficial for health and effective for self-defense. It is very likely that these styles will become as popular as Taijiquan in the 1990's. People who are starting to learn them now will be the pioneers of these styles in the future.

Still, despite the growing popularity of Chinese internal martial arts, many people still have questions about them. The most common questions are: What are the major differences between the external and internal martial styles? How is Qi related to these different styles? What are the differences between martial and non-martial Qigong? What are the differences in both theory and techniques between the different internal styles? These general questions must be answered before you can begin to understand the role that Baguazhang plays among the Chinese internal arts. Then you will be able to ask yourself why you want to learn Baguazhang, rather than Taiji or some other internal style.

To answer these questions fully would actually require a rather large book. It is almost like trying to describe the different tastes of various Chinese foods. You can get a general idea, but unless you actually sample them, you will not really understand what you are reading about. This is especially true with the Chinese internal arts, where spiritual feeling and enlightenment are the ultimate goals.

Differences Between Internal and External Styles

Before we go into the differences between internal and external styles, you should first recognize one important point: all Chinese styles, both internal and external, come from the same root. If a style does not share this root, then it is not a Chinese martial style. This root is the Chinese culture. Throughout the world, various civilizations have created many different arts, each one based on that civilization's cultural background. Therefore, it does not matter which style you are discussing; as long as it was created in China, it must contain the essence of Chinese art, the spirit of traditional Chinese virtues, and the knowledge of traditional fighting techniques which have been passed down for thousands of years.

Martial artists of old looked at their experiences and realized that in a fight there are three factors which generally decide victory. These three factors are speed, power, and technique. Among these, speed is the most important. This is simply because, if you are fast, you can get to the opponent's vital areas more easily, and get out again before he can get you. Even if your power is weak and you only know a limited number of techniques, you still have a good chance of inflicting a serious injury on the opponent.

If you already have speed, then what you need is power. Even if you have good speed and techniques, if you don't have power, your attacks and defense will not be as effective as possible. You may have met people with great muscular strength but no martial arts training who were able to defeat skilled martial artists whose power was weak. Finally, once you have good speed and power, if you can develop good techniques and a sound strategy, then there will be no doubt that victory will be yours. Therefore, in Chinese martial arts, increasing speed, improving power and studying the techniques are the most important pursuits. In fact, speed and power training are considered the foundation of effectiveness in all Chinese martial arts styles.

Moreover, it does not matter what techniques a style creates, they all must follow certain basic principles and rules. For example, all offensive and defensive techniques must effectively protect

vital areas such as the eyes, throat, and groin. Whenever you attack, you must be able to access your opponent's vital areas without exposing your own.

The same applies to speed and power training. Although each style has tried to keep their methods secret, they all follow the same general rules. For example, developing muscle power should not be detrimental to your speed, and developing speed should not decrease your muscular power. Both must be of equal concern. Finally, the training methods you use or develop should be appropriate to the techniques which characterize your style. For example, in eagle and crane styles, the speed and power of grabbing are extremely important, and should be emphasized.

It is generally understood in Chinese martial arts society that, before the Liang dynasty (540 A.D.), martial artists did not study the use of Qi to increase speed and power. After the Liang dynasty martial artists realized the value of Qi training in developing speed and power, and it became one of the major concerns in almost all styles. Because of this two part historical development, we should discuss this subject by dividing it into two eras. The dividing point should be the Liang dynasty (540 A.D.), when Da Mo was preaching in China.

It is generally believed that before Da Mo, although Qi theory and principles had been studied and widely applied in Chinese medicine, they were not used in the martial arts. Speed and power, on the other hand, were normally developed through continued training. Even though this training emphasized a concentrated mind, it did not provide the next step and link this to developing Qi. Instead, these martial artists concentrated solely on muscular power. This is why styles originating from this period are classified as external styles.

Then, the emperor Liang Wu invited the Indian monk Da Mo to China to preach Buddhism. When the emperor did not agree with Da Mo's particular Buddhist philosophy, the monk fled across the Yellow River to the Shaolin Temple. There he saw that many priests were weak, and fell asleep during his lectures. Da Mo went into meditation to discover how to help the monks. After nine years of solitary meditation, he wrote two classics -the *Yi Jin Jing* (Muscle/Tendon Changing Classic) and the *Xi Sui Jing* (Marrow/Brain Washing Classic). After Da Mo died, the Shaolin priests continued to practice his methods, especially the *Yi Jin Jing*, to strengthen their bodies and spirits. They soon found that the training not only made them healthier, but it also made them stronger. During these times, even priests needed to know martial arts in order to protect themselves from bandits. When they combined Da Mo's Qi training with their traditional defense techniques, they became very effective fighters. As Da Mo's training methods spread out from the Shaolin Temple, many forms of martial Qigong were developed. This topic is explored more thoroughly in *Muscle/Tendon Changing and Marrow/Brain Washing Chi Kung* by Dr. Yang.

The *Yi Jin Jing* was not originally intended to be used for fighting. Nevertheless, students training the martial Qigong based on it were able to significantly increase power, and it became a mandatory course of training in the Shaolin Temple. This had a revolutionary effect on Chinese martial arts, leading to the establishment of an internal personal foundation, based on Qi training.

As time passed, several martial styles were created which emphasized a soft body, instead of the stiff muscular body developed by the Shaolin priests. These newer styles were based on the belief that, since Qi (internal energy) is the root and foundation of physical strength, a martial artist should first build up this internal root. This theory holds that when Qi is abundant and full, it can energize the physical body to a higher level, so that power can be manifested more effectively and efficiently. In order to build up Qi and circulate it smoothly, the body must be relaxed and the mind must be concentrated. We recognize at least two internal styles as having been created during this time (550-600 A.D.): Hou Tian Fa (Post-Heaven Techniques) and Xiao Jiu Tian (Small Nine Heavens). According to some documents, these two styles were the original sources

of Taijiquan, the creation of which is credited to Chang San-Feng of the late Song dynasty (around 1200 A.D.).²

In summary: The various martial arts are divided into external and internal styles. While the external styles emphasize training techniques and building up the physical body through some martial Qigong, the internal styles emphasize the build up of Qi in the body. In fact, all styles, both internal and external, have martial Qigong training. The external styles train the physical body and hard Qigong first, and gradually become soft and train soft Qigong, while the internal styles train soft Qigong first, and later apply the built up Qi to the physical techniques. It is said that: "The external styles are from hard to soft and the internal styles are from soft to hard, the ways are different but the final goal is the same." It is also said: "External styles are from external to internal, while internal styles are from internal to external. Although the approaches are different, the final goal is the same." Again, it is said: "External styles first *Li* (muscular strength) and then Qi, while internal styles first Qi and later *Li*." The preceding discussion should have given you a general idea of how to distinguish external and internal styles. Frequently internal and external styles are also judged by how the *Jin* is manifested. *Jin* is defined as "*Li* and *Qi*" (*Li* means muscular strength). It is how the muscles are energized by the Qi and how this manifests externally as power. It is said: "The internal styles are as soft as a whip, the soft-hard styles (half external and half internal) are like rattan, and the external styles are like a staff." If you are interested in this rather substantial subject, please refer to Dr. Yang's books *Advanced Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, Vol. 7*, or to the future YMAA Qigong publication: *Martial Qigong*.

Qi, Health, and Martial Arts

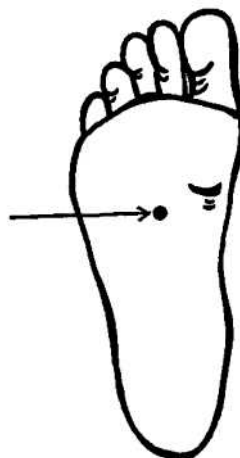
Let us first define Qi. The original meaning of the Chinese word Qi was "universal energy." Every type of energy in this universe is called Qi. When the term was later applied to the human body, it meant the energy which the body maintains or circulates. In the last twenty years, a clearer theoretical definition of the Qi circulating in the human body has arisen: bioelectric energy. According to this model, all other types of bodily energy, such as heat or light, result from the transformation of this bioelectric energy.

In Chinese cosmology, Qi is the original energy source which keeps the entire universe alive. It is the same in the human body, where Qi keeps the cells alive and keeps the physical body functioning. Your body is like a mechanical electric fan which needs electricity to make it turn. If the electric circulation is insufficient, the fan will not work properly. Similarly, if the Qi supply in your body is insufficient or stagnant, you will become sick or even die.

In Chinese Qigong and medicine, Qi is classified as Yin because it can only be felt, while the physical body is classified as Yang because it can be seen. Yin is the root and source of the life which animates the Yang body (physical body), and manifests power or strength externally. When the Qi is strong, the physical body can function properly and be healthy, and it can manifest a lot of power or strength.

In order to have a healthy and strong body, you must learn both how to keep the Qi circulating smoothly in your body, and how to build up an abundant store of Qi. In order to reach these two goals, you need to understand the Qi circulatory and storage systems of your body.

In your body, there are twelve Qi primary channels which function like rivers and distribute Qi throughout your body. There are also eight "Extraordinary Qi vessels," which function like reservoirs, storing and regulating this Qi.³ One end of each channel is connected to one of the twelve internal organs, while the other end is connected to either a finger or toe. These twelve Qi channels lead Qi to the twelve organs to nourish them and keep them functioning properly. The twelve channels also lead any excess Qi in the internal organs to the limbs, and finally release it outside of your body. This

Figure 1 -1. *Laogong* Cavity (P-8)Figure 1 -2. *Yongquan* Cavity (K-1)

is one of the primary methods of releasing excess Qi from the body's organs. Whenever the Qi level circulating in the channels is abnormal due to stagnation or sickness, one or several organs will not receive the proper amount of Qi nourishment, and will tend to malfunction.⁴

The eight vessels include four in the body and four in the legs.⁵ These vessels store Qi, and are able to regulate the Qi flow in the twelve Qi channels. In addition, there are five major gates through which the Qi in the body communicates with the Qi in the surrounding environment, and further helps to regulate the body.⁵ The main gate is the head. There are four secondary gates: a *Laogong* cavity in the center of each palm (Figure 1-1), and a *Yongquan* cavity on the bottom of each foot (Figure 1-2). Also, the tips of the fingers and toes are considered lesser gates, and help with the regulation of Qi. Finally, there are thousands of pores over the whole of your body that are considered small gates which constantly regulate the body's Qi, and therefore adjust the body's Yin and Yang.

In order to be healthy and slow down the aging process, you must learn to keep the Qi circulating smoothly in the twelve channels, and you must learn how to fill up the Qi reservoirs so that they can efficiently regulate the Qi flow. You must also understand how your body's Qi communicates with the Qi around you, so that you can adapt to natural conditions.

If you understand Qi circulation theory for the human body, then you will be able to understand how Qi relates to the martial arts. Remember that the human body is not merely a machine like the aforementioned electrical fan. It is alive, and able to improve itself. When your Qi grows stronger, your physical body will also grow stronger. If you build your Qi up to a stronger level, your organs and physical body will receive more nourishment and their condition will improve, and you will become stronger.

To make this clearer, remember that many parts of your body, such as the limbs, are governed by your conscious mind. The governing process is very simple. Your mind generates an idea, and this thought leads Qi to the appropriate muscles, energizing them to perform the desired action. The key to martial Qigong training is learning to lead your Qi more efficiently, so that you can manifest more power. This theory holds that people normally only use their muscles at no more than 40% to 50% of their maximum capacity. This is simply because you don't need any more for your daily activities. The result is that your mind has never been trained to lead the Qi as efficiently as possible.

The Chinese martial artist learns to concentrate his mind through meditation or other training so that Qi can be led efficiently. This significantly increases power and improves the effectiveness of all techniques. The martial artist also learns through meditation to use Qi to raise the spirit and elevate morality. Through correct training, the mind can reach a very calm and peaceful state. The real Dao of Chinese martial arts aims for both spirit and skills. Correct training seeks perfection in both technique and spirit, not the conquest of others.

Chinese Martial Power (*Jin*)

Jin training is a very important part of the Chinese martial arts, but there is almost nothing written on the subject in English, and very little even in Chinese. Many instructors once viewed the higher levels of *Jin* as a secret which should only be passed down to a few trusted students. Unfortunately, it is also true that many instructors don't understand *Jin* very well themselves. It is a difficult subject to explain, and even harder to express in English.

Many current martial artists do not understand what *Jin* is, or they think that it is trained only in a few particular styles. In fact, almost all Oriental martial styles train *Jin*. The differences lie only in the depth to which *Jin* is understood, the different kinds of *Jin* trained, and the range and characteristics of the *Jins* emphasized. For example, Tiger Claw style emphasizes hard and strong *Jin*, imitating the tiger's muscular strength; muscles predominate in most of the techniques. White Crane, Xingyi, and Bagua are softer styles, and the muscles are used relatively less. In Taijiquan, the softest style, soft *Jin* is especially emphasized and muscle usage is cut down to a minimum.

The application of *Jin* brings us to a major difference between the Oriental martial arts and those of the West. In China, martial styles and martial artists are judged by their *Jin*. How deeply is *Jin* understood and how well is it manifested? How strong and effective is it, and how is it coordinated with martial techniques? When a martial artist performs his art without *Jin* it is called *Hua Quan Xiu Tui*, which means "Flower fist and brocade leg."⁶

This is to scoff at the martial artist without *Jin*, who is weak like a flower and soft like brocade. Like dancing, his art is beautiful but not useful. It is also said: "*Lian Quan Bu Lian Gong, Dao Lao Yi Chang Kong*" which means "Train *Quan* and not *Gong*, when you get old, all emptiness."⁷ This means that if a martial artist emphasizes only the beauty and smoothness of his forms and doesn't train his *Gong*, then when he gets old, he will have nothing. The "Gong" here means "Qigong," and refers to the cultivation of Qi and its coordination with *Jin* to develop the latter to its maximum, and to make the techniques effective and alive. Therefore, if a martial artist learns his art without training his *Qigong* and *Jin Gong*, once he gets old the techniques he has learned will be useless, because he will have lost his muscular strength.

Chinese martial artists say: "*Wai Lian Jin Gu Pi, Nei Lian Yi Kou Qi*", which means "Externally, train tendons, bones, and skin; and internally train one mouthful of Qi."⁸ This means that it does not matter whether you are studying an external or an internal style, if you want to manifest the maximum amount of *Jin*, you have to train both externally and internally. Externally means the physical body, and internally means the Qi circulation, which is related to the breathing.

Traditionally, *Jin* was considered a secret transmission in Chinese martial arts society. This is so not only because it was not revealed to most students, but also because it cannot be passed down with words alone. *Jin* must be experienced. It is said that the master "passes down *Jin*." Once you feel *Jin* done by your master, you know what is meant and are able to work on it by yourself. Without an experienced master it is more difficult, but not impossible, to learn about *Jin*. There are general principles and training methods which an experienced martial artist can use to grasp the keys of this practice. If you are interested in a more detailed exploration of about this subject, you may refer to: *Advanced Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, Vol. 1* by Dr. Yang Jwing-Ming.

Popular Chinese Internal Martial Arts

Because all Chinese martial styles utilize some Qigong training, it is difficult to distinguish the external styles from the internal ones. Traditionally, almost all of the Chinese martial styles were taught in secret, and it was not until the last hundred years that these secrets were gradually revealed to the general public. Even today, there are many styles that are still taught secretly. Because of this conservatism, most people (including many Chinese martial artists) simply don't have enough information to clearly distinguish between styles.

There are four generally known styles which emphasize Qi development more seriously than other styles, and are therefore considered internal. These four styles are Taijiquan, Xingyiquan, Baguazhang, and Liu He Ba Fa. Before we discuss the differences between these styles, we would first like to point out their similarities. First, they all concentrate on training the circulation of Qi and building it up to a higher level. Second, they all emphasize a calm and peaceful mind. And finally, all four styles are very effective in improving health.

1. *Taijiquan*:

- A. In order for the Qi to move freely and smoothly in the physical body, the body must be relaxed from the skin to the bone marrow and the internal organs. In order to lead the Qi to any part of the body without stagnation, the body must be relaxed, and the movements soft, like a baby's.
- B. When *Jin* is emitted for an attack, it is like a whip. Though soft, the power is strong and penetrating.
- C. The fighting strategy is more defensive than offensive. This means that defense is often treated as the preparation for an attack. Because of this, training focuses on yielding, neutralizing, sticking, adhering, and coiling. The movements are always rounded. "Pushing hands" practice leads the practitioner towards this goal.
- D. Strategy and techniques indicate that Taiji specializes in fighting mostly within the short and middle ranges. Almost all of the kicks trained in the Taiji sequences focus within these ranges.

2. *Xingyiquan*:

- A. In order to enable the Qi to move freely and smoothly in the physical body, the body must be natural and comfortable. In the beginning of both attacking and defensive movements, the body remains soft so that Qi can be led to the limbs. The body is then stiffened for an instant upon striking, in order to manifest the *Jin*. Xingyi *Jin* is like rattan, soft at the beginning and hard at the end. *Jin* manifests like a cannonball exploding.
- B. The fighting strategy is more active than passive. Offensive movement is usually used as a defense. Although techniques such as yielding, neutralizing, sticking, adhering, and coiling are used, the attacking mind and movement remain paramount. In order to keep up momentum, straight forward and backward movements are emphasized, although some dodging and side ward movements are used.
- C. Because of the strategy and techniques emphasized, Xingyi can be very effective when fighting at short range. Though some kicks are trained, almost all of them are directed at targets below the groin.

3. *Baguazhang*:

- A. The movements of Baguazhang are not as soft as Taijiquan, yet they are not as hard as Xingyi. The internal Qi is the main focus of the training.

- B. The fighting strategy emphasizes circular movements. Generally, both the stepping and the techniques are circular. Although many techniques such as yielding, neutralizing, sticking, adhering, and coiling are used, they are mainly adopted to coordinate with the round movements. Attack and defense are equally important. Rounded defensive movements are usually used first, followed by rounded attacking movements, to uproot the opponent and make him fall.
- C. Because of its strategy and techniques, Baguazhang can be effective at all ranges. Round stepping movements are constantly used in coordination with the techniques, but high kicks are seldom used. Instead, the training focuses on low kicks and firm rapid walking.

4. Liu He Ba Fa:

- A. Liu He Ba Fa is a combination of the strategy and techniques of Taijiquan, Xingyiquan, and Baguazhang. The training contains soft within the hard and hard within the soft. Its strategy contains straight line forward and backward, as well as circular movements. It utilizes all three fighting ranges, but does not emphasize high kicking techniques. It is normally taught to people who have already learned the three previous styles, because they are more likely to understand the essence of the three and mix and apply the techniques skillfully and effectively.

Before finishing this section, we would like to mention one other point. Martial publications have gone through considerable changes in the last eighty years. When Chinese martial arts started to be revealed to the general public, through publications between 1910 and the 1940's, the authors were still very conservative and only partially revealed the secrets of their style. They emphasized martial morality, and they published some of the secret songs and poems, but gave little explanation of them.

Between 1940 and 1960, more secrets were revealed, and the songs and poems were explained by well-known masters. In addition, most books published in this period included photos of the techniques and emphasized martial morality. This made it possible for martial artists with only a limited knowledge of a style to learn the essential theory of that style.

However, from 1960 until now, most publications have primarily emphasized the movements and the beauty of the forms. The theories and methods for reaching the higher levels of training have been widely ignored. The worst part of this new trend is that very few books even mention the moral aspect of martial arts. A person's morality is directly related to their attitude towards life. The authors of this book have always believed it is the morality of the martial artist which determines how deeply he comprehends the essence of any style. We also believe that the theory of each style is its essence and its root. Only those who have grasped the essence and the root will be able to reach the higher levels of the style.

The authors also consider that it is the understanding of theory which makes it possible for a student to reach a high level in a relatively short time. For these reasons, we have emphasized theory in this book. Almost all of the theory discussed in this book was passed down in songs and poems in publications before the 1950's.

There are still many other styles whose secrets remain hidden. For example, some of the other internal styles such as Buddha Hands and Butterfly Palms are unknown to westerners even today. The final point we would like to stress is that after several hundred years of development, there are now many different styles of Baguazhang. However, regardless of which style Baguazhang a person has learned, the basic theory and foundation remains the same. Therefore, no one should use his/her limited background and knowledge to criticize other styles. In fact, each style has its own unique characteristics and advantages.

In this chapter, after reviewing some of the important concepts of martial arts, we will summarize some vital martial moralities together with some well-known martial stories. Then, in the third section, the concept of Bagua (the Eight Trigrams) will be reviewed. In order to help you understand the cultural background of Chinese martial arts, the connection between Chinese martial arts and the *YiJing* (Book of Changes) will be discussed in the fourth section. In the fifth section, we will translate an ancient document to define Baguazhang. Finally, in the last two sections, the history of Baguazhang will be surveyed and the contents of Baguazhang training will be presented.

1-2. Martial Morality

Martial morality has always been a required discipline in Chinese martial society. Before you learn many martial techniques, therefore, you should first understand this subject.

In Chinese martial society, it is well known that a student's success is not determined by his external appearance, nor by how strong or weak he is, but rather by the student's way of thinking and his morality. Chinese martial artists have a saying: "A student will spend three years looking for a good teacher, and a teacher will test a student for three years." A wise student realizes that it is better to spend several years looking for a good teacher than to spend the time learning from a mediocre one. A good teacher will lead you to the right path, and will help you to build a strong foundation for your future training. A teacher who is not qualified, however, will not help you build a strong foundation, and may even teach you many bad habits. In addition, good teachers will always set a good example for their students with their spiritual and moral virtue. Good martial arts teachers do not teach only martial techniques, they also teach a way of life.

From a teacher's perspective, it is very hard to find good students. When people have just begun their studies, they are usually enthusiastic and sincere, and they are willing to accept discipline and observe proper manners. However, as time passes, you gradually get to see what they are really like, and sometimes it's quite different from how they acted in the beginning. Because of this, teachers quite frequently spend at least three years watching and testing students before they decide whether they can trust them and pass on to them the secrets of their style. This was especially so in ancient times when martial arts were used in wars, and fighting techniques were kept secret.

Martial Morality is called *Wude*. Teachers have long considered *Wude* to be the most important criterion for judging students, and they have made it the most important part of the training in the traditional Chinese martial arts. *Wude* includes two aspects: the morality of deed and the morality of mind. Morality of deed includes: **Humility, Respect, Righteousness, Trust, and Loyalty**. Morality of mind consists of: **Will, Endurance, Perseverance, Patience, and Courage**. Traditionally, only those students who had cultivated these standards of morality were considered to be worthy of teaching. Of the two aspects of morality, the morality of deed is more important. The reason for this is very simple. Morality of deed concerns the student's relationship with master and classmates, other martial artists, and the general public. Students who are not moral in their actions are not worthy of being taught, since they cannot be trusted or even respected. Furthermore, without morality of deed, they may abuse the art and use their fighting ability to harm innocent people. Therefore, masters will normally watch their students carefully for a long time until they are sure that the students have matched their standards of morality of deed before letting them start serious training.

Morality of mind is for the self-cultivation which is required to reach the final goal. The Chinese consider that we have two minds, an "Emotional mind" (*Xin*) and a "Wisdom mind" (*Yi*). Usually, when a person fails in something it is because the emotional mind has dominated their thinking. The five ele-

merits in the morality of mind are the keys to training, and they lead the student to the stage where the wisdom mind can dominate. This self-cultivation and discipline should be the goal of any martial arts training philosophy.

Next, we will discuss these requirements of morality.

Martial Morality (*Wude*) 武德

Morality of Deed:

1. Humility (*Qian Xu*) 謙虛

Humility comes from controlling your feelings of pride. In China it is said: "Satisfaction (i.e., pride) loses, humility earns benefits."⁹ When you are satisfied with yourself, you will not think deeply, and you will not be willing to learn. However, if you remain humble, you will always be looking for ways to better yourself, and you will keep on learning. Remember, there is no limit to knowledge. It does not matter how deep you have reached, there is always a deeper level. Confucius said, "If three people walk by, there must be one of them who can be my teacher."¹⁰ There is always someone who is more talented or more knowledgeable than you in some field. The Chinese say: "There is always a man beyond the man, there is a sky above the sky."¹¹ Since this is so, how can you be proud of yourself?

I remember a story that my White Crane master told me when I was seventeen years old. Once there was a bamboo shoot that had just popped up out of the ground. It looked at the sky and smiled, and said to itself, "Someone told me that the sky is so high that it cannot be reached. I don't believe that's true." The sprout was young and felt strong. It believed that if it kept growing, one day it could reach the sky. So it kept growing and growing. Ten years passed, twenty years passed. Again it looked at the sky. The sky was still very high, and it was still far beyond its reach. Finally, it realized something, and started to bow down. The more it grew the lower it bowed. My teacher asked me to always remember that "The taller the bamboo grows, the lower it bows."¹²

There was another story a friend told me. Once upon a time, a student came to see a Zen master. He said, "Honorable Master, I have studied for many years, and I have learned so much of the martial arts and Zen theory already that I have reached a very high level. I heard that you are a great master, and I have therefore come to see if you can teach me anything more."

The master didn't reply. Instead, he picked up a teacup and placed it in front of the student. He then picked up the teapot and poured until the tea reached the rim of the cup, and then he kept on pouring until the tea overflowed onto the table. The student stared at the master in total confusion and said, "No, No, Master! The cup is overflowing!"

The master stopped pouring, looked at him and smiled. He said, "Young man, this is you. I am sorry that I cannot accept you as a student. Like this cup, your mind is filled up and I cannot teach you any more. If you want to learn, you must first empty your cup."

In order to be humble, you must first rid yourself of false dignity. This is especially true in front of a master. A person who is really wise knows when and how to bend, and always keeps his cup empty.

2. Respect (*Zun ling*) 尊敬

Respect is the foundation of your relationship with your parents, teachers, your fellow students, other martial artists, and all other people in society. Respect makes a harmonious relationship possible. However, the most important type of respect is self-respect. If you can't respect yourself, how can you respect others or expect them to respect you? Respect must be earned, you cannot request or demand it.

In China, it is said: "Those who respect themselves and others will also be respected."¹³ For example, if you despise yourself and become a villain in this society, then you have lost your self-respect. Since you have abused your personality and humility as a human, why should other people respect you? Only when you have demonstrated that you are deserving of respect will respect come to you automatically and naturally.

I remember my grandmother told me a story. A long time ago a girl named Li-Li got married, and went to live with her husband and mother-in-law. In a very short time Li-Li found that she couldn't get along with her mother-in-law at all. Their personalities were very different, and Li-Li was infuriated by many of her mother-in-law's habits, the worst of which was constant criticism.

Days passed days, weeks passed weeks, but Li-Li and her mother-in-law never stopped arguing and fighting. What made the situation even worse was that, according to ancient Chinese tradition, Li-Li had to bow to her mother-in-law and obey her every wish. All the anger and unhappiness in the house caused everyone great distress.

Finally, Li-Li could not stand her mother-in-law's bad temper and dictatorship any longer, so she decided to do something about it. Li-Li went to see her father's good friend Mr. Huang, who sold herbs. She told him the problem, and asked if he would give her some poison so that she could solve the problem once and for all.

Mr. Huang thought for a while, and finally he said, "Li-Li, I will help you to solve your problem, but you must listen to me and obey what I tell you." Li-Li said, "Yes, Mr. Huang, I will do whatever you tell me to do." Mr. Huang went into the back room, and returned in a few minutes with a package of herbs. He told Li-Li, "You can't use a quick-acting poison to get rid of your mother-in-law, because that would cause people to become suspicious. Therefore, I have given you a number of herbs that will slowly build up poison in her body. Every other day prepare some pork or chicken, and put a little of these herbs in her serving. Now, in order to make sure that nobody suspects you when she dies, you must be very careful to act very friendly toward her. Don't argue with her, obey her every wish, and treat her like a queen."

Li-Li was so happy. She thanked Mr. Huang, and hurried home to start her plot of murdering her mother-in-law. Weeks went by, and months went by, and every other day Li-Li served the specially treated food to her mother-in-law. She remembered what Mr. Huang had said about avoiding suspicion, so she controlled her temper, obeyed her mother-in-law, and treated her like her own mother.

After six months had passed, the whole household had changed. Li-Li had practiced controlling her temper so much that she found that she almost never got mad or upset. She hadn't had an argument in six months with her mother-in-law who now seemed much kinder and easier to get along with. The mother-in-law's attitude toward Li-Li had changed, and she began to love Li-Li like her own daughter. She kept telling friends and relatives that Li-Li was the best daughter-in-law one could ever find. Li-Li and her mother-in-law were now treating each other just like a real mother and daughter.

One day Li-Li came to see Mr. Huang and again asked for his help. She said, "Dear Mr. Huang, please help me to keep the poison from killing my mother-in-law! She's changed into such a nice woman, and I love her like my own mother. I do not want her to die because of the poison I gave to her."

Mr. Huang smiled and nodded his head. "Li-Li," he said, "There's nothing to worry about. I never gave you any poison. All of the herbs I gave you were simply to improve her health. The only poison was in your mind and your attitude toward her, but that has been all washed away by the love which you gave to her."

From this story you can see that before anyone can respect you, you must first respect others. Remember, "The person who loves others will also be loved."

There was also another story my grandmother told me. In China, there was once a family made up of a father, a mother, a ten year old son, and a grandmother. Every mealtime they sat together around the table. The grandmother was quite old. Her hands had begun to shake all the time, and she had difficulty holding things. Whenever she ate, she couldn't hold the rice bowl steady and spilled rice all over the table.

The daughter-in-law was very upset by this. One day she complained to her husband, "My dear husband, every time your mother eats she spills her food all over the table. This makes me so sick I can't eat my own food!" The husband didn't say anything. He knew that he couldn't keep his mother's hands from shaking.

In a few days, when the husband had done nothing to solve the problem, his wife spoke to him again. "Are you going to do something about your mother or not? I cannot stand it any more." After arguing for a while, the husband sadly gave in to his wife's suggestion, and agreed that his mother should sit at a separate table, away from the rest of the family. When dinner time came, the grandmother found herself sitting alone at a separate table. And to make things worse, she had to eat from a cheap, chipped bowl because she had dropped and broken several others.

The grandmother was very sad, but she knew she couldn't do anything about it. She began to think of the past, and how much time and love she had given her son as he was growing up. She had never complained, but had always been there when he was sick or when he needed anything. Now she felt deserted by her family, and her heart was broken.

Several days passed. The grandmother was still very sad, and the smile began to disappear from her face. Her ten year old grandson had been watching everything, and he came to her and said, "Grandma, I know you are very unhappy about how my parents are treating you, but don't worry. I think I know how to get them to invite you back to the table, but I'll need your help."

Hope began to grow in the grandmother's heart. "But what do you want me to do?" she asked. The boy smiled and said, "Tonight at dinner time, break your rice bowl, but make it look like an accident." Grandmother's eyes opened wide in wonder. "But why?" she asked. "Don't worry," he said, "Leave it to me."

Dinner time came. She was curious about what her grandson was going to do, so she decided to do as he had asked. When her son and daughter-in-law were not looking, she picked up the old and chipped rice bowl that she had to eat out of, then dropped it on the floor and broke it. Immediately her daughter-in-law stood up, ready to complain. However, before she could say anything, the grandson stood up and said, "Grandma, why did you break that bowl? I wanted to save it for my mother when she gets old!"

When the mother heard this her face turned pale. She suddenly realized that everything she did was an example to her son. The way she was treating her mother-in-law was teaching her son how to devalue her when she got old. She suddenly felt very ashamed. From that day on, the whole family ate together around the same table.

From this, you can see that how we love, value and respect teachers and elders is exactly how we deserve to be treated when we are old. Real love is something that cannot be purchased. Respect your parents and love them always. Only then will you deserve the respect and love of your own children.

3. Righteousness (Zheng Yi) 正義

Righteousness is a way of life. Righteousness means that if there is something you should do, you don't hesitate to take care of it, and if there is something that you should not do, you don't get involved with it. Your wisdom mind should be the leader, not your emotional mind. If you can do this, then you will feel clear spiritually, and avoid being plagued by feelings of guilt. If you can demonstrate this kind of personality, you will be able to avoid evil influences, and you will earn the trust of others.

In the period of the Warring States (475-222 B.C.), the two neighboring states of Zhao and Qin were often fighting against each other. In Zhao's court, there were two capable and talented officers - a military commander named Lian Po, and a civilian official named Lin Xiang-Ru. Because of these two men, the state of Qin dared not launch a full-scale invasion against Zhao.

Originally, Lin Xiang-Ru's position was far lower than that of General Lian Po. But later on, when Lin Xiang-Ru was assigned as an ambassador to Qin, he won a diplomatic victory for the Zhao. This led the Zhao king to assign him to more important positions, and before too long his rank climbed higher than Lian Po's. Lian Po was very unhappy, and unwilling to accept this. He kept telling his subordinates that he would find an opportunity to humiliate Lin Xiang-Ru.

When Lin Xiang-Ru heard of this, he avoided meeting Lian Po face to face at any occasion. One day, some of Lin Xiang-Ru's officers came to see him and said, "General Lian Po has only talked about what he intends to do, yet you have already become so afraid. We feel very humiliated and would like to resign."

Lin Xiang-Ru then asked them, "If you were to compare General Lian Po and the Qin's King, who would be more prestigious?" "Of course General Lian Po cannot compare with the King of Qin!" they replied.

"Right!" he exclaimed. "And when I was an ambassador to Qin I had the courage to denounce the King of Qin right to his face. Thus, I have no fear of General Lian Po! The State of Qin dares not attack Zhao because of General Lian Po and myself. If the two of us are at odds with each other, Qin will take advantage of this opportunity to invade us. The interests of this country come first with me, and I am not going to haggle with Lian Po because of personal hostilities!"

Later, when Lian Po heard of this, he felt extremely ashamed. He tore off his shirt, and with a birch rod tied to his back, he went to Lin Xiang-Ru's home to request retribution for his own false dignity. Lin Xiang-Ru modestly helped Lian Po up from the ground and held his hand firmly. From that time on, Lian Po and Lin Xiang-Ru became close friends and served their country with the same heart.

There is another tale of events that happened during the Chinese Spring and Autumn Period (722-481 B.C.). In the state of Jin, there was a high-ranking official named Qi Xi. When he was old and ready to retire, Duke Dao of Jin asked him to recommend a candidate to replace himself. Qi Xi said, "Xie Hu is an excellent man who is most suitable to replace me."

Duke Dao was very curious and said, "Isn't Xie Hu your political enemy? Why do you recommend him?" "You asked me who I thought was most suitable and most trustworthy for the job. Therefore, I recommended who I thought was best for this position. You did not ask me who was my enemy," Qi Xi replied.

Unfortunately, before Duke Dao could assign Xie Hu the new position, Xie Hu died. Duke Dao could only ask Qi Xi to recommend another person. Qi Xi said, "Now that Xie Hu is dead, the only person who can take my place is Qi Wu."

Duke Dao was again very curious and said, "Isn't Qi Wu your son? Aren't you afraid that there may be gossip?" "You asked me only who was the most suitable for the position, and did not ask if Qi Wu was my son. I only replied with who was the best choice as a replacement."

As Qi Xi predicted, his son Qi Wu was able to contribute greatly. People believed that only a virtuous man like Qi Xi could recommend a really talented man. He would neither praise an enemy to flatter him, nor would he promote his own son out of selfishness. Instead, both his actions and his greatness emanated only from his sense of truth.

4. Trust (*Xin Yong*) 信用

Trust includes being trustworthy, and also trusting yourself. You must develop a personality which other people can trust. For example, you should not make promises lightly, but if you have made a promise, you should fulfill it. Trust is the key to friendship, and the best way of earning respect. The trust of a friend is hard to gain, but easy to lose. Self-trust is the root of confidence. You must learn to build up your confidence and demonstrate it externally. Only then can you earn the trust and respect of others.

There is an ancient Chinese story about Emperor You of Zhou (781-771 B.C.). When Emperor You attacked the kingdom of Bao, he won a beautiful lady named Bao Shi. However, although she was beautiful, Bao Shi never smiled. In order to make her smile, the Emperor gave her precious pearls and jewels to wear, and delicious things to eat. He tried a thousand things but still Bao Shi wouldn't smile. The Emperor was the monarch of the country and yet he couldn't win a smile from the beautiful lady. It made him very unhappy.

At that time, the country of Zhou had platforms for signal fires around its borders. If an enemy attacked the capital, the fires were lit to signal the feudal lords that their emperor was in danger, and they would immediately send out troops to help. The fires were not to be lit unless the situation was critical. However, the emperor thought of a way to use them to please Bao Shi. He ordered the signal fires lit. The feudal lords thought that the capital city was in great danger, so a vast and mighty army of soldiers soon came running.

When Bao Shi saw all the troops rushing crazily about in a nervous frenzy, she unconsciously let out a great laugh. Emperor You was so happy that he smiled and smiled, and completely forgot about the lords, standing there staring blankly. After a while the Emperor said, "It's nothing. Everyone go home."

Emperor You completely forgot about the importance of the signal fires, and went so far as to light them several times in order to win Bao Shi's smile. The lords all knew that they had been made fools of, and were furious.

Later, Emperor You dismissed his empress, Lady Shen, in favor of his concubine Bao Shi. Lady Shen's father was greatly angered, and united with a foreign tribe called the Quan Rong to attack Emperor You. When Emperor You's situation grew urgent, he ordered the signal fires lit, summoning the feudal lords to save him and the capital. Even as he died, the Emperor never understood that, because of the games he had played with the signal fires, not even one lord would come to save him.

5. Loyalty (*Zhong Cheng*) 忠誠

Loyalty is the root of trust. You should be loyal to your teacher and to your friends, and they should also be loyal to you. Loyalty lets mutual trust grow. In the Chinese martial arts, it is especially crucial that there be loyalty between you and your master. This loyalty is built upon a foundation of obedience to your master. Obedience is the pre requisite for learning. If

you sincerely desire to learn, you should rid yourself of false dignity. You must bow to your teacher both mentally and spiritually. Only this will open the gates of trust. A teacher will not teach someone who is always concerned about his own dignity. Remember, in front of your teacher, you do not have dignity.

There was a story told to me when I was a child. A long time ago in Asia there was a king. Nobody had ever seen the king's real face, because whenever he met with his ministers and officials, and whenever he appeared in public, he always wore a mask. The face on the mask had a very stern and solemn expression. Because nobody could see the real expression on his face, all the officials and people respected him, obeyed him, and feared him. This made it possible for him to rule the country efficiently and well.

One day his wife said to him, "If you have to wear the mask in order to rule the country well, then what the people respect and show loyalty to is the mask and not you." The king wanted to prove to his wife that it was he who really ruled the country, and not the mask, so he decided to take the mask off and let the officials see his real face.

Without the mask, the officials were able to see the expression on his face and figure out what he was thinking. It wasn't long before the officials weren't afraid of him anymore.

A few months passed, and the situation got steadily worse. He had lost the solemn dignity which made people fear him, and even worse, the officials had started to lose respect for him. Not only did they argue with each other in front of him, they even began to argue with him about his decisions.

He soon realized that the unity and cooperation among his officials had disintegrated. His ability to lead the country had gradually disappeared, and the country was falling into disorder. The king realized that, in order to regain the respect of the people and his ability to rule the country, he had to do something. He therefore gave the order to behead all of the officials who had seen his face, and he then appointed new ones. He then put the mask back on his face. Soon afterward, the country was again united and under his control.

Do you have a mask on your face? Is it the mask that people are loyal to? Is what you show people on your face what you really think? Do we have to put a mask on in this masked society? How heavy and how thick is your mask? Have you ever taken your mask off and taken a good look at the real you in the mirror? If you can do this it will make you humble. Then, even if you have a mask on your face, your life will not be ruled by your mask.

Morality of Mind:

1. Will (*Yi Zhi*)意志

It usually takes a while to demonstrate a strong will. This is because of the struggle between the emotional mind and the wisdom mind. If your wisdom mind governs your entire being, you will be able to suppress the disturbances that come from the emotional mind, and your will can last. A strong will depends upon the sincerity with which you commit yourself to your goal. This has to come from deep within you, and can't be just a casual, vague desire. Oftentimes, the students who show the greatest eagerness to learn in the beginning, quit the soonest, while those who hide their eagerness deep inside their hearts stay the longest.

There is a Chinese story from ancient times about a ninety year old man who lived together with his sons, daughters-in-law, and grandsons near the mountain Bei. In front of his house were two mountains, Taixing and Wangwu, which blocked the road to the county seat and made travel very inconvenient. One day he decided to remove these two mountains to the coast nearby and dump the dirt into the sea. His neighbors laughed at him when they heard of this. However, he

replied, "Why is this so impossible? I will die soon, but I have sons and my sons will have grandsons without end. However, the mountain remains the same. Why can't I move it? Isn't it true that where there is a will, there is a way?"

There is another story about the famous poet Li Bai. When Li Bai was young he studied at a school far away from his home. He lacked a strong will, so before the end of his studies he gave up and decided to go home. While crossing over a mountain on the way home he passed an old lady sitting in front of her house. In her hands she held a metal pestle which she was grinding on the top of a rock. Li Bai was very curious and asked her what she was doing. She said, "I want to grind this pestle into a needle." When Li Bai heard of this he was very ashamed, and decided to re turn to school and finish his studies. He later became one of the greatest poets in China.

There is another well-known story which tells of a famous archer named Hou Yi. When Hou Yi heard that there was a famous archery master in the North, he decided to ask the master to take him as a student. After three months of travel, Hou Yi finally arrived in the cold Northern territory. Before long, he found the home of the famous master. He knocked on the door, and when the old master came out, Hou Yi knelt down and said, "Honorable master, would you please accept me as your disciple?" The old master replied, "Young man, I can't accept any students. I am not as good as you think, and besides, I am already old." But Hou Yi would not accept no for an answer. "Honorable master," he said, "I have made up my mind: I swear I will not get up until you promise to take me as your student."

The master closed the door without a word, leaving Hou Yi outside. Before long it got dark and started to snow, but Hou Yi remained in his kneeling position without moving. One whole day passed, but the master never appeared again. Hou Yi continued to kneel on the ground in front of the door. A second day passed, and a third day. Finally, the master opened the door and said, "Young man, if you really want to learn my archery techniques, you must first pass a few tests." "Of course, master," Hou Yi replied with great happiness.

"The first is a test of your patience and perseverance. You must go back home and every morning and evening watch three sticks of incense burn out. Do this for three years and then come back to see me."

Hou Yi went home and started to watch the incense each morning and evening. At first, he got bored and impatient very quickly. However, he was determined to keep his promise, so he continued to watch the incense. Six months later, watching the incense burn had become a habit. He started to realize that he had become patient, and even began to enjoy his morning and evening routine. He began to concentrate his mind, focusing on the head of the incense as it burned down the stick. From practicing concentration and calming his mind, he learned to distinguish between the real and the false. After the three years were up, he found that every time he concentrated and focused his eyes on something, that object would be enlarged in his mind, and all other surrounding objects would disappear. He did not realize that he had learned the most important factor in becoming a good archer - a concentrated and calm mind. After he finished this test, he was very happy and traveled to the North to see his master.

The master told him, "You have passed the first test, now you must pass a second. You must go back and day and night watch your wife weave at her loom, following the shuttle with your eyes as it moves incessantly to and fro. You must do this for three years and then come back to see me."

Hou Yi was very disappointed, because he had thought that his master would teach him now that he had completed his three years of patience training. However, because his heart was set on

learning from this famous master, he left and went home. He sat by his wife's loom and focused his eyes on the shuttle as it moved to and fro. As with the incense, he didn't enjoy himself at first, but after one year passed he began to get used to the fast shuttle motion. After another two years, he found that when he concentrated on the shuttle, it would move more slowly. Without realizing it, he had learned the next important part of an archer's training - concentrating on a moving object. He returned to his master and told his master what he had found. Instead of beginning his instruction, he was asked to return home and make 10 rice baskets a day for the next three years. Chinese rice baskets were made out of rattan, and one needed to have very strong wrists and arms to make them. Even a very good basket maker could hardly make five a day, and Hou Yi was being asked to make ten a day!

Although disappointed, Hou Yi returned home to do as he was told. In the beginning he hardly slept, spending almost every hour of the day in making baskets. His hands were numb and bleeding, his shoulders were sore, and he was always tired, but he persisted in working to finish ten baskets a day. After six months he found that his hands and shoulders were no longer in pain, and he could make ten baskets a day easily. By the end of three years, he could make twenty a day. He surely had achieved the last requirement of a good archer - strong and steady arms and shoulders. Hou Yi finally realized that all his efforts for the last nine years had actually been the training for how to become a good archer. He was now able to shoot very well with his concentrated mind and strong arms.

Proud and happy, he returned to his master, who said, "You have studied hard and learned well. I can't teach you any more than what you already know." With this the master turned and walked away.

Hou Yi was thinking that all his master had taught him in the last nine years was expressed in only three sentences. He couldn't believe that this was all there was to learn. He decided to put his master, who by now was two hundred yards away, to a test. He pulled an arrow from his quiver, aimed at the tassel on his master's hat, and released. His master instantly sensed the arrow coming his way, pulled and nocked an arrow, and shot it back to meet the coming arrow in the air. Both arrows dropped to the ground. Hou Yi saw this and without stopping shot a second arrow, and this second arrow suffered the same fate. He couldn't believe that his master could shoot and meet his arrows in mid-air three times in a row, so he loosed a third arrow. He suddenly realized that his master had run out of arrows. While he was wondering what his master was going to do, his master plucked a branch from a nearby willow tree and used this branch as an arrow. Again it met Hou Yi's arrow in mid-air. This time, Hou Yi ran toward his master, knelt before him, and said, "Most respected master, now I realize one thing. The thing that I cannot learn from you is experience, which can only come from practicing by myself."

Of course, part of the story is exaggerated. However, masters in China often used this story to encourage the students to strengthen their will, to think, and to research. What the master can give you is a key to the door. To enter the door and find things inside is your own responsibility. The more experience you have, the better you will be.

2. *Endurance, Perseverance, and Patience (Ren Nai, Yi Li, Heng Xin)*

忍耐，毅力，恆心

Endurance, perseverance, and patience are the manifestations of a strong will. People who are successful are not always the smartest ones, but they are always the ones who are patient and who persevere. People who are really wise do not use wisdom only to guide their thinking, they also use it to govern their personalities. Through cultivating these three elements you will gradually build up a profound mind, which is the key to the deepest essence of learning. If you know how to use your mind to ponder as you train, it can lead you to a deeper stage of understanding.

If you can manifest this understanding in your actions, you will be able to surpass others.

Of all the stories that my master told me, my favorite one is about the boy who carved the Buddha. Once upon a time, there was a twelve year old boy whose parents had been killed during a war. He came to the Shaolin Temple and asked to see the Head Priest. When he was led to the Head Priest, the boy knelt down and said, "Honorable Master, would you please accept me as your Gongfu student? I will respect, obey, and serve you well, and I won't disappoint you."

As the Head Priest looked at the boy, he felt that he had to give him a test before he could accept him as a student. He said, "Boy, I would like to teach you Gongfu, but I have to leave the temple for one year to preach. Could you do me a favor while I am gone?" The boy was glad to have a chance to prove that he could be a good student, and so he said, "Certainly, honorable Master! What do you want me to do?"

The Head Priest led the boy out of the temple and pointed to a big tree. He said, "I have always wanted a good carving of the Buddha. See that tree? Could you chop it down and make a Buddha for me?" The boy replied enthusiastically, "Yes, Master! When you return, I will have finished the Buddha for you." The next morning the Head Priest departed, leaving the boy to live with the monks. A few days later the boy chopped down the tree, and got ready to make the Buddha. The boy wanted to carve a beautiful Buddha and make the Head Priest happy. He worked night and day, patiently carving as carefully as he could.

A year later the Head Priest came back from his preaching. The boy was very anxious and excited. He showed the Head Priest his Buddha, which was five feet tall. He hoped to earn the Head Priest's trust, and he eagerly waited to be praised. But the Head Priest looked at the Buddha, and he knew that the boy had sincerely done his best. However, he decided to give the boy a further test. He said, "Boy, it is well done. But it seems it is too big for me. It is not the size which I was expecting. Since I have to leave the temple again to preach for another year, could you use this time to make this Buddha smaller?"

The boy was very disappointed and unhappy. He had thought that when the Head Priest saw the Buddha, he would be accepted as a student and he could start his Gongfu training. However, in order to make the Head Priest happy he said, "Yes, Master. I will make it smaller." Even though the boy had agreed, the Head Priest could see from the boy's face that this time he did not agree willingly, from his heart. However, he knew that this time the test would be a real one.

The next morning the Head Priest left, and again the boy stayed with the monks to fulfill this promise. The boy started carving the Buddha, trying to make it smaller, but he was disappointed and very unhappy. However, he forced himself to work. After six months had gone by, he found that he had carved an ugly, unhappy Buddha.

The boy was very depressed. He found that he couldn't work on the Buddha when he was so unhappy, so he stopped working. Days passed days, weeks passed weeks. The date of the Head Priest's return was getting closer. His chances of becoming a student of the Head Priest were getting slimmer and slimmer, and his unhappiness was growing deeper and deeper.

One morning, he suddenly realized an important thing. He said to himself, "If completing the Buddha is the only way I can learn Gongfu, why don't I make it good and enjoy it?" After that, his attitude changed. Not only was he happy again, he also regained his patience and his will was stronger. Day and night he worked. The more he worked, the happier he was, and the more he enjoyed his work. Before the boy noticed it, the year was up and he had almost completed his happy and refined Buddha.

When the Head Priest came back, the boy came to see him with his new Buddha. This carving

was two feet tall, and smiling. When the priest saw the Buddha, he was very pleased. He knew that the boy had accomplished one of the hardest challenges that a person can face: conquering himself. However, he decided to give the boy one final test. He said, "Boy, you have done well. But it seems it is still too big for me. In a few days I have to leave the temple again for another year of preaching. During this time, could you make this Buddha even smaller?" Surprisingly, this time the boy showed no sign of being disappointed. Instead, he said, "No problem, Master. I will make it smaller." The boy had learned how to enjoy his work.

The Head Priest left again. This time, the boy enjoyed his work. Every minute he could find he spent at his task, carefully making the carving more lifelike and refined. His sincerity, his patience, and his growing maturity became expressed in the Buddha's face.

One year later, the Head Priest returned. The boy handed him a Buddha which was only two inches tall, and which had the best artwork one could ever find. The Head Priest now believed that this boy would be a successful martial artist. The boy had passed the test. He went on to become one of the best students in the Shaolin Temple.

As mentioned earlier, we have two kinds of minds. One comes from our emotions, and the other is generated from our wisdom and clear judgement. Do you remember times when you knew you should do a certain thing, but at the same time you didn't want to do it? It was your wisdom mind telling you to do it, and your lazy emotional mind saying no. Which side won? Once you can follow your wisdom mind, you will have conquered yourself and you will surely be successful.

3. *Courage (Yong Can)* 勇敢

Courage is often confused with bravery. Courage originates with the understanding that comes from the wisdom mind. Bravery is the external manifestation of courage, and can be considered to be the child of the wisdom and the emotional minds. For example, if you have the courage to accept a challenge, that means your mind has understood the situation and made a decision. Next, you must be brave enough to face the challenge. Without courage, the bravery cannot last long. Without the profound comprehension of courage, bravery can be blind and stupid.

Daring to face a challenge that you think needs to be faced is courage. But successfully manifesting courage requires more than just a decision from your wisdom mind. You also need a certain amount of psychological preparation so that you can be emotionally balanced; this will give your bravery a firm root so that it can endure. Frequently you do not have enough time to think and make a decision. A wise person always prepares, considering the possible situations that might arise, so that when something happens he will be ready and can demonstrate bravery.

There is a story from China's Spring and Autumn period (722-481 B.C.). At that time, there were many feudal lords who each controlled a part of the land, and who frequently attacked one another.

When an army from the nation of Jin attacked the nation of Zheng, the Zheng ruler sent a delegation to the Jin army to discuss conditions for their withdrawal. Duke Wen of Jin (636-627 B.C.) made two demands: first, that the young duke Lan be set up as heir apparent; second, that the high official Shu Zhan, who opposed Lan's being made heir apparent, be handed over to the Jin. The Zheng ruler refused to assent to the second condition.

Shu Zhan said, "Jin has specified that it wants me. If I do not go, the Jin armies that now surround us will certainly not withdraw. Wouldn't I then be showing myself to be afraid of death and insufficiently loyal?" "If you go," said the Zheng ruler, "You will certainly die. Thus I cannot bear

to let you go."

"What is so bad about letting a minister go to save the people and secure the nation?" asked Shu Zhan. The ruler of Zheng then, with tears in his eyes, sent some men to escort Shu Zhan to the Jin encampment.

When Duke Wen of Jin saw Shu Zhan, he was furious and immediately ordered that a large tripod be prepared to cook him to death. Shu Zhan, however, was not the least bit afraid. "I hope that I can finish speaking before you kill me," he said. Duke Wen told him to speak quickly.

Relaxed, Shu Zhan said, "Before, while you were in Zheng, I often praised your virtue and wisdom in front of others, and I thought that after you returned to Jin you would definitely become the most powerful among the feudal lords. After the alliance negotiations at Wen, I also advised my lord to follow Jin. Unfortunately, he did not accept my suggestion. Now you think that I am guilty, but my lord knows that I am innocent and stubbornly refused to deliver me to you. I was the one who asked to come and save Zheng from danger. I am this kind of person; accurately forecasting events is called wisdom, loving one's country with all one's heart is called loyalty, not fleeing in the face of danger is called courage, and being willing to die to save one's country is called benevolence. I find it hard to believe that a benevolent, wise, loyal, and courageous minister can be killed in Jin!" Then, leaning against the tripod, he cried, "From now on, those who would serve their rulers should remember what happens to me!"

Duke Wen's expression changed greatly after hearing this speech. He ordered that Shu Zhan be spared and had him escorted back to Zheng.

There is another story about a famous minister, Si Ma-Guang, and his childhood during the Song dynasty (1019-1086 A.D.). When he was a child, he was playing with a few of his playmates in a garden where there was a giant cistern full of water next to a tree.

One of the children was very curious about what was in the giant cistern. Since the cistern was much taller than the child, he climbed up the tree to see inside. Unfortunately, he slipped and fell into the cistern and started to drown.

When this happened, all of the children were so scared and they did not know what to do. Some of them were so afraid that they immediately ran away. Si Ma-Guang, however, without hesitation picked up a big rock and threw it at the cistern and broke it. The water inside flowed out immediately, and the child inside was saved.

This story teaches that when a crisis occurs, in addition to wisdom and a calm mind, you must also be brave enough to execute your decision.

1-3. What is Bagua?

Baguazhang is based on the theory of the Bagua (Eight Trigrams), whose source was the *Yi Jing* (Book of Changes). It would therefore be wise to first learn about this ancient book to gain a clear picture of how Baguazhang is related to the Bagua both in its theory and applications. It is impossible to explain the entire *Yi Jing* theory in this short section. After all, the Chinese people have studied and applied it for more than four thousand years.⁴ However, our aim is not to explain the *Yi Jing* and its uses, but rather to merely demonstrate the link between Baguazhang and the Bagua. Hopefully, an understanding of this will enable the reader to grasp the root and essence of Baguazhang practice.

It is said that the Bagua was first formulated in China by Fu Xi (also called Bao Xi) during The Age of The Five Rulers (2852 B.C.).¹⁴ Later, the *Yi Jing* was explained by the first ruler of Zhou, Wen Wang (1122 B.C.), in his book called *Yi Xi Ci* (Yi's Related Metrical Composition) or *Yi Da*

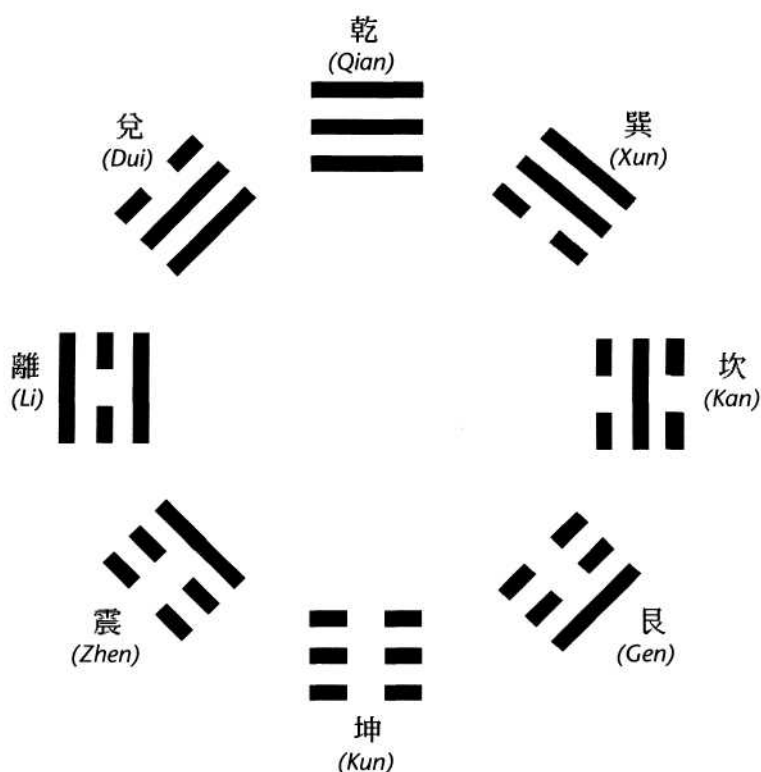


Figure 1-3. Pre-Heaven Bagua

Zhuan (Great Biography of Yi), the first written explanation of the relationship between the *Yi Jing*'s Bagua and nature.¹⁴ This book is also commonly called *Zhou Yi* (Zhou's Book of Changes).

In this book it states: "Ancestor Bao Xi (i.e., Fu Xi) as a king under the heavens, looked upward to observe the phases of the heavens. He looked downward to perceive the rules of the earth. He viewed the inhabiting birds and animals and their connection with the earth. Close adopt our bodies and far adopt various objects (i.e., he carefully observed our body's change, which is near, and closely inspected various natural phenomenon, which are far away from us, in order to figure out the rules or patterns of nature). He then began to create the Bagua, which is to be used to collaborate the decency of the divine enlightenment and to be used to classify the effects of ten thousand objects (i.e., the Bagua he created, could be used to draw the relationship between the heavenly nature and the millions of objects)"¹⁴. (Figure 1-3). The *Yi Jing* is actually a scientific treatise based on detailed observations and careful contemplations, which produced an understanding of the patterns and rules of nature. Since nature is always repeating itself, it is possible through careful observation to deduce the rules of the natural patterns.

The *Zhou Yi* says: "There is a Taiji (extremity) in the *Yi* (i.e., *Yi Jing*). It produces Two Poles (*Liang Yi*, i.e., Yin and Yang). Two Poles yield Four Phases (*SiXiang*). Four Phases generate Eight Trigrams (*Bagua*)."¹⁵ It was believed that Taiji was the root and foundation of the universe. In the Xingyiquan martial style there is a song about Taiji: "Taiji was originally misty and turbid, no shape, no Yi (i.e., intention of change). But there is one Qi within. (When) this Qi circulates in the universe, all places are reached. Living things then originated. Named 'One Qi,' it is also called 'Pre-Heaven Real Sole Qi.' From this Qi, the two poles (Yin and Yang) were generated and the heaven and the earth began to divide. Since then, Yin and Yang were distinguished."^{16,17} This concept of how the Two Poles derive from the Taiji was later expressed in a diagram by Lai Zhi-