



Pa Kua Chang

JOURNAL

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Fu Zhen Song's Ba Gua in San Francisco

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*Fu Zhen Song's student
Lin Chao Zhen*

Ba Gua Qi Gong

*The Essential Rules of
Qi Gong Practice*

by Xie Pei Qi



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About the Pa Kua Chang Journal

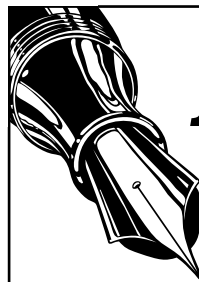
The *Pa Kua Chang Journal* is published six times a year. Each issue features an interview with, or article by, one or more Ba Gua Zhang instructor(s) from mainland China, Taiwan, the United States, and/or Canada. The interviews will report on each instructor's background, current program, training methods 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.

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 Giles 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

Ba Gua Qi Gong

In this issue I begin a three part series article on the practice of *qi gong* in Ba Gua Zhang. This article is based on my personal experiences during over ten years of practice, information I have obtained during interviews with Ba Gua Zhang instructors in Taiwan and mainland China, and advice and guidance from my teachers, Park Bok Nam and Vince Black. The information on Chinese medicine which appears in this article was obtained through interviews with Vince Black and Michael Roland.

Vince Black began his initial training in the art of *Tui Na* and bone manipulation starting in 1974 under the guidance of Hsu Hong Chi of Taipei, Taiwan. He has been a licensed acupuncturist in the United States since graduating from the California Acupuncture College in San Diego in 1986 and was the owner/director of the North Park Health Center in San Diego from 1987-1992. He has studied at the China Shanghai International Acupuncture Training Centre and interned at Yue Yang hospital in Shanghai as well as various other hospitals in mainland China. His training also includes advanced studies in CranioSacral Therapy and Visceral Manipulation at the Upledger Institute. He has served as the Head Instructor of the *Tui Na* Department at the American Institute of Oriental Medicine in San Diego where he taught *Tui Na*, *Qi Gong* therapeutics, and Taijiquan. He has studied and taught various martial arts for over 25 years, including Xing Yi Quan, Ba Gua Zhang, Tai Ji Quan and Liu He Ba Fa Quan.

Michael Roland is a licensed acupuncturist in the state of California, holds a Master's Degree in Chinese Medicine from the Five Branches Institute in Santa Cruz, CA and has earned the title of diplomate in acupuncture (licensed by the NCCA). Michael is a student of both Ba Gua Zhang and Xing Yi Quan. Michael owns and operates an acupuncture clinic in Pacific Grove, CA and continues his education through apprenticeships with Vince Black, a specialist in musculoskeletal problems, and Professor Li Shao Hua, a specialist in women's medicine.

I wish to thank both Michael and Vince for their input to this series of articles.

On the Cover

Ba Gua Zhang instructor Fu Zhen Song (1872-1953), who popularized Ba Gua in Southern China, poses with his Broadsword, circa 1933.

Fu Zhen Song's Direct Disciple, Lin Chao Zhen, Teaching in San Francisco

By Robert Chen

Lin Chao Zhen (林朝珍) is one of the last surviving Ba Gua instructors of his generation and lineage. Lin was born in 1912 in Hong Kong. At the age of 14, he returned with his family to Canton, China. Their family lived in downtown Canton. As fate would have it, a short distance from where they lived, Ba Gua Zhang instructor Fu Zhen Song (傅振嵩) taught Ba Gua and the internal arts of Northern China.

Fu Zhen Song was one of the most well-known *gong fu* instructors in Chinese history. Fu Zhen Song was thirty years senior to Lin Chao Zhen. Fu, who was from Northern China, was known to the Southern Chinese as one of the "Five Tigers From The North*." In 1928, Fu, along with four other northern *gong fu* (功夫) instructors, was sent to Southern China by the Central Martial Arts Academy (中央國術館) in Nanjing. They were invited to Southern China to develop martial arts and share their knowledge of northern martial arts with the provinces in the south. There were many established martial arts schools in Southern China already and legitimacy in those days had to be established with a fist. Many encounters and introductions turned immediately into contests of skill. In these contests, Fu Zhen Song and his fellow instructors from the North often inflicted enough injury to send the appropriate message. For example, when a rival Tai Ji instructor asked to push hands with Fu Zhen Song, Fu opened up the instructor's defenses and gave him a shove in the chest with sufficient strength to cause internal injury. Fortunately for the other instructor, he was also skilled in Chinese medicine, so he was able to treat himself after the encounter. After sharing their knowledge for several years, some of Fu's fellow instructors eventually returned to Northern China. Fu, however, chose to remain as an instructor in the South.

When Fu first arrived in Southern China, he was in great demand as an instructor. Fu Zhen Song received invitations from over twenty different sites to teach Ba Gua. One of the sites where Fu taught was the

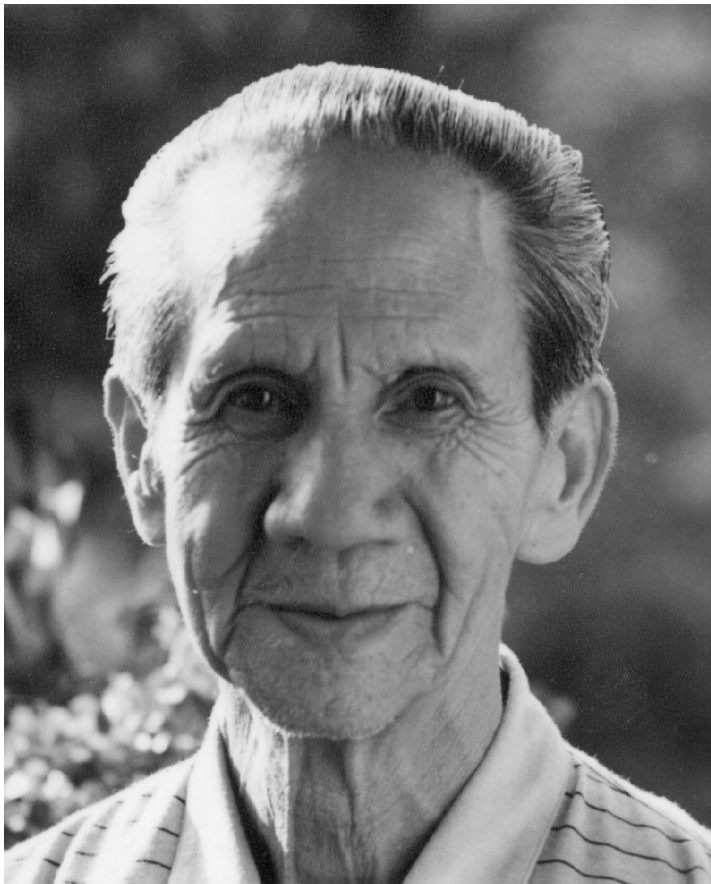


Lin Chao Zhen (left) with his teacher, Fu Zhen Song (center) and his teacher's son, Fu Yong Hui (right), in Guang Zhou, China, March 1950

athletic club in downtown Canton near Lin Chao Zhen's home. One day, Lin's brother brought a pamphlet to him describing the Ba Gua classes at the club. Lin recalls that the price of the lessons was very low at that time and that the classes were very popular. Lin Chao Zhen began studying at this club when he was seventeen years old.

In Lin's first few years of study, he learned the Fu style linear Ba Gua forms, called *Pao Quan* (炮拳), the four-direction combat spear, and the whirlwind broadsword. *Pao Quan* is an elegant northern form used for developing solid basic techniques and stances. The spear was one of Fu Zhen Song's

*Although the names of the "five tigers" will sometimes vary depending on the source (many people like to claim that their teacher or teacher's teacher was one of the famous "five tigers"), the five martial artists that the Central Academy sent South were probably Fu Zhen Song, Ku Ju Chang, Wang Shao Zhou, Wan Lai Sheng, and Li Xien Wu. Fu Zhen Song was the only one who stayed in Canton after the Central Martial Arts Academy and its provincial schools were closed.



Fu Zhen Song's disciple, Lin Chao Zhen

favorite weapons and Fu was famous for his spear technique. The whirlwind broadsword contains the smooth body spins that are the trademark of Fu style Ba Gua. Lin also trained in some of the fundamental techniques of circle walking. In Fu style Ba Gua, the practitioners train with the traditional "mud-stepping walk" where the entire foot travels parallel to the ground and lands flat with each step. To develop the placement of the stepping foot, Lin was required to execute each step as a front kick, with the toes pointed forward. After the kicking foot was extended, it would be placed flat on the ground, with the toe and heel landing simultaneously. Each successive step would be executed in the same manner as the practitioner walked in a circle. This exercise developed *fa jing* (發勁 - explosive force) in each step. The mud walking step also developed a moving "root," so that the practitioner would be "rooted," or stable, even when he was in motion.

At the athletic club, a martial arts curriculum was offered that enabled students to study from a number of different instructors. During his early years of training at the club, Lin took advantage of the other courses offered there. From Fu's fellow instructor, Wang Shao Zhou (王少周), Lin learned *Cha Quan* (查拳), another famous long-fist style from the north. Wang Shao Zhou was one of the youngest members of the Five Tigers. Lin also learned a Shaolin form from Fu Zhen Song's nephew, Ren Sheng Kui (任生魁).

After the first year at the club, Lin gravitated towards

Fu Zhen Song and was invited by Fu to study with his private group of students. They practiced at a location in central Canton, which when literally translated, would be called "Children's Park." Children's Park was also close to Lin's home and the athletic club. The group practiced in the early morning hours at the park when admission to the park was free. They called their school Wu Dang Jing Yu Club.

During the years when Lin Chao Zhen trained with Fu Zhen Song at the park, he learned the Sun Style Tai Ji Quan (孫式太極拳) form, which Fu learned from his friend Sun Lu Tang (孫祿堂); Yang Ba Gua (陽八卦); the flying dragon straight sword; the first half of the Dragon Ba Gua form; Ba Gua push hands; and Liang Yi (兩儀). He also learned four sets of Tou Tang Quan (頭趟拳), which resembles the Liang Yi form. Yang Ba Gua was usually the first circular Ba Gua form that Fu Zhen Song taught. It is more expressive and athletic than the Yin Ba Gua form, which is usually taught later. The Dragon Ba Gua form contains the most advanced Ba Gua movements of Fu style Ba Gua, requiring the practitioner not only to walk the circle, but to move in all directions in a constant flow of coiling, twisting, revolving, and exploding techniques. Liang Yi is a synthesis of the techniques of Tai Ji and Ba Gua.

Lin said that it was not uncommon for Fu Zhen Song to simply teach one-half of a form initially, and then wait for a year or even several years to teach



Lin Chao Zhen performing Fu Style Ba Gua Zhang in San Francisco

the second half of the form. By teaching this way, Fu could test the character and perseverance of his disciples.

When Lin Chao Zhen was 20 years old, he performed at different Universities and sports centers with Fu Zhen Song. In 1937, when Lin was 26 years old, Fu accepted him as a formal disciple. Lin went through the traditional ceremony. On that day, Fu bestowed upon Lin the name, Xiang Long (翔龍), or "Flying Dragon." Becoming Fu's disciple was significant because in China, prominent instructors who openly taught at martial arts institutes often had hundreds of students in their lifetime. The number of students, however, who they accepted as formal disciples were few. Those who were accepted as disciples almost invariably had to follow their instructors for years, having demonstrated not only their ability in martial arts, but their patience, character, perseverance and martial virtue. Those who were accepted as formal disciples were privileged to learn the complete system, being treated almost as a member of the instructor's family. Many instructors stopped charging their students tuition at the point that they became disciples because of the closeness of the relationship. When Lin was accepted as a disciple, he had trained with Fu Zhen Song for 9 years.

No one was forced to hold basic stances for hours. Fu Zhen Song believed that the practical applications in Ba Gua are based on movement.

One of Fu Zhen Song's other disciples, General Sun Bao Gang (孫寶剛), authored a book in which he estimated that Fu Zhen Song taught ten thousand students. Fu, however, had only a handful of formal disciples. The Wu Dang Academy, after extensive research many years ago, published an article on Fu's disciples. They listed Fu Yong Hui (傅永輝 - Fu Zhen Song's eldest son), Liang Ri Chu (梁日初), Ma Ri Qing (馬日青), Huang Hong (黃洪), Chai Rong Ji (翟榮基), Sun Bao Gang (孫寶剛), and Lin Chao Zhen (林朝珍).

When Lin became a disciple, Fu Zhen Song was living on Tung Goh Boulevard, where there was a memorial park that sometimes served as a training area. Fu also had an apartment with a yard where a small group of Fu's students practiced privately. During this time frame, he learned Yin Ba Gua and finished Dragon Ba Gua. He also continued in his study of Liang Yi and Fu Style Tai Ji. Fu Style Tai Ji has elements of Ba Gua within the Tai Ji.

In 1938, at the Fifth Sun Yat Sen University Athletic Games, there was a day of special celebration. Fu Zhen Song performed at the event. One of the forms that was showcased was the Ba Gua push hands form that Fu had developed. He considered this form one of the treasures of Ba Gua and had developed this form



Lin Chao Zhen poses in Ba Gua's characteristic "guard stance"

after years of research. Lin Chao Zhen was selected to be Fu Zhen Song's demonstration partner for this form. Although the push hands form appears quite simple on the surface, its techniques are actually quite deep. Its hand movements are prearranged, but the practitioners have tremendous flexibility in the direction, distance, and pace that they take in their footwork. The hand techniques include Ba Gua's characteristic palm strikes and precision strikes to vital areas. Angles are also extremely important in performing and understanding Ba Gua push hands.

Fu Zhen Song's teaching was interrupted when the Japanese invaded Canton during the Second World War. The invasion caused the members of the group to disperse. Lin Chao Zhen left for another state. In



Fu Zhen Song (in the center, to the left of the woman wearing the white gown) poses in 1934 with his good friend Yang Cheng Fu (center, wearing glasses). Also in this photo is Yang's famous student Fu Zhong Wen (to Yang's right) and Fu Zhen Song's son, Fu Yong Hui, (to Fu Zhong Wen's right).

fact, Lin, who by training was a civil engineer, often traveled on joint projects with the U.S. Armed Forces and assisted them in designing and building roads. Fu Zhen Song, on the other hand, took his family and went to northern Canton, to a place called Qu Jiang. Qu Jiang was near the countryside and the mountains. In this area, people could still live in relative peace despite the war.

In 1941, Lin Chao Zhen met up with Fu Zhen Song in Qu Jiang. The Japanese Army was nearby, but had not yet arrived. Fu had been traveling alone because of the war. His family was in the area, but a safer distance away. Lin was also traveling by himself. After they met, they stayed together in a hotel, where Lin was able to have extensive discussions with his teacher for four days on the finer points of Dragon Ba Gua. During these discussions, Lin used pencil and paper to write down the details of the form's movements. Lin learned as much as he could from his instructor before they were both forced to go their separate ways again.

After World War II, when the Japanese Army left, people began to return to Canton. Fu Zhen Song also returned to Canton. He arrived before his son and family, who joined him later. Unfortunately, Fu's life after World War II was much more difficult. With people struggling just to survive, studying martial arts was considered a luxury, which not many people could afford.

Lin Chao Zhen recalls that Fu Zhen Song lived on But Gung Lane when he first returned to Canton. His home had little furnishings, a hard bed, simple furniture. Things improved for Fu when his family moved back to Canton and his son, Fu Yong Hui, was able to assist the family.

Ba Gua Zheng Zong (八卦正宗) was the last set

that Lin learned from Fu Zhen Song. Lin learned this form after the war had ended. It is much simpler than the Dragon Ba Gua form, but contains several important martial techniques not found in the other forms. Since this was the last set that Lin learned from Fu, he remembers his instructor fondly whenever he practices it. Lin recalls that when Fu was older, the war and his hard life after the war had begun to take a toll on him. Whenever Fu performed his Dragon Ba Gua, however, he was able to draw from his internal strength and he was transformed into a man who was the embodiment of a dragon.

There was quite a contrast between the life that Fu Zhen Song had before the war and the life he was forced to live after the war. When Fu first came from Beijing to Canton, he was famous and had scores of students. Fu even had a car, a British-made Austin that held four people, which his son would often drive. It was rare for anyone in China to own a car during this time period. The car symbolized the prestige that Fu enjoyed as a martial arts instructor. Fu practiced his art until his passing at the age of 81.

When Lin trained with his instructor, he usually would arrive at the class before sunrise. Fu's close students would all train for a few hours before they had to be at their regular jobs. Some books have said that Fu was a pleasant man with a good temper. Lin's recollection was that deep down inside, Fu had a good heart, but that he had a terrible temper and was extremely proud.

For example, in Canton, there were often martial arts demonstrations. Fu had a rule that he always had to be the first performer. If the organizer of an event ever made the mistake of scheduling Fu in-between other performers, Fu would simply leave. Lin recalls times when Fu would suddenly say that he was leaving,

and ordered all his students to leave with him. Lin later discovered that Fu was offended because he was not listed first on the program. When Fu left, he did not bother to explain anything to the organizer of the event.

Fu was also very stern towards his students. Students could never sit while their instructor was performing or demonstrating a move. He would stare down any student who was not standing. Also, whenever Fu Zhen Song and his school were asked to perform, the students were expected to carry all the weapons and equipment. Fu Zhen Song never carried anything. Ironically, as an instructor, Fu was usually easier on his public students. Many times, he would offer some encouragement or positive reinforcement with the public class students while they were struggling with their forms. With his formal disciples, however, he was very stern and demanding. If a disciple was asked to demonstrate a move in front of the class, the slightest mistake might prompt Fu to chide the disciple, "Do you call that *gong fu*?"

In the tradition of the old instructors, Fu was constantly pushing his formal disciples to correct their movements, to strive for perfection. Fu would not settle for anything less from those he expected to carry on his style. For example, when Lin Chao Zhen practiced the Yang Ba Gua form, which contains eight different palm changes, Fu would have the students practice together. They would do a full twenty circles before changing directions on any of the palm changes. This meant that to complete this first form, the students would have to complete 320 circles. No one was forced, however, to hold basic stances for hours. Fu Zhen Song believed that the practical applications in Ba Gua are based on movement. Fu felt that stationary practice simply made students tight. The core of the basic training was in the forms. Fu Zhen Song relied on the linear Ba Gua form, Pao Quan, and Tou Tang Quan to develop the stances, the stance shifting, basic striking and kicking skills.

In another revealing incident, Fu Zhen Song was introduced to a well-known praying mantis instructor at a public event. There had been a rivalry developing between the two instructors before their meeting, and it was clear that Fu Zhen Song was not happy about meeting a rival instructor. When the two of them met, they each held out their hands. Instead of shaking each other's hands, they engaged in a contest of strength. Fu Zhen Song broke the praying mantis instructor's hand before releasing him. They never spoke with each other after that event. Lin Chao Zhen met the praying mantis instructor's son many years ago, and in an effort to reconcile the differences between the two schools, Lin and the praying mantis instructor's son exchanged sets from their respective styles.

In some old pictures of Fu Zhen Song, he is shown holding a stone ball of approximately 12 inches in diameter. Fu said this ball was for Tai Ji training. In some of his performances, however, Fu would throw the stone ball into the air and let it strike his body. None of Fu's students attempted this feat. Whenever

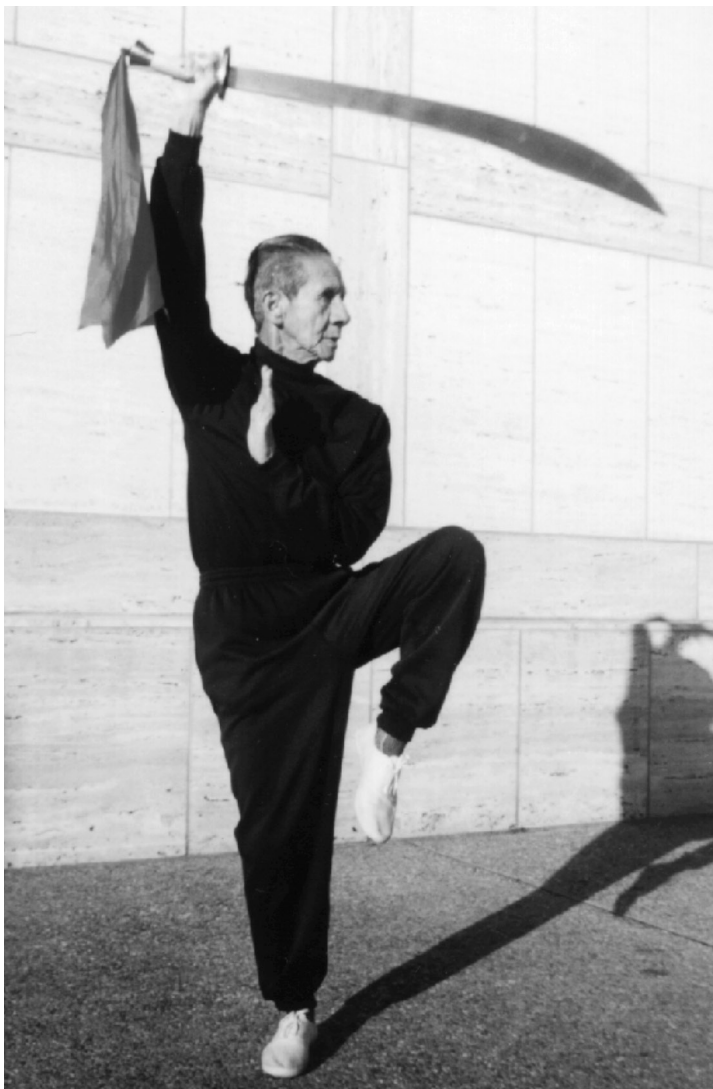
any students dared to ask if they could learn the art of training with the stone ball, Fu's response was an abrupt "what for?" As far as Lin is aware, no one ever learned how Fu trained with the stone ball or exactly how he developed the ability to withstand the blow from the ball striking his body. Fu never showed any of the training techniques to his disciples.

Fu Zhen Song was married to Han Kun Ru (韓坤如). Fu's father-in-law was also a famous gong fu master in Northern China. Lin never saw Mrs. Fu perform her *gong fu*, but he remembers occasions when he practiced the spear with her for fun. Lin noticed immediately that her spear technique was very powerful. From those encounters, Lin is certain that she was also highly skilled in martial arts.

Fu had four children. The oldest was a daughter, Fu Jun Xiu (傅君銹). Fu Yong Hui (傅永輝) was the second oldest child. He was the only one to professionally teach martial arts. The third child was a son, Fu Yong Xiang (傅永祥). Lin remembers that Fu Yong Xiang had perfect Ba Gua form when he was young. Unfortunately, he stopped practicing completely when he grew older. Fu's youngest child was Fu Wen Xiu (傅文銹), another daughter. She is the only surviving child from Fu's family. She is still living in Canton.



Fu Zhen Song practiced with his stone ball, but would not teach his students how to use it



Lin Chao Zhen with the Ba Gua broadsword, 1994

Fu's two daughters had also learned Ba Gua from their father and their sword technique was excellent. They never opened their own schools, however. Fu Jun Xiu used to help her brother, Fu Yong Hui, teach at his school. Fu Jun Xiu's husband was a famous Xing Yi instructor. Lin had asked Fu Jun Xiu's husband years ago whether she could teach him some of her husband's Xing Yi, but she said she never learned Xing Yi from her husband.

Lin Chao Zhen studied engineering in China and as an engineer, had opportunities to travel throughout the country. During his travels, he met many martial arts teachers. He exchanged information with fellow martial arts instructors of Southern Fist, Cha Quan, Shaolin, and Praying Mantis. His exchanges with these instructors and his own research and training helped him develop a deeper understanding of his own Ba Gua. Throughout his life, Lin did not allow the political turmoil in China or life's hardships to deter him from the practice of martial arts. Lin's objective was to capture the spirit of his teacher within the movements. Lin made this his goal because he felt that it was the only way that he could do justice to his instructor's art and to honor his instructor.

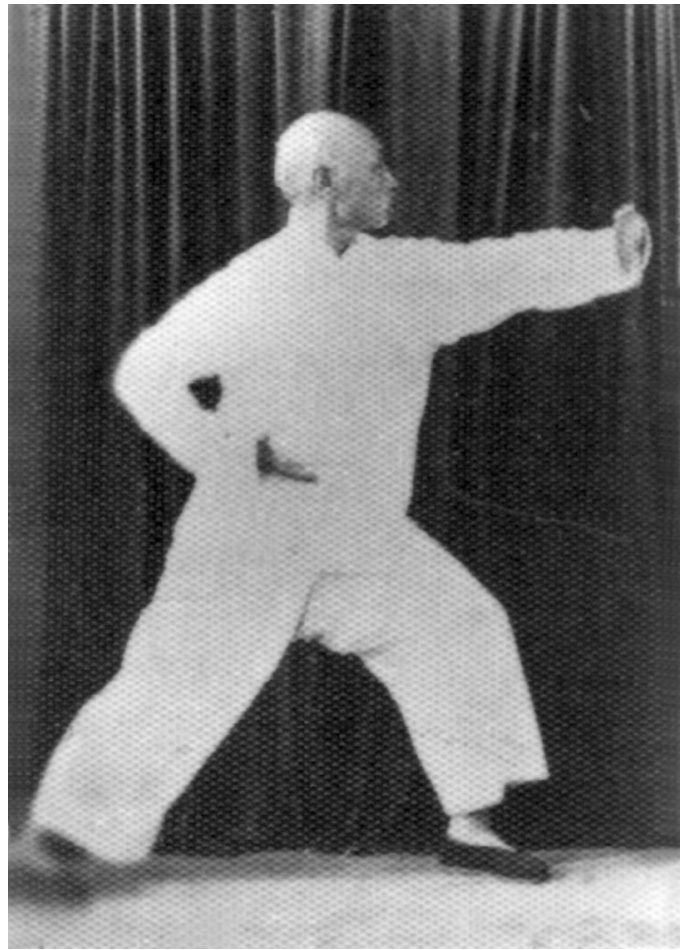
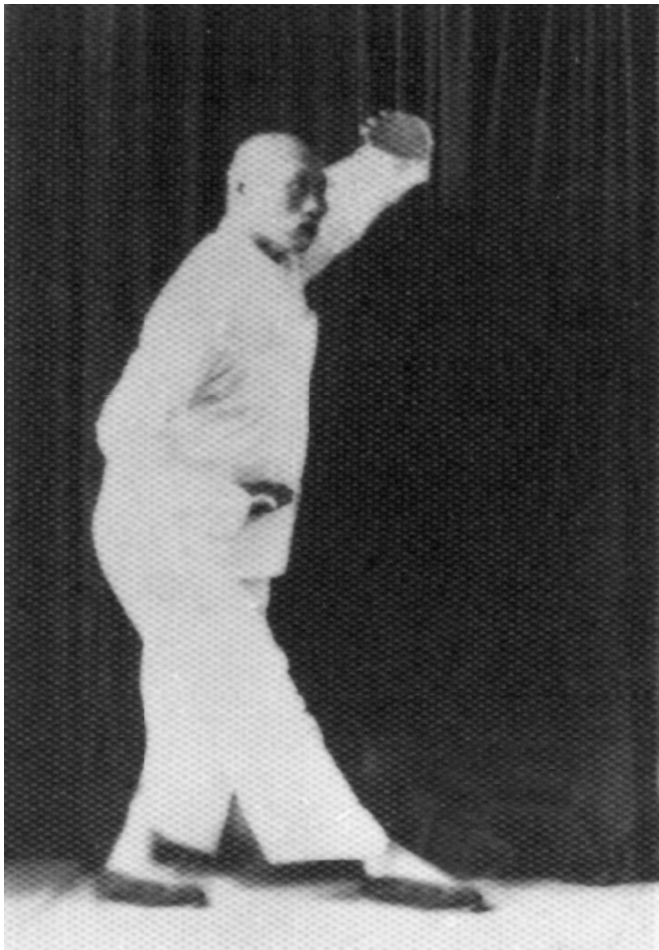
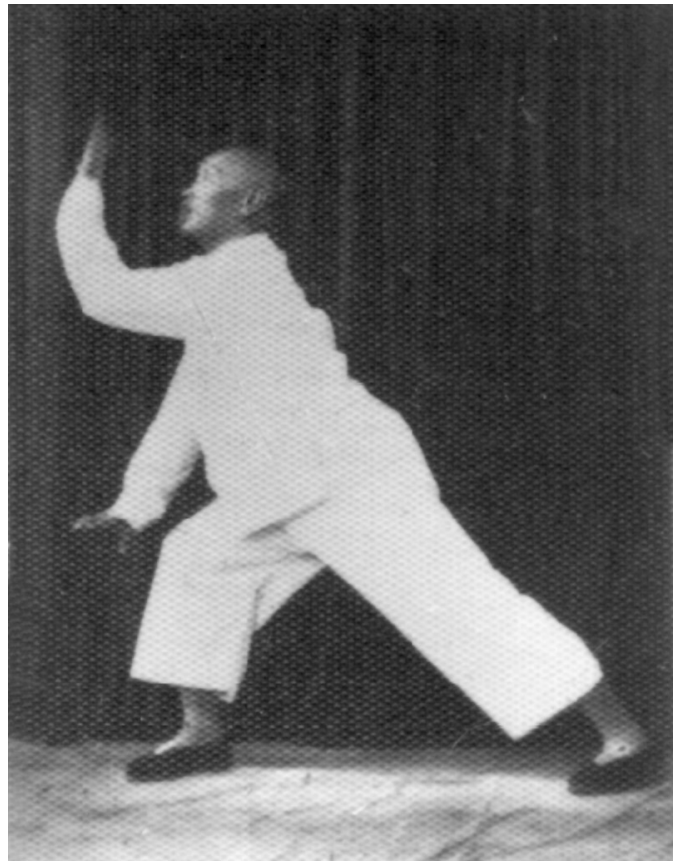
The Hong Kong Ba Gua Academy invited Lin Chao Zhen to perform the Dragon Ba Gua form in 1980. The performance was rendered at the inaugural meeting of the Hong Kong Wu Shu Association. Some old instructors who had seen Fu Zhen Song give one of his dazzling performances of Dragon Ba Gua were able to immediately recognize the spirit of Fu Zhen Song when decades later, they had an opportunity to see Lin perform the set. For Lin, this was the highest compliment that he could receive - to have fellow instructors say that he reminded them of Fu Zhen Song.

When Lin retired from engineering, he lived in the city of Chao Ching, approximately 100 kilometers from Canton. During his martial career, Lin has taught hundreds of students. He was the founder of the Chao Ching Martial Arts Association and served as its chairman. In 1983, Lin participated in the government-sponsored, Sixth State Athletic Games in Canton. His performance of Dragon Ba Gua earned him the gold medal in the long form category. He received a bronze medal for performing Fu style Tai Ji. That same year, he was voted on of China's Most Outstanding Martial Arts Coaches. In May 1991, Lin authored and published a book entitled, "Ba Gua Zhang, Dragon Form." In 1991, Lin immigrated to the United States and has taught over a hundred students in America.

Lin Chao Zhen believes that *Gong Fu* is an international language. He teaches students of many different backgrounds and nationalities. Even though he may not speak the language of all of his students, he finds that they can communicate through movement. Lin's desire has been to perpetuate his art, and he is committed to passing on his knowledge to as many people as possible. He continues to practice his art daily, including the whirlwind style Dragon Ba Gua form, which practitioners a fraction of Lin's age struggle just to complete.

Although Lin trained many of his disciples in China in the traditional fashion, he has modified some of his teaching methods to facilitate learning in America. Since his desire is to promote the art of Fu Zhen Song in America, and hopefully, to pass on his complete knowledge of the art to students in America, he teaches at an accelerated pace, giving the student as much as they can handle. At this stage of Lin's life, he feels that time is precious and he wants to transmit as much information as he can to his students. Accordingly, he has allowed his students to have access to the Dragon Ba Gua form and has worked diligently to develop their technique. In many ways, Lin is much more open than his instructor, but he feels that the changes in teaching methodology are necessary to ensure the art's survival in our modern culture.

Opposite Page: Fu Zhen Song poses in four postures from his Yin Ba Gua form, in 1947. These photographs were taken for a book Fu was preparing to publish on Yin Ba Gua. Fu died before the book was published, however, Lin Chao Zhen has the original manuscript and photographs.

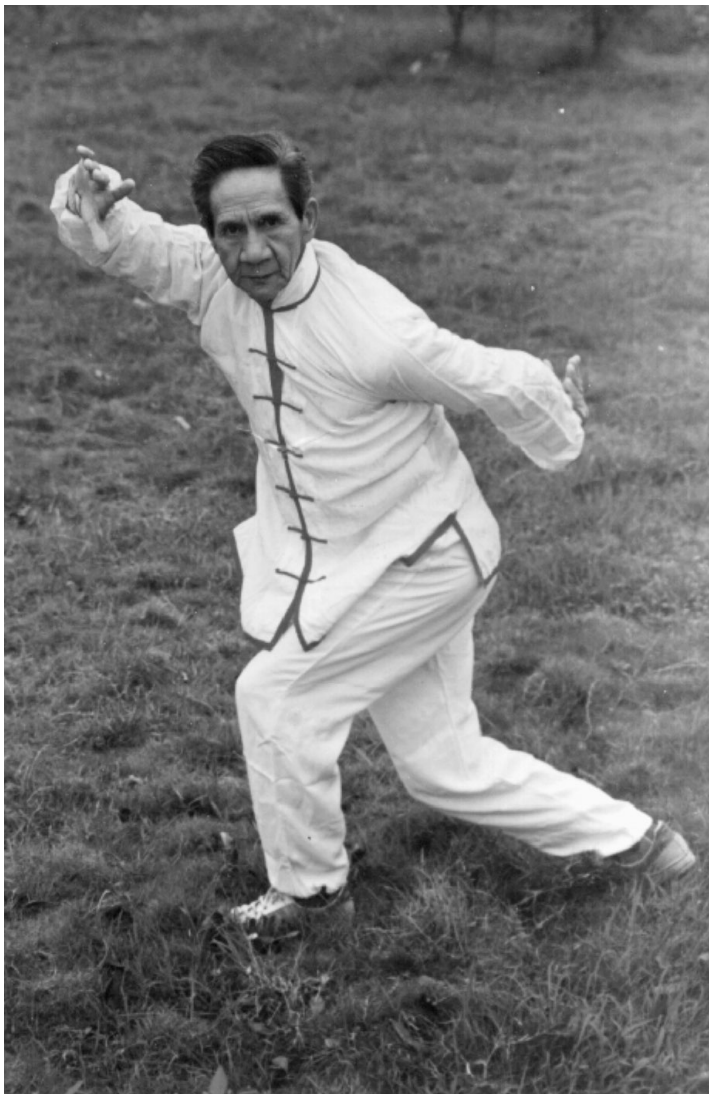


Fu Style Ba Gua: An Interview with Lin Chao Zhen

by Michael Barrett

Editor's Note: I first met Lin Chao Zhen while visiting San Francisco in November, 1993, with Luo De Xiu and Tim Cartmell. Lin's student, Michael Barrett, had arranged the meeting and Lin's son, Lin Wei Ran, came along to translate for his father. Lin had brought some written material that he had published in China and several photographs he had copied for me. He also gave me a copy of a video tape his son had made of him demonstrating some of his Ba Gua. I found Lin to be a very energetic, personable man. Although he was advanced in years, his energy and spirit, especially when discussing Ba Gua with Luo De Xiu, indicated that he was still very much full of life and eager to teach Ba Gua.

Several months after I had met Lin Chao Zhen, his student Robert Chen sent me the excellent article



Lin Chao Zhen, 1988, in Zhao Qing, China

which appears on page 3 of this issue. Later, Lin's son sent me the photographs of Fu Zhen Song which appear on the cover and on the previous page. After I began working on this issue of the Journal, I realized that although Robert had done a great job with the article, perhaps our readers would like to know more about Lin's teaching methods and his thoughts on Ba Gua practice. I typed out a list of questions and sent them to Michael Barrett so that he could use them in conducting the following interview.

Please explain what is taught in the complete Fu style Ba Gua system, i.e., fundamental skills training which are separate from forms, all of the various forms training, weapons training, fighting sets, qi gong, etc. In what order do students progress through the material described above?

There are different levels to Fu style Ba Gua. At the basic level the student starts with walking the circle. He or she will practice this for 2 or 3 months and will also learn single straight line forms. The forms taught at this level are the Tou Tang Quan, Pao Quan (leopard style) and Lian Huan Quan (連環拳 - Linking Ring Form). These are all straight line forms and belong to the Basic Level. These forms train body strength, flexibility and power issuing.

At the next level the student learns the Ba Gua open hand forms. We have four Ba Gua forms in our system, they are: Yang Ba Gua, Yin Ba Gua, Zheng Zong Ba Gua, and Dragon Form Ba Gua. Weapons training also takes place after the Basic Level in conjunction with the Ba Gua forms training.

Did Fu Zhen Song emphasize fundamental skills training (exercises designed to develop flexibility, overall body strength, balance, coordination, etc.) before teaching students any of the Ba Gua forms?

The basic level straight line forms and the circular Ba Gua forms give flexibility, body strength, balance, and coordination through the continuous movements of the set. The sets are alive and so should be your practice of them. Fu stressed body alignment and basic stances. Each student must perform movements correctly before being given another move. If students were lazy, he would not teach them. Walking the circle 30-40 times before changing directions was stressed.

What different components of Ba Gua are trained in the Liang Yi, Yin Ba Gua, Yang Ba Gua, Zheng Zong Ba Gua, and Dragon Style Ba Gua. In other words, what is unique about each form and what skills does the student gain by studying them.

Yang Ba Gua is powerful and has a lot of kicking. This form is good for young people. Yin Ba Gua is softer with more relaxed movements and is good for older people. Zheng Zong Ba Gua is a combination of Yin and Yang Ba Gua and is circular, but has more complex movements linked together. Movements are practiced equally on the left and right. Dragon Ba Gua is the top form of the style. The movements are non-stop, flowing with maximum twisting and coiling power. It is the pinnacle or goal of the Fu style.

Liang Yi is a combination set of Ba Gua and Tai Ji. Fu made this form as a synthesis for the two systems. Liang Yi has the movements of Tai Ji with the footwork of Ba Gua. It is done slower than Ba Gua but faster than Tai Ji.

How does the student train to develop *fa jing*, or striking power in Fu style Ba Gua?

Fa Jing is trained in the forms at various places making the forms fast and slow and hard and soft and making the student aware of the transitions without stopping between fast and slow and hard and soft. Sandbags and exercises where the student strikes himself at key points help with the body conditioning.

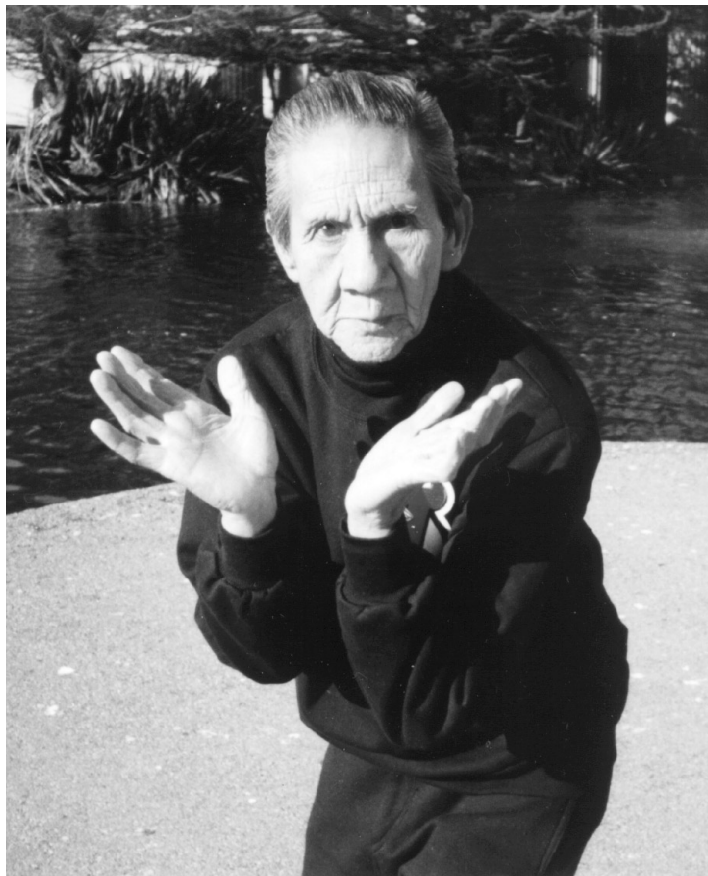
Did Fu emphasize fighting training? If so, what methods did he use to teach students how to learn to fight with Ba Gua? Were there separate drills, exercises, or practice sets one would practice in order to learn striking skills, kicking, sweeping, and trapping with the legs, throwing skills, and qin na (seizing and locking) skills?

Yun Song Kua was Fu's nephew and practiced fighting a lot with Fu. Two person forms, two person push hands which trained "touch and feeling" and skills such as "you move I move, you don't move, I don't move" where practiced. Also, two person Tou Tang Quan and Qin Na (擒拿) techniques were all used.

What are some of the most important principles Fu Zhen Song emphasized when teaching Ba Gua?

Fu stressed seriousness above all else. He continually said, "Do it again, do it again." He also stressed soft to get in and hard power to hit.

What is unique about Fu style Ba Gua? What sets it apart from other styles? What are its main characteristics?



Lin Chao Zhen in San Francisco, 1993

Fu had very fast footwork, he changed direction very fast and never stopped. Body, leg, and waist were always all unified. He spun on his heels to change direction or angles of attack very quickly. The spinning quality helps you to keep your balance while moving. His tornado palm also uses spinning power combined with whole body waist power to strike an opponent while you spin to his rear. The stepping movements are similar to Cheng Ting Hua's, but Fu uses more over the head and behind the back twisting or spiralling hand movements.

What components of physical movement skills did training with various weapons provide? In other words, were there skills one developed in training with the different weapons that aided the practice and execution of the open hand forms and fighting sets?

In Fu style Ba Gua, the broadsword is practiced first. It is a "*yang*" weapon and the sets develop power, kicking and jumping abilities. The double edged straight sword is practiced next. It is a "*yin*" weapon and develops sensitivity and finesse. It has smaller movements. The spear is practiced next. It combines the two qualities of *yin* and *yang* and trains the extension of power or *qi* from the practitioner to the tip of the spear. It is said to be a "four-sided" weapon and it controls all directions with flexibility and "snap" power.



Lin Chao Zhen in San Francisco, 1993

What do you know about Fu Zhen Song's teacher Jia Feng Ming (also called Jia Qi Shan)? Who else did Fu study Ba Gua with? Cheng Ting Hua? Ma Gui?

In addition to studying with Jia Feng Ming (賈鳳鳴), Fu also studied with Ma Gui (馬貴) and he was friends with Sun Lu Tang (孫祿堂) and Yang Cheng Fu (楊澄甫) and they shared knowledge.

Did Fu invent the Yin Ba Gua, Yang Ba Gua, and Dragon Ba Gua, or are these things he learned from his teachers?

The Dragon form and Liang Yi were made up after Fu studied Tai Ji with Song Wei Yi (宋唯一). Fu learned Yin and Yang Ba Gua from other teachers.

Did Fu Zhen Song have a brother (Fu Zhen Tai) that studied Ba Gua?

Fu Zhen Tai (傅振泰) was Fu's younger brother. He also assisted in teaching class. Fu Zhen Tai was very tall and strong. His *gong fu* skills were excellent. He also was a Chinese Doctor and herbalist. He spent two years teaching as Fu Zhen Song's assistant, then went back to Henan (Fu's home Province). He taught there until he died around 1942.

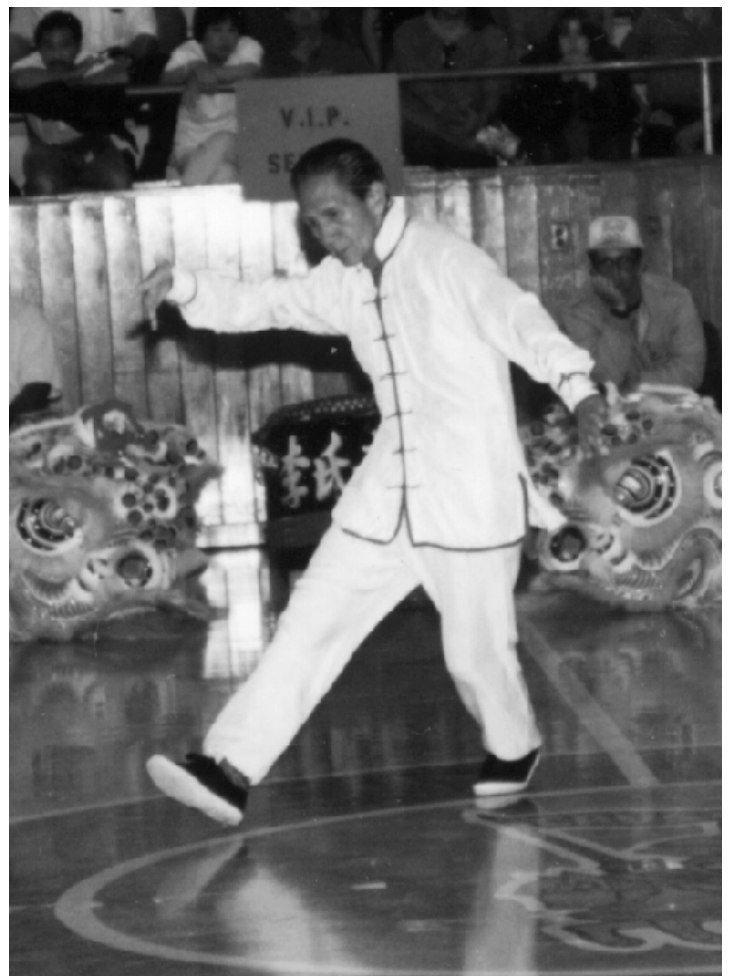
What plans do you have as far as teaching here in the United States? Are you going to be teaching seminars, producing video tapes, publishing books?

Next February I will be giving a workshop in San Francisco. It will be a day long class, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, February 4th. I will teach the circle walking practice in the morning and the Dragon Ba Gua form in the afternoon with its applications to fighting.

I want to introduce the complete system from the basic level to the real Ba Gua. I have four video tapes available containing weapons, straight line forms, circular forms, and performance of the Dragon Ba Gua form. These tapes will be discounted to attendees of the workshop mentioned above.

I am also completing my second book on Fu style Ba Gua.

Those who may be interested in attending the workshop mentioned above should call (415) 921-6978 and speak with Lin Chao Zhen's son Lin Wei Ran. Those interested in contacting Lin Chao Zhen can do so by writing to the address listed on the back page of this Journal.



Lin Chao Zhen demonstrating Fu Style Ba Gua at the Westmoor High School gym in Daly City, CA, June, 29, 1992

Ba Gua Zhang Qi Gong Methods - Part I

Because almost every traditional medical, martial, religious, physical, and, in many cases, scholarly disciplines in China have a tradition of *qi gong* (氣功) practice, it is very difficult to strictly define the "hows and whys" of *qi gong* without putting it in the context of the discipline in which it is practiced. Each discipline, and each of the various schools within those disciplines, practice *qi gong* with different goals in mind and thus each has a different criteria and method for practice. There are literally hundreds of *qi gong* methods in China, each traditional method having its own fairly unique systematic approach to practice. Additionally, terms such as *nei gong* (內功) and *nei dan* (內丹) are also used frequently to describe exercises and methods which some might also call *qi gong* and vice-versa. Thus *qi gong* methods can really only be defined within the discipline they are to be practiced and in the context of each individual's personal practice.

While most martial arts schools will have their own definitions for terms such as *qi gong* and *nei gong* and will probably have separate training methods which they place under these categories of practice, each school's definition tends to be slightly different. While some schools might call one thing *qi gong*, another school might call that same thing *nei gong*. Also, some schools will call all of their internal practices *qi gong* while others will call all of their internal practices *nei gong*. Some people will say that "traditionally" all internal practices were called *nei gong* and that *qi gong* is a fairly modern term. However, there are others who will say the exact opposite. In this article I will not argue semantics, nor will I provide my own view about how the terms *qi gong* and *nei gong* are defined or how their methods might differ. For the purpose of this article, it will suffice to say that, in most cases, the practices which are grouped under these terms are so similar that the terms can be used synonymously. In this article, we will group all "internal" practices involving the coordination of breath, mind, and body under the "umbrella" of the term *qi gong*.

"Gong" literally means "effort" or "work," "merit" or "achievement," and "usefulness" or "effectiveness." If we choose our definition of *qi gong* to be "*qi* work" or "*qi* achievement," we can see that almost every form of

physical, mental, or breath exercise could possibly fall into this category since everything we do involves the use of our *qi*¹. In this article I will focus on a small slice of the *qi gong* spectrum of exercises and techniques in that I will only be discussing methods which are typically taught as Ba Gua Zhang Qi Gong training. However, even these methods vary from school to school because many instructors have added *qi gong* training to their Ba Gua programs which they have borrowed from other martial arts styles and other internal disciplines (religious, medical, etc.)

Since Ba Gua Zhang is an internal martial art, some of the goals of *qi gong* practice as it relates to Ba Gua development would be a balanced, full, smooth, strong, distribution of energy in the body, a harmonization of the mind, breath, and body motion, and a refinement of all internal processes (physical, mental, and spiritual). The results of the practice should be a strong, internally healthy body, efficient and effective use of the body in martial arts application, the ability to issue a great deal of martial power through very subtle body motions, and a heightened state of awareness and sensitivity to one's internal body and external environment. Ba Gua Qi Gong methods are designed with these goals in mind.

The History of Ba Gua Qi Gong

It would be difficult to say for sure whether or not Dong Hai Chuan (董海川) taught *qi gong* methods to his students which were separate from the circle walking practices of Ba Gua Zhang. There is evidence which points to Dong's involvement with the *Quan Zhen* (全真) sect of Daoism and thus we might conclude that he was taught the various *qi gong* methods practiced by this sect (which included circle walking - see *Pa Kua Chang Journal*, Vol 4, No. 6, page 3). However, the only real identifiable trail that I have been able to uncover which traces *qi gong* practiced by modern practitioners directly back to these particular Daoist roots was a mention of *Long Men Qi Gong* (龍門氣功) by Zhang Jun Feng (張峻峰). The *Quan Zhen* sect of Daoism was part of the *Long Men* School of Daoism. During an interview with Zhang Jun Feng's wife in Taiwan, she told me that her husband called his sitting *qi gong* practice *Long Men Qi Gong*. Zhang had learned this method of *qi gong* from one of Yin Fu's (尹福) students (see *Pa Kua Chang Journal*, Vol 3, No. 4, page 3).

There are several stories about Dong Hai Chuan teaching various methods of sitting and standing *qi gong* to his students. Most of these stories say that Dong reserved the practice of special *qi gong* methods which were separate from the Ba Gua circle walking practice for his closest students. Yin Fu style Ba Gua Zhang practitioner Xie Pei Qi (解佩啓), of Beijing (see *Pa Kua Chang Journal*, Vol 4., No. 1, page 16), says that Dong Hai Chuan taught Yin Fu both Daoist and Buddhist *qi gong* methods which Dong had learned in various places while traveling around China. Xie says that

1) In this article I will not try to define "*qi*" in the context of *qi gong* practice. I believe that each individual practitioner should try to identify with his or her own "definition" of *qi* through the practice of martial arts or *qi gong* rather than listen to someone else's description. My personal favorite idea about "what *qi* is" came from Steve Rhodes, the publisher of *Qi Magazine*, in his premier issue. Steve wrote, "I have always wanted to publish a six-inch thick book on what I think "Qi" is. I would leave all the pages blank and a brief paragraph in the beginning would instruct readers to fill in the information as they discovered it within themselves, because this is the only place it exists." Later Steve also writes, "It is virtually impossible to translate "Qi" without putting it in some type of context, and even then it changes depending on how each of us look at it."

only a few students who were taught all of Dong's *qi gong* methods, Yin Fu, Ma Gui (馬貴), and Fan Zhi Yong (樊志勇). However, since Xie was a student of Yin Fu's student Men Bao Zhen (門寶珍), Fan Zi Yong's daughter, and Ma Gui, it is possible he is either "propping himself up" or that he would not know about any other lineage's practice of *qi gong*. However, it is known that many of the Ba Gua descendants of both Yin Fu and Ma Gui emphasize *qi gong* practice in their Ba Gua training. While many of today's instructors of Ba Gua Zhang teach various *qi gong* methods, it would be very difficult to say whether these methods were originally part of Ba Gua Zhang as taught by Dong Hai Quan, or were added later.

Having discussed Ba Gua Zhang *Qi Gong* with various instructors in the United States, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China, I find that there are generally two schools of thought. One school believes that the Ba Gua practitioner will not practice any *qi gong* exercises which are separate or supplemental to the linear and circular forms, exercises, and practice sets of Ba Gua Zhang. This view point certainly has merit. After all, Ba Gua is an internal martial art and thus everything a practitioner does in Ba Gua should harmonize the body, mind, and breath and promote the development of internal strength. For this group, the majority of what may be considered *qi gong* training is executed during the circle walk practice. In *Pa Kua Chang Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 6, we discussed some of the circle walking methods utilized for *qi gong* purposes.

Many of the older generation Ba Gua Zhang instructors that I have interviewed in mainland China and Taiwan say that all of the *qi gong* and *nei gong* in Ba Gua is contained in the circle walk practice. They do not advocate the practice of separate standing or sitting *qi gong* methods. They say it is not necessary. If the circle walk and directional changes on the circle are practiced correctly, starting with simple methods and gradually progressing to more complex methods, the student will not need any supplemental *qi gong* practice.

The other school of thought believes in the practice of exercises and meditations which serve to supplement the standard Ba Gua circle walking practice and form execution. While most of these practitioners would agree that the circle walk practice can and will contain all of the elements of *qi gong* training, they also believe that beginning practitioners need to practice component parts of the training separately before they try to integrate these parts into the circle walk training. In these schools, *qi gong*, meditation and breathing exercises are performed separately from the circle walk practice until the student becomes very comfortable with the circle walk method. Concentration, visualization, and breathing methods are integrated into the circle walk practice in stages. This is a more gradual step-by-step approach and also certainly has merit. One cannot say that one approach is right and the other approach is wrong, they are just different ways to approach the same goal.

Before concluding this short section on the history of Ba Gua *Qi Gong*, I should mention that practitioners

may run across methods of *qi gong* practice that are called "Ba Gua *Qi Gong*" but do not have any connection with Dong Hai Chuan's martial art of Ba Gua Zhang, or those who have practiced and taught it. The term "Ba Gua" or "Eight Trigram," and its associated philosophy, being deeply imbedded in Chinese society, has been used by many as a label for various religious sects, secret societies, martial arts methods, meditation practices, and *qi gong*. Most of these groups, methods, or practices do not have a relation to Dong Hai Chuan's art of Ba Gua Zhang other than the fact that they share a common name and might share a common philosophical base. If an instructor teaches a method he calls "Ba Gua *Qi Gong*" but he or she does not practice the art of Ba Gua Zhang, their *qi gong* method is probably not related to Ba Gua Zhang.

Because the principles of internal martial arts practice and *qi gong* are so similar, in the remainder of this article when I speak of *qi gong*, the term will also apply to any of the various Ba Gua Zhang practices, such as the circle walk, which are used in many Ba Gua schools to provide those results which others obtain from separate supplemental *qi gong* training.

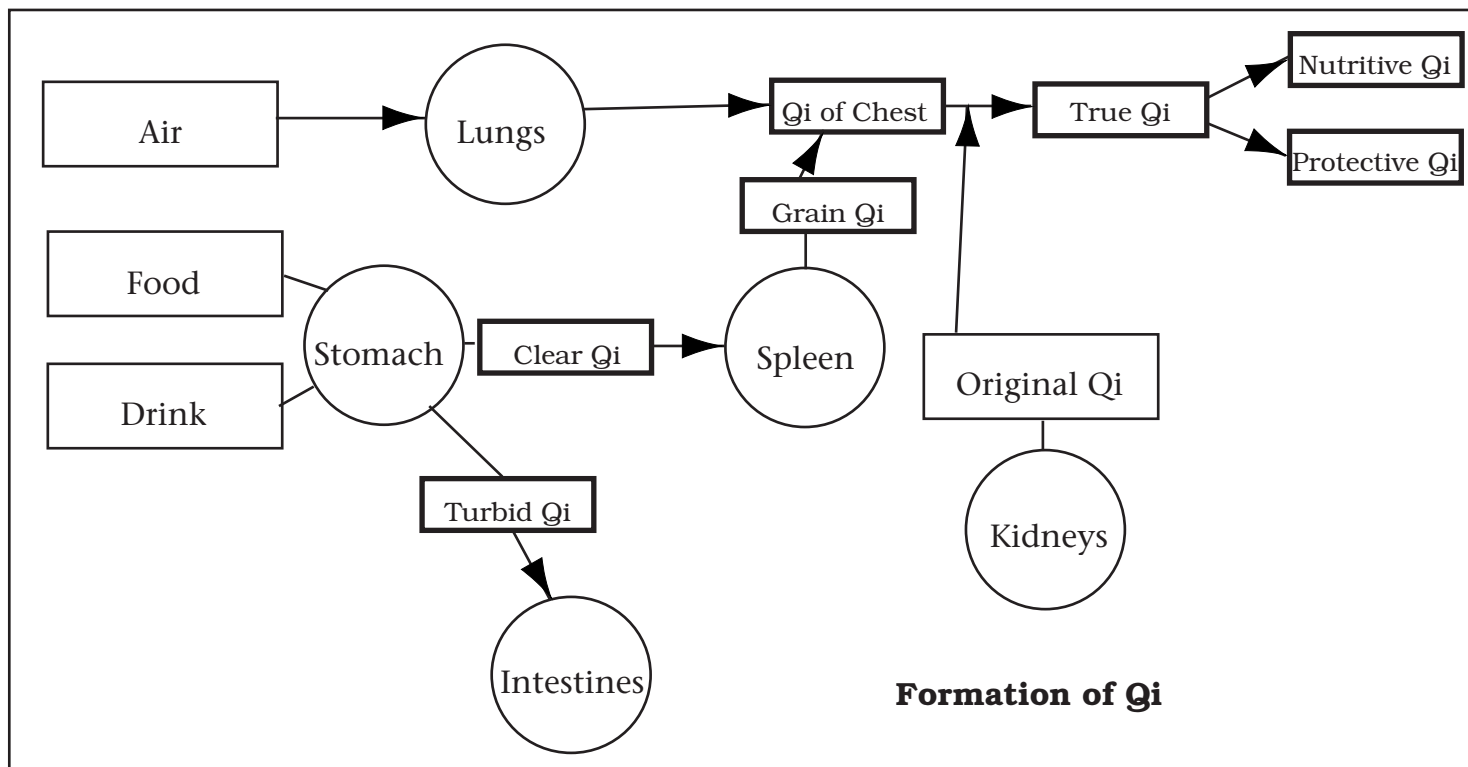
The Energy Assimilation, Production, and Distribution Process

Before discussing the theory and practice of *qi gong*, it may help to first take a quick look at how the body gathers, metabolizes, and distributes energy. Since Chinese medical theory formed the foundation of traditional *qi gong* practice, we will look at the energy process from the perspective of Chinese medicine. Of course, we will only give a general overview here as this topic alone could be the subject of an entire book. Those who would like to explore this topic in more depth should refer to a text on Chinese medicine or talk with a qualified Chinese medicine practitioner.²

The energy assimilation process in the body starts with the combination of four "raw materials." These are: the food we eat, the liquid we drink, the air we breathe, and our original essence (also called prenatal essence, kidney *yang jing* (陽精), *yuan qi* (原氣), or "fire of the *ming men* (命門)"). The prenatal essence is derived from the essence of the parents and can be viewed as your "internal battery supply." The energy of the prenatal essence combines with the energy of the postnatal essence, which is derived from purified food and drink, and acts as a catalyst for the formation of *qi* in the body.

Of course we all know that raw food and drink is first processed in the stomach and air is first brought into the body through the lungs. Once food and drink are brought into the stomach, the stomach begins the process of energy refinement by sending the "clear *qi*" (清氣 - *qing qi*) to the spleen and the "turbid *qi*" (濁氣 -

2) Two good references for more complete information pertaining to this subject are: *Zang Fu: The Organ System of Traditional Chinese Medicine*, by Jeremy Ross, Churchill Livingstone, 1985, and *The Foundations of Chinese Medicine: A Comprehensive Text for Acupuncturists and Herbalists*, by Giovanni Maciocia, Churchill Livingstone, 1989.



zhuo qi) to the intestines. The spleen then transforms and transports the "grain qi" (谷氣 - *gu qi*) to the chest where it interacts with the clear *qi* of the air from the lungs to form the "ancestral qi" (宗氣 - *zong qi*, also known as the *qi* of the chest or the *gathering qi*). The "original qi" (原氣 - *yuan qi*) from the kidneys then provides a catalyst to form the "true qi" (真氣 - *zhen qi*). The nutritive qi (營氣 - *ying qi*), which runs through the body's energy meridians, and the protective qi (衛氣 - *wei qi*), which guards the body against external invasion of wind, cold, disease, etc. are both derived from the true qi.

In addition to playing an important role in the formation of qi in the body, the internal organs all have a very big role to play in the formation, storage, and transportation of other vital substances such as body fluids (tears, sweat, saliva, milk, nasal, gastric, and genital secretions), and blood. In Chinese medicine, qi and blood have a very close relationship (traditionally it is said that "qi is the commander of the blood, and the blood is the mother of qi"). The kidneys, heart, and liver all play a role in the formation, distribution, and storage of blood in the body.

While the above explanation is extremely brief, the bottom line here is that raw materials are brought into the body, processed and refined by the internal organs located in the torso, and distributed throughout the rest of the body in the form of usable energy. Each of the internal organs has a role to play in the process and the function of the system as a whole is most efficient when the individual systems (organs)³ are operating in balance and harmony with each other. Ensuring that this process is operating without disharmony or dysfunction *should* be the first stage in qi gong training.

Mutual Dependence

One more important concept to understand before discussing *qi gong* practice is the idea of mutual dependence of the various systems of the body and the relationship between the systems of the body and the world outside the individual body. The traditional Chinese model of the universe, both inside and outside the body, is based on a concept of energetic relationships and an energetic continuum. All things in the universe, and in the human body, interact and mutually support one another. Any one thing only has existence and meaning within the context of the whole. Nothing exists in isolation.

It is important to know that all internal systems of the body have interdependencies and overlapping functionalities. There is an internal system of checks and balances, modeled by the five element theory in Chinese medicine, which serves to keep the body in balance and healthy. In practicing *qi gong*, this system of checks and balances must be respected. If there is a deficiency or excess in any one part of the body, the rest of the body will be affected. The problem with practicing *qi gong* when one part of the body is out of balance is that the *qi gong* practice, if it is not appropriate for that particular condition, could throw the body even farther out of balance. This is why individuals who are

3) For those readers with no background in Chinese medicine, it may be necessary to briefly clarify what is meant by "organ." The organs of Chinese medicine are: Kidneys, Spleen, Liver, Heart, Lungs, Pericardium, Bladder, Stomach, Gall Bladder, Small Intestine, Large Intestine, and Triple Warmer. To Chinese medicine practitioners, these organs do not represent a single anatomical entity. These organs are equivalent to an "energetic space" or "sphere of influence" and a systematic interlinking of functions which define the organ. The definition of the organ in Chinese medicine includes both its form and function, as well as its energetic state.

engaging in the practice of *qi gong* should be monitored frequently by a skilled Chinese medical practitioner or knowledgeable *qi gong* teacher.

The relationship between the internal body and the external environment is also an important consideration in *qi gong* practice. All good *qi gong* teachers will tell their students to practice in a quiet place which is shielded from the wind and cold. There are also certain times of the day which are optimum for practice, concerns about the quality of the air in the practice area, and certain directions one should face during practice. Environmental factors and personal habits (poor diet, over working, too much drinking, smoking, too much sex, etc.) all effect the body and the *qi*. Anyone who is engaged in *qi gong* training should be under the guidance of a skilled instructor who knows how to prescribe a *qi gong* method which is appropriate for that person's individual constitution and environment. Factors such as current physical condition (internal and external), constitution, occupation, character, age, sex, lifestyle, experience level, physical and mental aptitude, and diet should be taken into consideration when designing an individual *qi gong* program.

An individual who smokes, drinks excessively, uses drugs, is sexually overactive, has a poor diet, or leads a stressful lifestyle, and thinks he or she is going to "balance" those unhealthy habits by practicing *qi gong* can easily hurt themselves more than help themselves. First, the bad habits should be eliminated and then the body brought gently back to a healthy state through the practice of simple methods under the guidance of an experienced teacher. Only then should the student go forward with the earnest study and practice of *qi gong*.

The Goals of *Qi Gong* Practice

As stated previously, the specific goals of *qi gong* practice will vary from one discipline to the next, however, in general, the martial arts practitioner will first want to promote overall health and well-being by seeking a balanced distribution of energy in the body and improving the body's efficiency in terms of energy movement and usage.⁴ This will include methods aimed at integrating and harmonizing the mind, body, and breath utilizing a safe, gentle, and well-balanced approach. Balance, efficiency, and naturalness are the key elements to building a body which is strong internally. If the body's internal systems are not balanced in terms of energy production, distribution, and consumption, then the body is not working optimally and any attempt at utilizing internal energy in a martial arts or healing practice will only cause further imbalance and can eventually damage the internal systems.

Only when the body is working in a balanced, efficient, natural manner should the *qi gong* practitioner worry about "energy cultivation," "energy refinement," building a stronger energy reserve, or using internal strength in martial arts. If a dam has a leak, you don't

fill the reservoir with water until the dam is fixed. It seems like common sense, however there are many practitioners who practice "power" *qi gong* methods before their body is fully balanced and operating efficiently. The power is transmitted through a system which is not internally connected and internally balanced and thus this weak structure is shocked and damaged. It would be like overloading an electrical circuit, the body will eventually "blow a fuse."

Power *qi gong* methods should only be practiced after the student has had a great deal of experience with much gentler, energy balancing, *qi gong* methods. The body must be internally connected and internally balanced before power training can be initiated. Training for power without slowly building up through a systematic series of exercises would be analogous to running a marathon without ever having practiced any type of jogging or running exercise prior to the 26 mile run. The body can be severely damaged.

Unfortunately, the damage which is done by the practice of inappropriate *qi gong* does not usually manifest right away. Energetic changes in the body are subtle and gradual. Unless the practitioner is under the guidance of an experienced teacher or skilled Chinese medical doctor, the signs of dysfunction can go unnoticed until they are blatant enough to be physiologically confirmed. At this point, the damage is done and will take a long time to correct.

While each particular power *qi gong* method will carry its own bag of problems caused by incorrect practice (which includes practice of a method correctly before the body is ready to practice that method), in general, most inappropriate practice tends to effect the heart first. Because *qi* and blood have a very close relationship and because the heart is the "palace" of the fire element, when the *qi* or blood is damaged during the practice of power *qi gong* methods, one can expect that damage to affect the heart.

Because the operation of the heart has a delicate neurological firing system and the need for the blood to be of the proper consistency, when internal functions are thrown off from improper *qi gong* you often have problems in the heart which are either physiologically confirmed or become psychological or psychosomatic. Physically, the heart can be damaged in several different ways. Improper repetitive shock to the heart caused by the practice of power striking methods, including fast whipping motions in the air, the hitting of heavy bags, or *fa jing* types of training, which are practiced before the body is internally connected and internally balanced is the first way the heart can be physically damaged. The next common problem effecting the heart in *qi gong* training is inordinate pressure caused by inappropriate breathing methods. Breathing that is held or forced, breathing that is unnatural, or breathing methods executed with tension in the body can all place too much pressure on the heart. Lastly, stress on the heart caused by the overheating of the *qi* or blood can also have a negative effect on the body physically. Practice which is executed in a forceful manner with tension, stress, or straining can obviously cause the blood or *qi* to overheat. However, even gentle methods practiced

4) While there will always be an ebb and flow of energy in the body and thus there will never be a perfect balance, balance in this sense means that the body is functioning

with forced intention (overuse of the mind) can cause the blood or *qi* to overheat and thus place stress on the heart.

Psychological problems resulting from improper *qi gong* can stem from the fact that the heart "houses the *shen* (神)." In Chinese medicine, the *shen* (or "spirit") is related to spiritual wisdom, intuitive insight, creative capacity, mental awareness, and overall vitality. The psychological problems occur due to the physical heart damage, as discussed above, because when the heart is damaged in any way, the *shen* can be affected. Unfortunately, when these problems occur Westerners do not usually pick up on them or do not relate them to the *qi gong* practice. The typical dysfunction of this type is what is known in Chinese medicine as "*shen* disturbance."

Shen disturbance is characterized by signs such as anxiety, nervousness, poor judgement, restlessness, sleeplessness and the inability to properly interpret the surroundings. Many times individuals suffering from *shen* disturbance will appear out of touch with their surroundings and with others. They will appear "spaced out." *Shen* disturbance affects the memory, emotions, and judgement. Lack of wisdom in judgement is a common problem related to *shen* disturbance. Individuals with this condition will inappropriately fixate on things.

Even *qi gong* which is practiced correctly can lead to *shen* disturbance if the practitioner does not participate in a *qi gong* system which is complete or does not practice under the guidance of a qualified teacher. Every level of *qi gong* should be viewed as a systematic process which contains a beginning, middle, and end. Each level of practice, or method of practice, has purpose and direction. The practitioner begins with the purpose in mind, executes certain exercises or techniques which facilitate that purpose, and then once results are obtained, the practice is appropriately varied, modified, changed, or concluded. For instance, certain *qi gong* practices are designed to open up specific "energy centers," "energy gates," or "energy points" in the body. Opening these centers, gates, or points would be the "purpose" of the training.

While the practitioner is involved in the training, he or she should be closely monitored by a knowledgeable instructor to insure that there are no "hitches" in the process of opening these energy centers, points, or gates. After the practitioner has worked with the *qi gong* method and the energy gate, point, or center is "open," it is time to progress to the next stage of training, whatever that might be for the particular system of *qi gong* the student is practicing.

If the student is not participating in a complete method of *qi gong* under the guidance of a knowledgeable teacher and is not monitored through the process or does not know the next step in the training process which is supposed to occur after obtaining results from any given method of practice, problems can begin to arise. Because of the mutual influences any significant energetic movement or opening in the body has on the rest of the physical body, mind, spirit, and emotions, there must be a systematic method in any *qi gong*

training which takes results obtained at each stage of practice and either completes, balances, varies or continues the process when each milestone is reached. If an energy gate, point, or center is opened as a result of training and the practitioner does not know how or when the training needs to progress to the next stage, at best they will stagnate in their training, at worst they will create a disharmonious condition in their body.

When a significant energy event (energy movement, opening, or release) occurs in the body and the student is not taught how to advance from that experience, problems can arise. Unfortunately, these types of energy events may feel very nice to the practitioner because there can be an associated "endorphine rush" when the energy is released. Students who cling to this experience and do not look past it to the next level of experience will stagnate in their training and can sometimes create a *shen* disturbance condition by fixating on trying to repeat that one experience in every training session.

Another common occurrence which can accompany a significant energy event in the body is the release of stored emotional energy or "body memory." Many times when our body or mind experiences an injury, be it physical or emotional, the "memory" of that event can be stored in the body like an "energetic scar." Significant energy movement can release this "memory" and the result can negatively affect the practitioner's emotional state. When the student is not under the guidance of a knowledgeable instructor, who knows how to recognize the signs and symptoms of this emotional release and treat this condition effectively, depression, anxiety, nervousness, sleeplessness and restlessness can result.

"Power" *qi gong* methods are definitely a part of the martial arts. If the practitioner wishes to use internal strength and energy to harm an opponent in combat, the practice of methods designed to teach the student how to use internal energy and internal strength in striking an opponent are necessary. But, as stated above, the student should not jump right into practicing these methods. There should be a gradual, systematic, developmental process taught by an instructor who knows how to cater to each student's individual needs. Power *qi gong* methods are not practiced until a strong foundation is built. Secondly, once the student begins training these methods, it is vital that he or she continue to practice *qi gong* methods which are designed to balance and rebuild the body's energy. Many martial artists and Chinese medicine doctors burn themselves out because they do not balance their practice between energy usage and energy rebuilding and balancing. A good internal martial arts teacher with a complete method will know how to balance a student's practice between energy usage and energy rebuilding (*yin* and *yang* training methods).

In *qi gong* practice, as it relates to the martial arts, there should be a systematic process of training which begins with a program of balancing the body's energy, structure, and movement, and then continues with exercises designed to build internal strength while maintaining that balance. Once these two goals are

accomplished, the practitioner can then start to learn how to use that energy for martial purposes and power. However, once the student begins this power training it is vital that he or she continue to balance the training with rebuilding and cultivation methods. The number one priority is to maintain a strong, healthy, balanced internal system, not to see how much "power" one can obtain.

The Qi Gong Training Process

If we trace the lineage of most of the *qi gong* methods which are practiced today, we will probably find that they were initially practiced and taught in the monastic environment of the Buddhist and Daoist temples in China. In order to better understand the optimum conditions and methods for *qi gong* practice it would behoove us to look at how *qi gong* might have been practiced at its place of origin. We all know from watching movies and reading books about monastic life that the first lesson any young monk is taught is patience. Patience in practice is essential. Never be in too much of a hurry. High quality, long lasting results will not come overnight. If results are forced to occur before their time, before the body is ready, there will inevitably be problems.

We can imagine that the novice Buddhist or Daoist monk would be taught a very complete system of *qi gong* training in a well designed program which systematically developed the body, mind, and spirit of the individual and that the external environment was one which optimally facilitated this process. *Qi gong* practiced in the environment of a monastic lifestyle, combined with the proper diet, meditation, and herbal supplements, provided the individual with a complete and balanced development. Once the student had practiced simple methods which were aimed at developing mental and physical relaxation, a clear mind, and proper postural alignments, more advanced methods were taught. The more specific the *qi gong* practice became, the more carefully guarded the lifestyle, diet, herbal supplements, etc. The methods that were taught were prescribed individually. Each student had a mentor who groomed and handled that student's development according to that individual's particular needs. This is how solid, long lasting results are obtained.

It may seem a bit romantic, especially in our context of our focus on Ba Gua practice in the modern world, to wonder about the training of monks in temples in China since the only well known Ba Gua practitioner who probably spent time learning in a temple was Dong Hai Chuan. However, as we have seen through our examination of the biographies of the first few generations of Ba Gua instructors in previous issues of this Journal, most of them began their training of martial arts with one teacher in a small village in the countryside. Thus, while the environment was not as sterile as the temple's, it was certainly conducive to proper martial arts and *qi gong* training, and the systems were taught methodically and completely.

While the practice of *qi gong* and internal martial arts methods all day in a monastic environment or in a remote village somewhere in the countryside would

be the ideal, it is not a practical option for most of us. However, the lessons we can learn from those who have preceded us in this practice are viable today: find a skilled teacher with a complete method who knows how to develop each student on an individual basis, maintain a lifestyle and environment conducive to internal training and development, and don't be in a great hurry to progress.

We will now take a look at the most important components of internal martial arts *qi gong* practice and how they might be trained in Ba Gua.

The Mind in Qi Gong Practice

Attainment of consistent mind/body harmony is one of the major goals of martial arts *qi gong*. The internal martial arts classics say that "the mind (意 - Yi or intention) leads the *qi* (氣) and the *qi* leads the strength (力 - li)." This principle tells us that without the correct mental intention, the *qi* and strength will not be fully available. When discussing this principle with his students, Ba Gua instructor Park Bok Nam gives a few simple examples to illustrate this point. Park says that if someone was engaged in an intense conversation with another person and unbeknownst to him a third person came up and put a five pound weight in his hand, he would probably drop the weight because his mind was not sending energy to his hand. Because his mental focus was on the person he was engaging in conversation, there was no intention in his hand, thus there was no *qi* and no strength. However, if that same person were to see another person ready to place five pounds in his hand, that five pounds would be easy to hold up because the mind has sent energy to the hand.

Another example that Park uses to illustrate the importance of the mind/body connection is to say that if someone had a perfectly healthy arm and put that arm in a sling for two weeks, when he tried to use that arm again, it would be stiff and would not function well at first. This is because the arm was not being used and thus the mind did not send energy to the arm for that two week period. When a part of the body is inactive, energy and blood do circulate to that area, however, because it is not being used, the mind only sends a minimal amount of blood and energy. The point is that if the mental awareness and intention do not reach all areas of the body, the energy movement throughout the body will not be optimal.

In the practice of internal martial arts, we not only want an optimal flow of energy to all parts of the body for the purpose of maintaining our health, we also want to develop an ability to move energy out to our extremities instantaneously for use in fighting. This requires that the neurological and energetic connections be more highly developed and refined than normal and thus the mind/body connections which work in relation with these martial movements need to be developed to an even greater degree.

There are generally three areas of concern when discussing the mind as it relates to *qi gong* or internal martial arts practice. These are: the overall mental

state, mental awareness, and mental intention. The mental state should be one of calmness and well-being. The mental awareness should be one of keen observation and sensitivity inside and around the body without the mind becoming pensive. The mental intention should be focused, yet simple. During *qi gong* the mind should remain as calm and inactive as possible while remaining focused and aware. Next, we will discuss these three aspects of mental involvement in *qi gong* in more detail.

Cultivating a Feeling of Well-Being

The overall mental state during *qi gong* practice should be one of inner peacefulness, joy, and happiness. A sense of ease and happiness will go a long way in helping to promote the balanced flow of energy in the body. A general feeling of happiness and well-being also helps the body conserve energy. Feelings of sadness, grief, worry, stress, anxiety, and anger consume energy. Of course, in internal arts practice, everything needs to be in a balanced state and thus even overjoy and over-happiness can consume too much energy. So the feeling of happiness one cultivates during practice is a gentle, calm feeling of joy and calmness. This is why many systems of *qi gong* start practice with what has become popularly known as the "inner smile" exercise. Other systems have similar visualization exercises to promote the feeling of internal well-being at the beginning of each *qi gong* session. In Park Bok Nam's system, students practice one of several different variations of what Park calls the "happiness" meditation prior to *qi gong* exercise (these meditations will be explained in Park's next book, *The Fundamentals of Pa Kua Chang, Volume II*, which will be released by High View Publications later this year).

Along with a sense of happiness, the mind should be as still as possible during practice. The innate wisdom the body has in regards to its own health and well-being is its own best healer and strength builder. A mind which is too active can easily interfere with the natural healing process in a number of different ways. General mental chatter and noise can be an enormous energy drain on the body. Combine mental chatter with worry, stress, or anxiety and the mental energy drain becomes far worse. Of all the internal body systems, the brain wastes the most energy. If the mind is calm and quiet, energy conservation and rebuilding will reach its optimum.

One need only stay awake all night to know exactly how an active mind drains the body's energy. Even if you lay down in a bed and rest the body, if you do not sleep (rest the mind), the body's energy will feel drained the next day. However, if the stories that are told about meditation masters are true, deep meditation is even better at recharging the body's energy than a full night's sleep. Everyone has heard the stories about meditation masters who can meditate for a short period of time and feel as though they have had a full night's sleep. In Park Bok Nam's system of Ba Gua, students are taught a system of meditation which leads to what Park refers to as "empty mind" meditation. Park himself first experienced the "empty mind" state after a one year

long training retreat in the mountains of Korea. If the mind can be trained to become totally quiet, the natural energy rebuilding and healing process will be optimum.

If the mind is calm and quiet, the body will rebuild and heal itself in the most efficient and effective way possible. This occurs not only because the mind's interference in the body's natural healing process is minimized, but also because the body is conserving a great deal of energy when the mind is calm. However, obtaining a quiet mind and internally calm body is not easy, it takes more patience and perseverance than most practitioners are willing to commit.

In our modern society, where the majority of educated people work on computers and talk on phones all day, the major source of energy usage is the brain. At the end of the day an office worker will feel just as physically drained of energy as a construction worker because of the amount of energy the mind can consume. Although the muscles of the office worker will not be sore, the body will feel just as tired. In order to rebuild the spent energy and maintain a healthy body the office worker needs to move the body and relax the mind. This is why *qi gong*, or internal martial arts practice, is ideal for our modern day world. Unfortunately, many who turn to these disciplines for help never learn how to fully relax the mind. Relaxing the mind and learning how to create an internal feeling of well-being and happiness should be the first priority in *qi gong* practice. Without the ability to cultivate an internally calm and peaceful environment, the practitioner will have difficulty reaching deeper levels of attainment in practice.

It is always helpful to precede any *qi gong* practice, circle walking or otherwise, with a simple "happiness" meditation of some kind. Cultivating a feeling of well-being, calming the mind, and forgetting about the outside world will aid in conserving energy, rebuilding health, increasing mental focus, and uniting the mind and body.

Mental Intention

After the practitioner can obtain a feeling of internal well-being and calm the mind, he or she learns to focus the mind. The mental focus, or intention, during *qi gong* practice should be as simple as possible. If the mental focus is not simple, the mind is too active and thus it is using too much energy. The best kind of mental visualization to use in the beginning levels of practice is a simple image which brings the mind to the hands. The practitioner can imagine the hands are moving through water, lifting something heavy, pushing something, pulling something, etc., anything which brings a sensation of the hands moving against some sort of slight resistance. If the mind feels as though the hands are meeting some resistance, the mind will send energy to the hands. If energy is sent from the torso to the hands, without the mind interfering with the movement of energy between the torso and the hands, it is circulating naturally and efficiently through the body.

At the beginning levels of practice the hands and body should be engaged in simple movements so that it will be easier for the mind and body to connect. If

the movements are too complex in the beginning, the mind will be unable to maintain complete intention and awareness. Usually, beginning level *qi gong* movements involve simple motions which help facilitate a full and balanced energy flow in the whole body, starting with the conception (*ren mai* - 任脈) and governing (*du mai* - 督脈) meridians. If the motion of the body is simple and the alignments are correct, the practitioner can easily and naturally encourage a strong, balanced, connected flow of energy in the *ren* and *du* meridians without the use of strong intention. The mind need only be focused on the hands.

If the mind is trying to guide the energy through the *ren* and *du* meridians from the torso to the hands along some special path or energy route, two problems can occur. Number one is that the mind is too active. In *qi gong* practice simplicity is the key element. You want to minimize mental activity. If the mind is trying to guide the *qi* all over the body, it is too active and thus it is wasting too much energy and full body awareness cannot be maintained. The second problem is in trying to force the *qi* through pathways it may not be ready to go through. A *qi gong* or internal martial arts practitioner should never try to force energy to move in the body by utilizing strong mental intention. Progress in *qi gong* practice should be gentle and gradual. If you think about your hands, the *qi* will move to your hands. If it is moving to your hands, it is moving from the torso, where it is cultivated and stored, to your hands in the manner which is most appropriate for your individual body at that given time. Do not interfere with the natural process by trying to guide the *qi* where it does not want to go.

In the practice of *qi gong*, if the physical movements are correctly designed to gently coax the energy to move in a balanced manner through all of the body's energy meridians and collaterals, then one need only think about the hands and feet during practice in order to have the proper mental intention. While sitting or standing still and trying to guide energy all around your body with your mind can be somewhat effective, it is inefficient and can lead to problems. As I will discuss later in the "body motion in *qi gong* practice" section of this article, if the body is not involved in *qi gong* practice, the practice is not complete. If the mind is overinvolved in the practice, the results will not be as deep and complications can easily arise.

There are a number of problems which can arise from *qi gong* exercises which rely too much on mental visualization. Aside from the problems of forcing *qi* where it is not ready to go and overuse of the brain's energy as discussed above, specific visualizations can also lead to problems. Visualizations which run energy along certain energy meridians can easily lead to energy getting "stuck" in the body if the mind cannot maintain full concentration while it is leading the energy. Once a sufficient amount of *qi* is flowing in body due to the guidance of a specific mental visualization, if the mind becomes distracted, the *qi* will rise to the head. This condition is known a "rising *qi*" and can be quite uncomfortable and may lead to migraine headaches.

Other visualizations which call for focusing on

any particular internal organ or energy center can cause problems if sending energy to those areas is not appropriate for the individual's physical condition. These type of exercises should be prescribed like drugs. The same is true of color visualizations and sound meditations. For example, if a particular individual has liver trouble or his character is such that he easily loses his temper, that person should not meditate on the color red at all. He will only make matters worse.

The use of imagery, visualization, and strong intention in the practice of *qi gong* or internal martial arts practice is useful, valid, and appropriate when practiced correctly. Like anything else, when needed, this practice should proceed gradually from very simple to more complex. The more complex should only be practiced when the body and mind are ready and are usually practiced only for specific results unique to an individual's progress. For instance, a visualization technique may be practiced to help correct a specific physical problem, energy blockage, or energetic imbalance. However, once those specific results are obtained, the practitioner always returns to the simple. The rule of thumb regarding the mind's involvement in *qi gong* is: simplicity is best.

Mental Awareness

Internal and external awareness are key elements in martial arts training. In order to expertly execute the subtle techniques of the internal martial arts in a combat situation the practitioner needs to have cultivated a keen awareness of his own body, its movement, its energy, and its relationship to the body, movement, and energy of an opponent. Sensitivity, awareness, and "listening" energy (聽勁 - *ting jing*) are cultivated by forging a strong mind/body connection during martial exercise, forms training, and *qi gong* practice.

Mental intention and mental awareness work together to provide a full mind/body integration. The use of intention can be compared to an outgoing radar signal and awareness can be compared to processing the return signal. The mental energy is sent out to all parts of the body, and then the mind "listens" to what "signals" are sent back. The eventual goal of practice is to have intention and awareness in all parts of the body at all times.

When a new student first learns any martial arts exercise or form, the mental awareness will be focused on the gross physical motions of the exercise or form. The mind and body are busy working out the physical alignments, coordination, timing, and balance necessary to execute the motions correctly. Once the student has a basic physical understanding of the motions, the awareness should turn to the physical subtleties of the movement. The internal connections, alignments, and mechanics are cultivated until these components become natural and efficient.

Once the physical motions, proper alignments, internal connections and efficient, natural body mechanics are in place, the student's awareness can then turn towards the energetic movement inside and around the body. A simple visualization, which is designed to move energy to distal points, can be added to the exercise and the

mind can become aware of how the energy is moving. Is there a feeling of warmth, buzzing, tingling, heaviness, pulsing, ticking, etc.? Does the energy feel as if it is collecting, dispersing, moving upward, moving downward, moving right to left, inside to out, etc.? Once the practitioner becomes conscious of the *qi* feeling and *qi* movement in the body, he or she tries to cultivate that feeling and then become aware of new feelings and new sensations. The more often a feeling is cultivated, the easier it will manifest and the stronger it will become.

Once certain feelings and sensations are cultivated, an experienced teacher will change the training so that the student will experience new feelings. For example, when a student has worked with a beginning level exercise which is designed to bring a full feeling of *qi* to the hands, the exercise can then be changed or modified such that the intention and movement involves the hands and forearms simultaneously so that a full *qi* feeling the entire length of the arms can be obtained. Once the student has experienced various sensations of *qi* flowing and moving throughout the body, he or she will then be led to cultivate an experiential understanding of the *qi* outside and around their body, then subsequently they will work to understand the relationship of their *qi* to that of other individuals around them.

After the student experiences the movements and exercises on all of the various levels mentioned above, he or she can then begin to expand the awareness in partner drills. The student gains an awareness of the spacial relationships, timing, rhythms, and movements of his or her body in relation to someone else. The body and mind become sensitive to a partner's movements and the student learns how to move efficiently and effectively in relation to the opponent while moving in accordance with all of the principles of the internal martial arts.

In order to bring any movement through the levels of awareness as described above, the student must have enough patience to repeat each movement, or sequence of movements, hundreds of times. Each repetition should be performed with full mental intention and awareness. If the repetitions are performed robotically, with no mind/body interaction, the movements will be "empty." Unfortunately many students do not take an exercise or sequence of movements past the first stage. Once they "learn" the moves physically, they become bored and want to learn something new. In *qi gong* practice, the same exercise or movement sequences need to be practiced hundreds of times before the student can gain full awareness and understanding of the movements.

While the mind needs to be active and involved in everybody motion, the mind should never become pensive. As mentioned previously, the mind should be as still and quiet as possible. The practitioner should always maintain the status of a quiet observer. If something happens, acknowledge it and then let it pass. Using mental intention and keen awareness one can work to deepen an experience or strengthen a sensation, however, it is important that the feeling or experience is be "watched" and nurtured, not pondered. Be aware of

what is happening in and around the body, but do not dwell on any particular experience. Each experience is simply a stepping stone to the next experience.

Whenever the student practices there should be sense of wonder and an open mind, but with a dose of reality and practicality as applies to martial arts. What ever feelings and sensations the student might obtain in practice, he or she should realize that there is always something more. Always use common sense in practice. If you feel a new sensation, do not get too excited about it. Acknowledge it and then continue "listening" for new, or deeper, sensations.

When practicing *qi gong*, do not limit yourself to knowledge gained from one or two profound experiences. Today the internal martial arts are being saturated with "new age" metaphysics and "healing" techniques which are being built on the limited experiences of individuals who have touched upon some self-proclaimed "cosmic" experience. Don't base your reality on a few limited experiences or overvalue a single experience. There is always something more. It is best to view all experiences as rungs on a ladder.

Unfortunately, many times, when speaking of mind/body awareness, some instructors and students like to leave the real, practical world of martial arts and begin to fantasize about phenomenal *qi* powers and abilities and the attainment of "spiritual enlightenment" through martial arts practice. While it is certainly possible to cultivate intuitive understanding and open up higher levels of consciousness through the practice of internal martial arts and *qi gong*, the nature of the martial arts vehicle is such that the body/mind awareness should be integrated fully before the body/mind/spirit connection can be cultivated. Students who expect profound spiritual experiences to occur before the body is coordinated, connected and harmonized with the mind are jumping way ahead of themselves.

On one occasion I was attending a class given by a Ba Gua instructor in Taiwan and a visiting American asked about spiritual growth through the practice of Ba Gua. The teacher said that when practicing martial arts, the student should not worry about the spirit until the body is full coordinated and balanced (internally and externally) and the mind can control every action of the body. He said if the mind cannot control the body, if the intention (*yi*) is not in every move, the foundation for spiritual growth in martial arts will not be strong. For practice to be complete there should always be a systematic gradual process. of development.

In the next installment of this article, we will discuss the involvement of body movement and breathing in qi gong practice and show some examples of typical Ba Gua Qi Gong exercises.

The Essential Rules of Qi Gong

By Xie Pei Qi

translated by Huang Guo Qi

In the following article, Yin Fu Style Ba Gua Zhang practitioner Xie Pei Qi presents the rules of Qi Gong practice by discussing "the three abstentions" and "the eight principles." Xie Pei Qi (see *Pa Kua Chang Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1, page 16) is well known in China for his knowledge of martial arts Qi Gong and his healing work using Qi Gong therapy to treat patients. His discussion of the rules of Qi Gong holds important information for practitioners of all levels of experience.

The martial arts are a treasure of our Chinese nation and are one of the important cultural heritages in Chinese history. Not only can they safeguard the body, strengthen the body, and prolong life, but also they can make the Chinese nation powerful and prosperous and strengthen our descendants. Therefore, the martial

arts possess an everlasting merit in the development and prosperity of the Chinese nation.

It is said: "No rules, no success." This also pertains to the practice of the martial arts. The martial arts have their own principles, rules and standards. If the practitioners go against these rules, certainly they will get the opposite of what they wished. Not only will no success be obtained, but their own body may be at risk¹. This detailed information will be given in the following article.

The Three Abstentions (三戒)

Introduction

The three abstentions are:

- 1) To abstain from angry *Qi*.
- 2) To abstain from awkward force.
- 3) To abstain from throwing out the chest and lifting the abdomen².

These three abstentions must be remembered by every beginner. There are advantages and disadvantages in every matter, and this is so with the practice of martial arts. If there is not correct method and only a moment's enthusiasm is relied on to guide the practice, the three disadvantages will surely occur during practice, i.e. the angry *qi*, the awkward force, and the thrown out chest and lifted abdomen. Hence, the disadvantage would result in harm. Not only is it impossible to build up the skill, the method, the *qi*, the force, and energy smoothly, but also it is difficult to accomplish the martial art skill. It will waste time and strength, and also can cause the results of injury to the body in the mild condition and of death in the severe condition. The more and the deeper the work is done, the quicker and more severe the problem will be.

1) *Qi Gong* is a double edged sword. Correct, systematic practice over time will bring tremendous results. Incorrect and haphazard practice can cause tremendous damage. Unfortunately, damage from incorrect *qi gong* practice will not always show itself until it is too late.

2) The "Three Abstentions" are also commonly called the "three disadvantages," the "three harms" or the "three fatal errors." In addition to the translation given above, they are also commonly translated as:

- 1) The harm of "forcing the breath," "holding the breath," or "oppressing the breath."
- 2) The harm of "using inappropriate strength," "using clumsy force," or "labored use of strength."
- 3) The harm of "sticking out the chest and pulling up the belly" or "throwing out the chest and sucking the abdomen."



Xie Pei Qi demonstrates one of his *qi gong* sitting postures, Beijing, 1993

Among the three abstentions, the disadvantage of the angry *qi* appears most often, particularly in beginners. Very often the beginners cannot sense it themselves after the disadvantage is created. When it is sensed, it is already difficult to cast off the ingrained habits. Therefore, the training cannot fully begin until the three disadvantages are eliminated. It is necessary for the beginners to understand the three abstentions, eliminate the three abstentions, know the source of the three abstentions, and master the method and theory to get rid of them. Then it is possible for them to practice the skill, to enter the right way for building up the skill, the force, the *qi*, and the energy and to make progress gradually for preventing the three harms and for realizing the aim to practice the martial art.

1) Abstain from Angry *Qi* (戒怒氣)

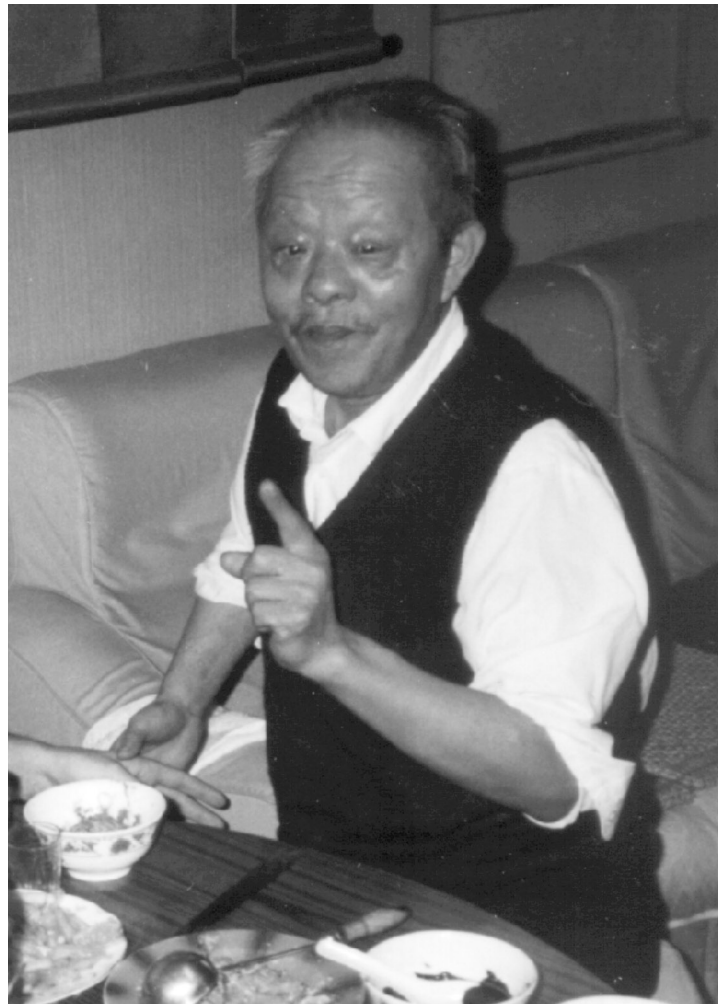
a. The Cause of Angry *Qi*

All of the following conditions can result in the production of angry *qi* (also called "exertive *qi*" or "forced breath" - 努氣): to practice the skill toughly while forcing the energy, to practice the skill with violent strength or excessive strength, to practice the skill with the *qi*-pounding method, to practice the skill while holding the strength in the chest and abdomen, to practice the skill while lifting the *qi*, and to practice the skill overtime (too long³) but still manage to practice the skill continuously can cause the problems of angry *qi*.

The ancients said: The angry *qi* is too firm, things that are too firm are easily broken. If the *yuan* (original) *qi* is not rooted, the heart and lungs are injured. The cause is due to the pressure of the angry *qi* and external *qi* and the resultant "squeezing" of the internal *qi*. The lung cells are injured and it may cause internal bleeding. Therefore, the blood circulation is blocked and the normal functions of the heart are influenced severely because the heart is squeezed by the lungs (it is believed in Chinese medicine that the angry *qi* causes *qi* stagnation and blood stasis.)⁴

While it is not difficult to refrain from these "harms" on a gross, or obvious, level, it is quite difficult for even the intermediate to advanced level practitioner to totally rid themselves of the three harms. In order to do so, the breath must be smooth, relaxed, and natural at all times, completely coordinated with the body movements, and never held for even a fraction of a second. The application of force must always be executed with the body articulations timed perfectly and in accordance with absolute optimum body alignments. The body energy is sunk to the lower abdomen at all times. To completely be in abstention from the three harms is quite a difficult task and thus practitioners at all experience levels should always pay attention to the three harms.

3) Everything in life seeks a balance and thus even good things can be overdone. In his book, *Detailed Explanation of Image Qi*



Xie Pei Qi discussing *qi gong*, Beijing, 1992

b. Manifestations of Angry *Qi*

In the mild condition, there can be chronic onset, stuffy sensations in the chest, hurried heart beat, shortness of breath, pricking pain in the chest, dyspnea, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, and lassitude in the whole body. In the severe condition, there can be productive cough, bloody sputum, spitting of blood, pain in the chest and back, or sudden death.

Gong, Li Zi Ming writes: To watch for too long will damage the blood, to lie for too long will damage the *qi*, to sit for too long will damage the flesh, to stand for too long will damage the bone, to walk for too long will damage the tendons. Too much anger will damage the liver, too much joy will damage the heart, too much thinking will damage the spleen, too much grief will damage the lungs, too much fright will damage the kidneys, too much fear will damage the gate of life (*ming men*). Overeating will damage the stomach. Too much sex in the drunken state will damage the essence. Exertion in fatigue will damage to middle burner.

4) This type of condition is seen frequently in those practicing "Iron Shirt" or "Iron Body" methods of *qi gong*. It is also not uncommon to see red areas on the skin in the mid-torso region of Iron Shirt practitioners where small blood vessels near the diaphragm have burst.



Xie Pei Qi taking a patient's pulse before *qi gong* therapy treatment, Beijing, 1992

c. Prevention

During the practice, it is advisable not to act with undue haste and not to be overanxious to make achievements. Do not use strength in the heart, do not release violent force, *qi*, or energy. Do not pound the *qi* inside the abdomen toughly, do not lift *qi* upwards forcefully, do not hold the *qi* in the chest or abdomen, and do not hold the energy forcefully.

During practice, it is necessary to be in a calm mood with a natural and peaceful expression. Use natural strength and allow the *qi* to sink downward. It is necessary to relax the whole body, to release the force steadily and concentrate the mind on the *dan tian* area, to clear away the distracting thoughts and to have proper time for practice. Always practice in accordance with the correct rules and standards.

It is advisable to increase the time for practice gradually in accordance with the degree of skill developed and the body adaptability. The quantity of released force is in accordance with the standards of not using too much force and not holding energy in the practice. It is required one not be too hasty in practice and always advance with a stable step. If these rules are obeyed, the angry *qi* will easily be eliminated and the skill will easily be improved.⁵

2) Abstain from Awkward Force (戒拙力)

a. The Cause of Awkward Force

All the disadvantageous conditions result from the postures and movements being stiff and dull during the practice and the mood of practice being hurried and unsteady. If the skill is not practiced in accordance

with the rules and standards of Ba Gua Zhang and the boxing skill, the practice will be rough and blind. When one makes haste in attempting to develop internal force and uses forced intention in an effort to hasten achievements, which should occur naturally and with patience, in the distraction of these disturbed thoughts, one will cause the awkward force.

b. Manifestations and Mechanism of Awkward Force

In the problems caused by the awkward force, there can be the unsmoothness of the meridians, disharmony between *qi* and blood, and disorder of the circulation in the heart and lungs (termed *qi* stagnation and blood stasis in Chinese medicine). The problems will occur anywhere there is stagnation.⁶ In mild conditions, the flesh throbs and in the severe condition, the furuncle will appear swollen and painful. This is because all tissues of the motor system are sprained by awkward force, hence causing the pressure on the muscles and inflammation in the tissues resulting in the above throbbing flesh and congestion.

c. Prevention of Awkward Force

It is requested to perform the practice in accordance with the rules and standards of Ba Gua Zhang and the boxing skill, to obey the procedure of the boxing skill to the finest detail, to relax the whole body naturally, to have a steady and natural posture, not to be nervous and hurried, not to be overanxious to make progress, not to release the firm and tough strength, not to be stiff and dull in the postures and movements, to depend upon the natural development for increasing the skill and energy, to prevent awkward and reverse *qi*, force and energy. It is also required to have smooth strength and graceful postures. If the practice is done in such a manner, the awkward force will easily be eliminated.

The various postures in *qi gong*, internal skill, the palm method and boxing skill are seldom used at ordinary times. All kinds of movements reflex on the cortex of the human brain in its fifty-two regions. The nerve routes can be built up among these regions. Therefore, in a short period of time, the brain cannot command these martial arts postures and movements which are used so infrequently in daily life. Any kind of posture or movement needs many tissues of the motor system to attend and respond. But, in beginners, only a few of the tissues in the motor system can smoothly accomplish certain postures and movements. Therefore, those who are overanxious to make achievements are able to cause the conditions that *qi*, force, energy are not smoothly harmonized and that the force and method are offset. When these conditions are shown

5) It is said that in order to avoid "angry *qi*," breath should always be full, natural, and unrestrained, and the movement and the breath should be completely coordinated. If the breath is not consistently smooth and natural, then the breath is being either held or forced. "Holding the breath" and/or "forcing the breath" are very common occurrences among beginners. They usually do not realize that they are doing it and thus it becomes a bad habit.

6) Awkward, or clumsy, force results from any movement which is not perfectly efficient. There should be no wasted motion and no waste of power. Any movement that is executed without the alignment, timing, breathing, intention, and efficiency of motion being absolutely perfect results in some degree of awkward force. Any amount of awkward force will result in some degree of tension. Tension restricts free movement and causes stagnation.

in the exterior, it is possible to show the phenomenon of stiff and dull postures and movements, and the disharmony of *qi*, force, energy and method, which cause awkward force.

If the theory is not understood, the rules and procedures not obeyed, and the mood is in haste to make achievements, these will be the cause of awkward force. As the former, if the practice is done painstakingly according to the rules for the purpose of finalizing the postures, the whole set of movements do not need to be considered all at once and it is not necessary to control the movements consciously during the finalization of the postures. On the contrary, the movements become automatic. This is because the individual and independent movement have converged into an integrated system of movements. (i.e. practice makes perfect). As for the latter, it is required to practice the skill with a calm mood, and certainly the "time that the canal can be formed when water comes," would come.

3) Abstain from Throwing Out the Chest and Lifting the Abdomen (戒鼓胸提腹)

a. Cause

If the rules and principles of *Qigong*, internal skill, Ba Gua Zhang and boxing skill are severely violated during practice, the incorrect posture of the skill appears, i.e. the problem of holding the energy in the chest cavity and lifting the *qi* in the abdomen.

b. Manifestations

This problem can cause the foot to be unrooted and as light as duckwood, the real *qi* will be unable to return to its origin. When *qi* is unable to return to the *dan tian* area smoothly, the lower limbs will be forceless and unsteady so that the *qi* goes upwards reversely and turbid *qi* cannot descend, causing a stuffy sensation in the chest, shortness of breath, no production of internal force, and no prolonged force and no development of skill even after a period of time.

c. Prevention

It is required to practice how to "hold the chest" and "erect" the back, to sink the *qi* naturally, lift the grain duct (sigmoid colon and anus), relax the body naturally, and remove the distracting thoughts in order to harmonize the *qi*, force, energy, and method.

Generally, the three problems of angry *qi*, awkward force, and throwing out the chest and lifting the abdomen are the three harms to practitioners of martial arts. The right way cannot be found until the three harms are eliminated. It was said: "The mortality must be built up gradually, the evils must be eliminated thoroughly." These three abstentions are the primary abstentions for the practitioners of martial arts.

The Eight Principles (八綱)

In the practice of the skill method, boxing skill, and palm skill, there are eight principles: one propping, two straightness, three points, four tips, five uniqueness, six harmonies, seven stars, and eight diagrams. They are not only the important rules for practitioners, but also the essential theory in the practice of *Qigong*, internal skill, palm method, and boxing skill. In the art of Ba Gua Zhang the theory of the interpromotion and intertransformation of the Ba Gua numbers in the *Yi Jing (Book of Changes)*⁷ is adopted together with the form and image and similarly in accordance with the theory of natural rules, for the purpose of setting up the palm method, boxing skill, the circulation of *qi* by guidance of circulation of big and small heavenly circles.⁸

1) Propping

This means that during practice the tongue is required to prop the upper palate, the mind props the *Bai Hui* (GV-20) on the vertex of the head, and the fingertips prop the energy.

The tongue propping the upper palate is supposed to supplement the deficient three phases⁸. When the Governor Vessel and Conception Vessel Meridians of *Yang* and *Yin* natures are linked, and circulation of the meridians and blood vessels can be smooth without any blockage, one is able to circulate the heart *qi* and open and clear the orifices of the heart. When the clear *qi*¹⁰ ascends, the *qi* ascending, descending, outflowing, inflowing, opening and closing can be smooth and harmonious. When the turbid *qi*¹¹ descends, it is able

7) The interpromotion and intertransformation of the Ba Gua numbers refers to the actions and patterns of the eight trigrams as they relate to the five elements. Each of the eight trigrams has a corresponding relationship with one of the five elements and thus can be arranged in a the creative and destructive cycles of the five elements. For more information, refer to *I Ching Numberology* by Da Liu., Harper & Row, 1979.

8) The "small heavenly circle" consists of the *ren* and *du* channels. The "large heavenly circle" is the full circuit connecting all of the acupuncture meridians and channels.

9) The term "Three Phases" refers to the three primary energy centers or three *dan tian*. The upper *dan tian* is located in the center of the head, behind the point between the eyebrows and under the crown, or *bai hui*. The middle *dan tian* is located in the area of the solar plexus, and the lower *dan tian* is located in the center of the lower abdomen just below the naval. The *dan tian* should not be thought of as exact "points," they are more like "areas" of energetic activity. Placing the tongue on the palate aids in forming a strong connection between the Governor and Conception Vessels and thus strengthens the mutual interaction between the three *dan tian*.

10) Clear *Qi* (清氣 - *qing qi* - also called "clean *qi*" or "pure *qi*") is the purified energy extracted from food, drink, and air.

11) Turbid *Qi* is made up of the impurities filtered from the food and drink we consume.

to nourish the deficiency of the *yin qi*, to produce body fluid, to moisten the throat, to clear away heat from the lungs, to tonify the kidney water, to decrease the heart fire, to correct the reversely-flowing *qi* and to produce and nourish the *yin qi* of the *zang* and *fu* organs¹² (it is said in Chinese medicine that *yin* is often deficient and *yang* is often surplus).

That the mind props the upper, middle and lower *dan tian* areas (see note 9) is the method to circulate, guide, and smoothen the big and small heavenly circles (see note 8).

2) Straightness

It is required that the head should be straight, the intention should be straight, and the waist should be straight during practice. The head is the phenomenon of heaven and earth, and is the norm of the body balance. Straightness in the head is a phenomenon that the whole body can smoothly balance and that the movements and postures of the whole body can be stable and standard, and that *qi*, force and energy can be entire and heavy, and that *qi* can be smooth and the mood can be calm.

When the head is straight, the mind can be concentrated in *Bai Hui* (GV-20) and the distracting thoughts can be eliminated to maintain quietness in the brain so that the body and mind can easily enter tranquility and the mind can be fixed in a certain place calmly.

In terms of straight intention, the right intention can bring about correct image and the correct image can produce the right idea, therefore, the skill can be practiced wholeheartedly without any distraction and the achievement can be made successfully. When the intention is straight, the mind can be rooted and the "hundred wisdoms" will appear from the heart.

When the waist is straight, *qi*, force, and energy can be entire without dispersion, and by the method of natural force, *qi* can be smoothed so as to reach the *dan tian* areas in the three regions (upper, middle, and lower - see note 9) for smooth *qi* and entire force. When *qi* circulates smoothly, there will be no place in the four limbs of the body that *qi*, force, and energy cannot reach. As a result, the body method and posture can be stable, correct, and firm, and *qi*, force and energy can be harmonized without obstruction to release the entire force naturally without the appearance of awkward force and problems of *qi* stagnation and blood stasis.

3) Three Points

It is required that the three points should be in opposition in a vertical line. The three points refer to the tip of the nose, the tip of the finger, and the tip of the foot. These three are linked into one for the purpose of seeking the three-point form of the starting hand and to link the upper, middle, and lower into one. When the mind is harmonious with the idea, the essence, *qi*, and spirit can return into one entirety in order to obtain the perfect integration. The image, motion, and tranquillity are combined thoroughly into one intention. The interior, exterior, upper, lower, anterior, posterior, left and right are combined into one form. The force, method, and energy are combined into one.

The ancients said: "The three bodies change unendingly, and the three bodies can bring about all things once again."¹³ The three points are exactly as the one tip, two points, and three stars.¹⁴ The three-star art is the basic skill method to practice the palm and learn the fist. The internal skill is supposed to seek the three treasures¹⁵ and to practice the essence into *qi*, to practice the *qi* to nourish the spirit and to practice

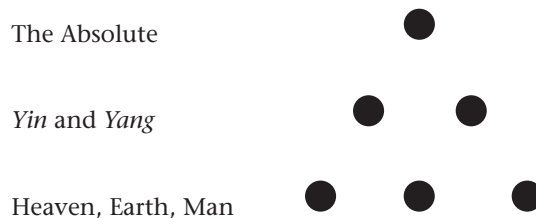
12) *Zang* and *Fu* - There are six *zang* and six *fu* paired organs in the body. The *zang* are relatively more *yin*, solid and internal and the *fu* are relatively more *yang*, hollow, and external. The *zang* organs are: kidneys, spleen, liver, heart, lungs, pericardium. The *fu* organs are: bladder, stomach, gall bladder, small intestine, large intestine, triple burner.

13) The "three bodies" (三體 - *San Ti*) refer to any number of trinities in Chinese martial arts. Each trinity has a root, a middle, and a tip. In the large spectrum, the three bodies refer to man, heaven, and earth; the earth being the root, man the middle, and heaven the tip. In the human body, externally, the feet are the root, the torso the middle, and the head is the tip.

Internally, the *dan tian* is the root, the heart is the middle, and the *Ni Wan* point in the head is the tip (also sometimes referred to as the lower, middle, and upper *dan tians*). Energetically, the trinity (sometimes referred to as the "Daoist Trinity") consists of the *jing* (精 - essence), *qi* (氣 - life force), and *shen* (神 - spirit). *Jing* being the root, *qi* the middle, and *shen* the tip.

The body can be further divided into upper, middle, and lower trinities. The lower trinity is the hips as the root, the knees as the middle, and the feet as the tips. The middle trinity is the waist as the root, the spine as the middle, and the head as the tip. The upper trinity is the shoulders as the root, the elbow as the middle, and the hand as the tip.

14) "One tip, two points, three stars" refers to a numerological arrangement of six points in the shape of a triangle as shown below. The "one tip" represents the original Absolute from which all was derived. The "two points" represent the "one tip" manifesting itself as its opposite reflection to become the two points representing *yin* and *yang* (heaven-earth, male-female, light-dark, etc.). When the "two points" come together they form the "three stars" which represent the creation of matter, or the creation of man (male-*yang*, and female-*yin*, join together to create the infant). This also leads us back to the trinity (heaven, earth, and man).



15) The "three treasures" (三寶 - *san bao*) are the *jing* (essence), *qi* (life force), and *shen* (spirit).

the spirit to return to the void can bring about the real body."

4) Four Tips

It is required that during practice, the ends of the four limbs of the human body should have *qi*, force, and energy. The tips are able to increase the "listening" ability and sensitivity. The four tips are: the hair is the tip of the blood, the tongue is the tip of the flesh, the teeth are the tip of the bone, and the ten fingers and ten toes are the tips of the tendons. In the practice of releasing force (*fa jing* - 發勁), it is required that *qi* circulate to the tips in order to enable the tips to have *qi* and force and enable *qi* to gush to the ends in order to have the power to "shake the feathers"¹⁶. Once *qi* circulates smoothly, no place in heaven and earth, *yin* and *yang*, the interior or exterior, tendon, bone, skin, flesh and hair will not be reached. Therefore, one is able to obtain the skill method of *qi*, force and energy and the skill of "no form" and "no image," of responding at a glimpse and of interpromotion and interaction.

5) Five Uniquenesses

This means to extend the hand for attack and retreat for safeguarding attack during practice, and have the skill and method in the five uniquenesses. The five uniquenesses refer to the five commonly-used joints: the shoulders, elbows, wrists, hips, and knees. The shoulder joint is relaxed to sink the energy. The elbow joint is dropped like a bow. The wrist joint is to drop the force and advance. The hip joint sits backwards to be contracted.¹⁷ The knee joint is lifted to be embraced for "hit" and "bump."

In the practice of the five major joints, it is required to be coordinated, to be smooth, to be round, to be entire, and to be in a bow form. The skill of the five uniquenesses in the shoulders, elbows, wrists, hips, and knees change smartly. The names of the force in the five uniquenesses are: advancing, attacking, retreating, defending, guarding, protecting, nourishing, producing, coiling, hitting, leaning, squeezing, pointing, nailing, bumping, pounding, lifting, sitting, contracting, shortening, extending, prolonging, rolling, rotating, covering, unloading, dodging, spreading, changing

and transversing. Totally, there are thirty kinds of force. The five uniquenesses can promote and nourish the *zang* organs and *fu* organs. This skill changes in accordance with the theory of the interpromotion and interaction and transformation in *yin* and *yang* and in the five elements.

6) Six Harmonies

It is required that during practice, the six harmonies should be smooth and coordinated. The internal six harmonies refer to the image being combined with the intention, the tranquility combined with the motion, and the *qi* combined with the force. The external six harmonies refer to the eyes combined with the heart, the waist combined with the body, and the hands combined with the feet.¹⁸ The smooth and harmonious coordination presents no reverse-flowing *qi*, and the orderly combination brings about the real skill.

In addition to the internal and external harmonies, there are six combinations as follows: In combination one, the heart is combined with the intention, and the intention is combined with the heart. As a result, *qi* can return to the *dan tian* area. In combination two, *yin* and *yang* are mutually related to the congenital and postnatal conditions, with the opening, hidden, smooth and reverse linked vertically and transversely. In the third combination, that of heaven, earth, and man and of the upper, middle, and lower, three are combined into one entirety with the interior and exterior also being linked. In the fourth combination, the four appearances are mutually related to the eight directions, and the four combinations and four dimensions are substituted. The four dimensions possess the quick and smooth changes to combine the tendon, bone, blood, and flesh. In the fifth combination, *yin* and *yang* and the five elements occupy the "king" position. Internally, it combines with the *zang* and *fu* organs. Externally, it combines with the sense organs and orifices¹⁹. In the body forms, it combines with the five emotions and six kinds of *qi*²⁰. In the sixth combination, the six satisfactions of the human body will happen, i.e. *qi* first, blood second, body fluid third, essence fourth, meridian fifth, and spirit sixth. Once the six combinations are perfect, *qi* will be

16) "Shake the Feathers" refers to a shaking energy in executing the release of force (*fa jing*) similar to a bird shaking its feathers or a dog shaking water off its coat.

17) This means that the practitioner "sits in the hips" such that there is a crease formed where the hip and thigh meets. If this crease is not present, stability will be compromised as the upper body will not be properly connected to the legs.

19) It is interesting to note that Xie Pei Qi's "six harmonies" differ slightly from the six harmonies one usually encounters in the literature of internal martial arts. These are: the hands harmonize with the feet, the shoulders harmonize with the hips, the elbows harmonize with the knees, the heart harmonizes with the intent, the intent harmonizes with the *qi*, and the *qi* harmonizes with the power.

18) The five element, *zang* organ, sense organ, orifice combinations are as follows:

Element	Zang Organ	Sense Organ/Orifice
Wood	Liver	Eyes
Fire	Heart	Tongue
Earth	Spleen	Mouth
Metal	Lung	Nose
Water	Kidney	Ears (and anus)

20) The "Five Emotions" are: Anger, Joy, Pensiveness, Grief, and Fear. "Six kinds of Qi" refers to the original *qi* (原氣 - *yuan qi*), the *qi* of the chest (宗氣 - *zong qi* or ancestral *qi*), the grain *qi* (谷氣 - *gu qi*), the true *qi* (真氣 - *zhen qi*), nutritive *qi* (營氣 - *ying qi*), and defensive *qi* (衛氣 - *wei qi*). See chart on page 15.



A prolific writer, Xie Pei Qi has authored two books, *Ba Gua Inner Elixir Standing Skill* and *Yi Jing Ba Gua Healing Methods* (shown above), and numerous magazine articles on Ba Gua qi gong.

produced.

7) Seven Stars²¹

It is required to adopt the seven star art during practice. The seven stars refer to the number of the

21) The image of the "Seven Stars" are used quite frequently in martial arts and *qi gong*. The number seven is used in relationship to stars because the image is usually associated with the seven stars of the Big Dipper. Most notably in martial arts we have the "seven deadly stars" corresponding to the striking surfaces of the head, wrists, elbows, shoulders, hips, knees, and heels. In this article Xie Pei Qi is using the seven stars to refer to seven directions, front, back, right, left, high, middle, and low used in his footwork techniques.

In Buddhist *qi gong* the seven stars of the big dipper are related to the seven energy centers of the body. Daoists also use the image of the Big Dipper and its seven stars in their meditations and in the Mao Shan sect the Big Dipper functions as the life giving center of the universe. In this sect it is said that the Universal Trinity "emerge and are transformed" out of the bowl of the Big Dipper. In certain Daoist meditations the practitioner will create an image of the seven stars of the Big Dipper above his head. The seven stars also play an important role in Chinese Astrology and Numerology.

directions and the theory of arithmetic of the eight diagrams in the *Yi Jing (Book of Changes)*. In the repeated seven star numbers, seven days are taken as one cycle. There are 168 hours in a cycle. Every form of the palm method in Ba Gua Zhang can be attributed to 168 routes.

In the repeated turning palm, the technique is supposed to adopt the seven star positions in the step method²². In the skill of advance and retreat in the anterior, posterior, and left and right, these steps are: the swinging step, the pulling-retreating step, the water-wading step, the wheel step, the crane-lifting step, the dodging and lying step, the hooking step, and the linked seven steps.

In extending the hand and walking, the step enters the seven stars configuration for free walking in the anterior, posterior, left, and right. The seven star skill can be divided into: 1) upper, 2) middle, 3) lower, 4) anterior, 5) posterior, 6) left and 7) right, and belongs to both the open and hidden skills of *yin* and *yang*. The seven star theory is supposed to adopt the theory of one cycle every seven days in the theory of *yin* and *yang* and the five elements.

The seven kinds of changes are in accordance with the ten heavenly stems, every seventh stem makes a return. The attribution of the five elements of every day's heavenly stem is certainly interacted by the attribution of the five elements of the seventh day's heavenly stem. For example, HS 1 is the first stem, and HS 7 is the seventh stem. If seven days make one return, the HS 1 wood is interacted by the HS 7 metal. On this analogy, the HS 2 wood is interacted by the HS 8 metal, and the HS 3 fire is interacted by the HS 9 water, and the HS 4 fire is interacted by the HS 10 water, and the HS 5 earth is interacted by the HS 1 wood, and the HS 6 earth is interacted by the HS 2 wood.²³

The ancients said: The return is made for preponderance, but overpreponderance brings injury. Therefore, it is necessary to prevent the injury by not overdoing.

22) In Xie Pei Qi's Ba Gua method there are eight primary stepping techniques, each relating to one of the eight animal styles of his system. Each of these stepping techniques have seven different variations relating to high, middle, and low postures and the advancing, retreating, moving-left, and moving-right directions.

23) In this section Xie Pei Qi is drawing from the numerological relationships between the Ten Heavenly Stems, the Five Elements, and the Seven Stars. These relationships are used as a model to predict daily, monthly, and yearly cycles and rhythms. Although this paragraph may seem confusing, what Xie is really saying is that there is a cyclic pattern to the practice utilizing the seven directions. For those readers who may be interested, the relationships between the Celestial Stems, the Five Elements, and Seven Stars that may help to clarify this paragraph are shown below. Cyclically, the first Heavenly Stem would be placed after the tenth and the cycle of stems would start again while the cycle of stars would continue at the bottom of this list

8) Eight Diagrams

It is required that, during practice, the philosophical, arithmetic art of the eight diagrams should be sought to rule the body. The motion and tranquility, the interior and exterior, and the upper and lower of the body should be practiced according to the theory of the eight diagrams.

- 1) Three combined into one of the starting hand, and the three-point form of the starting hand.²⁴
- 2) *Qi* is full and sinks to the *dan tian*.
- 3) The form of straightening the back, rounding the shoulders, and erecting the neck.
- 4) Open, close, ascend, descend, outflow and inflow.
- 5) Contract and lift the anus.
- 6) Relax naturally and transform and move hollowly.
- 7) The coordinative and harmonious six breaks²⁵, and the reverse-return seven star form.
- 8) Fill a vacancy in the above break of the *Dui* diagram and supplement a break in the lower break of the *Xun* diagram, with six breaks linked in three, harmoniously and perfectly conforming to the theory and position of the eight diagrams.

The symbols of the eight diagrams: One link is *yang*, two breaks is *yin*. Namely, *Qian* is three links, *Kun* is six breaks, *Li* is empty in the middle, *Kan* is full in the middle, *Zhen* is like a jar, *Gen* is like an overturned jar, *Dui* lacks in the top, and *Xun* breaks in the bottom.

The eight diagrams mainly symbolize the eight kinds of natural phenomena of heaven, earth, fire, water, wind, thunder, mountain and lake (see illustration on

with 4, 5, etc. Because there are ten stems and seven stars, one complete cycle occurs every 70 iterations.

Heavenly Stem	Element	Star
1 - Jia	Wood (Yang)	1
2 - Yi	Wood (Yin)	2
3 - Bing	Fire (Yang)	3
4 - Ding	Fire (Yin)	4
5 - Wu	Earth (Yang)	5
6 - Ji	Earth (Yin)	6
7 - Geng	Metal (Yang)	7
8 - Shen	Metal (Yin)	1
9 - Ren	Water (Yang)	2
10 - Gui	Water (Yin)	3

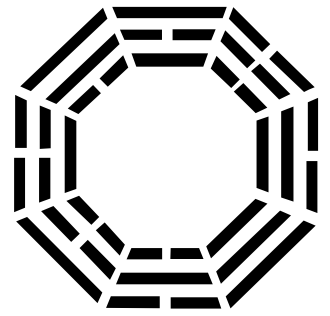
24) "Three combined into one of the starting hand" means that when the first hand gesture is made, the arms, body, and legs all move together (whole body motion). "the three-point form of the starting hand" refers to the tip of the nose, tip of the finger and tip of the feet being aligned.

25) The "six breaks" refer to the "breaks" in the lines of the eight trigrams. Each *yin* line is said to have "two breaks."

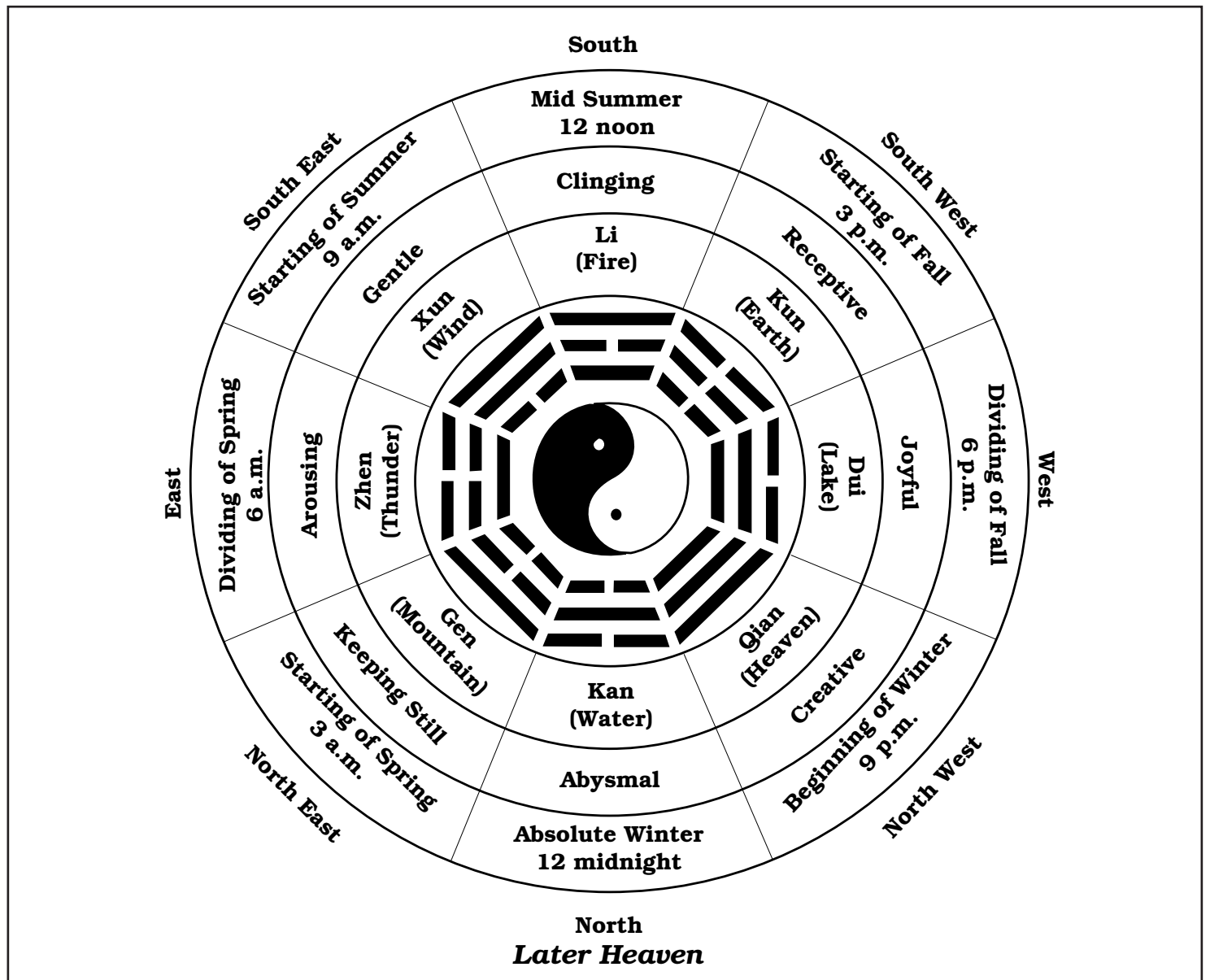
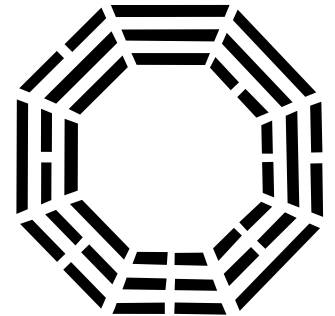


the bottom of this page), and it is believed that *Qian* and *Kun* diagrams occupy the very important position in the eight diagrams and are the source of the initial development and change of all things. The congenital (pre-heaven) eight diagrams hold that the heaven and earth locate the position, the mountain and lake communicate with air, the wind and thunder fight each other, and the water and fire are not compatible. Namely, the globe, the sun rises in the east and falls in the west, with verticalness and transverseness, and with one stroke to draw an eight-diagram form and four places called one change, and three changes become one *Yao*-alternation, and eight out of ten becomes six *Yao*-alternations, and nine motions become the diagram. Therefore, the eight diagrams are said to be accomplished initially. The changes of *yin* and *yang* repeatedly and unendingly in the interior and exterior, the upper and lower, the anterior and posterior, the left and right, the middle, the bright and shade, the motion and tranquility, and the conversion, form the simple philosophical theory of *yin* and *yang*, the five elements and the eight diagrams.

Post-Heaven Diagram Arrangement



Pre-Heaven Diagram Arrangement



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1350 14 Mile Rd., Suite 103
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7361 Brooklawn Dr.
Westminster, CA
(714) 898-1218

Kwok Chan

P.O. Box 1642
Kingston, Ontario
Canada K7L 5C8
(613) 546-2116

Col. (Ret.) Y.W. Chang

2729 Palmer Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70118
(504) 861-4283

Peter Chema

60 McLean Ave.
Yonkers, NY 10705
(914) 965-9789

Wai Lun Choi

2054 West Irving Park Road
Chicago, IL 60618
(312) 472-3331

Robert Claar

Box 6291
Carmel, CA 93921
(408) 394-7921

Joseph Crandall

1564A Fitzgerald Dr. #110
Pinole, CA 94564
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James C. Cravens

1040 D West Prospect
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(305) 938-6992

Daniel Crawford

Peaceable Hill
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173 Jersey St.
Marblehead, MA 01945
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Bryant Fong

P. O. Box 210159
San Francisco, CA 94121
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P.O. Box 2424
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Kumar Frantzis

1 Cascade Drive
Fairfax, CA 94930
(415) 454-5243

Andrew Glover

3308 18th St.
Davenport, IA 52804
(319) 386-7204

Glenn Guerin

134 E. Kings Highway
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Nick Gracenin

28 North Pine Street
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Ray Hayward

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Benjamin Hill

1626 Sedwick Ave
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8801 Orchard Tree Lane
Towson, MD 21204
(301) 823-8818

Andy James

179 Danforth Ave.
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M4K 1N2
(416) 465-6122

Jang Kui Shi

P.O. Box 1677
Santa Cruz, CA 95061

Jerry Alan Johnson

P.O. Box 52144
Pacific Grove, CA 93950
(408) 646-9399

Stanley Johnson

847 Jadewood Dr.
Dallas, TX 75232
(214) 283-9136

James Keenan

P.O. Box 1173
Lowell, MA 01853
(508) 460-8180

Jan Lane

346 East 9th Street
New York, NY 10003
(212) 777-3284

Stephen Laurette

123 Madison St.
New York, NY 10002
(212) 629-2004

Brian Lee

821 San Mateo Rd.
Sante Fe, NM 87501
(505) 989-2505

Johnny Kwong Ming Lee

3826 Manatee Ave W
Brendanton, FL 34205
747-0123

Leung Kay Chi

53 River Street
Central Square, MA 02139
(617) 497-4459

Shouyu Liang

7951 No4 Road
Richmond, B.C., Canada
V6Y2T4
(604) 273-9648

Lin Chao Zhen

685 Geary St. P.O. Box 502
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 921-6978

Lin Chih-Young

84-35 Corona Ave
Elmhurst, NY 11373
(718) 779-5909

Edgar Livingston

224 South Haven St.
Baltimore, MD 21224
(301) 732-4890

Kevin Lovas

3852 Parkdale
Cleve Hts, OH 44121
(216) 382-6759

Nan Lu, O.M.D.

396 Broadway, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10013
(212) 274-0999

Ray McRae

30 W. Carter Dr.
Tempe, AZ 85282
(602) 345-1831

Bow Sim Mark

246 Harrison Ave
Boston, MA 02111
(617) 426-0958

Chick Mason

1130 Beaver St.
Bristol, PA 19007
(215) 464-6548

Dan Miller

620 Lighthouse Ave.
Pacific Grove, CA 93950
(408) 655-2990

Harrison Moretz

8007 Greenwood Ave. N.
Seattle, WA 98103
(206) 784-5632

Al-Waalee Muhammad

P.O. Box 301216
Houston, TX 77230-1216
(713) 661-2107

Dr. John Painter

P.O. Box 1777
Arlington, TX 76004-1777
(817) 860-0129

William Palmeri

16404 North Aspen Dr.
Fountain Hills, AZ 85268

Park Bok Nam

11101 Midlothian Turnpike
Richmond, VA 23235
(804) 794-8384

Mike Patterson

8204 Parkway Drive
La Mesa, CA 92041
(619) 698-6389

Richard & Iva Peck

7312 Zelpia Cir.
Plano, TX 75025
(214) 380-9070

Shannon Kawika Phelps

P.O. Box 234
Del Mar, CA 92014
(619) 792-8026

Allen Pittman

P.O. Box 450394
Atlanta, GA 31145
(404) 270-1642

Wilson Pitts

316 S. Cherry St.
Richmond, VA 23220
(804) 648-0706

Chris Quayle

1160 East Apple Way
Flagstaff, AZ 86001
(602) 774-6702

Peter Ralston

6601 Telegraph Ave
Oakland, CA 94609
(415) 658-0802

Russell Sauls

3438 Hwy 66
Rowlett, TX
(214) 475-1268

Rick Schmoeyer

1907 Electric St.
Dunmore, PA 18512

Sheng Lung Fu

116 East Pender St.
Vancouver, B.C. Canada
432-1153

Jacopo Silicani

Via Sette Martiri, 32
35143 Padova, Italy

Michael Smith

8511 #2 Rd.
Richmond, B.C. Canada
(604) 241-0172

Edward Star

1220 Market, N.E.
Salem, OR 97301

Gary Stier, O.M.D.

2300 Lake Austin Blvd.
Austin, TX 78703
(512) 445-1950

G. S. Torres

932 15th St. Suite #4
Miami Beach, FL 33139

Carl Totton

10630 Burbank Blvd.
No. Hollywood, CA 91601
(818) 760-4219

Jason Tsou

330 S. San Gabriel Blvd.
San Gabriel, CA 91776
(818) 287-0811

Eric Tuttle

P.O. Box 2166
Kingston, Ontario
Canada K7L-5J9
(613) 542-9025

Larry Walden

3806 Olympic Blvd. W.
Tacoma, WA 98466
(206) 564-6600

Li Wang

440 Hawkeye Ct.
Iowa City, IA 52246
(319) 353-4599

Timothy Warfield

5th & Lehman St.'s
Lebanon, PA 17046
(717) 274-9840

Fred Weaver

110 E. 43rd St.
Kansas City, MO 64110
(816) 561-7183

Alex Wang

3314 Venables St.
Vancouver, B.C. Canada
(604) 251-1809

Brian Weatherly

4846 Gary Rd.
Bonita Springs, FL 33923
(813) 495-3919

Martin Werner

510 N. Alma School #173
Mesa, AZ 85201-5458
(602) 969-9471

Y.C. Wong

819A Sacramento St
San Francisco, CA 94108
(415) 781-4682

Glenn Wright

P.O. Box 11272
Tacoma, WA 98411
(206) 584-4647

Dr. Fred Wu, Ph.D.

520 Dendra Lane
Worthington, OH 43085
(614) 885-7512

Grace Wu

122 1/2 N. St. Francis
Wichita, KS 67202
(316) 264-9640

James Wu

24156 Kathy Ave.
El Toro, CA 92630
(714) 583-1096

Wen-Ching Wu

PO Box 14561
East Providence, RI 02914
(401) 435-6502

George Xu

4309 Lincoln Way
San Francisco, CA 94122
(415) 664-4578

Yang Shu-Ton

290 West Ave., Suite D
Tallmadge, OH 44278
(216) 633-1914

Jane Yao

50 Golden Gate Ave, Apt 502
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 771-7380

Robert Lin-I Yu

2113 Sommers Ave.
Madison, WI 53704
(608) 241-5506
253 East Fourth St., Third Floor
St. Paul, MN 55101
(612) 291-1080

Yu Cheng Huang

P.O. Box 166851
Chicago, IL 60616-6851
(708) 679-3113

Luigi Zanini

via Faccio, 73
I - 36100 Vicenza
ITALY 0039 444 563696

Zhang Gui-Feng

2844 Hartland Road
Falls Church, VA 22043
(703) 698-8182

Zhang Jie

1402 Northeast 155th St.
Seattle, WA 98155
(206) 368-0699

Zhang Hong Mei

750 Myra Way
San Francisco, CA 94127
(415) 334-8658

Zhang Hong-Chao

3729 North Ravenswood
Chicago, IL 60613
(312) 883-1016