



Pa Kua Chang

JOURNAL

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Gao Yi Sheng
Style
Ba Gua Zhang
In Tianjin

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*Liu Feng Cai and Gao
Style Ba Gua in Tianjin*

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Purpose and Policy Statement

In order to keep the *Pa Kua Chang Journal* an un-biased forum for Pa Kua Chang instructors and practitioners to exchange their thoughts and ideas about the art of Pa Kua Chang, this Journal is totally subscriber-supported and does not affiliate itself with, or receive support from, any particular Ba Gua Zhang instructor or martial arts school. In order to help maintain integrity and impartiality, the Journal will not accept paid advertisement.

The Journal is published six times a year. Each issue features an interview with one or more Ba Gua Zhang instructors from mainland China, Taiwan, the United States, or Canada. The interviews will report on each instructor's background, current program, training methods and teaching philosophy. By utilizing this format, the intention is to give students an opportunity to get to know prospective teachers and to let teachers possibly gain insights and ideas from learning about the activities of their colleagues.

We will refrain from using titles, such as Master or Sifu, in this Journal. Every school has their own separate definition of these terms and criteria for using these titles. In order to remain impartial and show equal respect to all instructors being interviewed, we felt that omitting the titles from everyone's name was the best policy. We mean no disrespect to any of our contributors or their great teachers.

Chinese names and terms will be romanized using the pinyin system of romanization except when an instructor prefers his name romanized differently. The title of the Journal appears in the Wade system of romanization as it was the system we started with and we kept the original title. Whenever possible, Chinese characters will be listed in parentheses following the first appearance of Chinese terms and names in each article.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this journal are those of the instructors being interviewed and not necessarily the views of the publisher or editor.

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Editor's Corner

Xing Yi Quan Journal ??

Ever since we began publishing the Pa Kua Chang Journal I have received phone calls and letters from individuals who request that I either include Xing Yi material in the Pa Kua Chang Journal or that I also publish a Xing Yi Quan Journal. I have resisted both because I want to keep the Pa Kua Chang Journal focused on the topic of Ba Gua and my hands are too full to start another Journal. However, during my many trips to mainland China and Taiwan I have collected quite a lot of Xing Yi material and I would like to publish it. Instead of starting a new Journal on Xing Yi, I will be writing a column about the old Xing Yi masters in the quarterly North American Tang Shou Tao Newsletter.

North American Tang Shou Tao is the largest internal martial arts organization in the United States. The association has over 20 member schools nationwide and over 400 individual members. In my opinion, it is the only organization dedicated to all of the major internal martial arts styles (Xing Yi, Ba Gua, Tai Ji, and Liu He Ba Fa) that actually promotes these arts to the extent that members have easy access to a wide variety of styles, lineages, and masters in China.

In addition to sponsoring top level instructors from China to teach seminar tours in the United States (which they recently did with Ba Gua Zhang instructor Luo De Xiu - see page 22), and sponsoring group trips to study with masters in Taiwan and China (they are sponsoring a group trip to mainland China next April), North American Tang Shou Tao also has set up a network of "advisors" in Taiwan and mainland China. Association members wishing to travel to China on their own to study with a qualified teacher have immediate access to some of the best teachers Taiwan and China have to offer through contact with one of the Association advisors. These instructors are not contemporary wushu coaches, but are old masters from traditional lineages who know complete systems, teach openly, and know how to apply their art in fighting.

In addition to providing members the opportunity to study with masters in China, North American Tang Shou Tao also conducts many annual events in the United States. Vince Black, the Association President, conducts dozens of seminars in all parts of the United States every year. Seminar topics include Tui Na, Bone Setting, Qi Gong, Xing Yi Quan, Ba Gua Zhang, Tai Ji Quan, Liu He Ba Fa, Chinese Medicine, and internal arts combat. The Association also conducts an annual full-contact tournament which is open only to Association members and an annual instructors' conference. Association instructors gather from all over the country to practice together and learn new material.

Those interested in finding out more about the North American Tang Shou Tao Association can write to Kim Black, P.O. Box 36235, Tucson, AZ 85740.

On the Cover

Ba Gua Zhang instructor Liu Feng Cai (1908 - 1987)
executing a posture from the Swallow form
(Yan Fan Gai Shou Zhang)

Gao Yi Sheng's Ba Gua Zhang in Tianjin

The Gao Yi Sheng style of Cheng Ting Hua's Ba Gua Zhang has been addressed in the Pa Kua Chang Journal numerous times. Since the Gao style is one of the most popular styles being taught outside of mainland China today, it is natural that it would be a recurring topic in the Pa Kua Chang Journal. However, in the half dozen articles which have discussed Gao's Ba Gua we have yet to address this system as it is still taught in the place where it originated. In previous issues we have discussed Gao's Ba Gua as it is currently being taught in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the United States. This article will focus on Gao's Ba Gua as it is being taught today in Tianjin, China. The information for this article was obtained through interviews conducted with Wang Shu Sheng and Liu Shu Hang in April 1993 and September 1993 in Tianjin. Wang and Liu were both students of one of Gao Yi Sheng's top disciples, Liu Feng Cai.

Gao Yi Sheng (高義盛), who was also known as Gao De Yuan (高德源) and Gao Shou Shan (高壽山), was born in 1866 in Shandong Province, Wu Di County, Da Shan Township, Da Zhuang Zi Village. Da Shan Township is located in northern Shandong Province near the Shandong/Hebei border about 50 miles from the southern part of Tianjin City. Gao's family was originally wealthy, however, when Gao was still young his family's fortune was swindled away and the family moved northeast about 90 miles to Hebei Province, Wu Qing County, Shao Gao Township. Wu Qing is located between Beijing and Tianjin in Hebei (about 80 miles from Beijing). As a child Gao studied the Da Hong Quan (大洪拳) system of martial arts that was taught in his family. He later studied Xing Yi Quan (形意拳) from Li Cun Yi (李存義) and when he was 26 he began to study Ba Gua Zhang (八卦掌) from Dong Hai Chuan's (董海川) student, Song Chang Rong (宋長榮).

After three years of study with Song, Gao Yi Sheng had only learned the Single Palm Change. He begged his teacher to teach him more, however, Song said that he was not ready. Song told Gao that one cannot learn too much and expect to achieve a high level of skill. Gao was disappointed and left Song to find another teacher.

When Gao Yi Sheng was 30 years old he met Cheng Ting Hua's (程庭華) student, Zhou Yu Xiang (周玉祥), a native of Wa Fang Village in Wu Qing County. Zhou, who also studied Xing Yi Quan with Li Cun Yi, was well known for his fighting ability. When Gao and Zhou first met they had a friendly challenge match to test each other's skill. After Zhou defeated Gao in three attempts at attack, Gao acknowledged Zhou's superior skill and asked to be Zhou's student. Zhou, who was only five years Gao's senior, said, "Because we are almost the same age, I really cannot be the one that brings you into the system. You should look upon me



Gao Yi Sheng's student Liu Feng Cai (1908 - 1987) studied and taught Ba Gua Zhang in Tianjin for nearly 50 years. He is shown above executing a Dragon Form posture from Gao's pre-heaven Ba Gua (Long Xing Chuan Shou Zhang)

as your elder brother." Gao pleaded with him and so Zhou agreed to take Gao to Beijing and introduce him to Cheng Ting Hua. If Cheng accepted Gao into the system, then Zhou said he could teach him. When Gao Yi Sheng met Cheng Ting Hua and asked to become one of his disciples, he told Cheng that he already had some experience studying under Song Chang Rong. Because Gao had some background in Ba Gua and because Zhou recommended him, Cheng accepted Gao as a student. Upon returning to Wu Qing, Zhou taught Gao his art and Gao periodically made trips to Beijing to study with Cheng. Since Cheng Ting Hua died a few years after Gao met him, Gao received most of his Ba Gua instruction from Zhou Yu Xiang. Gao studied with Zhou for five or six years. He learned the traditional eight palm changes, the broad sword, the straight sword, the spear, the crescent moon swords, the short stick, basic fighting sets and their corresponding developmental training exercises. After spending five



Gao Yi Sheng with two of his students, left Wu Meng Xia, right Wu Zhao Feng

or six years with Zhou, Gao then started teaching Ba Gua Zhang in Wu Qing County.

When Gao Yi Sheng was 45 years old (around 1911), he returned to his original home village in Shandong Province. Shandong Province was famous for its martial arts and almost every village in Da Shan Township had a martial arts training hall. At the time, most martial artists in the area practiced one of the Shaolin arts. When Gao first returned to Shandong with the intent to teach Ba Gua Zhang, he had to follow the local custom of engaging in combat with one of the local martial artists. His first contest was against a local teacher named Wu Hui Shan (吳會山) who he easily defeated. He later also defeated local teachers Ma Yuan Biao (馬元彪), known as the "Tiger of Da Shan Street," and Li Xue Wu (李學武), known as "Iron Palm" Li. With these victories, Gao quickly became well known and martial artists from more than ten surrounding villages came to study with him.

Liu Feng Cai (劉鳳彩)

Liu Feng Cai's hometown was only five miles away from where Gao lived in Da Shan Township and Gao Yi Sheng's older sister was Liu Feng Cai's grandmother. When he was growing up, Liu Feng Cai called Gao Yi Sheng "grand uncle." Liu's father was one of the martial artists who began studying Ba Gua Zhang with

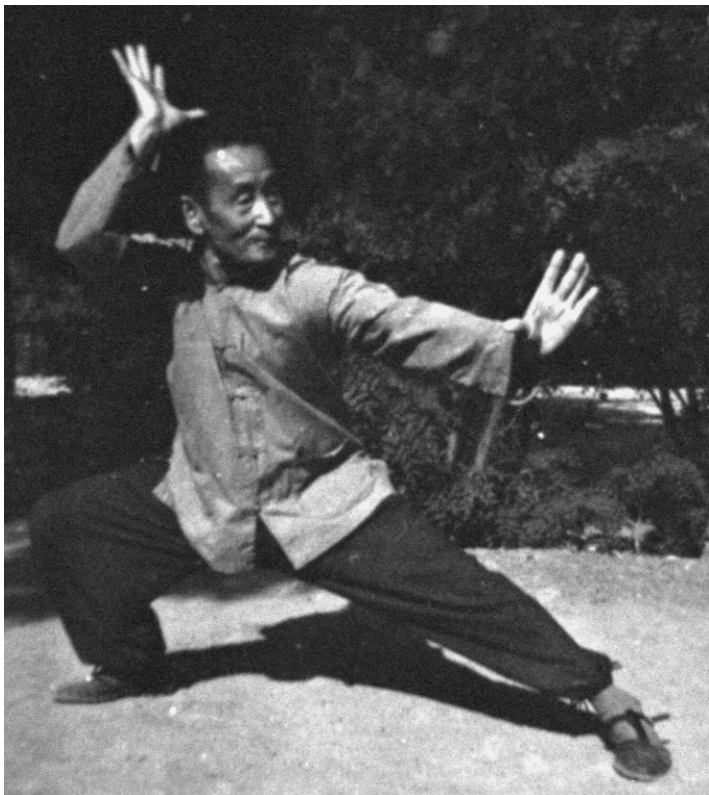
Gao Yi Sheng shortly after Gao arrived in Da Shan in 1911. Liu Feng Cai was born on the fifteenth day of the first month of the lunar calendar in 1908. He was a native of the Liu family village in the Wai Feng area of Shandong Province (Wu Di County, Da Shan Township). Liu was born into a very poor family. He started practicing martial arts when he was nine years old. His father was his first teacher.

In addition to studying Ba Gua Zhang, Liu Feng Cai also studied *San Huang Pao Chui* (三皇炮錘), Wu Dang Sword (武當劍), double sticks, and other weapons in his home village. As a young man, he enjoyed these more "active" styles and his father thought this training would help him develop basic skills which would enhance his Ba Gua training. Later, when Liu Feng Cai taught Ba Gua in Tianjin, he started all of his young students with *San Huang Pao Chui* to give them a martial arts foundation before they practiced Ba Gua Zhang. When he was in his twenties Liu also became skilled at the "night fighting" saber (Ye Zhan Dao - 夜戰刀).

The "night fighting" saber style was created by a notorious bandit in Shandong Province who passed on his skills to Wang Mao Lin (王茂林). Wang Mao Lin became well known for his sword skill in Shandong's capital city, Ji Nan. In a contest with the most well known sword masters in Ji Nan, Wang was undefeated. The "night fighting" saber set consisted of only six short straight line forms. The special skills of this set employed techniques which attacked the opponent's wrists. These techniques enabled the practitioner to find the opponent's wrist even when fighting at night,



Liu Feng Cai executes a posture from the eighth section of the pre-heaven Ba Gua form (Ting Shen Ban Kou Zhang)



Liu Feng Cai executes a posture from the Horse Form (Ning Shen Tan Ma Zhang)

hence the name “night fighting” saber.

Liu Feng Cai met Wang Mao Lin in his hometown and defeated Wang in an open-hands contest utilizing his Ba Gua Zhang. After the friendly match was over, Wang said that he had one skill which Liu did not possess. So saying, Wang grabbed a long tobacco pipe (several feet long), which was the nearest object shaped like a sword. He asked Liu to grab a chicken feather duster that lay nearby and try to poke him with it. Every time Liu tried to poke Wang, he was hit on the wrist with the tobacco pipe. Liu was curious about this technique and asked Wang to teach him the “night fighting” saber.

When Gao Yi Sheng was around 50 years old (1917), he left his home village in Shandong and moved to Yang Village, Wu Qing County, Hebei Province. Yang Village was only about 10 miles from Tianjin. In addition to teaching in Yang Village, Gao also began teaching Ba Gua Zhang in Tianjin City. In the early part of this century, Tianjin was a very rough place. It was a major port city with many foreign concessions, thus there was a lot of money in Tianjin. The money attracted the criminal element and the underworld was well organized. Many martial artists in Tianjin, such as Ba Gua and Xing Yi men Zhang Zhou Dong (張兆東) and Li Cun Yi, made a living as bodyguards or bounty hunters and also set a standard for martial arts in the city. Anyone teaching Ba Gua or Xing Yi in the city would have to meet that standard if they wanted to stay in business.

The first formal disciple Gao accepted in Tianjin was Wu Meng Xia (吳孟俠). Wu Meng Xia had studied Ba Gua Zhang and Xing Yi Quan with Zhang Zhao Dong's

top student Han Mu Xia (韓慕俠). When Wu heard that Gao was teaching Ba Gua in Tianjin he went to test Gao's skill. When the two fought, Gao defeated him soundly. Wu knelt in front of Gao and asked to become a student. Wu Meng Xia was a big man with a reputation as being a good fighter. When Wu began studying with Gao, others became interested in what Gao was teaching. Zhang Jun Feng (張峻峰) was one of Gao's early students in Tianjin who met Gao through Wu Meng Xia (see *Pa Kua Chang Journal* Vol. 3, No. 5).

While Gao was living in Yang Village, he also periodically returned to his home village in Shandong to teach. When Liu Feng Cai turned 19 years old, Gao accepted him as a formal Ba Gua Zhang disciple. When Liu Feng Cai was 28 years old (1936), Gao moved from Yang Village to Tianjin City and began teaching at the sports field in the English concession. Liu Feng Cai moved to Tianjin a year later so he could continue studying with Gao full time.

Gao Yi Sheng's Ba Gua Zhang

All systems of Ba Gua Zhang include basic training skills. In the Gao Yi Sheng system, the basic training includes eight sets of basic hand exercises (Ji Ben Shou Fa - 基本手法), body strengthening exercises, stance keeping or standing exercises, and basic circle walking holding static upper body postures.

The eight sets of hand exercises are repetitive hand and arm gestures that the student first practices while standing in one spot, then later practices in conjunction with various footwork patterns. The body strengthening exercises, called *Tian Gan* (天干), or “heavenly stems,” consist of a set of ten exercises, each having several variations, which are practiced so that the student strengthens the torso and develops full body power¹. The standing exercises employ two basic



Liu Feng Cai executing a Snake Form posture (She Xing Shun Shi Zhang)



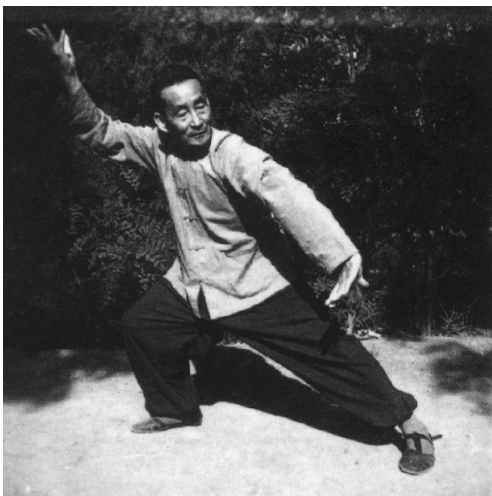
Liu Feng Cai

standing postures. The first is the standard Ba Gua circle walking stance shown on page 8 (far left). In the Gao system, this is referred to as Xian Tian Zhuang (先天樁), or the pre-heaven standing posture. The second standing posture is identical to Xing Yi's San Ti Shi (三體式) or "Trinity" posture. In the Gao system, this posture is referred to as Hou Tian Zhuang (後天樁), or post-heaven standing posture. After the student has practiced the two static standing postures, he or she will then be taught the basic circle walking postures. This set consists of eight static upper body

postures which are held while the practitioner walks the circle. In the Gao system, this set is called Dong Zhuang (動樁) or Xing Zhuang (行樁).

Gao Yi Sheng's core Ba Gua system is divided into two primary training sets which are practiced after the student has developed skill in the basic training exercises. The traditional circular form is called Xian Tian (先天), or pre-heaven Ba Gua Zhang. From the traditional circular form Gao derived 64 linear sets which are used to practice and train fighting applications. This set he called Hou Tian (後天), or post-heaven, Ba Gua Zhang. The pre-heaven set consists of a total of ten palm changes. The first palm change is the "single palm change" or dan huan zhang (單換掌). After the "single palm change" the form consists of eight sections as follows:

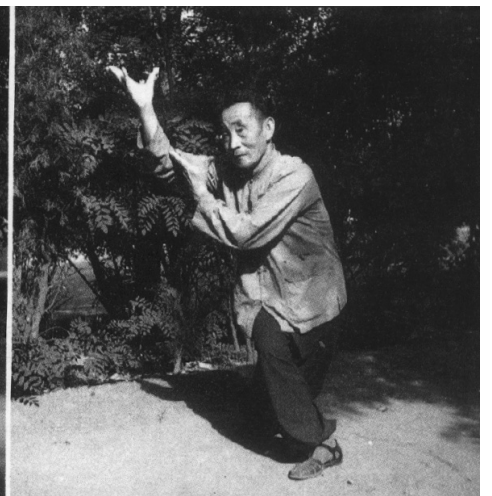
- 1) *She Xing Shun Shi Zhang* (蛇形順式掌)
Snake Form Smooth Body Palm
- 2) *Long Xing Chuan Shou Zhang* (龍形穿手掌)
Dragon Form Piercing Hand Palm
- 3) *Hui Shen Da Hu Zhang* (回身打虎掌)
Turn Back the Body and Strike the Tiger Palm
- 4) *Yan Fan Gai Shou Zhang* (燕翻蓋手掌)
Swallow Over Turning, Covering Hand Palm
- 5) *Zhuan Shen Fan Bei Zhang* (轉身反背掌)
Turn the Body Over the Back Palm
- 6) *Ning Shen Tan Ma Zhang* (擰身探馬掌)
Twist the Body and Check the Horse Palm
- 7) *Yao Shen Bei Cha Zhang* (搖身背插掌)
Swing the Body and Insert from Behind Palm
- 8) *Ting Shen Ban Kou Zhang* (停身扳扣掌)
Stop the Body, Pull Down and Hook Palm



Zhuan Shen Fan Bei Zhang



She Xing Shun Shi Zhang



Zhuan Shen Fan Bei Zhang



Liu Feng Cai demonstrates a posture from the third section of the pre-heaven form (Hui Shen Da Hu Zhang)

The tenth palm change in Gao Yi Sheng's system is called "Black Dragon Waves its Tail Palm" or *Wu Long Bai Wei Zhang* (烏龍擺尾掌). This palm change is a bit more complicated than the others and forms the link between the pre-heaven and post-heaven sets.

When Gao Yi Sheng taught the circular changes, he first taught simplified versions of the changes so that the student could grasp the essential principle of body motion that each of the palm changes were designed to train. The names he used to describe this simplified set described the basic principle of the movement. The simplified form had the following names: smooth palm, piercing palm, turn back palm, overturning palm, turning body palm, twisting palm, reversing palm, and spiral palm. When the student demonstrated a sufficient level of skill with the simplified form, Gao would then teach them the more complex version. The complex form built upon the foundation of the simple form by adding more intricate movements and refinements.

Liu Feng Cai became especially skilled at Gao Yi Sheng's *Xian Tian Ba Gua Zhang* and was known to be Gao's top student in performing this skill. Gao's other top students, such as Wu Meng Xia and Zhang Jun Feng, were large men who had also studied Xing Yi Quan. They became highly skilled at the post-heaven component of Gao's system.

When Liu Feng Cai performed the pre-heaven set it is said that he was light, but not floating; solid, but not stiff. There was firmness within softness. The inside and outside, top and bottom, left and right, were connected as one *Qi* (氣). When Gao Yi Sheng was old he praised Liu Feng Cai by saying, "If you want to talk about fighting, you are not yet as good as I. However, if you want to talk about forms, your skill has reached a higher level than mine." Liu Feng Cai's skill at the

pre-heaven Ba Gua was much higher than his skill at the post-heaven Ba Gua.

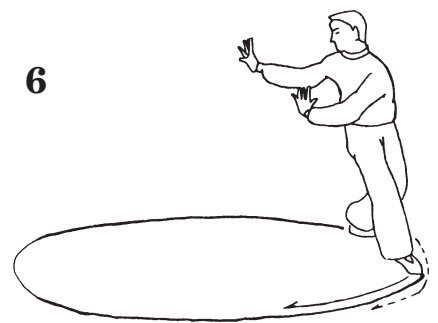
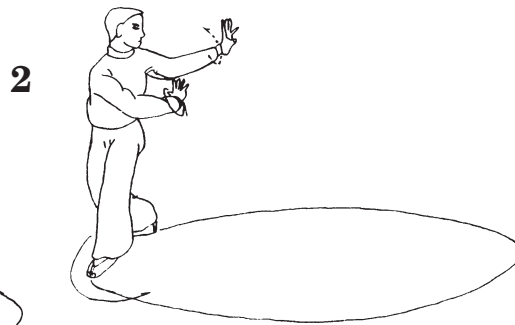
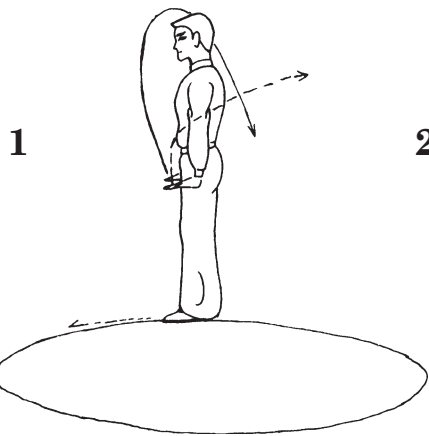
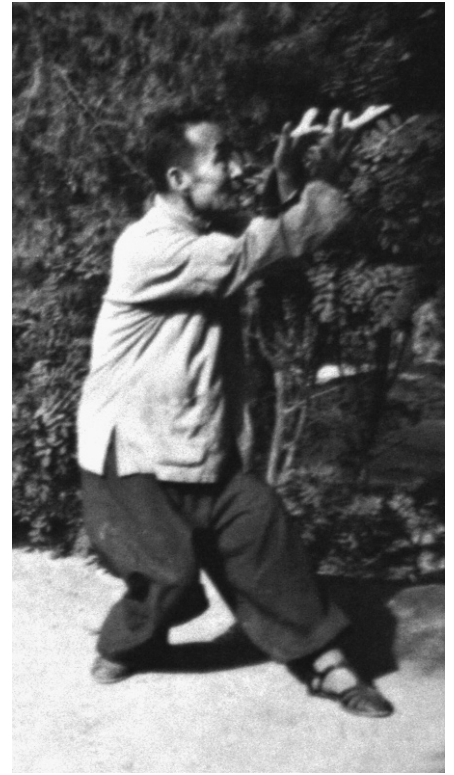
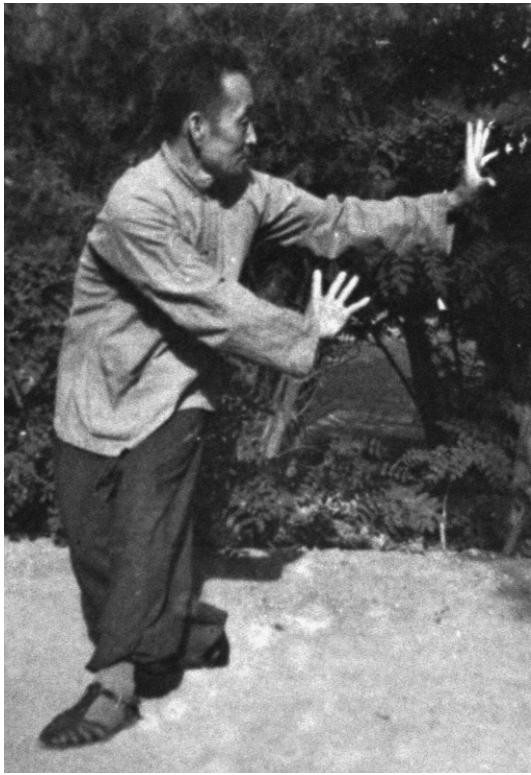
Although almost all lineages of Ba Gua Zhang practice straight line fighting sets, the post-heaven set taught by Gao Yi Sheng is unique to his style. Some believe that Gao was taught the post-heaven Ba Gua by a mysterious Daoist named Song Yi Ren (宋異人) while he was living in his home village in Da Shan between 1911 and 1917, however, there is no proof that such a man ever existed (See *Pa Kua Chang Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 2). Many people practicing Gao style today believe that Gao invented this set himself based on his experiences with *Da Hong Quan*, *Xing Yi Quan* and Cheng Ting Hua's Ba Gua Zhang. About half of Gao's post-heaven Ba Gua originated with techniques Gao learned from Zhou Yu Xiang. One of Zhou's students, Yen De Hua (閻德華) published a book, titled *Ba Gua Zhang Tu Shou* (八卦掌圖說 - *Ba Gua Zhang Illustrated*), which illustrated 34 of Zhou's fighting techniques and at least 31 of those techniques appear in Gao's post-heaven set.

Gao's post-heaven Ba Gua consists of straight line sets of techniques which are practiced repetitively as in the basic practice of Xing Yi's five fists and twelve animals. Additionally, there are forms which link the 64 techniques together and there are two-person sets which utilize the post-heaven techniques. In Tianjin, the descendants of Liu Feng Cai practice the post-heaven Ba Gua sets with a great deal of power; in every movement *fa jing* (發勁) is expressed. In Taiwan, descendants of Zhang Jun Feng practice the post-heaven method with long, low extended postures as well as the shorter postures with expressive movements.



Liu Feng Cai executes a move from the fifth section of the pre-heaven form (Zhuan Shen Fan Bei Zhang)

Single Palm Change - The Foundation of Gao Style Ba Gua



Gao style practitioner Luo De Xiu (羅德修), who is from the Zhang Jun Feng lineage in Taiwan, said that Zhang Jun Feng taught two variations of the post-heaven set as taught by Gao Yi Sheng. One set was practiced with the stances low and the postures very long and extended. The other set was practiced with shorter stances and more expression of force. The long, low posture practice is developmental, this set teaches the student to coordinate the body and use full body power. The short stance set practiced with quick expressive movements is practiced to develop *fa jing* and teach the student how the movements would actually be applied in combat.

The short stances and quick movement practice develops the fighting tactics which are best employed by smaller, faster students. The long, low, extended postures, which serve as good developmental training for everyone, are suited for those practitioners who are large and can use their body mass to their advantage. Looking at the way the post-heaven forms are taught today, it seems as though Gao taught his bigger students, such as Wu Meng Xia and Zhang Jun Feng, to practice the long and low postures in training so that when they actually used the techniques, they would have developed the ability to use their mass to their advantage. He taught his smaller students, such as He Ke Cai (何可才), Yu Yi Xian (于義賢), and Liu Feng Cai, to practice the quicker, more expressive method so that they could hit hard, move quickly, and strike in rapid succession.

Single Palm Change

While the Single Palm Change movement is not one of the eight main changes which make up Gao's pre-heaven Ba Gua, its movements form the template from which all eight pre-heaven changes are derived. In most of the Gao style schools the beginning student will first learn the basic circle walk practice and then spend a great deal of time studying and practicing the movements of the single palm change prior to learning any of the other eight changes.

Gao style practitioner Luo De Xiu, of Taipei, Taiwan, states that all of the movements in Gao's Ba Gua Zhang can be derived from the single palm change. He feels that when Dong Hai Chuan invented this art, he wanted to create a fundamental set of movements which embodied all of the possible ways the body moved while executing combative tactics. The single palm change is the movement he created to fit this criteria. It expresses circular movement in the horizontal plane, the vertical plane, and at oblique angles. Varying the single palm change motions from high to low, inside to outside, left to right, opening to closing, center to eight directions, and their opposites, the single palm change can be seen as the foundation for all of Ba Gua Zhang's characteristic movements.

Liu Feng Cai taught the single palm change to his students in the "swimming body" style. This means that when the change is executed, the feet are continually moving while the arms change. In "fixed step" practice the practitioner stays in relatively the

The Song of Single Palm Change

换掌为母始无终，八路翻身内里生；
一路翻身生八式，八路又生六四名；
六十四式生变化，阴阳动静妙无穷；
八路翻身遵八卦，乌龙摆尾凤轮生。

Changing the palms is the mother, the beginning without end,

The eight roots overturning the body originates from within;

One root overturning the body produces the eight styles,

The eight roots create the sixty-four names;

The sixty-four forms create the changes,

Yin and Yang, movement and stillness are profound without end;

The eight roots overturning the body follow the Ba Gua,

The "Black Dragon Waves its Tail" creates a whirlwind.

same location while the change is executed (as shown in the illustrations on the previous page). This level of practice is executed by beginners in order to practice proper alignments and full body, coordinated movements. Once the practitioner can execute the change correctly in the "fixed step" manner, they can graduate to *you shen* (游身), or "swimming body" practice. This means that as soon as the change of direction is executed with the *kou bu bai bu* (扣步摆步) footwork (illustrations 3 and 4 on the previous page), the practitioner immediately begins walking the circle while the remaining upper body movements are executed (illustrations 4, 5, and 6 on the previous page).

Gao Yi Sheng's Ba Gua Zhang Book

In 1927, with the help of his student Liu Bo Yong (劉伯庸), Gao Yi Sheng completed the first draft of his six volume book which he simply called *Ba Gua Zhang*. Gao wrote this book as a guideline for future generations and he allowed his senior students to copy what was written in the book.

One of Gao's students, Du Shao Tang (杜紹棠)

Gao Yi Sheng's Ba Gua Zhang Book



Gao Yi Sheng's complete book consists of six volumes (as shown above left). The bottom page (far left) discusses the fourth change of the pre-heaven Ba Gua (*Yan Fan Gai Shou Zhang*). The "song" of this change is shown at the top of the right hand page and the characteristic posture of this change is shown below the song. On the opposite page the correspondence to the Ba Gua diagram and the post-heaven changes are shown. Each pre-heaven change in Gao's system corresponds with eight of the post heaven sets. Each of the pre-heaven changes are depicted in this manner in the book. The middle page above shows the Gao style "Ba Gua tree" which symbolizes the student's development in Ba Gua training. Strong roots and a solid foundation (trunk) promote the growth of a infinite number of changes (branches). The diagram on the page to the right, above shows the correspondence between the Ba Gua diagram and various aspects of Gao's Ba Gua system.

was a story editor for the *New Tianjin News*. In 1935 Du wrote a book he called *You Shen Lian Huan Ba Gua Zhang* (游身連環八卦掌 - *Swimming Body Continuously Linked Ba Gua Zhang*) and it was published by the New Tianjin Book Company. Almost everything in Du's book was taken directly from the book Gao Yi Sheng had written for his students. Evidently, Du had published this material without Gao's permission and thus Gao was upset.

In 1936, Gao added more information to his original book. His book was written in his own hand in five volumes. The first three volumes include background information about Dong Hai Chuan, theory and philosophy of practice (including Yin Yang (陰陽) and Five Element Theory) and practical fighting concepts such as the use of the rise, drill, fall, and overturn movements. These volumes also included *Nei Gong* (內功) practice and the *Xian Tian* and *Hou Tian* forms with "songs" pertaining to each of the changes and sets, an explanation of the movements, an illustration of the characteristic posture of the set,

relationships between the pre-heaven changes and the post-heaven sets, and their correspondences with the Ba Gua diagram. The fourth volume includes the five fists and twelve animals of Xing Yi Quan and the use of the "Ba Gua single fist." The fifth volume includes many "songs" pertaining to the practice of Ba Gua Zhang and practical theory. After Gao had finished his five volumes, some of his students got together and wrote a sixth volume on the practice of *Qi Gong* (氣功) and methods for cultivating health and longevity. This volume is written in great detail and came directly from Gao's teaching of this material.

Many masters of old wrote books in order to leave a written account of their experience for later generations. For the most part these were not written in great detail because they were written solely to provide initiate students with keys to remembering what they were taught. They were written in the form of "songs" that typically could not be understood by the uninitiated. Most of these books would be annotated by future generations and several have been published publicly.

Over the years, Gao's book has appeared publicly and privately in many forms, however, all of the material is basically the same in content.

After Du Shao Tang's book was published in Tianjin in 1935, the next version of Gao's book to be published was published privately by Zhang Jun Feng in Taiwan around 1954. This book was written by Zhang's students based on Zhang's copy of Gao's book. Zhang's book is very similar in content to Gao's as Zhang was against changing anything that was written in his teacher's book.

Since 1989, three books with Gao's material have been published publicly in mainland China. The first, called *Yu Shen Lian Huan Ba Gua Zhang*, was written by Wen Zhong Shi (溫仲石). Wen was a student Gao's student Zhang Fu Hai (張福海). Wen's book shows the pre-heaven and post-heaven forms and gives a few examples of the two-person practice sets. This book does not include the "songs" that are associated with the pre-heaven and post-heaven forms.

In 1991 two books were published that contained Gao's material. The first, titled *Ba Gua Zhang San Da Shu* (八卦掌散打術 - *Ba Gua Zhang Free Fighting Technique*), was written by Ma Wen Rong (馬文榮) under the pen-name Jian Xian (劍仙). Ma was a student of Gao Yi Sheng's student An Ji Hai (安繼海). Ma's book contains various two-person sets including Ba Gua moving step push hands, two-person elbow sets, two-person cutting legs sets and linking legs sets,



Liu Shu Hang poses with the Qing Dynasty era Ba Gua Sword he inherited from his grand-uncle, Liu Feng Cai

ground fighting, and throwing.

The second book published in 1991 was written by Liu Shu Hang (劉樹行) under careful review by Liu Feng Cai and Liu's top student Wang Shu Sheng (王書聲). This book, called *Cheng Pai Gao Shi Ba Gua Zhang Pu* (程派高式八卦掌譜 - *Gao Yi Sheng's Style of Cheng Ting Hua Ba Gua Zhang*), was based on Gao's original book, however, the form illustrations are much more detailed. This book includes a history of the Gao style, biographies of Gao Yi Sheng and Liu Feng Cai, the standing practice, the static circle-walking postures, and the pre-heaven and post-heaven forms with the original "songs" from Gao's book that are associated with each form.

Although Gao allowed many of his students to copy his book, he gave the original version to his grand-nephew, and student, Liu Feng Cai. Liu Feng Cai in turn gave this book to his grand-nephew, and student, Liu Shu Hang.

After the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor in 1941, the situation in China became turbulent. The foreign concessions in Tianjin were sealed off and transportation became difficult. In 1942, Gao Yi Sheng, who was about 75 years old at the time, moved from Tianjin back to Yang Village in Wu Ching County at the request of his son. Gao retired from teaching all but a few select students and lived in the back of a medicine shop which was owned by one of his students. Gao Yi



Wang Shu Sheng practicing with the large Ba Gua Broad Sword



Liu Feng Cai (bottom right) poses with some of his students. (Wang Shu Sheng is first row left, Liu Shu Hang is back row middle.)

Sheng died in 1951 at the age of 85.

While Gao Yi Sheng was living in Tianjin, Liu Feng Cai helped him teach classes to beginning students. After Gao moved back to his home village, Liu started teaching on his own. When Liu Feng Cai began teaching Ba Gua Zhang on his own, his first student was a *Tong Bei* (通背) practitioner named Liu Shao Chen (劉少臣). When he taught students, he started the younger beginning students studying *San Huang Pao Chui* as a Ba Gua Zhang primer. Students who were in their thirties or forties who already had some martial arts experience would start learning Ba Gua Zhang immediately. Older students began their study with Wu style Tai Ji Quan.

Ba Gua Zhang Weapons

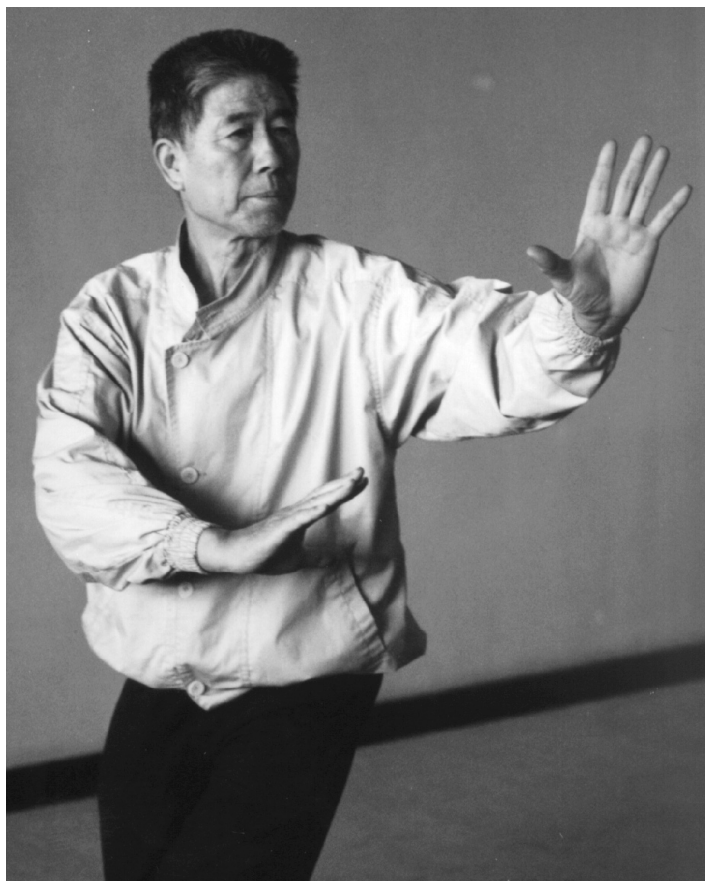
After students had studied both the pre-heaven and post-heaven Ba Gua, including the two-person sets, for a considerable amount of time, Liu Feng Cai allowed them to study weapons. Liu felt that unless the student had developed a great deal of internal power through fundamental bare-hand form practice, they would not be able to handle weapons properly, especially the large Ba Gua broad sword and straight sword.

The large straight sword and broadsword were training weapons specific to Ba Gua Zhang. These were not weapons used in fighting, they were used to develop strength in training. Liu Feng Cai first taught his students the movements of the straight sword and broad sword using standard size weapons. Students were required to become proficient in these movements before they were allowed to pick up the large weapons.

If the large heavy weapons were used too early, the student would use physical strength in the arms instead of coordinated whole body power in handling these weapons and thus bad habits would be developed.

The large Ba Gua straight sword that was owned by Liu Feng Cai was given to him by his friend Qi Shao Zhen (齊少禎). Qi told Liu that the weapon was too big for him to use himself. The sword is 4 feet 3 inches in length and weighs 5.5 pounds. Some of Liu Feng Cai's friends told him that the straight sword he owned had belonged to Sun Lu Tang (孫祿堂), however this cannot be confirmed. Liu Feng Cai's grand-nephew, Liu Shu Hang, now owns this sword and he said that he has been told that this sword had been owned by either Sun Lu Tang or Yin Fu (尹福). The man, Qi Shao Zhen, who had given the sword to Liu Feng Cai was Yin Fu's nephew, so it is possible that the sword had once belonged to Yin. Regardless of where it came from, the sword is definitely one of a kind. It is the highest quality Chinese weapon that I have ever seen. Liu Feng Cai's Ba Gua Zhang broad sword, which is also currently owned by Liu Shu Hang, is approximately the same weight as the straight sword, however, it is four inches longer.

Liu Feng Cai's top student, Wang Shu Sheng, borrowed Liu Feng Cai's weapons and tried to have replicas made. The weapons that Wang has are of very high quality and match Liu's in dimension, however, they are not quite as heavy because the quality of the metal is hard to match. Liu Feng Cai's broad sword and straight sword are both Qing Dynasty era weapons.



Wang Shu Sheng in Tianjin, China, 1993

The crescent moon swords that Wang Shu Sheng owns are also of very high quality. This weapon, which has seven blades, was a special Ba Gua Zhang weapon used to defend against long weapons.

The weapons which Liu Feng Cai taught were the straight sword, broad sword, spear, crescent moon swords, and cane. He was particularly skilled in the straight sword and crescent moon knives.

Liu Feng Cai retired from his job in the textile industry in Tianjin at the age of 75 and at the age of 76 (1983) he moved back to his hometown in Shandong Province. Liu Feng Cai died in his hometown on February 10, 1987 at the age of 80. His students say that Liu never went a day without practicing Ba Gua Zhang and spent all his spare moments researching the art. In 1982, when Dong Hai Chuan's tomb was reconstructed in Beijing, Liu Feng Cai attended the ceremony and his name was carved in the stone wall in front of Dong's tomb as the representative of Ba Gua Zhang in Tianjin. In Liu Feng Cai's book, which was written by Liu Shu Hang, there is a list of names which indicates that Liu Feng Cai had 23 disciples.

Wang Shu Sheng (王書聲)

Wang Shu Sheng was born in 1918 in An Xing County, Hebei Province. In his youth Wang became skilled in Ba Ji Quan (八極拳). In 1943 Wang moved to Tianjin. He had heard of Ba Gua Zhang and the power of the so-called "internal" martial arts, however, being a practical fighter he was more interested in Ba Gua's use of circular movement and evasion than "internal power." His curiosity about Ba Gua's employment in fighting led him to seek out a Ba Gua Zhang teacher when he arrived in Tianjin.

Wang Shu Sheng met Liu Feng Cai in 1947. In order to see first hand how Ba Gua was applied in fighting, Wang asked Liu if he could test his skill. Wang states that when Liu moved in and hit him he "felt something special" and then understood the power of Ba Gua Zhang. He immediately knelt down and asked to become Liu's student. However, Liu did not accept him as a student right away. Wang was determined to learn Ba Gua and began following Liu Feng Cai to wherever he was teaching. Finally, after Liu saw that Wang was patient and determined, he accepted him as a student. When Wang bowed to be accepted as a disciple, five other school brothers were accepted at the same time. They were as follows: Liu Shao Chen (劉少臣), Li Chang Jiang (李長江), Yang Zhi Sheng (楊知生), and Dong Jie Gao (董潔高). These four and Wang Shu Sheng were five of Liu Feng Cai's top disciples. Wang said that at present Liu Shao Chen and Li Chang Jiang are still alive, however, they do not practice Ba Gua any more. Yang Zhi Sheng has past away and Dong Jie Gao's whereabouts are unknown. Dong studied chemistry at a university in Tianjin while he was practicing Ba Gua with Liu Feng Cai. After the Communist takeover of China in 1949, Dong was sent out of Tianjin and Wang has not heard from him since. Although Gao Yi Sheng was still alive when Wang began studying with Liu, Wang never

had the opportunity to meet him as Gao had already left Tianjin.

Wang studied Liu Feng Cai's Ba Gua with an interest in learning how to fight utilizing Ba Gua Zhang's special characteristics. The concentration of his study was the usage of the pre-heaven Ba Gua and the two-person sets based on the post-heaven Ba Gua. Wang Shu Sheng and a fellow classmate worked hard on the two-person sets for three years and became highly skilled in executing these drills. In addition to practicing the set two-person patterns, Wang and his partner studied the details and descriptions which were written in Gao's book and worked on variations to the set patterns. Based on these variations, and the fighting skills he learned from Liu Feng Cai, Wang Shu Sheng created his own set of two-person combat drills based on Gao Yi Sheng's Ba Gua style. Presently, all of the Gao style practitioners in Tianjin practice this set.

When Wang first started teaching Ba Gua in Tianjin he taught at the Nan Kai Martial Arts School and the Zhen Hua Martial Arts school. Now his students Ge Guo Liang (戈國良) and Li Xue Yi (李學義) have taken his teaching positions at the schools and Wang only teaches privately.

In April 1987, Wang Shu Sheng was invited to



Gao Yi Sheng's student Liu Feng Cai (1908 - 1987)



Liu Feng Cai's grand-nephew Liu Shu Hang

instruct in Japan. The martial arts magazines in Japan published articles about Wang and his skill was praised highly. While in Japan, it was requested that Wang demonstrate Ba Gua Zhang applications. Wang gladly demonstrated, however, to prevent anyone from getting hurt, he used light contact when applying his technique. The magazine photographers, wanting to capture a dramatic shot, were not satisfied. They told Wang that they wanted to see actual effects of the applications. They found a 4th degree karate black belt to be Wang's demonstration partner. When the man attacked, Wang stepped in, turned his body crisply and threw his opponent out of the practice space. The photographers were then satisfied. When teaching Ba Gua, Wang emphasizes the fighting applications and he is especially skilled at *San Shou* (散手).

One of Wang's favorite weapons is the Ba Gua Crescent Moon Swords. A number of years ago Wang met with Sha Guo Zheng (沙國政) in Zhen Zhou and they compared their Crescent Moon Sword forms. Sha said that Wang's form was the orthodox method. Sha also told Wang that his Ba Gua style was very practical for actual combat.

Wang Shu Sheng also had the opportunity to meet with Li Zi Ming (李子鳴) at Li's home and discuss Ba Gua Zhang. They compared styles and discussed the

history of Ba Gua Zhang. Both men agreed that Dong Hai Chuan was the originator of Ba Gua and that the stories about Ba Gua Zhang existing before Dong Hai Chuan were not true.

Liu Shu Hang (劉樹行)

Liu Shu Hang is Liu Feng Cai's grand-nephew and the family inheritor of Liu Feng Cai's Ba Gua Zhang. Liu Feng Cai was the brother of Liu Shu Hang's grandfather. Since Liu Shu Hang's father and grandfather did not study Ba Gua, Liu Shu Hang was called upon to inherit the family style. Liu Shu Hang began studying Ba Gua Zhang with Liu Feng Cai when he was sixteen years old. Liu states that when he began his study of Ba Gua, he did not like the circular forms. After learning only two sections of the circular form, Liu Feng Cai began teaching Liu Shu Hang the post-heaven fighting sets in order to maintain his interest. The post-heaven sets were more vigorous and the application of power was more apparent and therefore they were more interesting to the young Liu Shu Hang. Liu states that, "for young people, walking in circles is boring." However, he also said that as he became older he realized that the real skills were in the pre-heaven circular set.

Liu Shu Hang studied Gao style Ba Gua Zhang with his grand-uncle for 20 years. His teacher taught him all of the details of the art in the privacy of his home. Liu said that he had practiced with Liu Feng Cai for 16 years before he was allowed to train with the large straight sword and large broad sword. Before he touched the big weapons he already knew the forms from practicing with smaller weapons. After he had been practicing with the large broad sword very hard for three months his grandmother and his grand-uncle came to see him where he was working. Liu Feng Cai told him that he was proud of his progress and presented him with his own broad sword as a gift.



In June of 1993 Liu Shu Hang visited Gao Yi Sheng's last living disciple, He Ke Cai, in Hong Kong; also pictured are He Ke Cai's wife and his student C.S. Tang

His grandmother brought a red silk cloth to tie on the end of the saber and this same cloth still hangs on the sword today. Before Liu Feng Cai returned to his hometown in Shandong, he also gave Liu Shu Hang his Ba Gua straight sword and the original copy of Gao Yi Sheng's book.

In 1980, Liu Shu Hang began to write his own book on Gao style Ba Gua under the verbal direction of his grand-uncle, Liu Feng Cai. In 1983 he finished the first draft and took it to his teacher and his classmates for review and comment. After receiving all of the comments, he wrote the second draft. In 1984 Liu took the second draft to Beijing and showed it to Professor Kang Ge Wu (康戈武) of the Beijing Wushu Research Institute. After receiving comments from Kang, Liu wrote a third draft and then took it back to Liu Feng Cai for final review. Between 1985 and 1988 Liu worked on the final draft of the book and it published it in 1991 at his own expense. In the future Liu plans to publish books about the Gao style weapons and Ba Gua fighting technique.

Connection Among Gao Style Descendants

In June of 1993, Liu Shu Hang traveled to Hong Kong to visit with Gao Yi Sheng's last remaining disciple, He Ko Cai and his student Deng Chang Cheng (鄧昌成). Liu compared his Ba Gua with some of He Ko Cai's students. He said that although the application of power was different in some cases, the movements were basically the same. Since publishing their book, Liu Shu Hang and Wang Shu Sheng have received visits and letters from many Gao style practitioners around the world. Some of Zhang Jun Feng's descendants from Taiwan have visited Liu and Wang in Tianjin on numerous occasions. Wang Shu Sheng also has good relations with An Ji Hai's (安繼海) son, An Shu Bao (安叔寶), who still lives in Tianjin and practices the Gao style Ba Gua he learned from his father. An Ji Hai was Gao Yi Sheng's student.

He Ko Cai's student Deng Chang Cheng (C. S. Tang) visited Zhang Jun Feng in Taiwan in 1973 and compared styles. The postures of the forms were similar, however, some variations in articulation and application of power were different. Since Deng's visit to Taiwan in 1973, several of Zhang Jun Feng's descendants have come to Hong Kong and compared styles with Deng. Deng has also been visited by Yu Yi Xian's disciple Y. C. Wong (黃耀楨) of San Francisco and has spoken over the telephone with Li Zhuang Fei's (李壯飛) disciple, Fred Wu (吳民安) of Worthington, Ohio (see article on page 16).

The most recent meeting among Gao style practitioners occurred during Luo De Xiu's visit to the United States during October and November of 1993 (see article on page 22). Luo was a student of Zhang Jun Feng's student Hong Yi Xiang (洪懿祥) and has also studied Ba Gua with a number of Zhang Jun Feng's other senior disciples. While in the United States, Luo gave a seminar at Y. C. Wong's school in San Francisco and compared several of the Gao style forms with Y. C. Wong.



Wang Shu Sheng and Liu Shu Hang in Tianjin, China, April 1993

Although each of the various schools of the Gao style have different "flavors," the continued friendly connection between Gao's descendants will ensure that the style lives on as it was taught by Gao Yi Sheng.

Studying the Gao Style in China

Those individuals who may be interested in studying the Gao Yi Sheng style of Ba Gua Zhang in China will have the opportunity to do so in April of 1994. The *Pa Kua Chang Journal*, in association with the North American Tang Shou Dao Association, is sponsoring a group trip to Tianjin in April of 1994 to study Gao's Ba Gua with Wang Shu Sheng and Liu Shu Hang. During the intensive study program students will learn all of Gao's pre-heaven and post-heaven Ba Gua as well as the Ba Gua broad sword and Ba Gua straight sword forms. Individuals interested in this trip can write to High View Publications at the address given on page 2 for more information.

Footnotes:

1) The origin of the *Tian Gan* exercises is in question. Zhang Jun Feng taught these exercises as part of the Ba Gua training when he taught in Taiwan. Other schools of Gao style Ba Gua do not practice these exercises. It is not known if Zhang learned these exercises from Gao or if he learned them from someone else and added them to his own Ba Gua curriculum.

Dr. Fred Wu's "Guang Hua" Ba Gua Zhang

The information in this article was obtained during an interview with Dr. Fred Wu at his home in Worthington, OH on 15 November 1992.

When the Japanese invaded China in the 1930's, Tianjin became a dangerous place to live and many of Tianjin's residents fled their homes and moved south. The Japanese were confiscating all weapons and arresting or killing those who owned them, therefore, the martial artists in Tianjin were leaving the city in large numbers in order to avoid persecution. Although the migration south disrupted many peoples lives, it turned out to be a stroke of good luck for a young Wu Min An (吳民安). Both of the instructors who taught him Ba Gua Zhang (八卦掌) had left Tianjin in the mid-1930's as a result of the Japanese invasion.

Wu Min An (Fred Wu) was born in Canton in 1916. Martial arts, Chinese medicine (herbal medicine and acupuncture), Yi Jing (易經) study, Yi Jing astrology,



Dr. Fred Wu of Worthington, OH

and Daoist and Chan (Zen) Buddhist philosophy and exercises were in his family and so he started studying all of these aspects of Chinese culture at a very young age. Wu's grandfather was a well known *Hung Gar* (洪家) practitioner and his uncles were skilled in the Southern style martial arts such as *Wing Chun*, *Hop Gar*, *Fu Jow*, *Choi Lei Fut*, etc. Another of Wu's uncles had practiced Chen style *Tai Ji Quan* (陳式太極拳) with the famous Chen Fa Ke (陳發科) in Beijing. Many of his family elders were skilled martial arts practitioners and his father and mother were both western trained medical doctors. Wu studied various styles of martial arts from his family members, belonged to the Jing Wu Association (精武會) in Canton, and later studied in Shanghai under various martial arts teachers. At the Shanghai Jing Wu Association school he was able to study *Bo Ji Ba Fa* (搏擊八法) with Zhou Shi Bin (周仕彬). In his youth he studied several different martial arts styles and health practices including Seven Star Praying Mantis, *Tan Tui* (彈腿), *Yi Jin Jing* (易筋經), White Eyebrow, and various weapons.

In 1935 Wu went to Nanjing to attend the University of Nanjing American Missionary College and earn his B.S. degree in horticulture. The Central Martial Arts Academy (*Chong Yang Guo Shu Guan* - 中央國術館) was five blocks away from the dormitory where Wu lived and he would frequently pass by and watch the students practice. Students enrolled in the Central Martial Arts Academy came from all areas of China and were required to pass a difficult entrance examination before being selected to attend. Training at the Academy was a full time occupation, however, the Academy also offered a part-time program for local Nanjing and surrounding district residents and, fortunately for Wu, the person teaching that program was Ba Gua Zhang instructor Sun Xi Kun (孫錫堃).

Wu was able to take private Ba Gua Zhang lessons with Sun Xi Kun at Sun's home in 1937. Sun had been a Ba Gua Zhang student of Cheng Ting Hua's (程庭華) eldest son, Cheng You Lung (程有龍 - who was also known as Cheng Hai Ting - 程海亭). Sun had been one of the chief instructors at a large martial arts school in Tianjin before he moved to Nanjing. Unfortunately, Wu was only able to study with Sun for a few months before the events of the war with Japan caused his college to shut down. While Wu was in Nanjing he also had the opportunity to study *Zi Ran Men* (自然門 - Natural Style Boxing) with Wan Lai Sheng (萬籟聲). Sun Xi Kun had begun Wu's Ba Gua practice by teaching him *Ba Gua Zhan Zhuang* (八卦站樁 - standing practice) and breathing exercises, *Qi Gong* (氣功), the single and double palm changes and other basic Ba Gua exercises and fighting techniques.

When the University was shut down and moved to Hankow, they told all of the students to go home and wait for notification concerning relocation of the

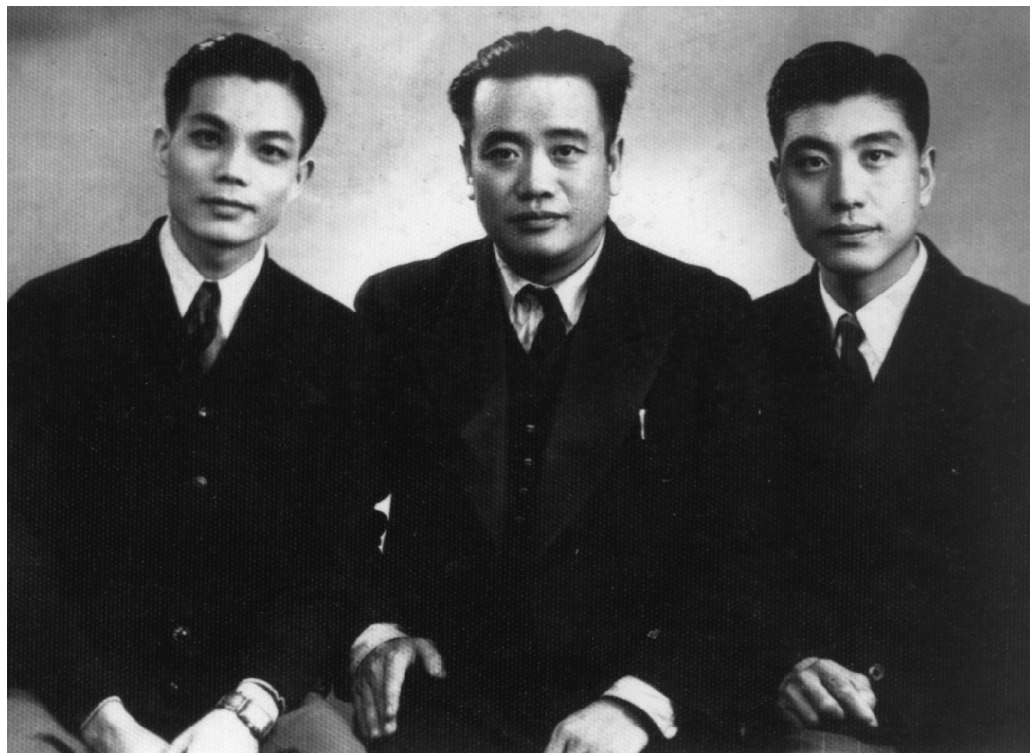
University and when it would reopen. Wu wanted to continue studying Ba Gua Zhang so before Wu left for Hankow, Sun Xi Kun gave him a letter of introduction to Sun Lu Tang (孫祿堂). Sun Xi Kun heard that Sun Lu Tang had gone to Hankow from Jiang Su, however, he did not know that Sun Lu Tang had already died by the time he gave Wu the letter. Unable to study with Sun Lu Tang, Wu returned home to Canton and enrolled in the National Chong Shan (Dr. Sun Yat Sen) University which had accepted his credits from his previous college.

Wu did not stay in Canton for long. In 1938 he traveled to Hong Kong and stayed with his Aunt for a short time and then, after traveling to Vietnam, ended up in Kunming, Yunnan Province studying at a coalition university for eight months. While in Kunming, Wu received a letter from the University of Nanjing saying that they had reopened in Cheng Du, Sichuan Province. Wu traveled to Sichuan and completed his college education.

After Wu graduated from the University of Nanjing in 1940, he got a job in Chong Jing (Chung King) with the federal government working for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. When Wu was in Chong Jing he met his second Ba Gua Zhang teacher, Li Zhuang Fei (李壯飛). Li was working for a local newspaper writing a column on martial arts history and giving martial arts technical advice to the readers. Wu had read his column and thus was familiar with Li Zhuang Fei's name. One day while he was taking a walk, Wu saw an advertisement for martial arts instruction outside a local hotel. The teacher offering the instruction was Li Zhuang Fei. Wu immediately went and enrolled in the class.

Wu Meng Xia (吳孟俠) and Li Zhuang Fei were close friends and had both been a Ba Gua students of both Han Mu Xia (韓慕俠) and Gao Yi Sheng (高義盛). Han Mu Xia was one of Zhang Zhao Dong's (張兆東) top Xing Yi Quan (形意拳) and Ba Gua Zhang students (see *Pa Kua Chang Journal Vol., 3, No. 6*). According to Wu, Li had first studied with Han Mu Xia in Beijing and then moved to Tainjin where he studied with Gao Yi Sheng for four or five years.

Wu studied "Guang Hua Mountain" Ba Gua Zhang, Xing Yi Quan, Tai Ji Quan, *Yin Yang Ba Pan Zhang* (陰陽八盤掌), Qi Gong, Daoist exercises, acupuncture massage, and herbal medicine with Li Zhuang Fei from 1941 until 1946. His teacher granted him ranking in the 5th generation (Yong generation - 永字輩) of Ba Gua Zhang in 1946 in Chong Jing, China.



Fred Wu (Wu Min An), left, poses with his Ba Gua Zhang teacher Li Zhuang Fei, center, and classmate Jiang Wen Yu in 1946 in Chong Jing, China

Li Zhuang Fei, also known as Li Qiu Lei (李秋來), was born in Tianjin, China. His father's sister was the first Chinese woman to study western medicine in America (she studied at Smith College). When he was young, Li liked to fight and he practiced *Shaolin* (少林), *Shuai Chiao* (摔角), *Tie Sha Zhang* (鐵砂掌), *Pai Da* (排打), Daoist exercises, herbal medicine, and massage. His Aunt wanted Li to get a good education and make something of himself so she enrolled him in the Yen Ching University's College of Divinity, a famous American missionary school in Beijing. She wanted Li to study to become a minister. Li Zhuang Fei did not like studying at the college and so he got into a fight with a few of his classmates in order to get himself expelled. After Li left the university he and his friend Wu Meng Xia went together to study Ba Gua Zhang with Han Mu Xia. They studied Ba Gua Zhang and Xing Yi Quan with Han for a total of five years. Li Zhuang Fei received official acceptance into the 4th generation (*Shan* generation - 山字輩) of Ba Gua Zhang from Han Mu Xia.

Fred Wu states that the Ba Gua Zhang that Han taught Wu Meng Xia and Han Mu Xia was not the same as that taught to Han by Zhang Zhao Dong. Wu says that according to both Li Zhuang Fei and Wu Meng Xia, Han met a Daoist Ba Gua teacher who taught him a style called "Guang Hua" Ba Gua Zhang which originated from the Guang Hua Mountain area of Jiangsu Province. Wu states that according to Li Zhuang Fei, the Daoist who taught Han Mu Xia could have been one of the two students of Bi Cheng Xia (畢澄霞). Legend says that Bi Cheng Xia's two students were Bi Deng Xia and Bi Yue Xia.¹

Han Mu Xia's Ba Gua consisted of basic *Qi* and footwork training, eight circle walking postures, *Chuan Jiu Gong* (穿九宮), *Zhuan Huan Zhang* (轉換掌 - this includes single and double palm changes), Pre-heaven Ba Gua, (also known as "Eight Big Body Turning Ba Gua" or *Ba Da Fan Shen* - 八大翻身), *Wu Long Bai Wei Zhang* (烏龍擺尾掌 - Black Dragon Waves its Tail), Post-heaven 64 fighting palms, and weaponry.

Fred Wu says that after Li Zhuang Fei and Wu Meng Xia had studied with Han Mu Xia for five years, they heard that Gao Yi Sheng was also teaching "Guang Hua" Ba Gua Zhang and they went to meet Gao Yi Sheng in Tianjin and became his students. They found that Gao and Han had the same 64 fighting palms with the same Chinese word names and their techniques were very much the same with only small deviations. The pre-heaven palms and the "Black Dragon Waves its Tail" were somewhat different. The similarity in the 64 fighting palms puzzled Li Zhuang Fei and Wu Meng Xia because it was said that Gao Yi Sheng and Han Mu Xia had never met. Li Zhuang Fei assumed that Song Yi Ren (宋異人), the person who Gao said taught him the 64 post-heaven Ba Gua, was also one of the two students of Bi Cheng Xia. Fred Wu says that to resolve this puzzle, Wu Meng Xia and Li Zhuang Fei arranged a meeting between Han Mu Xia and Gao Yi Sheng. According to what Li Zhuang Fei told Fred Wu, when Gao and Li finally met each other they did not have much to say to one another. They exchanged polite greetings and the conversation remained very light. Thus the origin of the 64 fighting palms remains a mystery.

Li studied with Gao Yi Sheng for four or five years. His Tai Ji Quan came from Yang Ban Hou's (楊班侯) student, Niu Lian Yuan (牛連元). He later also privately exchanged his Ba Gua Zhang with a friend for the study of *Yin Yang Ba Pan Zhang*. Wu says that his teacher taught him the Ba Gua he had learned from both Han Mu Xia and Gao Yi Sheng. He states that



Fred Wu stands in the Ba Gua Zhan Zhuang (stance keeping) posture which he learned from Sun Xi Kun

the straight line techniques taught by both men were similar, however, there were some small differences.

When the war with Japan was coming to an end, President Chiang Kai Shek (蔣介石) began to make plans to rebuild the country and established a program to send young college graduates to study abroad and receive practical training. Eight thousand people from all over China worked in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and many applied to take the examination in order to be selected for the program. Fred Wu passed the examination and won a scholarship to study in the United States. In 1947 Wu entered Ohio State University to study for his master's degree in horticulture.

By the time Wu graduated from Ohio State in 1950, the Communists were in power in China and Chiang Kai Shek's government had retreated to Taiwan. With no job to return to in China, Wu decided to stay in the United States. However, jobs for foreign-born residents in America were also hard to find in the agriculture field and so Wu stayed in college and earned his Ph.D. in Plant Biochemistry in the Agricultural Biochemistry department at Ohio State University in 1957. During a visit to Hong Kong in 1964, Wu had the opportunity to meet many of the prominent martial artists in various fields and studied *Yi Quan Zhuang Zhang Gong* (意拳站樁功), *Qi Gong*, *Qin Na* (擒拿), Eagle Claw and weaponry.

While he was attending college, Wu continued to practice his martial arts. Occasionally people would see him practicing and ask what he was doing. A number



Fred Wu with some of his Ba Gua students

of people expressed interest in learning the martial arts from Wu and so in 1958 he started teaching Tai Ji Quan and Ba Gua Zhang and has been teaching ever since. Wu claims to be the first Chinese Kung Fu teacher in the mid-west to open up and teach to the non-Chinese speaking public. Although there were Chinese martial arts teachers teaching in Chicago, Wu says that they were only teaching Chinese residents at that time.

Dr. Fred Wu's Ba Gua Zhang

Fred Wu's Ba Gua Zhang, like both the Han and Gao styles of Ba Gua that he studied from Li Zhuang Fei, is divided into the pre-heaven and post-heaven sets. The pre-heaven set consists of the eight traditional circle changes plus the single palm change, double palm change, and another changed called "Black Dragon Whips its Tail." Wu explains that the single and double palm changes form the foundation of the practice and the "Black Dragon Whips its Tail" change is the link between the pre-heaven and post-heaven sets. Additionally, as in most all styles of Ba Gua, Wu's system has a set of mother palms, which he calls



Two of Fred Wu's students practice the post-heaven Ba Gua two-person exercise

Fu Xi Ba Gua (伏羲八卦), whereby the practitioner holds static postures while walking the circle. Wu explains that the *Fu Xi Ba Gua* practice is mainly for *Qi* (氣) development. Wu also refers to the circular Ba Gua method as *Ba Da Fan Shen* (八大翻身), or "Eight Big Body Turning" Ba Gua.

Wu says that when teaching beginning students the circular Ba Gua, the first stage is to perform the movements soft and slow so that the mind can learn to dictate what the body is doing and the body will learn to be soft. He states that performing the movements slowly helps train the body to listen to the mind. Additionally, the body can effect the mind. Wu says that when the body is moving slowly, the slow movement creates a calm mind. He emphasizes that this level of training brings the mind and body into balance. Wu also tells his students that although the body becomes soft, it must still have power. The classic saying in the internal arts is that "soft wins over hard," however, the "soft" has to have energy behind it. Wu gives his students the analogy of still air becoming a tornado to demonstrate how something soft can have power.

When walking in the standard Ba Gua Zhang posture, Wu tells his students to concentrate on the "tiger's mouth," located between the index finger and the thumb. He says that the index finger is the leader of the *Qi*. The shape of the palm is such that the little finger and the ring finger are held together. Wu says that the connection of the little finger and ring finger join the heart and pericardium meridians, strengthens the power of the palm, and forms a very stable striking surface. He says in order to prove this to yourself, go ahead and chop something with the fingers apart and then chop with the fingers together, you will immediately feel the difference. Wu also says that when hitting, one should strike with the bones just at the base of the palm. When the little finger and ring finger are together, it is easier to focus on this point.

When practicing the circular Ba Gua, Wu teaches



Fred Wu studied Ba Gua Zhang from Sun Xi Kun (shown above) in 1937



two methods of stepping. One is the familiar *tang ni bu* (趟泥步) step. In this step the foot slides out flat when the practitioner walks forward. Wu says that his teacher Li Zhuang Fei told him that after the Ba Gua practitioner has practiced the *tang ni bu* step for several years, the power in the step is such that the practitioner can walk into a rope which has been stretched out at shin level and break it. Li also told Wu that there was an old saying in the Ba Gua community about the circle walk practice which said that when the student first started walking the circle he was to plant a small tree and begin walking around it everyday. When the student had practiced long enough that the tree was taller than the student, he or she would then have skill at circle walking. The other circle walking step Wu teaches is the *deng* step (蹬步). This is a natural walking step and is used for speed. In this step the heel digs into the ground when stepping.

Wu teaches that in the pre-heaven Ba Gua circular footwork and changing postures, the student learns how to continually change his center so no opponent can touch it. Wu states that if your center is touched, you are in trouble. He says that Sun Lu Tang wrote that Tai Ji Quan empties the center, Ba Gua Zhang changes the center, and *Xing Yi Quan* (形意拳) fortifies

the center. Wu explains that all three techniques convey the same general principle which is that one should protect the center and not let it be controlled by the opponent. He teaches his Ba Gua students how to perform all three skills - empty the center, move the center, and fortify the center.

***Wu tells his students that
although the body becomes soft,
it must still have power.***

When teaching the post-heaven Ba Gua, Wu emphasizes that Guang Hua Mountain Ba Gua makes full use of kicking, fists, elbows, hips, shoulders, back, knees, and forehead as well as the palms. He says that some practitioners mistakenly think that Ba Gua Zhang only utilizes the palms in application. All of Wu's students are required to go through hand-finger-fist hardening training similar to *Tie Sha Zhang's* Mung bean thrusting. His students also undergo "body abuse training" or *Pei Da Gong*. When his students are ready to learn the post-heaven set, he teaches them one new set per week and thus it takes them sixty-four weeks to learn the entire set. But this is only the beginning. Wu states that just as the hexagrams of the *Yi Jing* (易经 - *Book of Changes*) have six changing lines, each of the sixty-four sets of the post-heaven Ba Gua has six variations. He explains that each of the six variations associated with each of the sixty-four post-heaven sets are very effective when used in fighting, they are actually referred to as "poison techniques" in Chinese. Wu states that variation is the most important aspect in learning how to fight. He says that the basic linear form movements are practiced so that the student can understand the main points of the practice such as structure, coordination, and timing. Learning how to really apply the techniques in fighting comes from studying the six variations.

In training his students, Wu will show them three of the variations of each of the sixty-four sets and then require the students to figure out the other three on their own through research of the principles associated with each set. Wu says that requiring the students to conduct their own research to figure out the variations teaches them to think for themselves. He states that this part of the training comes from Han Mu Xia. Han taught six variations to each of his straight line Guang Hua Ba Gua sets in his system.

After Wu's students learn and practice the 64 fighting techniques of the post-heaven Guang Hua Ba Gua, he shows them the two-person sets in order to teach them to develop proper distance, timing, power and speed in applying their techniques. Subsequent to the two-person sets, Wu's students are required to go through many weeks of free sparring practice amongst themselves and with students from other schools. Later, they advance to learn Ba Gua weaponry.

Beyond Simple Form Practice

Fred Wu's teaching philosophy, which comes from his teacher Li Zhuang Fei, is to teach his students so that they become better than he is. He emphasizes that they should take what he has given them and go forward to research and improve the art. Wu often tells his students that there have been a good number of researchers and scholars in every field of endeavor who have invented new ideas, new methods, new developments, and went on to win Nobel prizes while their colleagues simply teach the old methods without exploring the boundaries of their work. Wu states that in order to improve our arts, we want progress, advances, and new developments, not teachers who are always better than their students because they hold them back. He encourages his students to look beyond what they have been taught.

Wu says that the best part of the practice is to learn how to transcend the "practice." When performing the pre-heaven form movements, it is not simply a matter of walking around in circles and changing the postures - it becomes a meditation. The concentration is focused on the lower *dan tian* (丹田), the energy

power house of the body. When the power house becomes full, the energy moves up to the other two *dan tians* (middle and upper) and then the *Bai Hui* point at the crown of the head opens. When this happens the practitioner can receive messages from nature and sharpen the intuition. This is moving beyond the realm of normal physical exercise.

Wu also encourages his students to study the philosophical principles which form the theory of Ba Gua practice. He says that if a practitioner does not know the theory and philosophy, they cannot research the art beyond what their teacher has taught them. The philosophy is worth pursuing in order to develop as an artist and an individual. Wu feels that learning the history of a style and its philosophy will help the student understand all aspects of the art.

Fred Wu now teaches students at his home in Worthington, Ohio. He currently teaches Tai Ji Quan, Ba Gua Zhang, and other various forms of gong fu.

Footnote:

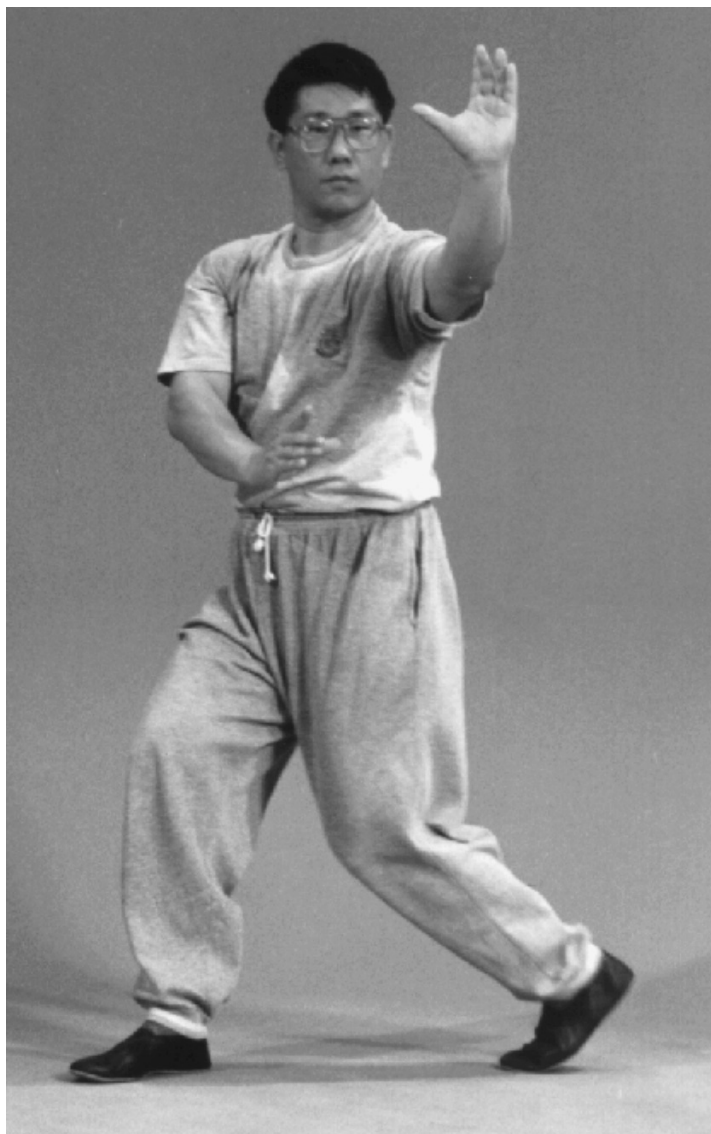
1) The existence of the Daoist Bi Cheng Xia and his students is a popular topic of debate among Ba Gua Zhang practitioners. See *Pa Kua Chang Journal* Vol. 3, No. 2



Fred Wu's teacher, Li Zhuang Fei, studied with both Gao Yi Sheng and Han Mu Xia. Han Mu Xia was one of Zhang Zhou Dong's top Xing Yi and Ba Gua students. Han Mu Xia is shown above (seventh from the left - tall man in center to the right of the small child). Han Mu Xia also taught Ba Gua and Xing Yi to Zhou En Lai. Zhou is standing ninth from the left. One of Zhang Zhou Dong's other top students, Liu Pu Qing is standing third from left. Liu Hai Tao is standing fifth from left (on the left side of the small child). The group is standing in front of Han Mu Xia's school.

Luo De Xiu Teaches the Principles of Gao Style Ba Gua Zhang Fighting

During the months of October and November 1993, close to 150 Ba Gua Zhang practitioners in the United States had their concepts of Ba Gua Zhang's use as a fighting art redefined by Ba Gua expert Luo De Xiu (羅德修) of Taipei, Taiwan. Luo and one of his top students, Tim Cartmell, conducted a nationwide series of eight two day seminars which were co-sponsored by the *Pa Kua Chang Journal* and the North American Tang Shou Tao Association. The first seminar was in Pacific Grove, CA on 16-17 October and the final seminar was in San Francisco on 21 November. Seminar participants at all of the locations (which included Pacific Grove, CA, Costa Mesa, CA, Phoenix, AZ, Tucson, AZ, Gaithersburg, MD, New York, NY, Flint, MI, and San Francisco, CA) were highly impressed with Luo's fighting skill, his teaching method, his generosity,



**Ba Gua Zhang instructor Luo De Xiu
of Taipei, Taiwan**

and his openness. Luo enthusiastically answered all questions and gave the seminar participants more material than they could handle. At the end of each seminar the question on everyone's lips was, "When will he be back?"

Luo De Xiu, who was featured in *Pa Kua Chang Journal*, Volume 3, Number 5, received his fundamental martial arts training from Zhang Jun Feng's (張峻峰) student Hong Yi Xiang (洪懿祥). Later, Luo went on to study with many of Zhang Jun Feng's top Ba Gua students and Sun Xi Kun's (孫錫堃) student Liu Qian (劉騫). Luo is probably the top student in the Zhang Jun Feng system who is still actively teaching today.

The seminars were divided into 4 three-hour sessions. Two sessions were held on day one of the seminar and two sessions on day two. The first session began with Luo teaching a few warm-up exercises. Luo explained that these exercises were not simply exercises to loosen up the body. They were also power training exercises. When the practitioner repeats these exercises with sufficient repetition, proper breathing, and mental focus, a great amount of internal power can be developed. Luo, who is extremely powerful, said that much of the power he has developed came from practicing many repetitions of these "warm-up" exercises.

After the warm-up exercises, Luo taught two of the basic hand methods that form part of the fundamental skills training of the Gao Yi Sheng system as taught by Zhang Jun Feng. In the Gao system the fundamental skills training consists of hand methods, footwork drills, and an extensive set of body conditioning exercises called *Tian Gan*, or "Heavenly Stems." The hand methods Luo taught in the seminars were two of a set of eight basic hand techniques (*Ji Ben Shou Fa* - 基本手法) which students practice in order to develop correct body motion, structural alignments and the roots of internal power. The two exercises Luo taught to the seminar students were particularly relevant to the techniques and skills taught in the remainder of the seminar.

After the seminar participants experienced the solo hand exercises, Luo taught two-person drills which begin to teach the student how to apply these basic hand methods in fighting and demonstrated how Ba Gua Zhang's circular footwork is employed in combination with these basic hand skills. Emphasis was placed on how to use these hand methods to connect with the opponent and get inside the opponent's defenses. Luo believes that when fighting, one should first create the situation and then control the situation. This way the practitioner can always remain a step ahead of the opponent. Creating the situation begins with eliciting a response from the opponent. Controlling

the situation is accomplished by responding to the opponent's initial reaction by using his force against him. Luo calls this method "giving him more of what he wants." These principles were practiced in the seminar while executing partner drills with the first two basic hand techniques (see article on page 25).

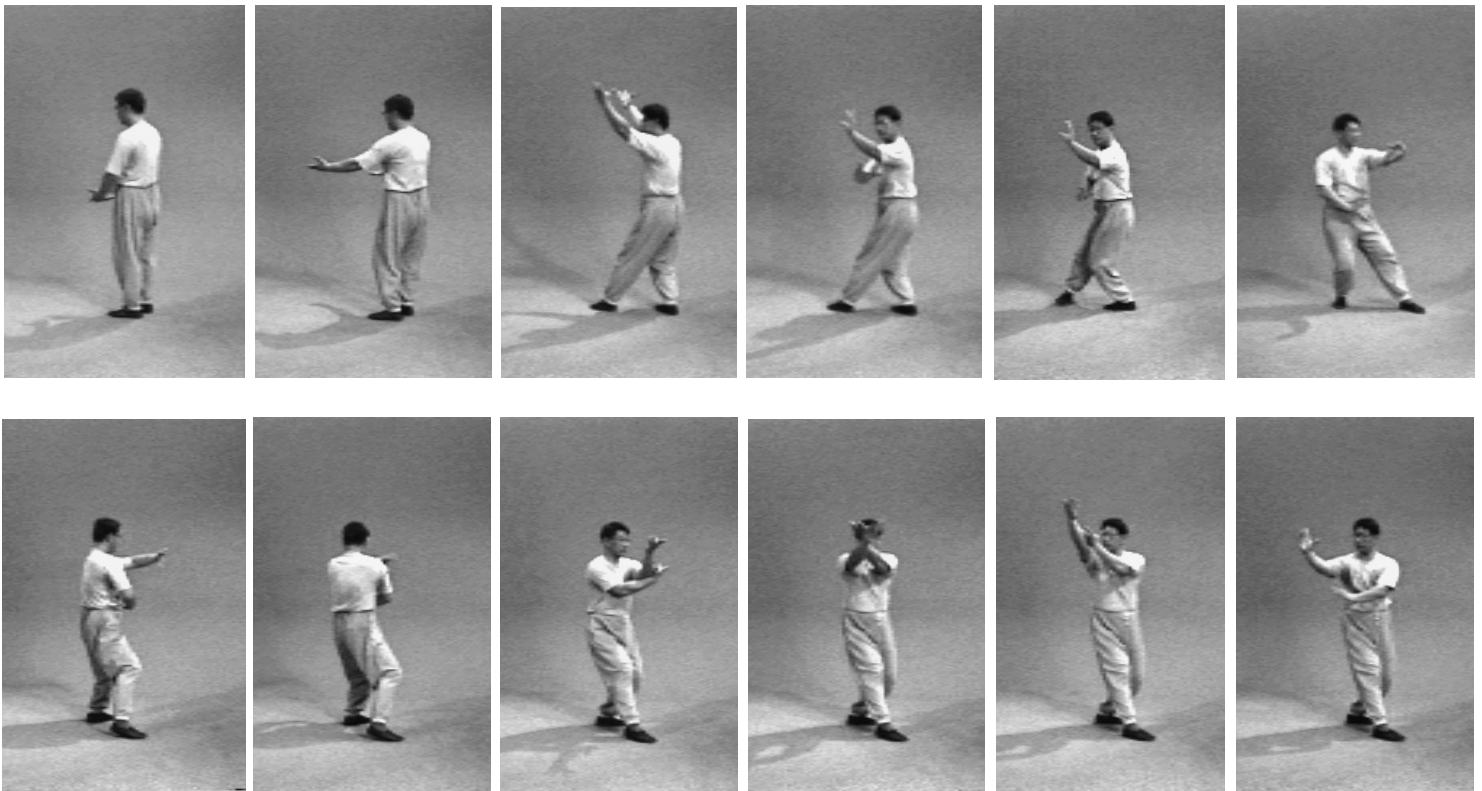
After seminar participants gained experience in the solo and two-person practice sets of the first two basic hand methods, Luo taught the first of the Tian Gan (天干) exercises. In the Gao system there are a total of twenty-four *Tian Gan* exercises. There are ten words which describe the basic movements of each exercise and there are variations of each basic movement. In the seminars, Luo taught, *ban* (搬), or moving, the first of the *Tian Gan* exercises, and one of its variations. The *Tian Gan* exercises are primarily designed to develop strength, flexibility, and power in the torso and teach the practitioner to extend that power all the way out to the tips of the fingers. The *Tian Gan* exercises as taught by Luo are all practiced utilizing low postures and long, extended movements. Luo believes that practicing in this manner helps develop full body coordination and the ability to bring power and intention to the fingertips.

Next Luo taught a number of variations of the Single Palm Change (*Dan Huan Zhang* - 單換掌). Although the single palm change is not one of the eight main changes in the Gao style eight section pre-heaven Ba Gua form, its movements are at the root of all of the changes. Luo states that all movements in Ba Gua are simply variations of the single change and thus it is the most important move in Ba Gua. In the seminars Luo taught the single palm change in stages. The



Luo De Xiu demonstrates Ba Gua Zhang fighting techniques on his student, Tim Cartmell, at the seminar in Pacific Grove, CA

first stage was the basic Ba Gua standing posture. Luo teaches that in the basic standing posture, the practitioner should have a central equilibrium. This means that the stability of the posture is balanced in all directions. In order to test the students, Luo asked everyone to hold the posture while he went around the room and pressed on each student from all four



The Basic Single Palm Change



Luo De Xiu explains circle walking basics at the seminar in Gaithersburg, MD

directions; front, back, left, and right. This gave the students an indication of where they were not stable in their stance.

After Luo taught students how to have stability in their basic stance, he taught the movements of the single palm change executed on a straight line in its simplest form. After students practiced the single change on a straight line, Luo taught the fundamentals of Ba Gua Zhang circle walking. Luo explained that in the Gao style there are three primary stepping methods utilized when walking the circle. In the first stepping method, *tang ni bu* (趟泥步), or mud walking step, the bottom of the foot is always held parallel to the ground. The second method, which is the one Luo taught in the seminar, is the chicken step. In this step the rear foot is brought up next to the ankle of the front foot before it slides forward with the toe landing before the heel. The third step is called the crane step. This step is similar to the chicken step, however, instead of the rear foot being brought up next to the ankle of the forward foot, it is brought up almost to the level of the knee before stepping out forward.

Luo taught the circle walking in progressive stages. The first stage is to walk around in a circle standing straight up and walking with a natural stride while concentrating on relaxing the body. After the body is relaxed, the knees are bent slightly and the step changed to resemble someone kicking pebbles down a road. The feet and legs are relaxed and the feet swung out with the toes pointing downward as if kicking a

pebble with the toes. After students had a feel for this kicking step, the step became more controlled and the feet were placed down gently with a sliding motion. When executing this step, the arms were brought up in front of the body as if holding a big ball (see photo at left). After students practiced basic circle walking, Luo taught how to execute the single palm change on the circle and then participants practiced a two-person circle walking drill.

After students obtained a good feel for the movements of the single palm change, executed both to the inside of the circle and to the outside of the circle, Luo taught the first of the pre-heaven circular changes. In the Gao system this change is called *She Xing Shun Shi Zhang* (蛇形顺式掌 - Snake Form Smooth Body Palm) and equates to what many other styles call the "double palm change." Because this change can be somewhat complicated to perform by those who are not familiar with Ba Gua, Luo taught the form in stages and it was first practiced on a straight line before students learned how to execute the change on the circle. After students practiced executing this change on the circle, Luo taught students a throwing technique utilizing the movements of this change. Luo first taught the basic throw and then taught one of many methods used to set up the throw.

After teaching the first of the circular changes of the Gao Yi Sheng system, Luo taught a number of the linear forms with an emphasis on how they are employed in fighting. The forms were first practiced repetitively moving in straight lines down the length of the practice space and then Luo broke down each move and demonstrated the practical applications. Students then spent time practicing the applications with a partner.

While teaching the applications of the various forms, Luo emphasized the fighting principles which each technique conveys. Luo wanted students to understand that each of the 64 straight-line fighting techniques are meant to teach certain principles of fighting rather than fighting "techniques." When the student understands the principle thoroughly, an endless number of "techniques" can be developed utilizing the principles that each of the basic forms convey.

Each of the eight seminars Luo taught followed the same basic format, however, they varied slightly depending upon the experience of the group and the speed at which the students grasped the material. Many seminar participants attended more than one seminar. These individuals received instruction beyond what was taught in the basic seminar. Luo's seminar series was such a great success that we are currently arranging a repeat performance for next year.

While Luo was visiting Pacific Grove, CA, High View Publications shot a one hour video of Luo teaching the material which he presented in the seminars. This video, called *The Principles of Ba Gua Zhang Fighting*, is currently available. Individuals interested in obtaining a copy of the video can write to High View Publications at the address listed on page 2.

Basic Ba Gua Zhang Hand Techniques

This article is the first in a series which will discuss practical methods of training Ba Gua Zhang as a fighting art. This article will be based on the teaching of Ba Gua Zhang instructor Luo De Xiu of Taipei, Taiwan.

During the months of October and November 1993, Ba Gua Zhang instructor Luo De Xiu (羅德修) of Taipei, Taiwan taught a series of eight seminars in the United States. Although Luo taught seminar participants Ba Gua Zhang basic methods such as circle walking and single palm change and also taught a few of the pre-heaven and post-heaven forms from the Gao Yi Sheng (高義盛) lineage, the emphasis of his seminars was to teach participants how to train Ba Gua Zhang (八卦掌) as a fighting art. The foundation of this training in the Gao style begins with fundamental practice drills. All complete systems of Ba Gua begin training with similar fundamental drills, and two-person sets based on those drills, prior to form practice. In Gao Yi Sheng's method, two of the important training sets are *Ji Ben Shou Fa* (基本手法 - Basic Hand Methods) and *Tian Gan* (天干 - Heavenly Stem) Exercises.

The *Ji Ben Shou Fa* consist of a set of eight basic hand training methods which refine neuromuscular spontaneity through repeated technique practice. These movements are repeated many times to insure correct

body mechanics and create the roots of *nei jing* (內勁) or "internal power." These movements are particularly relevant to the techniques and skills which the student will utilize when executing both the pre-heaven and post-heaven Ba Gua Zhang methods which form the core components of Gao style Ba Gua.

During the seminar series, Luo taught the first three of the *Ji Ben Shou Fa* exercises and their associated two-person drills. Luo also teaches this material in his new one hour video *The Principles of Ba Gua Zhang Fighting* produced by High View Publications. In this article we will present the first two of the exercises and a few of the two-person exercises which are associated with these drills. Additionally, we will discuss how these hand movements are best employed in fighting and how they are combined with Ba Gua Zhang footwork.

Chuan Zhang (穿掌)

The first technique is *chuan zhang*, or the piercing palm. This palm is prevalent in all styles of Ba Gua Zhang. The classic "songs" of Ba Gua make many references to the effectiveness of *San Chuan* (三穿), or three piercing palms applied in rapid succession. The piercing palm, as it is executed in the Gao Yi Sheng style, includes the four basic movements of internal boxing, namely, rise, drill, fall, and overturn. These



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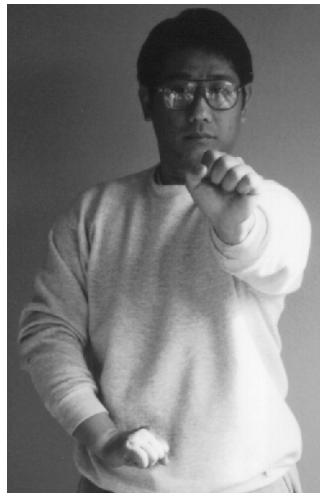
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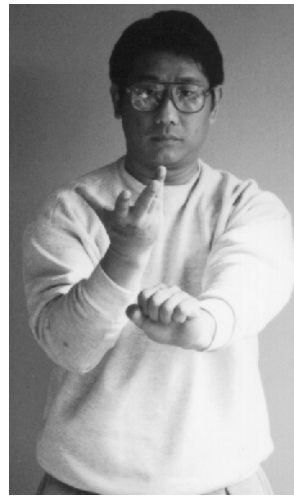
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Chuan Zhang - 1



Chuan Zhang - 2



Chuan Zhang - 3



Chuan Zhang - 4

movements are basic to all others and the *jing*, or trained strength, associated with these movements form the fundamental power expressed in almost all Ba Gua techniques.

Execution of this exercise is as follows:

- 1) Stand in a naturally erect posture with the knees bent and the legs comfortably placed slightly wider than shoulder width. The left hand is held out along the center-line of the body with the palm facing up as shown in photograph #1 above and on the previous page. The right hand is held near the right hip and is in a fist.
- 2) The forward hand turns over as the fingers of the forward hand curl in as in grabbing and the arm moves down towards the left hip. The forward wrist remains bent at a 45 degree angle and the elbow remains almost straight as the arm pulls back. At the same time, the back hand pierces forward along the center-line of the body and the palm turns to face upward as it pierces forward. The movement of the hands is motivated by the waist and legs. The body twists around its center as the back palm pierces forward. The pulling back of the forward hand initiates the piercing of the back hand. The intention should be equal on both sides of the body. Do not over-concentrate on the hand which is piercing forward and forget about the arm which is pulling back.
- 3) Repeat the movement on one side and then the other continuously. See photos on the previous page.

When practicing the exercise, the movement should be performed slowly and smoothly with the focus of the intent on the movement of the hands. When executing the exercise, try to feel the air as it moves past the hands. This will help bring the intention to the palms. The body should remain relaxed. Be sure to move the palms along the center-line of the body when piercing forward. When the hand pulls back, the elbow remains almost straight and the arm pulls down at an angle similar to the path the hand would follow if one were walking with a natural arm swing. This is the most natural angle for the arms to follow and thus is the

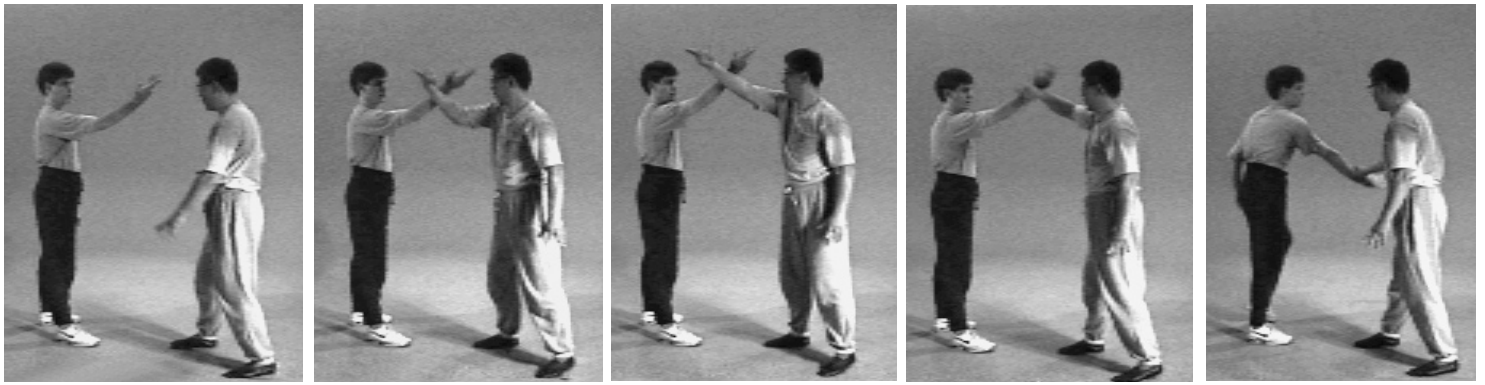
most powerful. The power is generated from the legs and turning of the waist, not the strength of the arms. Be sure to coordinate the movement of the hands so that the pulling back of the forward hand initiates the forward piercing of the back hand. This exercise sequence is shown in the photographs. The components of this movement are included in the majority of Ba Gua techniques.

Two Person Chuan Zhang Exercises

Students may also practice the piercing palm technique in a variety of partner exercises as Luo and his student Tim Cartmell demonstrate on the following page. The first exercise is a basic drill to help students work the mechanics of applying the piercing palm. In this exercise, the "dumby" partner stands with his arm held out in front as if defending himself. The partner practicing the piercing palm will pierce forward with the hand opposite the hand his partner is holding forward. As the hand pierces forward, it rotates so that the palm faces upward when it the arm is at its full extension as in the exercise. It should meet the partner's arm prior to reaching its full forward extension and prior to reaching its full rotation. At this point the "rise" and "drill" components of the movement have been executed.

Now the forward palm begins to turn over. As it turns, the palm edge presses against the partner's arm so that his arm is pulled off of his center-line. Subsequent to this movement, in a continuous, fluid motion, grab the partner's wrist and pull the partner's arm down at a 45 degree angle to the rear. Be sure not to lift the shoulder or the elbow when pulling. Although this is a one-count technique applied smoothly and continuously, the practitioner does not simply grab the opponent's arm and pull. In proper execution of this technique the rise, drill, fall, and overturn components should all be expressed in the one-count application. This exercise is shown in the sequence of photographs on the top of the next page.

In the next sequence of photographs, Luo and Tim demonstrate a variation of this drill. Here the opponent's arm is pulled from the inside. Again, be



Basic Chuan Zhang Two-Person Exercise executed to the Outside



Basic Chuan Zhang Two-Person Exercise executed to the Inside

sure to pull down and out at a 45 degree angle to off-balance the opponent. Note that Luo's arm does not bend at the elbow when he is pulling. He uses the strength of his legs and torso in executing the movement.

Later these same two-person drills are practiced in more realistic scenarios and in conjunction with stepping techniques. Obviously, someone would have to be incredibly strong in order to stand in place and totally off balance an opponent by pulling them in this manner. However, these exercises are only practice drills. These two basic drills are practiced to simply train the mechanics of the piercing palm while receiving a small amount of resistance from a partner.

The two photographs below indicate one of any number of possible follow-up techniques to the basic piercing palm maneuver. Here, as Luo pulls Tim's arm, he steps out to a 45 degree angle. The step and the pull are performed simultaneously. As soon as Tim is pulled off balance, Luo then strikes to Tim's face, with the arm that was grabbing, while blocking Tim's elbow with the lower hand in order to keep Tim off balance and guard against a counter-attack. In the seminars, Luo taught students to utilize this technique in conjunction with the circular walking footwork.

On the following page, Luo executes a number of *chuan zhang* applications. These are just a few of many possible applications of this maneuver.

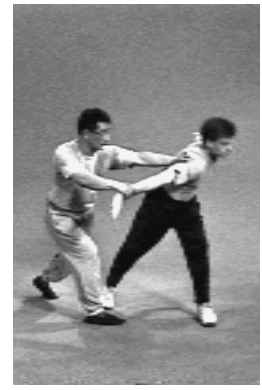


1 - Pull the Opponent Off Balance and Step



2 - Immediately Strike to the Opponent's Face

Sample Piercing Palm Applications



1 - Piercing and Striking to the Outside



2 - Piercing and Striking to the Inside (if the opponent blocks, pull down and strike again as shown below)



3 - Pierce, Pull Down, Check the Elbow, Strike



4 - Same Technique as above, however, the opponent blocks. When the opponent blocks, pull the blocking hand down and strike again with the same hand.

Kai Guo Jing (Wrapping In and Opening Out)

The second basic hand movement is *kai guo jing* (開裹勁), or wrapping in and opening out. This exercise trains the power in the "wrapping" and "opening" components of Ba Gua Zhang. These components are utilized in the application of many of Ba Gua Zhang's characteristic techniques.

The exercise is practiced as follows:

1) Stand with the hands held in front of the body as in the first photograph below. Turn the body to the left. Keep the left arm in place and allow the right arm to "wrap" to the inside of the left arm. The right palm turns upward as it wraps in. The body has twisted, however the weight is still in the center.

2) After the arms have wrapped, the forearms are crossed and touching. Shift the weight to the left leg and open the arms out to the sides with equal force in both arms. Both palms face outward (away from the body) The arms are slightly rounded. The chest does not stick out.

3) Turn back to the center and repeat the exercise on the other side. Repeat the exercise on both sides many times.

When practicing this exercise, be sure to move the body as an entire unit. The wrapping hand moves inside of the back arm. When opening out, be sure to use power equally in both hands. Be sure the closing and opening is performed as one motion to make use of the body's momentum. Do not allow the chest to stick out when the hands are separated and do not allow the hands to move back beyond the plane of the shoulders.

The chest should be relaxed and the arms slightly rounded. When the arms are separated there should be strength in both arms such that the arms would not collapse if someone were to press in on both hands simultaneously.

There are two basic *kai guo jing* two partner drills. These drills are shown in photographs on the next page. These drills can be executed to the inside or to the outside of the opponent's arm. In executing the drill to the inside, first use the forward hand to check inside the opponent's wrist. Next, bring the back hand from underneath to continue checking the wrist as you chop. This sequence is shown at the top of the next page. If the opponent reaches up to block the first chop, execute the technique again clearing his blocking hand away and chop one more time. This sequence is shown in the second set of photos on the next page. This technique may be performed to the inside or the outside.

When practicing, insure that the elbow and shoulder sink down and the chop is executed by springing off of the opponent's blocking hand. Do not pull the arm back in order to chop, the technique continually moves forward. When executing the chop, change the angle of your body in relationship to your opponent in order to gain maximum advantage.

The third technique on the next page shows a chopping technique performed to the outside. Luo sets up the attack with a strike to the face. Whether the opponent blocks the initial strike or not, the follow through take down can still be executed. The fourth technique on the next page shows a set up with the *chuan zhang* technique following with a chopping technique after the opponent blocks.



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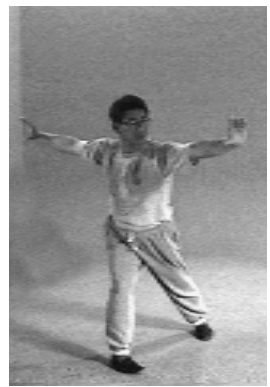
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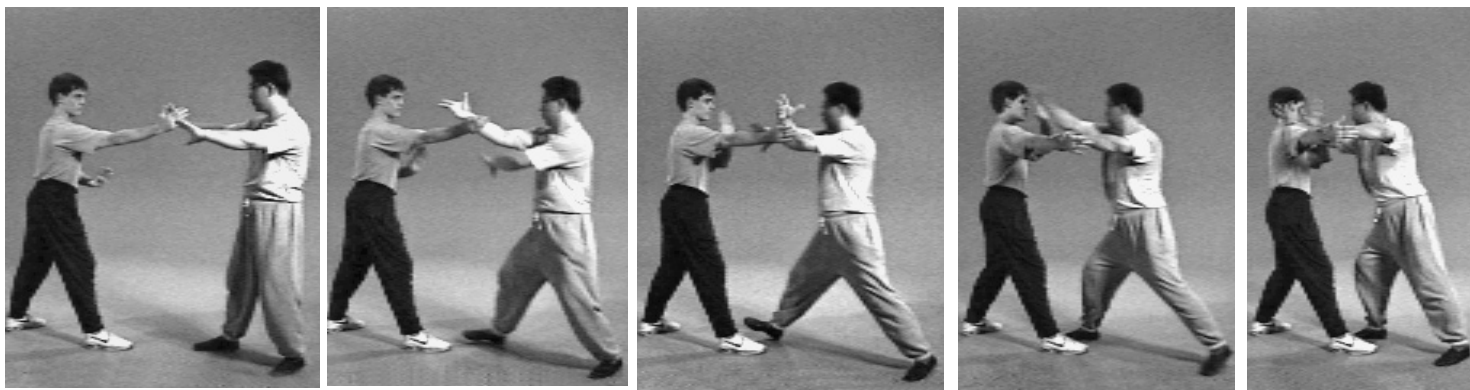
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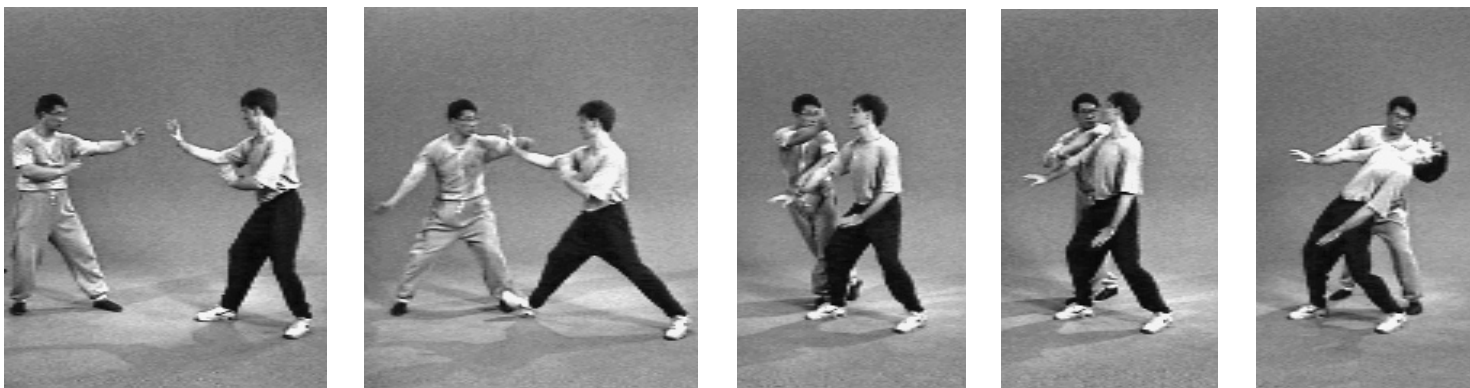
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Chopping to the inside



If the opponent blocks the chop, perform the same technique again



The chopping technique performed to the outside



Piercing Palm followed by a Chopping Palm when the opponent blocks

Pa Kua Chang Related Periodicals

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