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**All Heroes Think Alike:
Kinship and Ritual in Baguazhang**

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**A dissertation submitted to the faculty of the
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
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in the
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Approved by:



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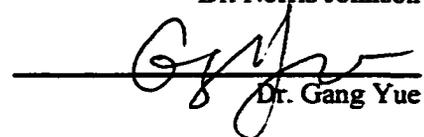
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Abstract

Jeffrey Lee Takacs

All Heroes Think Alike: Kinship and Ritual in Baguazhang

(Under the direction of Dr. Robert Daniels)

This ethnography investigates the transmission of a particular Chinese martial arts tradition, Baguazhang, as it is practiced in Taiwan. Using the theoretical approaches of systems theory and British social anthropology it examines several aspects of the transmission of this tradition. First the teaching methodology and goals of a contemporary instructor are detailed. Second, the architectural landscape of this instructor's martial arts society is investigated. Third, the history of teacher-student relationships in this tradition is outlined. Fourth, several common representations of the origin of Baguazhang are detailed and analyzed. Fifth, the method by which this society is organized is detailed and compared to other types of Chinese social organizations.

As a result, a new conceptual term in the study of Chinese kinship, the "aggregated lineage", is presented. Like the traditional Chinese lineage, the "aggregated lineage" is organized following the Confucian patrilineal principle, but differs in two ways. First, in the "aggregated lineage", the patriline is not one of biological descent, but one of ideology: one's teacher is one's father. Second, the "aggregated lineage" recruits its members not through childbirth, but through initiation into discipleship.

Acknowledgments

I wish to thank my committee for giving me the intellectual tools to conduct this research and the criticisms that have raised the level of my scholarship. I also owe a deep debt to my several martial arts teachers, especially Jamal al Bakkar and Luo Dexiu, who have been my *shifu* in the deepest sense. Endless thanks to my wife, Helen, not only for the blow by blow translations when my Mandarin was inadequate, but also for the illustrations and all of her support, material and spiritual.

Any mistakes are my own.

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Introduction

*Entia praeter necessitatem non sunt multiplicanda.
Principles are not to be multiplied beyond the necessary.*

-William of Occam

In late May of the year 2000, I attended a banquet. It was not a Taiwanese wedding nor was I the guest of honor. Indeed, I was only a minor performer in the inaugural banquet for the newly created *Yizong* Martial Arts Association¹ in Taipei. Why I was performing there, in front of a group of aging Taiwanese martial artists, is a question that leads to an investigation well outside the realm of traditional studies of Chinese martial arts, and deep into Chinese kinship, politics, economics, legitimacy and mythology. This is the ground on which anthropology thrives.

The banquet and my performance were part of a ceremony that included the election of officers, men who had decided to organize themselves into an officially incorporated society. The men were not strangers to one another. Indeed, though they came from different families, different cities, different social classes and different political leanings, they had one thing in common: they were all martial arts students of a Taiwanese named Hong Yixiang, who had died less than ten years previously.

There are some curious facts about this society. The name they had chosen for themselves, *Yizong* Martial Arts Association, was not the name of Hong Yixiang's school. In

¹*Yizong wushu xiehui*. Please see Appendix for characters.

fact, *Yizong* was the name of Hong Yixiang's teacher's school, their teacher's teacher. Why did they not take the name of Hong Yixiang's school? Why would a group of 40 and 50 year old men create a society founded on the name used by their teacher's teacher? Why would an American anthropologist perform martial arts for them?

The last question is the easiest to answer.

My martial arts teacher in Taiwan, and my primary informant for this work, is a man named Luo Dexiu². His family name is Luo, and his personal name is Dexiu, pronounced "duh-shee-o". His English name is Eric Luo, but after three years of association with him, I am still only comfortable with "Luo *laoshr*". He agreed not only to allow me to do my fieldwork in his school, with an expansive "Say anything you like, tell them I am fat and don't practice. I don't care!", he also taught me his martial arts, which he has spent over 20 years perfecting.

² Mandarin is the official language of both Beijing and Taiwan. Regarding the Romanization of Chinese characters, for the most part I use the *pinyin* system used on mainland China. While many Taiwanese tell me that this is politically incorrect, as Taiwan is economically, culturally and above all politically distinct from mainland China, it is the system I learned first, and is therefore more familiar to me. The Taiwanese have a different system, but it is not legible unless you have studied it for some time.

In a few cases, for the sake of expediency, I have used Chinese languages other than Mandarin. One of the most notable examples of this is the Cantonese name for Chiang Kaishek, the first president of the Republic of China on Taiwan. It is by this name that he is known in America, and as that is the primary audience of this work, I have retained the Cantonese, rather than his Mandarin name and title.

In all Chinese languages, names of people are given with the family name first, which is a single syllable, represented by a single Chinese character. The family name is followed by the one or two syllables of the given name of the individual. Often people have more than one personal name, what Americans might call a nickname, or a name bestowed upon a special occasion, such as upon taking religious orders or joining an organization. Some authors hyphenate the two syllables of personal names in Chinese languages. I do not.

I have taken some liberties with the *pinyin*, in an effort to make it more user-friendly to those who do not speak Mandarin. For example, *Luo* is actually *Lo* in *pinyin*, but I am trying to avoid confusing the reader who might be inclined to pronounce his name like the English "low", rather than the English word "law", which is closer. Similarly, the title "teacher" in Beijing Mandarin is rendered in *pinyin* as *laoshi*, but pronounced "lou-" as in the English "loud" and "shr" as is the "Shir" part of "Shirley". I am spelling it "laoshr" with an "r", in order to emphasize the Beijing accent with which it usually is pronounced in Taiwan. *Laoshr*, like all titles and forms of address in China, follows the family name of the individual, thus "Luo *laoshr*", means Teacher Luo.

With the exceptions of personal and place names, Chinese words are in italics in the text and appear in Appendix I, the glossary at the end of the work, in my Romanization, standard *pinyin*, and in some cases other commonly recognized forms.

Luo Dexiu is a reluctant member of the *Yizong* Martial Arts Association. He was asked to have his students demonstrate their *Baguazhang* to the group, even though none of the *Yizong* members seriously practice this art any longer. As one of Luo's twenty current students, I was one of ten to demonstrate some of the basic exercises of our *Baguazhang*.

Baguazhang, (hereafter without italics) is literally Eight Trigrams Palm, a style of *gongfu*, or Chinese martial arts. It is practiced by students, who study together under an instructor. An instructor of Chinese martial arts is called a *shrfu*, meaning teacher-father, or *laoshr*, a teacher. They, the students and instructor together, recognize each other as members of a group. They are aware that they have close or distant relationships to, but are in any case distinct from, other groups of martial artists. By recognizing themselves as members of a group, exclusive of "people who are not students of so-and-so *laoshr*", martial arts students and their teachers constitute societies.

With the advent of firearms, especially mass-produced, very accurate weapons, traditional martial arts are obsolete on the battlefield. In fact, a Chinese general in 1561 made the exact same remark: boxing is not very useful on the battlefield (Henning 1999:12). While it can take six months to learn to throw a decent punch, the army trains a combat-ready rifleman in 12 weeks. For winning wars, excellent guns and regular pay are historically superior to excellent punches and unshakable valor. This has been proven numerous times, not the least of which was in China itself in the 19th century during the Opium War (Chang 1964) and the Taiping Rebellion (Carr 1992).

Nevertheless, the popularity of Asian martial arts outside of Asia is rising and their practice spreading around the world. Few social activities have undergone as much transformation and yet retained so many of their fundamentals as the martial arts of China,

Japan and Korea have, as they have been propagated around the world in the last 50 years. As the numbers of groups, associations and practitioners rise, it becomes more and more important for anthropologists to clearly understand this social behavior, and grasp its structures, myths and permutations (Donohue 1991, Takacs 1995, 2000).

In the United States, I studied martial arts for about 10 years. I have trained with half a dozen teachers, and in half a dozen different kinds of martial arts, or “styles”, sometimes practicing two or more concurrently. I spent 4 of those years training in a southern Chinese style, 4 years training in *Taijiquan* and shorter times in other styles. I have previously described (Takacs 1995) some of these varied experiences and my interpretation of martial arts training in America as a rite of passage. Because I gravitated away from large tournament-oriented schools, I have no experience as a tournament fighter, although I have done some bare knuckles sparring and been in a scrap or two.

In order to conduct the research for this dissertation I used that decade of experience of training in America to enter a Taiwanese martial arts society as a participant and member. In the city of Taipei, in northern Taiwan (see Figures 1 and 2), I trained in the Chinese martial art style Baguazhang under Luo Dexiu from September 1997 until July of the year 2000.

There has been little anthropological research into martial arts. Freedman (Freedman 1958:93) mentions a martial arts organization in the context of voluntary associations in a village: “the boxing club and music clubs were, as their names imply, groupings for recreation. The structural significance of these associations is not altogether clear...”. The few serious anthropological studies of martial arts and Asian warrior traditions (Liu 1967, Amos 1983, Donohue 1991a, 1991b, 1994) focus or touch upon the use of tradition in the creation of identity.

Donohue in particular has shed considerable light on the practice of martial arts in Japan and the United States. He notes that there are two main streams of martial arts research. The most common records a given martial art “as a technical body of knowledge...validated by combat effectiveness” (Donohue 1994:3). The other line of research describes martial arts as “essentially cultural systems...that perpetuate a particular culture, philosophy or ideology”. He critiques this approach, for while it is “useful, [it] portrays martial arts systems as a category of cultural fossils...of an archaic world view” (Donohue 1994:4). Donohue argues that far from being static and ahistorical, the meaning and functions of martial arts practice have evolved, and he is interested primarily in how martial arts practice is used today to build “a coherent world view” (Donohue 1994:5).

Donohue’s division of martial arts literature into two broad classes covers most of the literature on Chinese martial arts as well. Moreover, I agree with his assessment of martial arts as a living, evolving tradition, one whose modern practice often centers on building a coherent world view. Where I differ from Donohue is where I take up the question of how, specifically, one Chinese martial arts system has been and is now constructed by its practitioners in China and Taiwan into a more or less coherent microcosm of Chinese culture and of what that system consists.

Unlike the vast majority of literature on Chinese martial arts (Sun 1935, Sun 1970, Smith 1974, Draeger and Khek 1976, Draeger and Cheng 1977, Draeger and Chye 1979, Chin and Staples 1980, Cheng 1981, Xi and Li 1982, Smith and Pittman 1989, Liu 1991, Smith 1992, Li 1993, Sun 1993, Liang, Yang and Wu 1994) what follows is not an exposition on how to fight. Except to illustrate a point, I won’t discuss any fighting techniques in detail. On the other hand, the ethnography is based upon three years of

Baguazhang classes: getting punched in the head, slapped in the ribs, kicked in the stomach, thrown on the ground and once hospitalized. My analysis is light on current anthropological theory and rather heavy on anthropological participation.

Regarding the role of the anthropologist in the ethnography, of course, I am not an “unbiased, objective” anthropological observer. I am Luo Dexiu’s student, and while I don’t agree with everything he says, neither am I going to go out of my way to embarrass him here. While I can speak Mandarin functionally well, I like to have an interpreter close by when I am interviewing. This is usually my wife. Fortunately, Luo’s English is better than my Mandarin. I recognize this as a serious limitation as a researcher, but in the final analysis, the three years I spent memorizing characters did not improve my understanding of Taiwanese social dynamics more than the three years of practicing boxing with Taiwanese men. I am first and foremost an anthropologist.

This essay is a study of a martial arts tradition. There is a considerable body of “tradition” literature, ranging from works on theory (Boyer 1990), to works dealing with the sometimes paradoxical behavior of traditional people (Calhoun 1983), to the efforts by marginalized groups to reclaim their tradition for themselves (Crowther 1994).

The study that I found most interesting was not about martial arts at all. It was the approach taken by Barbara Ward’s (Ward 1977) paper on the transmission of Chinese culture as a tradition. She examined a socially marginal group of riverboat dwellers near Hong Kong (see Figure 1). Because they are almost entirely nonliterate, Ward wondered how the traditions of Chinese culture are transmitted among them. She found the periodic performances by traveling theater and opera groups to be a primary source of story telling and moral education. Furthermore, due to low literacy rates in imperial times, Ward

hypothesizes that Chinese cultural values were transmitted in similar fashions throughout much of the Chinese empire. While I do not explicitly use much of her material, her line of questioning: “How has the Chinese cultural tradition been transmitted (outside of the educated class)?” has been invaluable in pulling together many of my disparate lines of research.

This paper takes an approach somewhat similar to Ward’s study. It takes one martial arts tradition, one group of Baguazhang practitioners, and examines several aspects of it, much as ethnographic village studies have been conducted in China and Taiwan in the past (Yang 1945, Diamond 1969, Cohen 1976, Harrell 1982, Huang 1989, Jordan 1989, Stafford 1995). I am most interested in the transmission of the tradition: what is transmitted, where it is transmitted, from whom it has been transmitted, and so on. I shall spell these questions out in detail below.

Rather than wedding myself to one theoretical tool or another, I have drawn upon several different anthropological theories to help analyze and present the data. Due to my prior training, the largest part of my theoretical thinking is taken from systems theory. While I do not sketch any systems diagrams, I make use of many of systems theory’s concepts, particularly Bateson’s (Bateson 1972) use of positive and negative feedback, double binds, levels of learning and especially play and metamesages³. The latter, statements about statements, set the context for what is being said: the difference between a joke and an insult is in the context. Roy Rappaport’s (Rappaport 1979, 1999) cybernetic notions of ritual and the unfalsifiable have been used throughout the essay. Although it has been, somewhat

³In the text. I use “metamessage” and “metastatement” interchangeably.

accurately, accused of mechanization, systems theory has by far been the most important key in my understanding and representation of the Baguazhang tradition.

Again in part from my previous training, and in part because the best known writer on Chinese kinship is Maurice Freedman (Freedman 1958, 1966, 1970), much of my analysis draws upon, or reacts to, British social anthropology. In understanding the nature of kinship and in analyzing Baguazhang as a kinship system writers such as Evans-Pritchard (Evans-Pritchard 1956), Max Gluckman (Gluckman 1949, 1962), Edmund Leach (Leach 1982) and perhaps most importantly, Victor Turner (Turner 1962, 1982, 1985) have led to my current understanding of the interaction of political, religious and economic systems with a society. Pierre Bourdieu's Outline of a Theory of Practice (Bourdieu 1993), though not strictly within the British social anthropology tradition, nevertheless provided insight where it was needed, as did Emile Durkheim's Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (Durkheim 1982).

Turning to a third school of thought, I sought to hedge against the materialism that the British social anthropologists appear to overly adopt. Their emphasis on political and economic relations tends to, as does Bourdieu (Evens 1999), present the symbolic as a thin veneer over materialism. Searching for something that presents the symbolic as something real in and of itself, I turned to Eliade (Eliade 1956, 1958, 1963, 1986) and Adrian Snodgrass (Snodgrass 1992) whose study of stupa architecture in India, China and Japan proved tremendously helpful. Alfred Schinz (Schinz 1996) follows in this tradition as well, in his examination of imperial Chinese urban architecture and geomancy.

In Chapter 1, the essay addresses the questions of "What is the Baguazhang tradition?" and "How is the tradition transmitted?". This section involves a very detailed look at the biography of one martial arts instructor, what he teaches, how, and for what purposes.

Bateson's (Bateson 1972) theory of mammalian play is very important to understanding the ritualized nature of combat training used in this school of martial arts.

"Where is the tradition transmitted?" is the subject of Chapter 2. Chinese architecture, architectural symbolism and their relation to Chinese behavior are the core issues addressed. Here I make use of Snodgrass (Snodgrass 1992) and Schinz (Schinz 1996) to show the interaction of architecture with behavior, as well as the role of symbolism and geomancy in daily life in Chinese society.

Chapter 3 looks at the issues of "From whom is the tradition transmitted, and how has it evolved?". In it I present the oral and written history of the key teachers of the Baguazhang tradition and their relationships to one another. Where available, I also present economic information about individuals, to be analyzed in Chapter 6.

"How has the tradition been presented?" is the subject of Chapter 4. Many legends surround the origin and development of Baguazhang, and this portion of the essay first groups them thematically, and then examines their content. That multiple purposes for the creation and propagation of these legends exists is likely, but examination of what those purposes might be are left for future research. Here I am mostly concerned with presenting the representations.

In preparation for my comparison of the Baguazhang society to Chinese lineages, Chapter 5 asks "What are the characteristics of Chinese kinship?". In addition to examining traditional studies of Chinese kinship (Freedman 1958, 1966, Ebrey and Watson 1987 and others), I also review more marginal work on other kinds of Chinese social organizations.

While studies of Chinese kinship and lineages have long been a mainstay of anthropological and sinological research, in recent decades there has developed a counter current.

There has been a heated discussion in the anthropological literature over the conditions for and causes of the development of large and powerful lineages in certain parts of China rather than in others. But it has tended to focus myopically on their presence or absence, paying only little heed to alternative organizational forms that might exist where such strong lineages do not (Strauch 1983:46).

Chapter 6 investigates “How does the network of relationships in Baguazhang compare to those in Chinese lineages?” Here, though only briefly outlined at the beginning of the chapter, I operate on T. M. S. Evens’ analysis of the Nuer statement that “twins are birds” (Evens 1989). Namely, the Nuer know that humans do not have feathers, and yet they act as if twins are indeed birds. They do not act as if the statement “twins are birds” is a metaphor. Using the same logic, I originally set out to prove that Baguazhang practitioners constitute a lineage. The data proved otherwise, but at the same time, proved unsuited to traditional sinological categories of biological lineages or aggregated corporations. What I found, to my surprise, was a different kind of Chinese social organization, one that recruits members through initiation, but is organized like a Chinese lineage. I call this previously undefined type the “aggregated lineage”. This is consistent with Strauch’s statement:

The Confucian injunctions to be filial and to venerate the elders, living and dead, obviously extended readily from the family to the lineage. But there is no inherent reason that this extension need stop with the socially constituted kin-group, for the underlying principles involved had more to do with a general order and harmony in society than with bloodlines *per se* (Strauch 1983:45).

This essay on Chinese martial arts, and Baguazhang in particular, lays the groundwork for future research. In constructing this ethnography, I have drawn upon many

anthropological traditions, not all of which are entirely compatible. Although I am aware of many of their mutual differences, I seek not to unify them, but rather utilize what is useful in a particular context to achieve my purpose, which is to understand and transmit my understanding of this tradition.

Chapter 1
Luo Dexiu, Baguazhang Master

*Ziqi of Nanbo asked Juyi "You are old but your complexion is like a child. Why?"
Juyi replied "I have been taught a method."*

-Chuangzi

This chapter will introduce in detail martial arts instructor Luo Dexiu, the primary martial art he teaches, namely Baguazhang, his teaching methods and goals. This chapter is not an exposition about how to do martial arts, it is rather about what one teacher feels is necessary for students to learn and how he has organized his body of knowledge to achieve those objectives. It is based on three years of interviews with the instructor and his students, on readings about him, his teachers and their martial arts tradition, and most importantly, on three years of participation in his martial arts classes.

In some ways, Luo Dexiu is very cosmopolitan. He travels internationally for his trading company and regularly teaches martial arts seminars in the United States, England, France, and Israel. He smokes expensive imported cigars, loves the French countryside and English pubs. Luo also has been the subject of a tremendous amount of research by Western as well as Taiwanese and Japanese martial artists.

Luo was the student chosen by his teacher to perform Baguazhang for the BBC documentary The Fighting Arts (Reid and Croucher 1983). He appears in the PaKuaChang Journal (PKCJ 3(5), 4(2), 5(5)) several times. Articles about Luo's practice of martial arts

appear in the Journal of Asian Martial Arts (Craig 1999), an academic journal dedicated to research in the martial arts, as well as Inside Kungfu (Cartmell 1993), a popular martial arts magazine. Photographs of Luo comprise Frantzis' illustrations of Baguazhang bodybuilding exercises (Frantzis 1998:85).

In other ways, Luo is very Taiwanese: his mother is a lively 72 year old Taiwanese woman, his father came from the mainland with the Guomintang⁴. Like his own teachers, Luo expresses himself best in Taiwanese, he loves Taiwanese food and loves Taiwan. When asked by the martial arts masters in San Francisco if he was planning to move to California, he insisted that no, he liked Taiwan better. When he traveled to America to teach his first seminar there, he packed a suitcase with instant noodles, because he feared America would have nothing edible. What he really likes is dark beer and seafood.

Luo started training in Chinese boxing in 1968 with few of his relatives in the city of Taipei. When he was in eighth grade, a junior high school classmate who was studying at Hong Yixiang's *Tangshoudao*⁵ school showed Luo some of what he had learned. Intrigued, Luo trained there for three or four months, but Hong Yixiang's beginners' classes bored him and he dropped out.

Almost a year later, while practicing with his classmate, he realized that the basic, boring training eventually led into the practice of "real fighting". He began training again in 1971 (PKCJ 3(5):22). When Luo says *laoshr*, teacher, today, he means his first real teacher Hong Yixiang, whom he calls Hong *laoshr*. He often does this in the context of story telling, for

⁴Also romanized Kuomintang, abbreviated KMT. until recently the ruling party in Taiwan.

⁵ *Tangshoudao*. (lit. Tang dynasty hand method) was the name of Hong Yixiang's school and the style of martial arts that he created and taught. As a style, it was a mix of the many styles Hong had learned, including *Xingyiquan*, Baguazhang and several Japanese styles.

example, “Hong *laoshu* was famous for his Sticky Hands ability. He was very good! As soon as he touched you, he would control your body. You could not escape!”

Luo performed well, if not brilliantly, in junior high school. He said that because the teacher kept yelling at him, he once studied hard and got 5th place on an exam⁶, just to show that he could. Luo tested into and attended high school⁷. He later studied electronics in the Navy and printing in a two-year college. He also self-studied and passed the written exam to become a doctor of Chinese medicine. Still later he self-studied more and became a project manager of a large financial institution. Currently he works for a trading company.

He told me that in junior and senior high school, he liked to hang out at Hong Yixiang’s school because at home everyone yelled at him. His father “died early” and his mother lived with her brother and father. One of Luo’s uncles was a manager of a major shipping company and was very harsh. His mother’s father had been taught by a Han scholar⁸ and was also very strict and pedagogical.

In comparison, Hong Yixiang’s martial arts school was relaxing and fun. When I asked him if he could talk to Hong Yixiang, he laughed and said that was impossible, but that he had many friends there. Additionally, he remarked that he got to let off steam by fighting with other martial arts brothers. These brothers, he found out later, also did not get along with their own families. Luo believes that many people who study martial arts, especially the people that like to fight, do so because they have difficult family lives.

⁶ In addition to being graded, every exam in Taiwan is also ranked and the ranks are publicly displayed (Shaw 1988). Competition in each class is thus institutionally encouraged.

⁷ At that time, mandatory schooling was only nine years. Senior high schools required, and still require, entrance exams.

⁸That is, a scholar of Han period (202 B.C.-220 A.D.) literature

When Luo was the junior-most of Hong Yixiang's students, he had many tasks. He was instructed to come to the school before the evening class began. Once there, he climbed over the courtyard wall, retrieved the key and unlocked the main gate. Then he swept the training area floor. After that, he fetched a bucket of water. Long after Luo was no longer the junior-most of Hong's students, he continued these chores. He felt that it was a special honor to do these tasks and wondered a little why no one else coveted them as he did.

Hong Yixiang's class ran from around 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. Often Hong would invite his students to accompany him to drink tea after class, which meant that the students got to buy Hong Yixiang tea and scrounge enough coins together for few dishes of Taiwanese snacks, like peanuts and melon seeds. Hong would tell stories of his youth, his teachers and the fights he'd been in. In the first years they listened raptly, but as they grew older, and Hong's stories didn't change, his students' interest flagged. When he returned home from these late night outings, Luo often found the gates to his mother's house locked, or he received a scolding and beating from his elders. Luo still likes these post-practice snack times, but beer has replaced tea, and fish, squid and clams have replaced the peanuts. Luo often picks up the tab, as well.

Training under Hong Yixiang, Luo began tournament fighting in 1972. At that time in Taiwan, competition fighting was full contact and bare-knuckled. Luo began competing, he says, because Hong Yixiang's son wanted to compete, but Hong Yixiang, who had a reputation for being a great fighter, was afraid he would lose face if his son lost. So, Hong entered Luo, who was about the same weight as Hong's son, into his first competition when Luo was in the equivalent of the 10th grade of American high school.

In fact, Hong Yixiang was reluctant to let his students enter the tournaments at all. While they wanted to fight, he was afraid of losing face if they lost, as it would show that he could not teach. So, for a long time, he would not allow them to compete. Finally, a few daring ones snuck into a tournament and won. After that, Hong let them compete officially under the banner of *Tangshoudao*, Hong's school. Luo described it to me:

The week before the fight, I could not sleep at all. I was the youngest of Hong Yixiang's students, so *laoshu* would not lose face if I lost, but of course there was enormous pressure on me to win... At the fight, I was very nervous. The seconds on the clock moved so slowly! Dong! Dong! One second felt like ten. My opponent hit me in the head with his bare-knuckled fist, and I was so excited that I didn't even notice until I was half way through my counterattack. It felt like a full half second before my brain said "Hey! That hurt!" [Luo laughs].

Luo won the match and took second place at the international tournament his first year. For the two years following his first fight, winning tournament matches was his top priority. Luo therefore began researching *how* and *why* certain techniques worked, in addition to knowing how to do them. Luo and about five other classmates practiced fighting applications constantly, and for three years, Luo entered many tournaments and was nearly always victorious (Cartmell 1993:60).

Luo began winning the fights and genuinely liked fighting, especially the full contact, no rules style. Actually, for Luo, there is no other kind of fighting. "I could put you in armor and padding, but then you would not know what real fighting feels like. Worse, you would start swinging wildly, flailing all over."

In addition to the tournament fighting, Luo learned even more serious techniques, skills that can't be used in tournaments. He demonstrated one of these on me. We started out facing one another, Luo and me, but after about a half second, I was face down on the

granite. The pain in my right shoulder, caused by the twisting-wrenching that landed me on the floor, was eclipsed by the weight of Luo's knee on the middle of my neck.

As I strained to look up behind myself to see what he was doing, he explained that these techniques were extremely dangerous, and that although he had practiced them when he was young, he wouldn't teach them. To highlight the danger, he rocked left and right, driving first one knee into my lower lumbar vertebrae and then the other into my cervical vertebrae. I was completely at his mercy, but emerged unharmed.

In the United States, many so-called martial arts schools purport to teach the "secret killing techniques of the xxx". Many of these schools are quite popular because of the supposed lethal nature of the fighting methods. I was thus curious why Luo refused to teach what would doubtless be a well-attended class. I asked him why he would not teach these killing methods. "What the [expletive] are you gonna do, *kill* people?" he asked me in Mandarin. Later, he told me it would be irresponsible of him to teach that kind of technique to new students.

Until recently, when a prospective student or a visitor came to a martial arts school, challenge fights were common. A challenge match occurs when one man challenges another to a duel. If the defender is an established teacher, the latter typically has his students fight the newcomer. Two obvious reasons for this are first, if the teacher did not have his students gain experience by fighting the challengers, a well known teacher would be endlessly fighting challenge matches. Second, while the challenger fights with the student, the teacher can observe the challenger's weaknesses and plan countermeasures.

Of Hong Yixiang's many students in the 1970s, Hong chose Luo to fight the first round of these challenge matches at the *Tangshoudao* school. Luo says that while he won many of

these matches, he did not win them all. Losing encouraged him to train harder and seek a deeper understanding of the art of hand to hand combat.

After training in *Tangshoudao* with several of his classmates and becoming a good tournament fighter, Luo went to visit Hong Yimien, Hong Yixiang's older brother. Though very small and quite old, Hong Yimien defeated Luo and his classmates easily and they were unsuccessful in hitting him. Luo and his *Tangshoudao* brothers perceived that while they were becoming good competition fighters, in fact, their training methodology was flawed.

So it was that in 1974 Luo became interested in Baguazhang and Zhang Junfeng, the grand-master, *shrz* (lit. teacher ancestor) of the martial arts that Luo studied (PKCJ 3(5), YC 2000:4). Zhang is described in later chapters.

Hong Yixiang, while a great fighter, taught only a portion of Zhang Junfeng's martial arts. Luo has spent many years talking to and training with many of Zhang's other students, including Zhang's wife. He has traveled to Beijing and visited Tianjin⁹ to talk with the Baguazhang teachers still in those places. Before he was finished, he had studied the Baguazhang systems of five masters: Zhang Junfeng, Wang Shujin, Sun Xikun, Sun Lutang and Cheng Tinghua. These men appear in later chapters.

The first pair of boxing instructors Luo approached were the older brothers of Hong Yixiang, Hong Yimien and Hong Yiwen. Between them the three Hong brothers had studied with their teacher, Zhang Junfeng, longer than all of his other students. Before he died,

⁹ Tianjin is a river port town east and a little south of Beijing (see Figure 1). In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Tianjin was the second most important center of Baguazhang, after Beijing. Contrast this to the Fujian- and Canton- centered Hung Gar Boxing (see Takacs 1995). Many of the best Baguazhang teachers lived and taught in Tianjin for decades. Tianjin is where Zhang Junfeng, Luo Dexiu's grand master, studied Baguazhang and *Xingyiquan*. Today, although the number of good teachers is smaller, Tianjin is still an important center for Baguazhang. Luo Dexiu went there to study and research the art in the 1980s.

Zhang taped his will. In it, he bequeathed his school and martial arts system to the three Hong brothers. I have not seen or heard the tape, but Luo says that he has.

The Hong brothers had specialized skills. While Hong Yixiang had mastered the *Xingyiquan*, Hong Yimien had been taught more of Zhang Junfeng's Baguazhang. When Luo met Hong Yiwen, the eldest of the three, he didn't fight anymore, but had a deep grasp of the theories of the system. Luo began to desire an understanding of the whole of Zhang Junfeng's martial arts, not only the Baguazhang.

Through these efforts, Luo has reconstructed Zhang's Baguazhang as a self-reinforcing system. This is what he teaches now, not Hong Yixiang's *Tangshoudao*. Nor does he teach using Hong's teaching methodology.

In order to understand why certain techniques worked, and others did not, Luo constantly asked questions of Hong and his senior brothers. They were not prone to patient explanation, however.

When I studied with Hong *laoshr*, I would often not understand a technique. If I asked *laoshr* or one of my senior brothers about it, they would always demonstrate the technique and hit me BAM. Then my stomach would hurt, but I still didn't understand. Moreover, I was afraid to ask more questions. What kind of teaching method is that?

To his Taiwanese students, Hong Yixiang's typical answer to questions was either to demonstrate the technique on them, or to yell at the student "Practice more! Then you will understand!". It was not what anyone would consider a learning, nurturing environment. Evidently most of Hong's Taiwanese students adopted the same teaching method.

So as he grew older, Luo Dexiu admired Hong Yixiang less, but Zhang Junfeng more. From what I have read and been told, Zhang Junfeng was just as rough a teacher, quick to

beat a student to keep his attention. But Zhang's martial arts were developed to a very high level, where each part was integrated into a functioning whole, one aspect reinforcing the others. Zhang was fearless and capable of handling any comers. Luo idolizes him.

I noticed that the closer that Luo got to Hong Yixiang's ability, the less Luo admired him. Indeed, Luo noticed this phenomenon himself. He mentioned on one occasion that "when you first start learning from a man, you think he is incredible. Later, when you have some skill, you think, 'Oh, he is nothing special'. But after he dies, you say, 'My teacher was a God!'. Everyone does this. Why? Because if my teacher was a god, that makes me a little god."

Zhang Junfeng was quite ill when Luo met him and died in 1974, before Luo possessed anywhere near Zhang's ability. I wonder if it was simply proximity to the hero that made Hong Yixiang less heroic and distance that made Zhang Junfeng more so.

A few years after appearing in the BBC film, Luo began teaching. It was in 1989-90 that a foreigner, Mark Brinkman, a five-year student of Hong Yixiang, first convinced him to teach. At that time, I'm told by my senior Baguazhang brothers, Luo's training method was very severe: hundreds of repetitions of back-breaking exercises, lots of combat applications drilled endlessly, hours of exercises. They told me how they would cheat and try to pretend that they had worked harder than they actually had.

Luo's first student was not Chinese. Even today, though it seems strange to me, the majority of his students are still foreigners. Since beginning to teach, Luo has modified his teaching method. He notes that whereas a Chinese martial arts instructor's response to a question is typically "practice harder and you will understand", this methodology is not suitable for Westerners. Foreigners ask lots of questions, which at first Luo found quite

vexing. From answering their questions, Luo says that he has learned a lot, not only about Baguazhang and Westerners, but also about himself. Seeing your own faults and errors in your students, he told me, makes you more aware of them in yourself.

Luo teaches *gongfu*, which often means skill or hard work, but in this context means the ability to fight. When Luo says “so and so has good *gongfu*”, he means the man can fight. According to Luo, *gongfu* has three important aspects, which make up the majority of Luo’s teaching curriculum. The first thing a student learns in Luo’s school is fighting skill, the ability to adapt any situation to your advantage to defeat your opponent. The second skill is striking power, here defined as the ability to inflict damage when you hit an opponent. The third and most important is courage.

Luo’s *Gongfu*

Baguazhang is one of the three most well known “internal styles” of Chinese martial arts¹⁰. The internal styles are so called because they use “internal power”. In the martial arts literature, internal power tends to be defined according to its diametric opposite: external power. The reasoning seems to be that because external power relies on muscular tension in the limbs, internal power must mean an absolute lack of muscular tension in the body (Cheng 1981:10). People who hold this opinion tend to say that internal power is the power of water: yielding, flowing around the obstacle without effort.

Nonsense, Luo says, literally “What a joke! How can you fight without using any muscle? (He grabs me around the chest in a wrestler’s hold) People who say that internal power is the absence of muscular strength clearly don’t do any fighting!”.

Luo has a less philosophical, more practical approach:

Internal martial arts have three parts: mind, structure and timing. The mind must be calm and focused. For this we practice meditation. The structure of the body must be strong and stable, relaxed but not flaccid. These things are inside of you, and are therefore easy to control. Timing...timing is a little difficult (He grins)...so we have to practice the techniques. Baguazhang is very clear and simple, but it takes work.

There is a saying associated with the internal martial art Taijiquan, popular among American and Chinese intellectuals. The saying asserts that it is possible “to deflect the momentum of a thousand pounds with a trigger force of four ounces” (Cheng 1981:13). This underlines the belief that a tremendous amount of energy can be rendered harmless by very little energy, mostly by redirecting the larger energy away from the target. In theory this is true, but on the street, in a fight, it is very hard to put into practice.

Unfortunately, many people, particularly Taijiquan players, believe that because of this saying, they need not practice very hard, nor must they develop more than four ounces of power¹¹. By emphasizing the “internal” and “soft” aspects of martial arts, as in “the goal of martial arts training is to become as soft and natural in your movements as a baby” (Liang, Yang and Wu 1994:25), many so-called martial arts teachers hope to sell Chinese-martial-arts-made-easy to Americans.

Luo remarked that of course four ounces can defeat one thousand pounds, just as a stack of pennies could derail a freight train. But if you make one mistake, you will be crushed. It is therefore only common sense that says you’d better have one thousand pounds of force to back you up. Luo teaches that there is a second half of the saying: “four ounces can defeat

¹⁰The other two are *Taijiquan* and *Xingyiquan*, which Luo also teaches.

one thousand pounds, but just in case, you'd better have one thousand pounds at your disposal".

According to Luo, internal power is, in fact, the opposite of external power. It is his definition of opposite that is quite complex. Rather than using the muscular power of the limbs, the external parts of the body, the internal styles use the power of the internal regions, namely the structure and the mind.

Good structure, says Luo, means that the skeleton is in a stable posture, the waist has twisting strength and there is enough muscular tension to keep the limbs alert but not tire them out. Learning how to find and maintain good structure, especially when fighting, is one of the keys to success in combat. He likens the structure of a internal boxer to the structure of a house or an armored tank, that is, solid. When you attack, you strike not only with hand, foot or elbow, but with the force of the structure you have built, the kinetic energy of your moving body.

This energy is guided and delivered by your concentration. "The intention goes first", he often says. More powerful than a fist shot out of a twisting hip, Luo describes this guided energy as a stone falling down a mountain. "I am like a fast tank!", he says enthusiastically, slamming into his target with the whole of his body weight. According to Luo, maintaining whole body "good structure" is the most important difference between the internal and external styles. Fighting with the internal styles demands it, the external ones do not.

Luo firmly believes in a hands-on approach to "real fighting" training, as he calls it. There is a world of difference between talking about fighting and actually getting smacked

¹¹ One mainland Chinese *Taijiquan* player told me of an old master who was so weak that he could not pick up chopsticks, but his *Taiji* was amazing. I am somewhat skeptical.

around. Luo believes this and teaches accordingly. For example, when asked a technical question, “*Laoshr*, how does this technique work?”, his typical response is “come on, attack me”, followed by a fast and heavy demonstration as to how exactly the technique in question, and a half dozen variants, should be done. Then, unlike Hong Yixiang, he explains in detail the mechanics and theory of the problem. When he teaches these applications, he methodically breaks them down into a series of principles and concepts that can be used elsewhere. Repeated demonstrations of Luo’s technical skill also assures his students of his authority, proof that he is an embodiment (Eliade 1963, 1986) of the Baguazhang tradition.

Luo’s Baguazhang classes have several different types, but they all conform to the same general pattern. As I will describe in detail below, the elements of Luo’s class are

- warm up exercises
- the *tiangan*
- the *xiantian*
- the *houtian*
- combat applications
- *qigong*, or breathing exercises

Luo does not have a formal school. Students hear of him through word of mouth, or happen to see the class practicing. Students pay tuition, a monthly fee of NT\$4000, which in 1999 amounted to about US\$130 per month. It is presented to Luo, or his senior students, when he is away, in a red envelope, the same as is used to give presents at Chinese New Year and weddings.

There is no building or room designated for Luo and his students to meet in, as was the case for Hong Yixiang’s *Tangshoudao*. Luo’s students meet in the colonnade that surrounds

the National Theater at Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall¹² in the center of modern Taipei (see Figure 8 top). Students arrive at Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall between 7:30 and 9 p.m.¹³.

The first exercises that the new students learn are the warm-ups, light stretches that are easier, simplified versions of the heavier, more complex movements that comprise later training. Often Luo does not arrive until 8:30 or 9:30, leaving students to warm-up on their own or under the direction of the senior students. Once or twice a week, Luo or one of the senior students will lead the class through all of the basic drills and warm ups.

After warming up, there are a score of body-building/stretching exercises that work on different parts of the body, building muscles and stretching tendons. These are the *tiangan*, literally, the “10 heavenly stems”. Luo says that the *tiangan* are the source of his fighting power. The name *tiangan*, like many of the names in Baguazhang, is found in the Yijing, the Book of Changes¹⁴.

Following the *tiangan* portion of the class, which can take as long as an hour, comes the circle walking, the *xiantian*, the most distinctive part of Baguazhang training. Like *tiangan*, the name *xiantian*, literally, pre-heaven, is derived from the Book of Changes.

I. *Xiantian*

Luo taught me how to walk the circle in four stages. The first is easy: “Take a walk in the park. Feel the stones beneath your feet. Just relax and go around the circle once.” Ask

¹² The setting of Luo’s training area is described in the next chapter.

¹³ It usually ends around 10:30, and when the lights are turned out at 11:00, that is enough to send the stragglers home.

¹⁴ The Book of Changes and its relationship to Baguazhang is the subject of a later chapter.

yourself: what does the floor feel like through your shoes? By this he wants the student to pay attention to their body, focus their attention 100% inward.

During the second lap of the circle, turn the foot that is on the outside of the circle in towards the center as you step forward, this makes turning and walking in a non-straight line more natural.

During the third lap, sink the hips and bend the knees somewhat.

During the fourth lap, pick up the rear foot, and when you put it down, slide the front toes and ball of the foot along the floor. Luo likens it to landing an airplane. When you are able to do all of these things at once, you are walking the Baguazhang circle.

Then you walk the circle in this fashion for a while -- arms held in front of you in a circle, still but not tense, or hands clasped just below the belly button.

Next, fixing the concentration "50% inside the body and 50% outside" [towards the center of the circle], the palm changes are added to the circle walking. Although they are called "palm changes", they actually involve coordinating the hands, feet, waist and the mind. Coordinating the hands and feet is relatively easy, turning the waist is not so easy, and relaxing and focusing the mind is critical and most difficult. For the first three months of my training, I walked the circle four nights a week for two hours each.

One of my senior brothers made the importance of mental focus very clear to me on one occasion. "Look at you", he said in Mandarin, "you are walking the circle, but there is no concentration, no focus in what you are doing. It is useless to practice like that." He invited me to attack him about twenty times. He then proceeded to demonstrate on my body why genuine focus was necessary to develop combat reflexes. This fellow's timing is incredible: by the time I had started throwing a punch, he had evaded it and was counterattacking,

knocking me down or stinging my ribs with an open handed slap. “So pay attention!” But, he added afterwards, while I was gasping for breath and rubbing new bruises, this much concentration wears you out quickly, so practice it a little at a time and build up slowly.

How many *xiantian* are there in Luo’s Baguazhang? In the basic set there are 10 palm changes, another 8 in the advanced¹⁵. Actually, Luo informed me that there are only ten, but there are two versions, big and small, of each of the middle eight. The first and the last are summaries of the whole set. Later you learn that in fact, according to Luo, there is only one, the Simple Change Palm (see Figure 3), often called Single Palm Change and all the others are simply variants on it. There you have it, most simply: in Luo’s Baguazhang there are one, eight, ten or eighteen palm changes.

In each palm change, the actual circle walking is identical. The palm changes are different. They start with the most basic rotations of the hips, turns of the feet and movements of the hands -- up, down, inside, outside, diagonals -- and progress to very complex spinning motions. Each of the palm changes is accomplished in order to execute a specific set of attacks or defenses and counterattacks.

Well, not really. Circle walking, like Gregory Bateson’s notion of mammalian play (Bateson 1972:364-378), is not real fighting. More accurately, it is not really combat applications that I practice while doing the circle walking. Rather, circle walking leads one to practice and think about the *principles of movement* that are used in fighting. These are the principles that must be applied if one is going to be an effective Baguazhang fighter. Thus the *xiantian* are related to fighting, refer to fighting, but are not real fighting. Luo often says

“I am trying to teach you the principles of fighting, not simply a bunch of fighting techniques.”

II. *Houtian*

Based on, or at least associated with, the principles encoded in each of the eight main palm changes, one of the Baguazhang teachers developed eight straight line exercises, one set of eight for each of the eight *xiantian*. In Zhang Junfeng’s Baguazhang, there are therefore 64 straight line exercises, called the *houtian*, meaning post-heaven, another term taken from the Book of Changes.

Not all styles of Baguazhang have *houtian* exercises. The Baguazhang that Luo teaches is one part of a larger network of Baguazhang schools, the material for each of which came from one or another of several teachers. To fully understand who taught what, it will be necessary to examine the history of who taught whom in some detail. I will take this up in a later chapter.

As I have already mentioned above, the words *xiantian* and *houtian* are, like *tiangan*, all references to the Book of Changes, the Yijing. I will discuss the book and its relationship to Baguazhang in a later chapter. Here I simply want to point out that in the Yijing, *xiantian* refers to a principle or time of unity and a concentration of matter and energy, a bringing together and thus an erasure of distinctions. *Houtian* refers to a principle or time of division, a time when distinctions between things were first made. Knowing this, it is not logically offensive that a category of things that were several specific examples of one principle, an act

¹⁵ The first is named Simple Change Palm. It is followed, in Luo’s Baguazhang, by Snake Body Palm, Dragon Body Palm, Tiger Palm, Swallow Palm, Overturn the Body Palm, Find the Horse Palm, Turn over the

of division and distinction, would be labeled *houtian*, while the expression of the basic principle itself would be called *xiantian*.

In order to be a good fighter, the boxer must have fighting skill and striking power. The practice and application of the *tiangan*, *xiantian* and *houtian* are how Luo learned and now teaches fighting skill and striking power.

III. Combat applications

During the course of a class, a student of Luo Dexiu's Baguazhang may spend an hour or two of *xiantian* and *houtian* practice. Most commonly, though, while the student is in the midst of walking the circle, Luo interrupts, gathers the class and grabs one of us to demonstrate on.

Several times he has said, "Fighting isn't hard. All you need is timing...and a little bit of strategy. In some styles of martial arts, contact is the end of the encounter. In Baguazhang, contact is the beginning." That is to say, in some styles of fighting, the goal is to hit the opponent with many separate attacks. In Baguazhang, the first strike becomes the preparation for the second, and so on. An American teacher I had¹⁶ used to tell me to watch out for the Baguazhang fighters because they "climb your joints", starting at your wrist and ending up at your head. Luo instructs

You must become accustomed to contact and fighting. If you do that, it will be natural. When I fight, I don't think about what I am going to do next. If I am too close to effectively use my hands, then my elbow comes out [hits me with his elbow as he advances rapidly]. If I am too far [motions me to retreat a microsecond before a kick comes out at me], my foot attacks. This kind of timing you must practice and practice.

Palm and Stop the Body Palm. The tenth palm is called Black Dragon Wags Tail.

¹⁶Jamal al Bakkar (see Takacs 1995).

Once you get it, it is as natural as walking down the street. With this sort of introduction, Luo begins the night's lesson in combat applications.

We have seen that Luo has a tremendous amount of experience as a fighter. He believes that it is fighting that is the root of martial arts, not philosophy. From discussions with him, it is clear that he believes that it is the experience of fighting that is the basis of all other philosophical and moral sentiments, not the reverse.

In practical terms, this means that for example, on Tuesday he will teach an exercise from the first *houtian*. This *houtian* is called Open, and the idea is that you use your hands to create an opening in the opponent's guard, or receive his attack and open him up to your attack. Often this first attack does not work, but we expect that it won't. The first attack is merely a set-up for what follows. After we have repeated Open for a while with a partner, Luo will add another element to it, perhaps a Chop attack. Then we practice first Open, then Chop with a partner. Open-Chop. Open-Chop. Open-Chop.

In the next class, Thursday, we will start with Open-Chop and then add a Slap-Throw. Open-Chop-Slap-Throw. Or change the Open-Chop to Punch-Chop. Eventually, we string these together in different ways Open-Chop-Chop-Twist-Close-Punch-Slap-Throw into one continuous, nearly random¹⁷ set of attacks. The effect is of an endless number of hands and feet attacking you with different attacks from different directions, overwhelming your defenses.

¹⁷ I say "nearly random" because there is some relationship between the elements. Following the rule of dynamic generation, laid out in Daoist cosmology, (discussed in a later chapter) a thing or state of being cannot directly reproduce itself. Fire cannot reproduce fire without wood and oxygen. In Baguazhang, you can go from Open to Close, or Close to Open, but going directly from Open to Open with the same hand is not really possible. What is opened cannot be opened again without being closed first.

Most skilled fighters can handle three or four attacks in rapid succession, but few can handle seven or eight. It is to deliver seven or eight different attacks that is the Baguazhang student's goal. This is how Baguazhang manifests the principle of continuous change found in the Yijing. It is because of this continuously changing nature that this martial art is called Baguazhang.

IV. Courage

Courage is the most important aspect of good *gongfu*. In teaching physical courage, Luo takes a low key approach to combat. "Fighting is not a big deal", he insists. There are only three parts; "approach, control and striking power". To learn Luo's system of fighting, the student uses principles learned in the *xiantian* circle walking, the *tiangan* training and the warm-ups. The principles are simple concepts like Open-Close, High-and-Low, Outside-Inside and Diagonal. They are embodied, encoded, in the *xiantian* and concretely manifested in the warm-ups, the *tiangan* and the *houtian* exercises. Fighting merely takes these principles out of the code and applies them, consciously or unconsciously, to a given environment.

When Luo begins teaching a new type of exercise, he frequently spends a few minutes explaining what we are doing and why. He uses his own and his teachers' experiences as the "why" of his fighting and thinking methodology. This is the most common method for explaining his martial arts: using the practical experiences of real people. For example,

Once Hong *laoshr* was practicing Sticky Hands with Wang Shujin [a famous Chinese boxer who lived in central Taiwan]. Wang Shujin, being senior, would lose face if Hong beat him. So, at one point where Hong left his ribs exposed, Wang Shujin thrust his fingers into Hong *laoshr's* floating ribs and injured him quite badly. It is for this reason that we...

In this short story we can see reference to the importance of giving respect or “face” to the older generation. In the martial arts world, this means that the younger Hong should not pull his punches for the older man, but that the older man still had to defeat the junior. It also refers to two well known figures in the Taiwanese martial arts world. Being main characters in the story they legitimize and authenticate it. Finally, the combat application of the story: there is a danger to be aware of and therefore we practice this way. In short, social information as well as technical knowledge is encoded in a story telling format.

Each time we learned a new principle or technique, Luo sent us back to integrate it into the existing body of knowledge. As a result, like several vines planted next to one another, my understanding of several different principles began to intertwine as it expanded and grew in depth. He wants to teach his students how to learn how to learn¹⁸.

Learning the principles of fighting, he says, will teach us to be more mentally flexible and allow us to change the manifestation of particular techniques while adhering to the principles of Baguazhang. “We do this all the time, right?”, he asks, demonstrating a common application. Then he does the reverse, saying “Isn’t this the same thing? How is it different?” He wants us to see the common principle in many different applications, not think of dividing things into hundreds of distinct parts. By showing us that the principles are the same, that they are, in fact, “what we do everyday”, he shows us that we have no need to fear fighting practice, as it is no different that what we are already accustomed to doing.

¹⁸ This is Bateson’s (Bateson 1972) description of a stage of adaptation higher than simple stimulus-response.

How does Luo teach his students courage? It took me over a year and a half to understand his teaching methodology. He uses play.

Luo said “Martial arts has three parts. They are courage, power and timing.”

I asked him, “Where does courage come from?”

He answered, “Courage is self-confidence. Half of self-confidence you receive from your teacher. If the teacher only says ‘Wrong, Wrong, Wrong’, the student thinks ‘Don’t I ever do it right?’. Maybe the student has no striking power, but his technique is half right, or maybe his movement is good. The teacher should encourage his student...”

I explain things in simple terms because I don’t want students to be afraid and tense. So I say ‘Fighting is not a big deal. Getting the advantageous angle is easy, learning the techniques is easy, and timing is not too hard.’ Little by little the student improves and his self-confidence grows.”

I asked him, “Did your teachers teach you like this?”

Luo smiled, “I have to thank my teachers for showing me the correct way to not teach. They sat back [Luo leans back, sticks his belly out, puts on a very serious, superior, and self-important air] and said ‘No, this is wrong, that is wrong, you stupid fool!’ So I never had much self confidence. Even after I was a [full contact tournament] champion, I still had very little confidence, very little power and my technique was not great. My senior brothers all criticized me.”

The emphasis of martial arts training is usually combat, which is commonly believed to lead, very naturally, to the development of other personality traits, such as courage, honesty and sincerity (Columbus and Rice 1991, Daniels and Thornton 1992). In fact, I have seen no evidence for this. These characteristics are not axiomatic outcomes of training in the martial arts, nor are any others, such as increased hostility. Rather, Luo believes that traits such as courage and self-confidence must be cultivated and encouraged, just as skill in attacking and defending is cultivated. Luo uses play to reduce fear and cultivate confidence.

a. Play

Bateson (Bateson 1972:180) wrote that the message between two mammals “this is play” is sent and received on the metacommunicative level. Lacking a digital language, that is,

lacking a negative or any tense modifiers, non-verbal mammals must first demonstrate the relationship to be negated, and then demonstrate that they do not wish to enter into that relationship. The classic example is of two dogs, who growl as they approach, and then, having established that they could indeed fight, demonstrate that they will not fight by not fighting or by a display of submission. The question of “will we fight?”, must be raised before they can decide not to fight.

Mammalian play works in exactly the same fashion. Much of play is like combat, but it is not combat. The message between two monkeys playing appears to be “we are doing something like combat, but it is not combat”. Bateson (Bateson 1972:180) articulates the situation as “these actions in which we now engage do not denote what those actions, for which they stand, would denote”. A implies B, but does not imply what B implies. This is a paradox of the Russellian type, wherein a thing cannot refer to itself. Such self-reference is necessary in order to communicate negative information in non-verbal communication. An inability to accurately send or receive messages of the type, “this is play”, is a characteristic of schizophrenics (Bateson 1972:194-271). The statement “this is play” is a metastatement that creates a context in which other actions are interpreted.

In teaching Baguazhang, Luo brackets fighting practice with a “this is play” metamessage, one effect of which is to reduce fear. Gradually, the student becomes accustomed to not being afraid of fighting or being hit and his courage grows.

Many of the Baguazhang students, one of whom I will call Mr. Jiang, have difficulty in exactly this area of metacommunication.

Baguazhang training is not what Luo calls “real fighting”. The training should make you able to do “real fighting” with a better than random chance of success, but the majority of the

training itself is play. In fact, he often calls it just that: “play”. The closest thing to real fighting is the last stage of training, two-man drills wherein both men move and attack randomly at their discretion. It is the random aspect that really distinguishes this aspect of training from real fighting. So long as you have previously agreed upon what your opponent will do or cannot do, you are not engaged in real fighting. It is play. There are no rules on the street, as Hong Yixiang taught, but there are when you practice with your *gongfu* brothers.

One night I was training with Mr. Jiang in a two-man prearranged drill. I attacked him using a predetermined attack and he defended using a predetermined defense that brought me to my knees. The drill was dynamic in that the defender had to respond to the timing and approach of the attacker, but it was prearranged in that the attacker always used the same attack, and the defender always used the same defense. The point of the exercise was to let us practice the combat application of a particular principle. It was play: the attack-defense are real fighting techniques, but not executed with the speed, power or randomness of real fighting. We practiced this drill for 20 or 30 repetitions each.

Then Mr. Jiang changed it. Instead of using the Baguazhang technique of the drill, Mr. Jiang used another Baguazhang technique that he had learned but I had not. This forced my attacking right arm sharply to the outside of my body, twisting the elbow joint. Halfway through the technique, I was forced to choose between diving over my arm, head first, onto the granite floor of the colonnade, or letting the momentum of my body dislocate or break my elbow joint.

Furious, I dove over my arm, head first and tried to kick his leg as I went by. I missed. My head went down, feet up, up and over my waist and to the far side. My feet described an

arc exactly like the hand of a clock as it travels from 9, through 12, to 3, with my head as the pivot. In martial arts jargon it is called a *breakfall* and although Mr. Jiang still held my right hand, preventing me from dissipating the force with my right arm, I was nonetheless able to land on my right shoulder, right hip and right leg and not hurt anything. I have practiced falling and done many breakfalls, but not at Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall, where the floor is solid granite and filthy.

I leapt up, swearing, and confronted him. He backed away, eyes large, surprised at my anger. Luo tells us that as we reach higher levels of skill, we should practice variations on the techniques. Nevertheless, I barely resisted the urge to wade into Mr. Jiang, swinging¹⁹. Seeing Luo out of the corner of my eye, watching us, was the only thing that prevented me from trying to smash Mr. Jiang. He giggled nervously. "Was that too hard?", he asked, trying to brush the filth off of my back. I shrugged him off, walked around to the starting position, clenched my teeth in rage. "My turn. Come on." I growled.

Now he attacked, I defended. I executed the Baguazhang drill we were working on, but very, very precisely. When the opportunity to twist the arm came, I was not polite and did not simply hold onto it: I twisted that arm for all I was worth. When the body-twisting step came, I executed it to the full range of motion, dragging Mr. Jiang along on his hands and knees and ended with him on his face on the ground. Just the way Luo showed it to me. Again. Again. Again. Again. And again. Mr. Jiang uttered not a syllable of complaint, and resisted not at all.

Upon reflection, what angered me was not the execution of the joint lock that forced me into the breakfall. I have done a lot of breakfalls and been thrown a great deal. I'm not

afraid of getting hurt, nor of getting dirty. Even landing flat on my back on a solid stone floor is not new, as years ago as a lion dancer (see Takacs 1995), I did many breakfalls on solid stone. There was nothing new nor unfamiliar about what he did. In fact, Mr. Jiang probably did it to me precisely because, being familiar with my background, he knew I would not get hurt. What angered me was that he executed the throw without any warning whatsoever.

Sunzi, the ancient Chinese military genius taught that “warfare is the way of deception” (Sawyer 1993:158). Randomness is one of the key elements of combat. Preventing the opponent from being able to respond to your attack is accomplished in many ways, one of the most important of which is being unpredictable. In a martial arts training sequence, at least during the first exposure to a new technique, unpredictability is removed.

In Bateson’s formulation, practicing Baguazhang in a training setting denotes combat, but does not denote what combat denotes, which is: we are fighting. Prearranging the combat techniques to be practiced is a metamessage that says “this is not real fighting”. Consequently, in such a setting, my guard is lowered, my alertness level down and my reflexes are not adrenaline enhanced. My attention is almost 100% “inside the body”, that is, I am completely focused on my technique, not even attempting to prevent or avoid his attack. I am aware and thinking about what I am doing, so that I won’t have to think later, when the context is not play.

By randomizing his reaction to my prearranged attack, and more importantly, not informing me beforehand, Mr. Jiang changed the context of the situation. Removing the

¹⁹As Mr. Jiang is a much better fighter. I would have probably been beaten easily. but I didn’t care.

prearranged nature of our interaction and randomizing it, he transformed our relationship from “play” to “real fighting”.

I learned from this experience to never trust Mr. Jiang’s metamesages. Whenever I work with him now, and I continue to do so, I assume that it is not play. Rather, I treat every drill with him as a “real fighting” situation, and expect him to randomize his attack or defense. He rarely disappoints me. But now, because I am not operating under the “this is play” assumption, I am never surprised, nor angry. In fact, we enjoy working together. However, I do not trust his metamesages “this is play” and keep fully alert all the time. I have learned that the person does not mean what his metamessage says he means.

Occasionally I have the same problem. Several years later, Mr. Jiang and I began working on head punches, how to avoid and counter them. The rules of this “play” scenario are that the attacker can only attack the head. Sometimes when attacking I forgot the rule, saw or sensed an opening in the abdomen area, and attacked there. This is the same rule violation as the breakfall, but with less dramatic outcome.

Breaking the rules of the scenario defeats the purpose of a training setting. Luo’s oft stated purpose of two man, prearranged drills is not to hone our reflexes, but rather to get our bodies accustomed to performing these unnatural movements. Over time, the movements ought to become natural. Then, using different kinds of play, with different rules, we focus on reflexes or other aspects of real fighting. Bateson would probably say that because the conscious mind can only process a limited amount of information, Luo is artificially restricting the amount of input we are receiving so that we can make it a somatic, not conscious, action. In fact, Luo’s students often speak of “muscle memory” as being the result of hours of practice.

The anthropologist and systems theorist Roy Rappaport defined *ritual* as “the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers” (Rappaport 1999:24). What I have shown is that Luo uses a ritual of combat to allow his students to gain the courage necessary to be good fighters. He breaks the combat techniques down into daily exercises, so the student is already accustomed to them when the time comes to apply them. He prearranges the practice of techniques, eliminating randomness, until the student is accomplished at the skill and randomness can be reintroduced. All of these actions contain the metastatement “this is play”, and the student becomes accustomed to this kind of behavior with as much confidence and courage as he or she can have. Thus, when the well trained student faces a real fight, it is not radically different from a training situation and generates little fear.

b. *Qigong*

Another method to teach courage is to reduce the student’s panic when faced with a frightening or shocking situation, such as a fight. Fostering confidence through small praise and metastatements of play are not Luo’s only tools. He also teaches *qigong*, or breathing skills. “Why do we practice *qigong* and meditation?,” he asked one night.

To calm your mind. That’s all. You work all day, and this makes you tense and nervous. If you come to class tense and filled with emotions, you cannot concentrate on your training. When you go into fight, you are even more tense. As soon as a fight starts most people forget everything they were ever taught. If you are able to keep your mind calm, you won’t panic, and will fight better.

Meditation and *qigong* are therefore used to calm the mind, and increase his student’s focus when under stress. If the fighter is able to control his panic, he will have more courage.

Luo's *qigong* method is very simple. Having studied under a mainland Chinese monk for several years, Luo does not use mantras, complex energy moving visualizations, or even the names of the many *qigong* meridians²⁰. His main method is standing meditation. Standing still in a quiet and comfortable place, the practitioner calms his mind by imagining a graph of his brain frequency slowly transforming from high frequency and high amplitude to low frequency, low amplitude.

Why does he use such a high-technology biomedical metaphor?

Because if I told you to concentrate on [this or that *qigong* point], you would spend your time wondering 'Where is it? Do I have it right?' But where is your brain frequency? Not in any one place. To lower your brain frequency, you have to calm your mind and this is what I want you to do.

The masters cannot fly, but they can calm themselves instantly, and in a fight, when panic can set in fast and result in a beating or death, having a calm mind can make the difference that makes a difference.

Open Mind

On several occasions I asked Luo Dexiu why he practiced Baguazhang. As I have noted, he is big and is thus not likely to have been picked on in high school or mugged on the street. Today, although he is over 40 years old, he still likes to fight, but spends a lot of time meditating as well. He loves to talk about martial arts, giving lively lectures on the history,

²⁰ Having studied Chinese medicine, he knows them, but he says that Daoist *qigong* and Chinese medical *qi*, though using the same character, *qi*, have been mixed up in the last several decades. Daoist *qigong* is quite simple, he says.

practice and the current state of martial arts. But it was not very clear to me why he spent so much time on it. He gave me this response after a long training session one winter night.

For every period of your life, your reasons for practicing martial arts will be different. When I was young [in high school], I was loud and liked to fight. That is what I did, even though I was always scared. Later I became interested in striking power. I studied this for many years. After I became skilled at these things, I became interested in how fighting skill and striking power worked, and this was when correct body movement became important to me. Now I think that having an open mind is the most important aspect.

Clearly, there has been an evolution in Luo's interest and martial arts education. He started at the most physically obvious aspects of martial arts, namely the fighting and the ability to hit things hard. These abilities were not only theoretically interesting to him, he actually spent years learning how to do them. A large portion of this training came in the form of tournament fights and challenge matches, described in above. Once he deeply understood the body mechanics of Baguazhang, he became more interested in the non-physical aspects, the part he calls an open mind. When pressed for an explanation of an open mind, he said

I mean not saying 'I am the best, no one else is any good at all.' If someone comes up to me and says 'I hear your *gongfu* is good', I can say to him 'Oh, I don't practice much.' Or, 'Oh, yours is very good too.' If he says 'Your fighting skill is at a very high level', I may respond 'Your techniques are very clear and your mind is very calm'. Some people get angry and say 'I have to fight you!', but I am not interested anymore. I am not afraid of anyone, but I don't have anything to gain by doing fighting. Having an open mind also means having a sense of righteousness, a sense of justice.

For many years, he says, he did not have an open mind. He was aggressive, rude and quick to fight. He was good at fighting and was quite arrogant about it, he himself says that he was not very tolerant and had a short temper.

When did he begin to lose his quick temper? He said that he often trained with a *gongfu* brother, that is, a fellow classmate. Whenever the brother was hit, which Luo was able to accomplish, the brother got angry. Luo thought this was odd and unbecoming because they were brothers and there ought be no competition between them.

At the same time, Luo practiced with another man, who frequently hit Luo. This in turn made Luo angry. After some time he noticed this behavior and thought it was low class of himself. He began to consciously change his behavior and strove to adopt the view that fighting is not competition but rather play. After that, his self confidence grew to the point where he did not perceive everything as a challenge. Now, when approached by other martial artists, he is polite on the surface, though wary and cautious underneath. For Luo, having an open mind means accepting the fact that other martial arts practitioners are skilled and other martial arts systems are good for fighting.

This does not mean that his standards for fighting skills are any lower, however. If anything, they are higher now than when he started teaching 11 years ago. Why? Because now he has an even deeper understanding of the Baguazhang principles. He does not accept the notion that *all* martial arts systems are as good as Baguazhang, nor does he believe that *all* martial arts teachers are good teachers. During his lectures, or when one of us mentions a teacher he knows, he is quick to deliver his opinion of the teacher's ability to fight and teach. These range from the disparaging "Oh, what a joke!" to an encouraging "he has no skill, but he tries hard", to what borders on praise "well, his Baguazhang is not very good, but his Southern Boxing is quite impressive", or even "I really admire him". However, his judgments are reserved for his and his student's ears alone, where such opinions are expected to be kept "in house". Once he mentioned that one thing he dislikes about teaching seminars

overseas is that many people ask him “Is So-and-so a good teacher?”. Luo has his opinion of most of the martial arts instructors he has met, but he does not want to offend anyone²¹.

One can access Luo’s concept of an Open Mind based not only on his teachings but also on his own behavior. Having an open mind does not mean not having an opinion. It does mean that one keeps one’s opinion to one’s self for the sake of getting along in society. An open mind uses the same principles to inform one’s attitude toward fighting and one’s attitude towards others. Namely, one should be self-confident, morally upright, have high standards and use strategy to strive towards harmony with others.

Having an open mind doesn’t mean being accepting of everything and being lazy [Luo stands in the Baguazhang on guard posture, but his eyes are dull, his back hunched, arms drooping]. Don’t be stupid, how could it mean that? It means being focused, straight forward, honest, earnest, upright [Luo corrects his posture, looks alert and ready, filled with purpose]. To be open minded means to be relaxed, a little happy, a little self confident. You know how to control a situation, a fight or anything that happens to you.

Say a man comes up to me [Luo slaps his chest, very aggressively] and says ‘I must challenge you to a fight!’ If I am open minded, I may say to him ‘Really? Let’s go drink tea and talk about it first.’ You don’t have to fight in order to control the situation. You can also be polite²².

Luo sees this change of worldview, from one where everything was a challenge to an open mind, as one of the end products of his Baguazhang training combined with meditation. Acquiring an open mind requires courage and self-confidence, which in martial arts training are learned by fighting. If students are well trained, the more they fight, the more confidence and courage they gain, losing their fear and therefore, in Luo’s belief, their hostility towards

²¹ Indeed, he has even told me that I must be “less direct” in my writing, to avoid angering the students of teachers of whom I was critical (Takacs 2000). I followed his advice, more to please him than to make myself popular.

²²This is an example of Bateson’s (Bateson 1972) Level II Learning.

their opponents and by extension the rest of society. Luo has made it clear that “learning to get along in society begins with your classmates”.

I don't believe that Luo is typical in this. For Luo, being a good fighter is a necessary but insufficient qualification for having an open mind. Nevertheless, Luo expects people, especially Baguazhang practitioners, whom he believes to be a better educated sort, to develop in this direction. Accounts of encounters with other martial arts practitioners demonstrate his use of the Open Mind in the real world.

I. The secret palm change

Hong Yixiang's teacher, Zhang Junfeng, had many other students besides the Hong brothers, but it seems that they learned more of his *gongfu* than most. Luo is the only one of the Hong's students who teaches the *tiangan*, *houtian* and *xiantian*, and he is very well known in Baguazhang society.

A man I will call Mr. Yu studied with Zhang Junfeng's wife and another of Zhang's students. In his training, he studied the *houtian* straight lines, but not the *xiantian* circle walking. According to Luo, Mr. Yu never studied Zhang Junfeng's *xiantian*, nor did he do any serious fighting training.

Sometime later, Mr. Yu traveled to mainland China and studied *gongfu* with many people. At that time he learned the *xiantian* of a Baguazhang group whose leader was Zhang Junfeng's classmate.

Recall that in Zhang's *xiantian*, described above as the *xiantian* that Luo Dexiu teaches, there are ten “palm changes”. There is Simple Change Palm, then eight different palm changes, followed by Black Dragon Wags Tail. After Simple Change Palm, the most

important of the palm changes is the Double Change Palm, known in Zhang's Baguazhang as the Dragon Body Palm. I noted above that there are two sets of the eight palm changes, a simple set and a more complex set. There are therefore two somewhat different versions of the Double Change Palm in Luo's Baguazhang.

When Mr. Yu returned from mainland China, he claimed that he had been taught the true Baguazhang and that nothing on Taiwan could compare to his. Moreover, he claimed to have learned a "secret Double Change Palm", one that had not been taught to Zhang Junfeng in the 25 years that Zhang knew and studied in Tianjin. This secret palm change, Mr. Yu continued, was taught only to the Zhang's classmate in their teacher's last years, after Zhang left for Taiwan²³. Thus, Yu concluded, the Baguazhang as taught by Zhang Junfeng, and by unspoken extension the Hong brothers and therefore Luo Dexiu, was not the "complete" system of Baguazhang.

Luo's students wanted to find Yu and beat him for this insult. Luo forbade it. Publicly, Luo ignored Yu. Privately, Luo dismissed Mr. Yu's claim on two counts. The first was, Yu never learned Zhang's *xiantian* so how could he know what Zhang's Double Change Palm looked like? Second, to the assertion that there is a secret technique, Luo shakes his head and laughs. "There are no secret methods. Secrets exist only in people's gossip and in books. If everyone practices something, how can it be a secret? If it is a secret, what good does it do anybody?" If you win fights using Baguazhang principles and techniques, where is your system incomplete?

²³ I will discuss Zhang Junfeng and his teacher in detail in the next chapter. Zhang's teacher was Gao Yisheng (1866-1951). Zhang left Tianjin in 1947, so according to Mr. Yu's story, Gao Yisheng started teaching a new, secret palm change at the age of 81, and died when he was 85.

Even more interesting than Yu's secret palm change was how it came to be known to Luo's students.

Among the many expatriates in Taiwan there is one I will call Mr. Lucas. Lucas has lived in Taiwan for several years, studying Buddhism under a grant from a Buddhist temple. His major in the Cultural University is martial arts. He studied half a dozen different kinds of martial arts, much as an American might major in sports education. When Lucas wanted to study Baguazhang, his teachers introduced him to the best Baguazhang practitioner they knew, Luo Dexiu. As a favor to Lucas' teacher, whom I believe Luo knew personally, Luo accepted Lucas as a student.

Lucas was frustrating. Clearly not suited to doing martial arts in a civilized fashion, Lucas insisted on hitting everyone as hard as he could, all the time. Luo attributes this to the fact that he was studying many different martial arts at the same time, and could not move from one mindset to another. Whatever the reason, over the year and a half that Lucas studied with Luo, Luo became increasingly frustrated and frequently angry. He even began curtailing the curriculum in the class, to avoid teaching Lucas high level fighting techniques, because he believed that Lucas would teach his classmates in the other school. When Lucas left for a year, Luo relaxed a great deal, and began teaching sensitive material.

One day Lucas returned. He asked Luo if he could start training again. Evidently Luo felt that he had fulfilled his obligation to Lucas' teacher, because he cast about for five minutes trying to "think of a way to get rid of that crazy person". Finally he told Lucas that there were no other students at his level anymore, which was not true, and maybe he could come back after Chinese New Year, in four months. Lucas, snubbed, left and found another teacher.

A few weeks later, Lucas engaged some of Luo's senior students in a running email debate. It was then that it came out that, having been turned down by Luo, Lucas had gone to Mr. Yu and interviewed him. When Lucas learned that Mr. Yu had the secret double palm change, he asked Yu to teach him. Yu replied that he did not take foreigners as students²⁴. Lucas, refused by both Baguazhang instructors, then revealed to Luo's students that Luo's Baguazhang is not any good anyway, lacking, as it does, the secret palm change.

My suspicion is that because Luo refused to take Lucas as a student, Lucas wanted to discredit Luo as a teacher. But, because Luo's record as a tournament fighter is indisputable, Lucas could only, via Yu, attack the completeness or "pedigree" of Luo's Baguazhang.

Luo's students²⁵ wanted to challenge Lucas to a fight, but Luo would not allow it. As a private instructor, Luo can refuse instruction to anyone he desires. The manner of his refusal, however, is completely under his control. He prefers to let people try the Baguazhang until they get bored and leave of their own accord. If they are not going to leave and are disruptive to the progress of his students, he first carefully controls the curriculum to ensure that they don't learn more than he wants them to know and then waits for an opportunity to exclude them with minimal confrontation.

In addition, simple verbal slander, although annoying, is no longer enough to provoke him to fight. He controls his students who, possessing less equanimity than their teacher, are more likely to cause trouble. Short of a direct physical confrontation, he will avoid physical combat. It appears that he is no longer interested in fighting as a means to improving his

²⁴ Inasmuch as most of Luo's students are foreigners, this may partially explain Yu's animosity towards Luo.

²⁵Myself included.

reputation. Secure in his ability, confident in his knowledge, Luo practices his belief in the Open Mind even when provoked.

Summary

In this chapter, I have examined in some detail Luo's personal history, the material he teaches, the goals he has for his students and his teaching methods. Luo's *gongfu* is comprised of fighting skill, striking power and courage. Luo's Baguazhang consists of *tiangan*, *xiantian* and *houtian* exercises along with fighting applications taught as "play", not competition. He uses play, encouragement and meditation to calm the mind and promote courage.

I also examined what Luo calls an "open mind", his current goal in his martial arts training. In his view, its attributes include a sense of justice, the confidence to accept others' opinions and the ability to get along with others, even when that entails ignoring provocations. An open mind requires confidence and a calm mind. One half of self-confidence comes from one's teacher. The rest of self confidence comes from one's own courage and fighting ability. These two feed each other in a positive feedback loop: as one's ability increases, so does one's courage, which in turn improves one's fighting ability. I have also shown how Luo's open mind manifests in his interactions with some particularly antagonistic martial artists. Looking at the lives and reputations of other martial artists, even those Luo admires, the practice of martial arts, even Baguazhang, is by itself insufficient to cause any individual to have an open mind. It can be the result of purposive action, deliberate self-cultivation, and careful teaching. It is not a necessary outgrowth of any kind of martial arts practice, internal or external.

The next chapter will deal with another aspect of Luo's martial arts, its architectural setting. Architectural symbolism and construction is an important part of Chinese life, and the next chapter shows how Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall, where Luo teaches Baguazhang, is similar and different to Chinese temples and other semi-sacred places.

Chapter 2 Architecture and Behavior in Taiwan

*The phoenixes fly all around my hall,
What virtue have I for spirits to call?
From former kings this influence comes;
It's their praise that rings in the people's homes.*

-King Cheng (1025 BC)

The Chinese concept of *fengshui*, literally “wind-water” but commonly translated “geomancy”, is rooted in their belief that the natural and manmade environment of a space has power. Not only does the *fengshui* of a place influence people’s moods, but also their health and prosperity (Freedman 1966:118-155).

It is difficult for somebody brought up in a tradition which distinguishes sharply between man and nature to grasp at once the basic premise of *fengshui*...So that while my characteristic reaction to a landscape may be to say that I find it beautiful, my [Chinese] friend’s may well be to remark that he feels content or comfortable...Man is in nature. The landscape affects him directly, in the ideal case making him feel relaxed and confident...And just as landscape affects man, man may affect it. In a landscape there are mystical entities...as men we may harm them or improve them, weaken them or strengthen them; if we do, the landscape will no longer be the same, and in turn it will differently affect us (Freedman 1966:122).

Luo Dexiu is teaching fighting skills, courage and self-confidence. The *fengshui* of the space in which he holds class will have a positive or negative influence on these goals. For this reason, although I am not a *fengshui* master, it is nevertheless important to examine the architecture of the space in which Luo teaches and spaces with similar architectural patterns.

Luo Dexiu teaches Baguazhang in the colonnade surrounding the National Theatre at the Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall in Taipei. Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall is a walled garden, adjacent to the old walled city of Taipei.

Chinese walled spaces, both public and private, are in many senses sacred. *Sacred*, following Durkheim (Durkheim 1982:454) is “the characteristic of all that is religious”, not because of its “exalted position, but by its distinction from the profane”. The French sociologist defined the two terms, sacred and profane, in terms of a binary opposition. Something described as sacred reflects a religious characteristic, while profane is its antithesis, the daily affairs, objects and actions of mundane life. He admitted that “there are sacred things in every degree, and there are some in relation to which a man feels himself relatively at his ease” (Durkheim 1982:38), meaning that some things are more sacred than others, that there is a gradation of sacredness.

Nevertheless, he insisted that the division between sacred and profane “is absolute. In all the history of human thought there exists no other example of two categories of things so profoundly differentiated or so radically opposed to one another” (Durkheim 1982:38). Not only are the two logical categories absolutely distinct, but there must also exist a division, physical, verbal, symbolic or behavioral, between them. “The sacred thing is *par excellence* that which the profane should not touch, and cannot touch with impunity” (Durkheim 1982:40).

This division is easily observed in Chinese architecture. In his survey of Chinese architecture and urban planning with relation to its cosmological significance, Alfred Schinz (Schinz 1996) investigated the Chinese use of the “magic square”. The magic square is the division of chaotic space into ordered units. Prior to the twelfth century BC it was used in

China by Yu the Great to divide China into a grid of $3 \times 3 = 9$ provinces. Later it was used by one of the Dukes of Zhou (Zhou period 1122-221 BC) to lay out the new Zhou capital city (Schinz 1996:59-62).

The symbolism of the magic square reflects the polar, not binary²⁶, opposites of the Chinese universe, a subject I take up in a later chapter. In laying out the magic square, first the four cardinal directions are determined and then a 3×3 square is superimposed over it. With Heaven and even numbers is associated the *yang* of the *yin-yang* and with *yin* is associated Earth and odd numbers. Thus the four cardinal directions joined with the 3×3 grid is the union of *yin* and *yang*, Heaven and Earth, a ritual act performed by man, to bring order to and harmonizes an otherwise chaotic universe (Schinz 1996:9).

Until the 20th century, major Chinese cities, especially national and provincial capitals, were constructed with walls and used the magic square. Walls are normally defensive (Freedman 1958, 1966), but they may also have other functions, or put another way, may defend against other-than-human attacks. For example, Chengzhou (see Figure 1), the capital of the above mentioned Duke of Zhou, is clearly laid out in a magic square pattern (Schinz 1996:62 map) and may in fact be the first Chinese city with this pattern. The wall of the city, however, is not precisely aligned with stellar north, as indicated by the location of Polaris, which the Chinese referred to as the Ridgepole Star. Instead, the north wall of Chengzhou is turned perpendicular to a small mountain in the immediate vicinity of the city. Schinz suggests that mountains may have negative geomantic influences on people or cities, and that if so, then the city walls may be aligned to ward against these influences. If true, then it is

²⁶ Binary opposites are mutually exclusive, such as X and not-X. Polar opposites are mutually dependent, such as dark and light.

clear that the actual construction of a Chinese city center depends not only upon cosmic principles, but also upon local conditions, a fundamental geomantic principle.

The old downtown of Taibei in Taiwan was laid out in the same fashion (Schinz 1996:378,379). The city was founded in 1878, not far from the river port village of Mengjia, and just south of a small peak called Seven Star Mountain²⁷. The city's intended function for the Qing government (Qing Dynasty 1644-1911), as the northern prefectural seat, determined the size of the area enclosed within the walls. This area, combined with the geomantic rules governing the construction of the magic square, influenced the layout of the streets. The principle street in the walled city, aligned with the Ridgepole Star, was also the site of the prefectural offices, the Confucian Temple and the War God Temple. Taibei's magic square was not fully executed: the southern wall was modified to parallel the bends in the river to the south, and the north and east walls aligned, not to the Ridgepole Star, but to Seven Star Mountain. Schinz (Schinz 1996:378,379) argues that the north and east walls are so aligned to thwart negative geomantic influences caused by the mountain.

In these two cases, the ancient city of Chengzhou and the modern city of Taibei, the walled city itself is architecturally, geomantically and symbolically opposed to the mountain closest to it. Aligning the city defenses with regard to the geomantic influence of the mountain acknowledges the mountain as part of the landscape, but does not incorporate it into the organized, sacred space of the magic square. Whether or not the slopes of the mountain are inhabited, cultivated or exploited as a resource extraction site is apparently irrelevant as far as the geomantic influence is concerned. In conclusion, as late as the last

²⁷ So named because when viewed from Mengjia and Taibei, the mountain is directly beneath the seven stars that form what we in the Euro-American culture call the Big Dipper.

decades of the Qing dynasty, the rules of geomancy were followed in the ritual layout of urban centers, combining urban planning with cosmic significance. In this context, sacred space is organized urban space and profane space is chaotic, rural and mountainous.

In another context, however, urban behavior is profane behavior, opposed to sacred behavior. The focus of the majority of urban Chinese life is on manufacturing and commerce, the mainstays of earning a living. Freedman (Freedman 1958, 1966), Cohen (Cohen 1976), Salaff (Salaff 1982), Shaw (Shaw 1988) and Stafford (Stafford 1995) have all shown that education is most commonly a Chinese strategy for improving the family or lineage's future earning potential, and is therefore, in my opinion, more often an aspect of commerce rather than education for self-cultivation. Within the city there is also, of course, an administrative focus, but bureaucrats always constitute a minority of the population, and they too, engage in commerce to provide themselves the necessities of life. Grossly generalized, commerce and production for commerce, then, are the activities of the mundane, daily world. Divided off from the profane bustle of city life both within and without the area of the old walled city, walled public parks, temples with walled courtyards and private homes are sanctuaries from the busy and commercial affairs of city life.

The Chinese character that expresses the concept "park"²⁸, means walled garden. According to Wieger (Wieger 1915:53), *yuan* is comprised of an outer wall which encloses a "trailing robe" or robed person. In imperial times, robes were the distinctive garments of scholars and government officials, or some other educated, cultivated person, normally (Freedman 1966:68-96) of the middle or upper class. Freedman notes that in the Qing dynasty, those who passed the first level of the imperial civil service examination were

“entitled to wear scholar’s garb” (Freedman 1966:69). The Chinese linguistic conception of a garden is therefore arguably a walled space wherein cultivated people are, or where cultivation, both in the sense of growing plants and self-development, takes place.

Walls built of stone and concrete are also common, and are found mostly around cities (Freedman 1958, 1966, Schinz 1996), temples, gardens, official buildings and wealthier houses (Gernet 1959:116). They are not found around businesses, nor the houses of the poor. The walls encircling cities and houses are primarily defensive, but they share some characteristics of temple and garden walls, such as the symbolic division of sacred from profane and the demarcation of geomantic boundaries.

Now I would like to examine a few particular walled spaces in Taiwan and some of their spatial, symbolic and behavioral characteristics.

Confucius Temple, Tainan

In the far south of Taiwan is the city of Tainan (see Figure 2). Tainan is the capital of “Taiwanese”, that is, Fujianese-Taiwanese, culture. This is juxtaposed with the largely northern mainlanders who immigrated in the 1945-1949 period and are residentially centered in Taipei. From 1661, the time of the Dutch expulsion from the island by Zheng Chenggong, until 1682, Tainan was the capital city. After 1682, Tainan was the provincial capital for the Qing government. It was not until 1885 that Taipei became the provincial capital and ten years later, the Japanese colonial capital.

The temple to Confucius in Tainan is the oldest on the island, the first parts constructed in 1665 by a supporter of the Ming dynasty. The main symbolic gate of Confucius’ temple in

²⁸Romanized in Mandarin as *yuan*.

Tainan is a 20 foot tall, free-standing, limestone, post and lintel Japanese *tori*, which, according to the inscription, was a gift from Japan to the temple (see Figure 6, item 1). A *tori* is used in Japanese Shinto religion to indicate the division of the mundane world from the sacred. There are no walls attached to *tori* gates, they are free-standing thresholds, non-functional as doorways proper, but powerful indicators of a change in the nature of space. The long axis of the *tori*'s lintel runs north-south, which means that the gate opening faces east-west. West of the *tori*, across a busy street, is a gate with a post and lintel door (see Figure 6, item 2), set in the outer compound wall (see Figure 6, item 5).

This wall forms a large, roughly square shape. Inside is a large compound with a half-dozen sun-bleached red-brick buildings (see Figure 6, item 11), a large brick courtyard and a smaller, inner walled compound²⁹ (see Figure 6, items 7, 8, 9). Directly west of the *tori* and located between the inner compound and the pond (see Figure 6, item 4) are two massive, ancient banyan trees, easily 200 years old, whose shade covers a third of the large courtyard (see Figure 6, items 3). A brick path wends its way among these smaller buildings and there are flowers planted between them³⁰.

Among the buildings in the outer courtyard is a pagoda, (see Figure 6, item 10) one type of Buddhist shrine. Three stories of octagonal brick walls capped by a conical roof, this pagoda, though architecturally identical to Buddhist tower-stupas discussed by Snodgrass (Snodgrass 1992:221), in fact houses Confucian gods. In his study of Chinese architecture and geomancy, Alfred Schinz (Schinz 1996:385 plates 14-17) notes that this particular

²⁹ This inner-outer courtyard pattern is mirrored in other contemporary temple architecture. For example, the Qing (1644-1911) dynasty Temple of Agriculture in Beijing, wherein the spirit of Earth and the spirit of Grain were united, has the same inner-outer courtyard pattern (Schinz 1996:30-31 pl.8).

³⁰See Schinz 1996:384 pl. 7 for an aerial photograph taken in the 1970s.

pagoda houses shrines to two literature gods, Wenshang and Guixing. Inasmuch as Confucius was the first Chinese teacher and is the patron god of learning, the literature gods are members of the same logical category of deity, or the same celestial ministry, to use the Chinese gods-as-government concept presented by Ahern (Ahern 1981) and Jordan (Jordan 1989).

The smaller courtyard (see Figure 6, item 7) surrounds the main shrine to Confucius (see Figure 6, item 8) and several other smaller shrines. The small courtyard has a post and lintel entrance which faces south. This entrance has three doors (see Figure 6, items 6a and 6b). The two flanking doors (see Figure 6, items 6a) are open to public access, but the larger central door (see Figure 6, item 6b) is not.

Centrally located in the inner courtyard is the main shrine (see Figure 6, item 8). It is a red-brick, rectangular, two-story building wherein the long axis runs east-west, parallel to the line of sight through the *tori*. On the southern side of the main shrine building is a two story doorway, which is open during daylight hours. Inside is an altar with a wooden tablet inscribed with Confucius' Chinese name (Schinz 1996:384 pl. 8). This tablet is identical in form to the ancestral tablet found in every traditional Taiwanese family. It is here that pilgrims come to burn incense and tourists come to take pictures.

In addition to the spirit tablet, the god, in the form of a statue, sits facing south, out through the door. Looking in this direction, his line of sight runs directly through the inner courtyard gate (see Figure 6, item 6b) toward the pond beyond³¹ (see Figure 6, item 4). The

³¹ Why is this layout so precise? One reason may be to ward off ghosts. I have been told that ghosts abhor water and can only move in straight lines. The straight line entrance to the Confucian shrine is blocked, for ghosts, by the pond and the trees. Furthermore, because the outer gate and inner gate are at right angles to one another, ghosts have difficulty entering the inner shrine through the front gate as well.

wall in which the inner courtyard gate (item 6b) is built is perpendicular to this line of sight, as is the line of sight through the *tori*.

Also in the inner courtyard, to the left and right of the god's line of sight, are long, single story buildings (see Figure 6, item 9). The god gazes down the long axis of these buildings, whose doorways face into the inner courtyard (see Figure 6, item 7), at right angles to the god's line of sight. These secondary buildings are lesser shrines. Inside them are housed tall, vertical tablets on which are inscribed the names and titles of the well-educated -- and money-donating -- of southern Taiwan. To summarize, refer to Figure 6, and note the relationship between the main shrine (8), the lesser shrines (9), and the gate (6). The god's line of sight runs from the shrine (8) to the pond (4).

Now that we have viewed the shrine architecturally, let us imagine it subjectively. As one travels from the street to the innermost Confucius shrine, one passes through layers of increasing sacredness. First the pilgrim on the street goes through the *tori* gate, which marks the outer threshold and thus the pilgrim's departure from the mundane world.

When I first observed the *tori* gate, I thought it looked out of place. Indeed, according to the Chinese inscription on the gate, it is in fact a gift from Japan. In Japanese Shinto architecture, the *tori* is a very important indicator of the category of space one is entering. The *tori* is a particularly good marker of the division between sacred and mundane spaces because it serves no utilitarian purpose. There is no door, nor is the *tori* attached to walls: it provides neither security nor structural support for anything. It has only one function, that of a threshold between worlds. Pilgrims must walk through the *tori*, which separates the mundane world from the sacred. One could go so far as to say that passing through the *tori* makes one, *defacto*, a pilgrim.

Broaching the compound door, the pilgrim has entered the outer courtyard, which itself contains Buddhist and Daoist architecture and shrines of Confucian deities. It is therefore a place more sacred than the street. The pilgrim then continues heading west, under the banyan trees, with the pond on his left. Turning right, up the brick sidewalk, the pilgrim passes several small, free-standing shrine buildings. Next, he approaches the gate of the main, inner shrine.

It is offensive to the deity to actually step on the stone of the shrine threshold. Stepping over the threshold, (of items 6a) the pilgrim enters the inner courtyard of the shrine. The pilgrim approaches the two story building directly opposite the threshold, crossing a stone courtyard. On the left and right are the shrines with the names of Taiwan's earlier scholars who claimed Confucius as their patron. They are those people who have carried on the Confucian tradition, and upheld, at least publicly, his standards and ideals. As such, they are his descendants in an ideological, not biological, sense.

Last, the pilgrim prays before the altar of Confucius, asking for help on the impending and all important College Entrance Examination or whatever educational hurdle is next in the pilgrim's life. Afterwards, the supplicant can retrace his or her steps, or exit out a back door in the rear of one of the lesser shrine buildings. Over the course of four hours, I saw approximately two hundred people do exactly this.

Evidently the innermost shrine was constructed first along with the inner courtyard, and subsequently, the outbuildings, the *tori* gate, and pagoda, the outer compound wall and the pond were added in stages. The trees were very old, and had been well cared for. I could see that these things were constructed at different times, and that some of them had been rebuilt - the compound wall was quite new in some places, and the *tori* gate is actually across a busy

street from the temple, so it is likely that the temple property lines have changed over the centuries. It is sufficient for this study to note that this temple has been under construction for several hundred years.

I. Redundancy between space and behavior

Inside the inner courtyard, (see Figure 6, courtyard 7 and shrine 8) most people, even tourists, remain subdued. A few burn incense and pray before the high altar (in shrine 8) and a few use crescent shaped divination blocks (described in Ahern 1981, Jordan 1989 and elsewhere) to learn the will of the god. The inner courtyard is empty of people not engaged in tourist, religious or maintenance activities.

The space in the outer courtyard under the twin banyan trees³² serves as a public space. I observed, in the course of one day, five distinct groups of local people come in and practice various kinds of light exercise, *qigong* and *gongfu*. Some of these groups practiced while playing to tapes of traditional Chinese music. These groups treated the outer courtyard almost as if it were a public park and not a shrine to the god of learning. Several nuclear families with small children came, the parents or grandparents resting beneath the trees. Neighbors sat down together and gossiped. A pair of old men came in and played Chinese chess on the wall under the trees. These groups stayed for at least 90 minutes and none of them entered the main shrine.

Many others did however. In addition to the 50-60 domestic and international tourists, sporting cameras, led by guides and brought in a bus, perhaps 150 Taiwanese came to

³²See Figure 6, the space inside wall 5, but outside of the inner courtyard doors 6.

worship and pay their respects. Interestingly, these Taiwanese were young and old alike, many high school and college aged Taiwanese unaccompanied by elders³³.

The behaviors observed in the temple compound are a subset of the behaviors observed in Taiwanese public parks³⁴. All of the non-religious activities conducted in the outer compound are easily found in public parks: chess playing, *gongfu* practice, families and friends gossiping. In addition, public parks have activities that are not found in this temple compound, nor did I observe them on any of the other temple grounds that I observed. Playing loud music, playing basketball or any ball game, kite flying, traditional, ball-room, or hiphop dancing and badminton, all popular outdoor activities among Taiwanese between 1997 and 2000, activities I frequently observed in public parks, were all absent from the temple compound in 1999.

In general, the non-religious, non-tourist behaviors I observed in the temple compound were the more subdued, quieter behaviors found in public parks. For this reason I hesitate to refer to the temple compound as a public park. Perhaps "public space" would be more appropriate. At least, the fact that temple compound behavior is a restricted and quieter subset of public park behavior, and that religious behavior, burning incense and consulting oracles, is of a completely different category, should be noted.

Rather than treating a sacred place blasphemously, on the contrary, the use of the shrine's outer courtyard as a public space integrates it into the urban community, a community that often lacks open spaces, particularly as development in urban areas continues

³³ This runs counter to Stafford's (Stafford 1995:48) finding that religion is something done to and for young people, but not by them nor taught to them.

³⁴ People in public parks do not pray or burn incense, obviously. These behaviors were not observed in the temple compound, but in the shrine proper.

at a fast pace. The use of the outer courtyard as a public space also indicates the integration of Chinese religion into the daily lives of its people.

Spatial distinctions are reflected in behavioral distinctions. At the Confucian temple, an inner courtyard and an outer courtyard are separated by gates and walls. There are two distinct and easily observed classes of behavior, religious behavior and public space behavior, found in these spaces. There are three, if one counts the urban commercial activities that are found in the mundane space outside the *tori* gate, but not within it. Additionally, one of these categories of behavior, public space behavior, is a subset of public park behavior. Redundancy exists, therefore, between the category of space and the types of behavior practiced in that space. Knowing what kind of space a certain area is will inform the participant what kind of behavior is appropriate and which forbidden. Conversely, knowing an individual's behavior gives an observer a better than random chance at identifying what kind of space the individual is in.

For example, if someone purchases something, he is most likely in the mundane urban space³⁵. If someone is offering incense or using divining blocks, I expect to find them in front of a shrine of some kind at home or in a temple. Someone practicing *Taijiquan* or playing chess will most probably not be found immediately in front of a shrine, but may be on the temple grounds or in a nearby public space.

³⁵ At Believe Heaven Temple in Taibei, the most popular place of worship, incense and flower offerings may be purchased, but only *outside* the temple walls.

II. Multiple symbolic systems

The walled courtyard of this Confucian temple has a constellation of elements from several symbolic systems. Confucian and Daoist symbolism dominate. This is seen in the symmetrical layout and architectural style of the buildings of the inner courtyard and the fact that the inner courtyard faces water. The entire compound is laid out according to the principles of geomancy, which is an aspect of Daoism. The Buddhist-Confucian pagoda and the Japanese Shinto *torii* indicate that while these religions have radically different views of the world, they exist in the same space-time as Chinese culture. Additionally all of these traditions, or some historically situated followers of these traditions, respected Confucius and his ideals. Subjectively, the inclusion of elements of disparate cultural systems increases rather than decreases the sacredness of the walled Confucian shrine in Tainan.

In this section I have examined architectural, symbolic and behavioral elements of the Confucian temple in Tainan. I have done this in order to demonstrate several principles. The first is that there is a non-random relationship between behavior and space. Although this is not a radical idea, I have used systems theory's concept of redundancy to do so.

Second, I have demonstrated that walled temples have multiple social functions in Taiwan and that these behavioral aspects are spatially distinct. Moreover, while they are distinct from one another, these activities, religious and non-religious, are at the same time related to other categories of behavior practiced in other kinds of space.

Third, I enumerated the symbolic systems from which the major architectural elements are drawn. The architectural styles of several structures indicates that they are drawn from several belief systems. Recognizing these architectural elements as representative of their belief systems makes the observer aware of the wide, even international respect, that

Confucius commands. It also forces the observer to recognize that at least in Taiwan, the internal consistency of symbolic logic is broad enough to embrace the symbols of multiple belief systems without losing coherence.

III. Other similar architectural patterns

The relationship of architectural features in Tainan's Confucian temple, where the god looks across his descendants out the main gate, is repeated in many places in Chinese architecture, both in the past and present.

This spatial pattern is found in the temples at the second millennium BC archaeological site of Erlitou in Henan Province. There, inside the temple courtyard, is the high altar. Although the long axis of the temple is parallel to the wall in which the gate is built, the altar itself is off-center from the main gate to the courtyard. However, behind and beneath the altar is a grave, which does have a straight line of sight to the main gate, perpendicular to the wall in which the gate is set (Schinz 1996:29 plates 2 and 3).

The pattern is approximated in a Yuan dynasty (1280-1368 AD) text which describes an ideal descent group graveyard. The grave of the oldest ancestor was to be located in the center and the subsequent generations placed proceeding directly away in age hierarchy, that is, according to when they were born, not who their fathers were. Standing at the oldest ancestor's grave, one would look down the rows of descendants. The original ancestor, if he could see, would have an unimpeded view of the lineage spread before him. This layout "would stress the unity of the group and its common origin" (Ebrey 1987:27) over the individual descent lines.

Another example of the same relationship of architectural elements is found in an upper-middle class eighteenth century Taiwanese family home preserved as a museum in northern Taipei (see Figure 4).

In this house, the innermost structure housed the family altar (see Figure 4, item 5). In Taiwan, the family altar is divided into two areas. One area on the altar is for the worship of the gods, the other is for devotions to the patrilineal ancestors (Jordan 1989:94). The family altar faces the main courtyard (see Figure 4, item 4).

Of courtyards in family residences, Cohen (Cohen 1976:23) says “a compound’s courtyard is built at the very outset...The courtyard, like the central hall, remains the common possession of the agnatic group as it increases in individual and family membership”. The line of sight from the ancestral altar, on which is placed the ancestral tablet, crosses this courtyard and proceeds to the main door of the house compound³⁶ (see Figure 4, item 3). From there, the line of sight continues first across the outer courtyard (see Figure 4, item 2) and to the pond (see Figure 4, item 1). The pond, positioned in front of the primary inner entrance to the house³⁷, prevents ghosts and hinders thieves from entering.

This was the pattern house layout in imperial times (Gernet 1959:114) and during the Republican period (Yang 1945:39). The floor plans of multi-generational Chinese homesteads in the pre-Second World War (Cohen 1976:18-21) and later periods (Jordan

³⁶ This is true of family altars elsewhere in smaller houses in modern Taiwan, as Jordan (Jordan 1989:93) notes that the “family altar...stands in the central room of the house, opposite the principal door”. By 1999, changing patterns of household architecture had changed this pattern so that it was no longer universally true, but many of my informants told me that placing the altar so that it faced the doorway and nothing was looking down on it was preferred.

³⁷ Surrounding the house is a wall with an outer gate, not shown, but which makes the pond and the outer courtyard (Figure 4, items 1 and 2) elements of the outer compound, just as they are at the Confucian Temple.

1989:93,94) also contain the same spatial relationships. This style of architecture is being replaced in land-starved Taiwan with three to five story, poured concrete buildings. I have nevertheless observed many less ornate and occupied houses with the same basic plan as in Figure 4 in both northern and southern Taiwan.

One could argue that there is a major difference between temples and private homes. Temples hold statues of the gods, statues which are inhabited by the god's spirit and actualize the god's presence. When these statues are transported (Jordan 1989), petitioned (Ahern 1981) and sacrificed to (Stafford 1995), these behaviors are directed toward the gods properly so called³⁸. Taiwanese people behave as if the god is imminent in his or her statue. Private altars, however, do not have statues of ancestors. In this respect temples and private homes are different.

However, family altars do have ancestral tablets, which list all of the known male relatives of the lineage (Jordan 1989:94, Cohen 1976:37). Ancestral tablets house the spirits of the ancestors named on them. In her description of the origins of grave offering and tomb sweeping rituals, Patricia Ebrey (Ebrey 1987) points out that the Chinese classics indicated that

individuals had two souls, a *p'o* that stayed with the body in the grave, and a *hun* that left the body and could be settled in an ancestral tablet. In the classics sacrifices were made to the spirit in the tablet but not the *p'o* in the grave. In the Sung [dynasty]...Ch'eng I (1033-1107) argued that the spirits of the dead did not reside in their graves but in spirit tablets (Ebrey 1987:22)

These tablets are placed on family altars. Ancestral tablets therefore house ancestral spirits. The tablets thus share this characteristic with statues of gods. Ancestral tablets and

³⁸ Jordan's (Jordan 1989) study of Taiwanese religion shows what appears to be the evolution of an individual's soul from spirit to ghost (for bad or neglected people) or from spirit to god (for good people).

gods' statues are the physical manifestations of the spirit of the place, the *genus loci*. Thus it comes as no real surprise that ancestral tablets in house structures and gods' statues in temples have the same relationship *vis a vis* architectural elements such as courtyards, primary doors and descendants' quarters.

Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall

The walls of old Taipei no longer stand, but the old city gates still exist, and the walls shaped the angle of the streets that ran alongside them. Across the street from the old east gate is a walled park. Inside is an immense building with a royal blue roof, visible from tall buildings for miles around. Inside is a massive bronze statue of Chiang Kaishek, the first president of the Republic of China on Taiwan. Famous for its well dressed and immovable guards, relieved every 30 minutes, an eternity in Taiwan's summer, Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall is a well known tourist spot.

Surrounding the Hall proper is a public park (see Figure 7). The park, which is laid out with trees and grass and many quiet corners, is amazingly peaceful considering it lies in the center of such a massive³⁹ and busy city. Corresponding, though not identical, sets of man-made hills and ponds, laid out facing one another across the long plaza, are home to birds and many giant carp.

The tree lined, twisting paths limit the view, so that from ten yards into the park, the outside wall is not visible. There are many trees, of several varieties. There are old banyans, probably remnants of the original park or neighborhood on that site, newer pine trees that

³⁹Taipei's population exceeds 1 million.

give the feeling of the cool mountains and even a bamboo grove. Grass and flowers abound and water lilies bloom in the ponds.

A cloister forms the outer wall. The outer wall is attached to a 10 foot tall roofed walkway, walled on the exterior side in white concrete. The interior has regularly spaced concrete pillars and above is a blue tiled ridge-poled roof. The tiles are ceramic, the rest is rebar-reinforced concrete.

The effect of the wall is significant. It blocks out the sound of traffic, which can be heavy, and much of the smog from the street. Once inside the park wall, the air is cleaner and the atmosphere much more relaxed. There is a distinct feeling of being separated from the outside world, that one has entered a world of quiet and rest. Even an American can feel that the space has good *fengshui*.

Facing the Memorial Hall is a thirty meter tall gate with five arches (see Figure 7, Figure 8 bottom, Figure 10 bottom). This archway is named the Gate of Upright Centrality, according to the information pamphlet (CKSMH 1999). As early as the Southern Sung dynasty (1127-1278), imperial decree regulated the number of arches in a gate, the limiting factor being one's social rank. Commoners were allowed a gate with one arch or lintel, and only "important dignitaries of the empire might have gates with several passageways, such as were to be seen at the Imperial Palace" (Gernet 1959:117). One imperial example of a five arched gate is located at the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 AD) imperial cemetery, north of Beijing (Schinz 1996:316).

Chiang Kaishek was not only the president of the Republic of China on Taiwan for three decades, he was also the brother-in-law of the founder of the Republic, Dr. Sun Yatsen. Apparently, Chiang Kaishek's son, who followed his father as president, approved the use of

an imperial status marker, namely the number of arches in the main gate, in the construction of his father's memorial.

Of course, gates serve a number of defensive functions. Gernet (Gernet 1959) described additional attributes of the gates in Hangzhou in the years 1250-1276. At that time, Hangzhou was the capital of the Southern Sung empire (see Figure 1).

Gates had a screen in front of them consisting of a wall six feet high which hid the entrance and was supposed to keep out baleful influences. We might mention here another form of protection against bad luck and demons: the gate gods. Painted images of them were placed one on each side of the gateway to prevent evil spirits from entering the house. These gods were historical persons who had been deified -- two captains of the guard who, according to the legend, kept armed guard at the door of the apartments of the first Tang [Dynasty] emperor and thus put an end to his nightmares. (Gernet 1959:117)

The multi-arched gates at the Chiang Kaishek memorial do not have screens, but they do have giant lions, carved of stone, in the place of the captains of the guard. Lions and guardians both face out, away from the thing they are guarding. The old main entrance to Tainan also consisted of a three arched, post and lintel gate with stone lions in the front (Takekoshi 1907:87). Across Taiwan, every Daoist temple door is guarded by pictures of heavenly soldiers, the gods' bodyguards, and often by a pair of guardian lions as well. Many house doors in Taipei display likenesses of these war gods for protection.

Between the five arched gate and the Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall proper is a long plaza where state and public ceremonies are held (see Figure 7, Figure 8 bottom, Figure 10). In recent years, these have included the International Aboriginal Festival, the presentation of Buddha's Tooth, the annual Lantern Festival and many free, open air concerts. National parades sweep by the street immediately to the south on national holidays. On the north side of the plaza is the National Concert Hall, on the southern flank is the National Theatre (see

Figure 7, Figure 8 top and bottom, Figure 10 bottom). It is in the colonnades of these buildings that Luo Dexiu teaches Baguazhang.

From an architectural perspective, the Chiang Kaishek Memorial and the buildings that flank it are a small scale replica of the Forbidden City in Beijing. This is not to say that the buildings are smaller, but rather that whereas the Forbidden City consists of hundreds of buildings, the Chiang Kaishek Memorial consists of three.

The Forbidden City housed the imperial residences and offices in Beijing during the last three dynasties. Construction began in the Yuan dynasty (1280-1368 AD), but most of the building took place in the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1644 and 1644-1911 respectively), especially in the reign of the third Ming emperor, when he moved the capital from Nanjing to Beijing. Between 1403-1417, this emperor employed 200-300,000 workers for 14 years to build the more than 800 buildings that make up the old Imperial Palace.

The Forbidden City is divided into the Inner Courts, where the emperor, his family and his concubines lived, and the Outer Court, where the official business was conducted and decrees announced. The Forbidden City was built according to the dictates of Chinese geomancy. Located at the center of the central city of the central kingdom in the world, it was the most sacred place on earth. Constructed on principles of symmetry and harmony, the place is a maze of courtyards and passageways. Schinz (Schinz 1996:320-332) describes the layout, function and symbolism of many aspects of the Forbidden City, which is well outside my purpose here.

In Taipei the National Theatre and the National Concert Hall are built according to the same geomantic ideals of "heaven and man at one" (CKSMH 1999). Indeed, the exteriors are

based upon the design of the Taho Hall and the Baoho Hall, two of finest examples of Chinese imperial palace architecture in the Forbidden City (NTCH 1999).

These two buildings, the National Theatre and the National Concert Hall, are rectangular in plan, 6 stories tall and have a colonnade running around the outside, supporting the roof. Both rest upon a 15 foot tall base. The long axis of both buildings runs east-west, so each one is north-south divided into a mirror image, in plan and in volume. The two buildings are not exactly identical: the National Theatre has a palace style roof, while the National Concert Hall has a hip and gable roof. Nevertheless, they are very similar, such that when viewed, one is reminded of the other. Thus there is double symmetry: each half of each building is a mirror image of the other half, and each building approximates the other across the plaza (see Figure 8).

The largest, centrally located structure in this park is the Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall proper (see Figure 9, Figure 10 top). Located on the eastern end of the plaza, surrounded on three sides by parkland, it is oriented towards the five arched main gate. Inside is a statue, a seated figure of Chiang Kaishek. Compare this to the layout of the Confucian temple in Tainan, where the main shrine faces the main gate and the line of sight crosses the courtyard, at right angles to the lesser shrines (Figure 6) and to the house compound (Figure 4). The floor plans of Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall, the inner courtyard of the Confucian Temple and the basic multigenerational house compound are the same. The line of sight from the statue at Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall is perpendicular to the front doors of both theatres, running directly through the five-arched primary gate. The line of sight from the statue crosses the large plaza, which, like the household courtyard, is common property, to be used by all.

The Hall proper stands 70 meters high on an enormous square base, terraced with three flights of stairs up the front (west) and flanking sides. This feature duplicates the Taihe Dian throne hall in the Forbidden City (Schinz 1996:321 pl. 60). Above the base is a cubical tower, of white concrete. In the middle of the western facet of the octagon are a pair of massive, 16 meter tall bronze doors, that roll back into the wall. Behind these doors is the statue of Chiang Kaishek. Above the cube are a series of octagonal, stacked tiled cones whose apex point skyward. At the pinnacle of the stacked cones is a bronze colored tapered post, which resembles a flower bud about to open. The upper levels of the Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall structure are partially modeled on the Tiantan, the imperial shrine, in Beijing (CKSMH 1999).

The main hall building is not a Confucian or Daoist temple. It is not a traditional Chinese house structure, or any modification of it. This structure has a floor plan that is symmetrical around a point in the square base and a volume that is symmetrical around a vertical axis. The floor plan of the first level is a square, the floor plan of the second is a octagon. In plan view, the roof cones are octagons, which are nearly circles. In profile, the cones on the roof are triangles. The architectural elements are thus square, circle and triangle. The monument hall of Chiang Kaishek most closely resembles a domed stupa, a Buddhist monument (Snodgrass 1992:10) more similar to the pagoda in the outer compound at the Tainan Confucian Temple than to any of other Taiwanese buildings discussed thus far.

This stupa is not a true stupa, of course. First, Chiang Kaishek himself was Christian, not Buddhist. Second, the interior spaces are used: a museum in the base, the massive statue on the second level. An Indian stupa “has no usable interior space” (Snodgrass 1992:4). But

the Chiang Kaishek Memorial resembles a stupa closely enough that it can pass for one at first glance.

The majority of behavior at Chiang Kaishek Memorial Park is radically different from that observed in the inner courtyard at the Confucian Temple. Like the Confucian Temple in Tainan, the Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall houses what could be considered, in the Chinese universe, a statue of the god or ancestor, Chiang Kaishek. As far as I can tell, however, no one in Taiwan treats this particular statue as either a god or an ancestor. It is true that the statue is seated as are gods in temples. Historically he is the creator of modern Taiwan, having personally shaped much of the foreign and domestic policy in the 1950s, '60s and '70s. Official delegations occasionally come and pay their respects to the late president by bowing in front of the statue. However, I have never seen anyone make offerings or burn incense there, and when offerings are made to him, as some KMT officials do on the anniversary of his death and on Tomb Sweeping Day (the fourth day of the fourth lunar month), they do so at his tomb, located at his family shrine in the northern part of Taipei. Behavior at Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall thus could not be considered religious or sacred.

Behavior in the park surrounding the Hall is also different from, and yet related to, the "public space" behavior in the outer courtyard of the Confucian Temple. In the latter space, I noted that while there was a wide range of non-religious behavior, such as conversation, board games and light exercise, this behavior all shared the quality of being fairly quiet and unobtrusive. As such, I described the behavior in that space as "public space" behavior, a subset of a wider range of "public park" behaviors.

At the Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall, these "public space" activities are easily observed. Friends, couples and small groups can be found chatting day and night. People,

especially men, playing Chinese chess can be found throughout the shady areas on the sides of the ponds during the daytime and are especially thick on weekends. Taijiquan and aerobics groups are a very common sight, day and night.

In addition to these low key behaviors, people fly kites in the central plaza, an activity which is very conspicuous. Accompanied by loud music, others practice hip-hop and various other kinds of Western and Chinese group dancing. Small groups of badminton players are a common sight. Large groups, ten or more individuals, can be seen practicing several styles of *gongfu*⁴⁰. Entire marching bands assemble and rehearse, along with their baton and rifle teams, in the colonnades and on the plaza. Various special interest groups stage what most closely resembles a county fair from my own rural home, where, with the exception of the livestock, they sell handicrafts and traditional food. Finally, public outdoor concerts are frequent, featuring pop music stars. This broader range of observed behavior in Chiang Kaishek Memorial Park is identical to the range of behaviors that I have observed in other large public parks around Taipei. As far as public behavior is concerned, Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall is a park, not a temple.

Although the relationship of architectural elements at the park are consistent with a temple layout or traditional Chinese homestead, the behavior of people in the park towards the god/ancestral statue of Chiang Kaishek is clearly not religious behavior. The stupa which houses the *genus loci* statue dominates the space but is not the focal point of much of the behavior.

I have shown that there are certain sets of similar relationships among certain architectural elements in both traditional and modern Chinese architecture. First is the use of

physical walls to separate one kind of space from another. Walls are used to mark, even in instances when they serve little strictly utilitarian purpose, the division of space. Second is the spatial relationship between the deity statue/ancestral tablet and the location of descendants in courtyards directly in the line of sight or arranged in structures perpendicular to the line of sight from the deity seat. Third is the spatial relationship between the deity statue/ancestral tablet and the primary entrance to the structure, whether a gate or a front door. A fourth common theme is the integration of architectural and symbolic elements from multiple symbolic systems, without apparent discord.

These sets of relationships are found in traditional Chinese homes, in at least one major temple in southern Taiwan and at the Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall in Taipei. The repetition of these relationships indicates that these spaces participate in some common quality. Without further investigation, which lies outside of the scope of this work, I can only speculate that that common quality is to be found within the rules of geomancy. Another line of productive inquiry would be to examine other temple grounds to see if this spatial pattern is repeated.

Originally, I expected to first demonstrate that walled public parks and Chinese temples shared the same architectural characteristics. From that, knowing that temple spaces are sacred spaces, I intended to argue that because of this shared architectural relationships, walled parks also partook in some degree of the sacred nature of temples. However, the argument became much more complex, and less cohesive, when I added the behavior I observed in the respective spaces into the analysis.

⁴⁹In this instance, it is the large group size, not the activity itself, that is notable.

As noted above, there are distinct categories of behavior associated with various spatially distinct areas. Religious behavior is clearly associated with inner shrines of temples and ancestral altars. Subdued “public space” behavior is associated with outer courtyards of temples. The latter is a subset of behaviors found in public parks. These sets of behaviors, the religious and the public park, are further distinguished from the commercial behavior that makes up much of the rest of the city⁴¹.

The relationship between the category of behavior and category of space is complex. I cannot reasonably argue that public park behavior is in the same logical category as temple behavior simply because they are both undertaken in spaces distinct from the rest of the city. Any given space is therefore not treated as a sacred space simply because of the relationships between the constituent architectural elements. On the other hand, public park behavior is clearly distinct from mundane commercial and production behavior, which is conspicuously absent from both parks and temples. There must therefore exist some other element that marks a given space as more sacred or less. This is also outside the range of my study, but raises questions for further research.

What I conclude is that walled temples and parks are both sacred, distinct from the mundane nature of urban areas outside of their walls. This sacred nature is evident first in the physical, spatial division of walled temples and parks from the rest of the city. Second, the sacredness can be observed in the deliberate and careful relative arrangement of architectural

⁴¹ Twice a month, on the full and new moons, and on other religious days as well, most Taiwanese burn incense and make small offerings at their family altars. The following day, many merchants set up altars on folding tables in front of their establishments. Incense is burned and a wide range of traditional and modern offerings are made to various gods, usually including the local Earth God. At these times, the behavior *directed toward* the altar is religious or sacred in nature, but the commercial activity within the establishment does not cease. There is a cyclical increase in the number of modes of observable behavior, but not a change from one to another.

elements. It is my suspicion that they are arranged in each case according to a specific geomantic analysis of the site, just as the old city of Taipei was (Schinz 1996:378). Third, the nature of the space is evident in the modes of behavior that are allowed, namely that commercial and production activities are forbidden from temples and parks. Within the category of “walled temples and parks”, there are differing degrees of sacredness. Parks are less sacred, and this is marked by the lack of religious behavior, even when, like Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall, they possess nearly identical architectural elements.

Luo Dexiu teaches Baguazhang in the colonnade of the National Theatre of Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall. He and his students thus participate in and contribute to the *fengshui* of the space. This makes the space itself a significant element of my study, though it is admittedly difficult to observe how it relates to the other elements.

In the next chapter, I turn my gaze from modern Taipei towards northern China in the mid-nineteenth century. I do this to trace the foundation of Baguazhang from its inception, through its several generations of practitioners, in order to place Luo’s practice within the historical context of the tradition. It will also allow us to examine the relationship between Luo’s group of Baguazhang practitioners and other Baguazhang groups. The lore of the Baguazhang tradition, including its key historical figures, is part of the non-combat education of a Baguazhang practitioner.

Chapter 3

Dong Haichuan and His Students

If one aspires to attain the Dao, one should practice circle walking.
-canon of the Complete Truth sect of Daoism

I asked Luo Dexiu how Baguazhang originated. My fieldnotes record his answer.

If it has circle walking, it is Dong Haichuan's Baguazhang. That was Dong Haichuan's genius, to incorporate the circle walking into the martial arts. Dong Haichuan studied a lot of martial arts and did a lot of fighting. He grew to understand the principles of why some techniques worked and others did not. He used these principles to make his art...

When he taught, he would first have a new student fight one of his older students. Then he would see the new man's weaknesses. He would say "Your skill is not bad, but I can make you better". For each student, he showed them how to use the Baguazhang to improve their existing martial arts.

In this chapter, I want to leave the modern practice of Luo's Baguazhang and look across the Taiwan Strait to Beijing and Tianjin and go back in time to the mid-nineteenth century. I do this to trace the transmission of Baguazhang from its creation through its several generations of practitioners. It is important, especially in the development of the next several chapters, because I want to place Luo's practice within the historical context of the Baguazhang tradition. Describing the teachers and students of the past will also allow us to better comprehend the relationships between Luo's group of modern Baguazhang practitioners and other Baguazhang groups.

The lore of the Baguazhang tradition, including its key historical figures, is part of the non-combat education of a Baguazhang practitioner. Most of what follows is summarized

from Dan Miller's Pa Kua Chang Journal (PKCJ) and conversations with Luo Dexiu. Figure 11 shows the basic teacher-student relationships between most of the individuals presented here, with special emphasis on the teachers of Luo's version of the art.

Dong Haichuan (1813-1882)

According to Kang Gewu,⁴² (PKCJ 3(4):27) Dong Haichuan was born around 1813 in Hebei Province in northeastern China (see Figure 1). His family was poor, and as a child Dong Haichuan took a liking to martial arts, which requires little financial outlay, as opposed to scholarship, which requires money for books and teachers.

Throughout China, there are many local styles of martial arts. It seems likely that Dong Haichuan studied one or more of these. He gained a reputation as a skilled fighter. Eventually there was some kind of problem between Dong Haichuan and a wealthy descent group of another surname in the same village. For whatever reason, Dong Haichuan left his hometown.

Dong Haichuan's agnatic cousin, also surnamed Dong, lived in another part of Hebei Province. Cousin Dong was also a locally well-known fighter, whom local bandits are said to have feared. It is likely, says Kang Gewu, that Dong Haichuan went to live with his relatives and studied the style of martial arts that his cousin practiced. It is indeed a common

⁴² Kang Gewu is a mainland Chinese researcher whose specialty is the documentation of Baguazhang's origins (PKCJ 3(1):14-20, 3(2):14-22, 3(4):25-29). His very exacting research included not only exhaustive documentary investigations but also nearly 300 interviews with practitioners and instructors, as well as archivists, on this subject. This formed the basis of his 1981 master's thesis at Beijing College (described in PKCJ 3(4):26). He was also one of the primary motivating forces behind the location, retrieval and restoration of Dong Haichuan's tomb outside of Beijing in the early 1980s.

practice for children to spend considerable time living with relatives and family friends in Chinese society, especially when studying (Stafford 1995).

When asked later where he had learned his Baguazhang, Dong Haichuan replied that he had learned it in the mountains from Daoists. This is what is recorded on his tombstone. Kang Gewu found that Dong Haichuan actually did become a member of a Daoist sect called Complete Truth. The primary meditation method of this sect was chanting while walking in a circle. The primary exercise of Baguazhang is walking in a circle. To non-martial artists, this may not seem like much of an important point, but in fact it is. In all of Chinese martial arts, only Baguazhang uses walking the around the perimeter of a circle as part of its training repertoire. Later, while teaching, it is said that Dong Haichuan admonished his students by telling them that “training in martial arts ceaselessly is inferior to walking the circle. In Baguazhang the circle walk practice is the font of all training.”

There are many legends surrounding Dong Haichuan and his fighting skills. It is rumored that Dong was involved in a failed revolt against the Manchu government in the 1860s. He survived and subsequently escaped to Beijing, to become a servant in the house of a prince of the empire called the Prince of Su.

One legend has it that the prince had, like all who could afford it, a unit of bodyguards. The head of this prince’s bodyguards was a Muslim boxer⁴³. The captain of the guard dominated the household staff and was supported by his wife, supposedly a pistol expert.

It is said that once, at a crowded banquet for which the Prince was host, Dong Haichuan served tea to the guests by scaling the wall and crossing the roof to the kitchen and back

⁴³ Chinese Muslims have a well known and respected martial arts tradition distinct from the Chinese Buddhist and Daoist ones (Ma 1984).

while spilling not a drop of tea. The Prince recognized from this that Dong was a man with no ordinary talent, and required Dong to demonstrate his martial arts skill. Unable to refuse, Dong demonstrated his Baguazhang to the guests. The guard captain naturally felt insecure and threatened by this, challenged Dong to a duel and was soundly beaten on the spot. The Prince of Su invited Dong Haichuan to teach martial arts to his bodyguards.

Some nights later, seeking revenge for this public loss of face, the guard captain crept into Dong's room armed with a knife while his wife guarded him from a window with her pistol. Before they were aware that he was awake, Dong had disarmed the wife, and aimed the pistol at the chief bodyguard. The guard captain fell upon his knees and begged forgiveness, which was granted. The story concludes with the would-be killer becoming one of Dong Haichuan's students.

Another near-fantastic story concerns Dong Haichuan's death, related by Robert Smith (Smith and Pittman 1989:22)⁴⁴. Believing that he was dead, Dong's body was placed in a casket by his students. However, when some of his students attempted to pick up the coffin, it would not move. Again and again they tried, all in vain. Then a voice was heard from within the coffin, saying, "As I've always said, none of you has even a tenth of my skill." So saying, Dong Haichuan died, and the coffin could be moved. He was 81 years old.

When Dong Haichuan began teaching martial arts in the House of Su around 1864, he did not teach his Baguazhang. Instead, he taught the other boxing styles that he had learned as a young man. Some time after that, he took his first private student, Yin Fu.

⁴⁴ Robert Smith is a retired American CIA officer who was stationed in Taiwan for several years in the 1960s and spent much of his free time training with the various martial arts teachers around the island. Nearly all of the Western martial artists who do the most cursory research about Chinese martial arts have read at least one of Smith's books. they are classics in the field of modern martial arts folklore.

Yin Fu (1841-1909)

Yin Fu was a youth when he first encountered Dong Haichuan. At that time, he lacked any martial arts experience. It is said that his father was a farmer, and Yin Fu left the farm and moved to Beijing where he became first an apprentice scissors salesman and later a doughnut seller. In his youth he was known as “Doughnut” Yin.

There are several stories about how Yin Fu met Dong Haichuan (PKCJ 4(1):3-5). One story has it that one day Yin Fu was robbed. In order to prevent a repeat mugging, the doughnut seller began practicing martial arts on his own near the imperial palace. Dong Haichuan saw him one day and asked if the young man wanted to learn martial arts.

Dong Haichuan began Yin Fu’s training with a well known martial art called *Luohan*⁴⁵ and other fighting systems that Dong Haichuan was teaching the palace guards. Today, the students in the Yin Fu tradition of Baguazhang also begin their training by learning *Luohan* boxing. The fact that Dong taught Yin Fu this system of fighting indicates that Dong was himself familiar with several fighting systems. This supports Luo Dexiu’s belief, mentioned at the outset of this chapter, that Dong Haichuan created Baguazhang from his personal training experience.

When the prince for whom he worked sent Dong Haichuan north to collect taxes in Inner Mongolia, Yin Fu accompanied him. It is believed that it was in these eight to ten years they spent together in the north that Dong Haichuan taught Yin Fu his Baguazhang.

⁴⁵ The standard *pinyin* is *lohan*. A *Luohan* is an enlightened Buddhist master, a leader in the Buddhist religion. Donn Draeger (Draeger and Chye 1979) has written a book that describes the modern practice of this style in Malaysia.

After Yin Fu and Dong Haichuan returned from the north, Dong took a second student, but he died in a fight at the age of 28. Yin Fu's cousin was accepted as a third student, and a fourth, named Cheng Tinghua, became Dong Haichuan's disciple around 1876. After that, very rapidly it seems, Dong Haichuan took on sixty or more students⁴⁶ between 1876 and 1882, when he died.

In 1883, a year after his death, Dong Haichuan's students built a tomb for him, and sixty six of his Baguazhang students had their names inscribed on the tombstone. On Dong Haichuan's tombstone, the order of his Baguazhang students' names appears to be by seniority: Yin Fu is first, Cheng Tinghua is fourth and so on.

It is said by the Yin Fu tradition practitioners that Dong Haichuan originally intended to teach all of the Baguazhang to only one student, Yin Fu. Following this tradition, in every Yin Fu generation of students, there is only one member who is taught all of the techniques and esoteric teachings. This person need not be the most capable fighter, nor is it always the first student of the teacher.

Yin Fu's descendants state that Dong Haichuan and Yin Fu had a falling out⁴⁷. Yin Fu's wife died and he remarried. At this Dong Haichuan was very upset and they parted angrily, to be reconciled only shortly before Dong died. Old members of the Yin Fu lineage say that Dong was angry because in those days it was not good for a widower to remarry and Dong Haichuan was a very traditional man.

⁴⁶ It appears that many of these later students were not actually taught by Dong Haichuan, but were in fact accepted by him as disciples and then taught by Yin Fu and Cheng Tinghua.

⁴⁷ It seems inconsistent with the facts, however. If Dong Haichuan had intended to teach Baguazhang to only one person, why did he take Yin Fu's cousin as his third disciple? If Yin Fu and Dong Haichuan were estranged, then why would Yin Fu's cousin study with Dong Haichuan at all? The shortest route for a cousin to

Before they parted company, Dong Haichuan helped Yin Fu get a job at the palace teaching martial arts to the royal bodyguards. Later, Yin Fu took some students of his own and opened a bodyguard and residential security business. He would sometimes hire strong looking fellows and then teach them his martial arts, both the *Luohan* and *Baguazhang* (PKCJ 4(1)). He also was hired by the government to collect late taxes, very likely using the threat or application of violence. During the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, Yin Fu was recruited to protect the Qing Empress Dowager and the Emperor when they fled Beijing. This added considerably to *Baguazhang's* reputation as an effective martial art.

Legends surround Yin Fu as well. On one occasion a monk came to where Yin Fu was teaching and jumped up onto a stool announcing that he was going to demonstrate his ability. Then he bent over and stuck his finger on the ground and lifted his feet off the stool into the air. The monk asked Yin Fu, "What do you think of my *gongfu*?", to which Yin Fu is said to have replied "This is good, but sticking your finger into a man is much harder than sticking it into the ground. The ground does not move."

This belittlement angered the monk and he grabbed a weapon which he had brought with him. Before the monk could attack, Yin Fu grabbed a stick off the ground. Every time the monk moved to attack, Yin Fu dodged the strike, entered the monk's position and struck the monk's hand with his stick. After several such attacks, the monk admitted defeat (PKCJ 4(1):7).

Yin Fu had three top students and a dozen good ones, including his own third and fourth sons. The bulk of his students stayed in Beijing. A few left Beijing for Tianjin on the coast

be introduced to Dong Haichuan would be through Yin Fu, and if they were estranged, both an introduction and acceptance would be difficult to get. Nevertheless, it is the lore of the Yin Fu tradition.

of Hebei Province. Today Yin Fu's Baguazhang is hard to find outside of these two cities. Possibly because of the reason given above regarding having only a single student learn the entire system, Yin Fu was reluctant to teach his entire system of martial arts to many students and his students shared this reluctance. Thus, Yin Fu's Baguazhang is relatively rare, though efforts are being made now to increase its popularity.

Ma Gui (1853-1940), whose family were wood carvers, was Yin Fu's best student. Ma Gui became first a palace guard, and later a guard in the president's home when the Republic was founded in 1912. It is said he was conservative and would not teach his students deeply because they did not meet his high standards. Ma Gui "devoted his life to martial arts and thus was not very successful in business" (PKCJ 4(1):9). He died penniless, relying on his friends and relatives for food.

Li Yongqing, a well muscled man known as Iron Arm Li, was Yin Fu's second best student. Li owned a jewelry store in Beijing. Once, at a temple fair, he got in a fight with a man who was molesting a young woman and killed him. He avoided prison only because of an influential palace eunuch who was a friend of his teacher, Yin Fu. He also did not have many students, and is not well known outside of the Yin Fu lineage.

Although Ma Gui and Li Yongqing were better fighters, it was Men Baozhen (1873-1958) who inherited the "complete system" of Yin Fu's Baguazhang. Men Baozhen's family were wealthy Manchurians, not Han Chinese. When young, Men Baozhen preferred sports over books, but tested poorly in the military exams used to select officers.

Men Baozhen was 20 when he met Yin Fu, who was then 52 years old and very thin. Nevertheless, when he asked to test the older man's skill, Yin Fu knocked him down with one slap. Men Baozhen lived with Yin Fu for 11 years and trained with him for additional 5

years until the old man died. Men Baozhen was Yin Fu's only "inner door" student, that is, he was the only one to learn all of Yin Fu's material. In the 1930s he became the advisor to the Hebei Province Martial Arts Academy, a school established by the Republican government to promote health, sports and Chinese culture. He had several students of considerable skill, some of whom still teach in mainland China.

Cheng Tinghua (1848-1900)

Dong Haichuan's fourth student was named Cheng Tinghua. It seems that after teaching Yin Fu, Dong required the rest of his students to have a martial arts background before they began training with him. Cheng Tinghua was a skilled wrestler and an eyeglass maker by occupation.

Around 1876, at the age of 28, Cheng Tinghua sought out Dong Haichuan, who was then around 63 years old and had a good reputation in Beijing. Dong had Cheng attack him with his wrestling and Cheng was unable to lay a hand on him. Cheng studied with Dong until the latter's death in 1882, for a total of 5 or 6 years (PKCJ 3(2)).

It is said that Cheng Tinghua became Dong Haichuan's challenge fighter, evidently because Yin Fu and Dong were not speaking to one another. A challenge fight is basically a duel. Perhaps a man wants to know if a teacher has anything to teach him. Or a young fighter wants to make a name for himself. Or he simply wants to know if his *gongfu* is any good. So he finds an established teacher and challenges him to a fight. The teacher has the right to have the visitor fight his senior students. If the stranger can defeat the students, then the stranger will fight the teacher.

Notice, however, that by the time the stranger fights the teacher, the teacher has seen him fight his own students and will have learned more about how the stranger fights than the stranger knows about the teacher. The odds thus favor the established teacher. Of course, the visitor will learn a lot about the teacher by fighting with his students. This is a good reason for not teaching all of your martial arts publicly and without regard to who is your student. It is furthermore a reason to keep a trick or two close to your chest. Naturally, if the student defeats the stranger, the student gains face, and if he loses, it reflects less badly on the established school than if the teacher himself had lost. Challenge fights still take place in Taiwan today, although less often than in previous decades.

Dong Haichuan was very well known. He was therefore likely to have a great many challenge matches. It is likely that Cheng Tinghua got a lot of fighting experience in the 5 years he studied with Dong. One of the better stories about Cheng Tinghua involves a challenge match. True or not, and it looks embellished to me, it was published in a mainland Chinese martial arts magazine in 1986.

A 6 foot tall boxer from Shandong came to Cheng Tinghua's house asking for "Spectacles Cheng", as Cheng was known. Cheng asked what business the stranger had, and the man said that he had come specifically to see Cheng Tinghua. Cheng Tinghua told the man that Cheng was not at home, that he was in fact Cheng Tinghua's younger brother. Cheng Tinghua served the man food and tea. After the guest rudely devoured 200 dumplings, he got up and went outside to wait for Cheng Tinghua to make an appearance.

After waiting a while, the guest started hitting things in Cheng's courtyard, breaking the head off of a stone lion statue. Cheng Tinghua told the man "I don't know when my older brother is returning, but I have practiced a little. Let us have a match."

The big man attacked, Cheng hit him in the groin, knocking him a couple yards away. The stranger attacked again and again Cheng hit him in the groin. On the ground now, the bigger man saw through Cheng Tinghua's ruse. He then begged to become Cheng's student, but Cheng sent him away after a month because he did not want to pay for the big man's food (PKCJ 3(2):10).

Cheng Tinghua had several friends who had studied another martial art known as *Xingyiquan*. They wanted to study Baguazhang with Cheng Tinghua, but because they were about the same age, Cheng was embarrassed to have them call him "master". Cheng took them to Dong Haichuan, who agreed to accept them as students, and Cheng taught them. Their names appear on Dong Haichuan's tombstone as Dong's own students, but they were in fact taught by Cheng Tinghua. They, in turn, taught Cheng their *Xingyiquan*.

These men, Li Cunyi, Zhang Zhaodong, Liu Deguan and Liu Waixiang trained and lived in Beijing and Tianjin. The students of these men study both *Xingyiquan* and Baguazhang, combining many of the fighting strategies and techniques in ways that the Yin Fu tradition does not. The two traditions grew more and more distinct: the Yin Fu tradition incorporated the *Luohan* boxing into its material, the Cheng Tinghua tradition absorbed the *Xingyiquan*.

Although they were students of the same teacher, Yin Fu and Cheng Tinghua were very different. Yin Fu was conservative and only passed his complete Baguazhang to one man. Cheng Tinghua was open and taught many. Because of their previous training, Yin Fu in Dong Haichuan's *Luohan* and Cheng Tinghua in wrestling and *Xingyiquan*, their Baguazhang styles were distinct. For this reason, Yin Fu's, who lived on Beijing's east side, was dubbed Eastern City Baguazhang, and Cheng Tinghua's was Southern City Baguazhang. Within the course of one generation, then, the Baguazhang tradition had already diversified.

Actually, there are several reasons for the considerable differences between the Baguazhang of Yin Fu and the Baguazhang of Cheng Tinghua. First, Yin Fu was teaching his own students and managing his bodyguard company when Cheng Tinghua started training with Dong Haichuan. Thus, they apparently never trained together, partially because Yin Fu and Dong Haichuan were evidently not speaking for many years and would not have been exchanging students in that time. It was common for teachers to send their students to train with one another, to develop skill in several teachers' specialties. Finally, Cheng Tinghua trained with his own friends, who shared their *Xingyiquan* with him.

Because Cheng Tinghua was more open in his teaching than Yin Fu, he had more students. Of the students he had, he taught them more of what he knew than Yin Fu did. Thus, Cheng Tinghua's Baguazhang is better known throughout China and the world than Yin Fu's.

As an adult, Cheng Tinghua taught martial arts near his glasses shop in the southern part of Beijing. In addition, he taught in his home village. Cheng's father had died when Cheng was young, and he returned to his home village once a month to look in on his mother. While there, he taught his younger brother and others of his village, and there is a Cheng style Baguazhang tradition in his home village today. In addition to his *Xingyiquan* friends, Cheng Tinghua also taught his sons, nephews and a writer named Sun Lutang.

Cheng Tinghua died in the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, known in China as the Eight Foreign Armies War. There are several romantic stories about Cheng killing half a dozen German soldiers on patrol before being cut down by gunfire. Dan Miller (PKCJ 3(2):8) relates a more believable tale of Cheng Tinghua being gunned down by Germans when he resisted being impressed for a work detail. He was 52 years old.

Sun Lutang (1861-1933) studied with Cheng Tinghua for only three years, but Sun was also skilled in *Xingyiquan*. In 1916, 16 years after Cheng Tinghua died, Sun wrote the first book to be published about Baguazhang, called the Study of Baguazhang (Sun 1970). While evidently a good fighter, Baguazhang was not his strongest art (PKCJ 3(2):10), and the published book contains more Yijing theory than Baguazhang substance. Still, it was the first of its kind and has been widely read in China and in the 1990s was published in English. Sun Lutang followed this with four more books about martial arts, including one about his own style of *Taijiquan* that combines *Xingyiquan* and Baguazhang.

Sun Lutang taught in Tianjin for several years and was invited to teach at the National Martial Arts Academy established in Nanjing in 1928, a physical education college based on the western college model, but designed to promote Chinese physical culture and national identity. Sun Lutang only taught there for three months the first year and never again. His version of Cheng Tinghua's basic Baguazhang became a permanent part of the Academy curriculum, however. Not the least of his accomplishments was the fact that Sun Lutang also taught his daughter, Sun Jianyun, his *Xingyiquan*, Baguazhang, and *Taijiquan*. This was an extremely rare thing at that time. She has gone on to be a martial arts instructor and judge for national martial arts competitions in China.

Gao Yisheng (1866-1951)

In 1866 Gao Yisheng (d. 1951) was born. As a young man, his family was wealthy, but before he was very old, their fortune was swindled away. The family moved to a village between Beijing and Tianjin. Regarding his early martial arts training, Gao studied a martial art that had been taught in his family. Later he studied *Xingyiquan* with Li Cunyi, who, as

we have seen, was one of Cheng Tinghua's students. Finally, at the age of 26, he began to study Baguazhang.

Gao first studied Baguazhang with one of Dong Haichuan's own students, Song Changrong. After three years, however, he had only been taught the Single Palm Change, and Song refused to teach him more. Gao Yisheng sought another teacher.

He found Zhou Yuxiang, who was 5 years older than himself and was also a *Xingyiquan* student of Li Cunyi. In another example of two men too close in age to be comfortable with the master/disciple relationship, Zhou took Gao to Cheng Tinghua, who made Gao a disciple, and then Zhou taught him Baguazhang. Gao Yisheng is officially in the third generation because of his relationship to Song and Cheng, but the bulk of his Baguazhang is from Cheng's students, not Cheng or Song himself. In any event, Cheng Tinghua died in 1900, therefore Gao Yisheng could have studied with him for no more than 5 years.

After five or six years of training with Zhou Yuxiang, Gao returned to his village and opened his own school. Of course, in order to open his own school, he had to fight challenge matches with the local instructors and gain a reputation. In this he was successful.

In 1917, at the age of 50, Gao moved to a town nearer to Tianjin. Tianjin is not far from where Martin Yang's (Yang 1945) account of rural China in the early twentieth century was set⁴⁸. It was also where a few of Yin Fu's students and many of Cheng Tinghua's students lived. Cheng Tinghua's friends Zhang Zhaodong and Li Cunyi had by this time established bodyguard service companies and martial arts schools in Tianjin.

⁴⁸ It is also the site of Susan Naquin's (Naquin 1987) study of a Ming and Qing dynasty lineage of religious leaders, the White Lotus Wangs, discussed in a later chapter.

Zhang Zhaodong taught many great fighters, including Zhang Junfeng and Wang Shujin.

In the 1960s, Wang described Zhang Zhaodong to Robert Smith:

To my query about [Zhang Zhaodong] Wang replied that he had studied under [Zhang] from 1929 to 1938... [Zhang] teaching was fairly typical of the great masters. At first he was gentle and watched from a chair. But if the student made repeated mistakes or was lazy, he struck him. There were many great boxers in north China during that period, and Wang believed [Zhang] was the greatest (Smith 1974:75,76).

It was into this city of worthies that Gao Yisheng entered and prospered. Gao Yisheng took numerous students. Among them were Wu Mengxia, Wu's friend Zhang Junfeng, Gao's sister's grandson Liu Fengcai and many others.

According to Luo Dexiu, Wu Mengxia had some money, so he set Gao Yisheng up in an herbal pharmacy and in Gao's later years, the old master lived with Wu Mengxia and Zhang Junfeng. These two subsequently learned more of Gao's art and learned it more deeply than Gao's other students.

Zhang Junfeng (1902-1974)

Zhang Junfeng was born in Shandong Province in 1902. When he was nine he moved to Tianjin to apprentice in the fruit trade. Between the ages of 16 and 21, he befriended and studied Baguazhang from Wu Mengxia (PKCJ 3(5):3). Around the time he turned 21, he became the manager of a grocery in the French concession in Tianjin.

Wu Mengxia introduced Zhang Junfeng to Gao Yisheng. Because of his work schedule, Zhang studied in the mornings and evenings with Gao, not during Gao's normal daytime public classes. He studied with Gao for about 20 years. In addition to studying with Gao Yisheng, Zhang Junfeng also studied *Xingyiquan* with Li Cunyi and Zhang Zhaodong in the

latter's last years. In Tianjin, Zhang Junfeng practiced Baguazhang and *Xingyiquan*⁴⁹. A very large man, about 6' tall and easily 200 pounds, he was a formidable fighter. It is said that Zhang Junfeng could split a bamboo pole by holding one end and cracking it like a whip.

After World War II, Zhang Junfeng attempted to expand his business by opening a branch in Taiwan. It ran into difficulties, so in the summer of 1948 he traveled there himself, to oversee the operation. Not only did Zhang's business not succeed, but when the National Army lost the civil war to the People's Liberation Army, and the KMT subsequently retreated to Taiwan in 1949, Zhang was stuck on the island. Even with his failed business, however, Zhang still had his martial arts skills.

The Hong's were prosperous candle and incense merchants in Taipei in the 1930s and '40s. At that time, the threat of banditry was still very real in Taiwan, despite Japan's military occupation. The head of the Hong household decided that he and his sons would learn *gongfu*. During the 1930s, the father hired a boxing master from mainland China to teach him and his five sons Chinese martial arts.

Around 1940, the middle brother, Hong Yimien, was drafted into the Japanese army. Until then, he had had no interest in martial arts and his first exposure to combat training was bayonet drills in the Japanese army (PKCJ 3(5):15). One morning after the war while he was out exercising in northern Taipei, he saw a man practicing an odd style of martial arts. At that time a 26 year old infantry veteran, Hong Yimien was interested when the man called him over. It was at that point that Zhang Junfeng demonstrated his *Xingyiquan* to Hong Yimien and the young man was fascinated.

⁴⁹According to Luo, Zhang studied *Taijiqian* in Taiwan.

Shortly after that, Hong Yimien introduced Zhang to his father and Zhang began training Hong Yimien and his brothers. In return, Hong's father supported Zhang financially and provided him with a place to stay. The classes of Zhang's original ten students in Taiwan were often held at the Hong's household. Three of the five Hong brothers, the oldest, Hong Yiwen, Hong Yimien, and Hong Yixiang, the youngest, studied with Zhang Junfeng. The Hong brothers were among Zhang's first students in Taiwan.

The Japanese were given the island of Taiwan by China following the war of 1895. They took possession and fought a short and bloody war of suppression (Takekoshi 1907) against the Taiwanese. The period of Japanese occupation lasted from 1895 to 1945, when the Japanese returned to their home islands. On the heels of the Japanese, the Nationalist Party of the Republic of China claimed Taiwan for its own. Tensions rose between the mainland Mandarin-speaking KMT and the Fujianese- and Japanese- speaking islanders, fed by language barriers and corrupt administrators. An incident of police brutality led to riots in the streets which were violently put down in what became known as the 2-28⁵⁰ Incident.

Following the crackdown in 1947, relations between the Taiwanese and the recently arrived mainlanders were very tense (Harrell 1982, Chang 1994, Wu 1994). There was a wide social gulf between the two groups, and a great deal of hostility. Following the defeat of the KMT by the People's Liberation Army in 1949, the former retreated to Taiwan with

⁵⁰ February 28, 1947 was the day the shootings began, and when it ended several months later many Taiwanese were dead, including all of their effective educated class. Two years later, in 1949, the Nationalist Army, led by Chiang Kaishek, was driven from the mainland to Taiwan, where the KMT suspended the constitution of the Republic and established martial law. The 2-28 Incident was followed by 40 years of "White Terror", the Taiwanese version of the McCarthy communist witch trials. Between the 2-28 massacre and the White Terror, some 15,000 Taiwanese were killed. Martial law was finally lifted in 1987. The KMT lost the presidency in 2000.

about a million soldiers and a half million civilians. Relations did not improve rapidly, to put it mildly.

Among other things, the recent immigrants did not want the hostile Taiwanese population to learn the martial arts of the mainland. There had been Chinese martial arts in Taiwan for over a century, of course, styles like White Crane and Wing Chun (Draeger and Smith 1969, Smith 1974, Smith 1992, Takacs 1995) but the immigrants did not want to teach the Taiwanese “their” *gongfu*, nor did they want anyone else to teach it.

Zhang Junfeng would have none of that. He believed that *gongfu* was for anyone willing to train hard. From a less egalitarian point of view, his opinion may have been informed by the fact that some of his wealthy students and benefactors were Taiwanese. Not only was it a matter of principle, but also one of self-interest for Zhang Junfeng to teach the Taiwanese.

The displeasure of the mainlanders manifested itself for decades as a series of challenge matches to Zhang Junfeng. As noted before, challenge matches among *gongfu* teachers amount to nothing less than duels. The loser, if he lived, would have to submit to the rule of the local *gongfu* society. In this case, Zhang Junfeng would have to stop teaching the Taiwanese. Unfortunately for the conservative mainlanders, Zhang was a formidable fighter. He continued teaching the Taiwanese. In 1951, Zhang founded an organization for the study and promotion of martial arts, the Taiwan Provincial Martial Arts Association (YC 2000:4). He also opened a private school, the *Yizong* Martial Arts Hall⁵¹ (PKCJ 3(5):5,12).

Luo Dexiu tells many stories about Zhang’s skill. One night he told us,

Zhang Junfeng really liked to do this: [Luo spins away, momentarily turning his back to me, then knocks my legs out from under me with his leg. A back spinning sweep. Then Luo smiles.]

⁵¹ *Yizong guoshu zhong guan.*

Actually, I think turning your back on your opponent is very dangerous, so I use a safer method. [At this, he turns sideways, and kicks me in the ribs.] This way I don't expose my back to you.

But Zhang *laoshu* was very big and not afraid of anything. He could even...[Luo turns all the way around again, this time coming down with an elbow to my face.] No one could hurt him. I have a more cautious strategy: Safety first!

One of Zhang's close friends in Taiwan was Wang Shujin, who also emigrated from Tianjin. Wang Shujin said that his Baguazhang teacher was Zhang Zhaodong. As noted above, Zhang Zhaodong was one of Zhang Junfeng's own teachers, and was a prominent figure in the Tianjin martial arts community. It is likely that Wang and Zhang Junfeng knew each other in Tianjin, or at least, knew the same people. Robert Smith studied with Wang Shujin for a short time in the early 1960s. He described Wang Shujin as "the greatest exponent of [*Xingyiquan*] and [Baguazhang] in Taiwan" (Smith 1974:72).

Wang Shujin and Zhang Junfeng both belonged to the philosophical-religious *Yiguandao* society. This shared belief contributed to an interesting relationship. According to Luo Dexiu and Zhang's wife, Zhang Junfeng had trained in martial arts deeper and longer than Wang, and Wang accepted him as his senior *gongfu* brother (PKCJ 5(6):4). When Wang was establishing himself in central Taiwan, and had challenge matches, Zhang would travel down the island to aid him. Luo Dexiu, who studied with Wang Shujin for several years, says that Zhang Junfeng taught Wang Shujin a great deal of the latter's Baguazhang, particularly the fighting.

In the *Yiguandao* community, however, it was Wang Shujin who was the high priest, and Zhang Junfeng the junior acolyte. In matters of religion, Wang Shujin was very respected, both on Taiwan and on the mainland. According to his foreign students, Wang would not

teach the deeper aspects of his martial arts, the *Xingyiquan*, *Baguazhang* and *Taijiquan*, unless the student first joined the *Yiguandao* (PKCJ 5(6):11).

Anthropologically, the relationship between Wang Shujin and Zhang Junfeng suggests multiple sources of legitimacy in “unofficial” Chinese society. For example, one Qing dynasty source of legitimacy was the officially recognized role of a government official⁵². However, other unofficial sources include religious knowledge or martial arts ability. The relationship between Zhang Junfeng and Wang Shujin indicates a system wherein access to one source of legitimacy such as religion does not automatically transform into other areas of expertise, such as martial arts. That this principle of decentralization goes against the grain of Chinese history and government authority (Freedman 1958, 1966) is not an accident. The *Yiguandao*, like other popular organizations of earlier centuries, such as the Heaven and Earth Society (Ownby 1996) were watched closely for decades in Taiwan by the government’s secret police.

In addition to teaching the Hong brothers and his other private students, Zhang Junfeng also taught *Taijiquan* to Chiang Kaishek. Today *Taijiquan* is popular among intellectuals, who regard fighting as immoral or unnecessary, or at the very least, low class. If well taught, *Taijiquan* is, however, a good fighting system. Luo Dexiu has a story that illustrates this point.

One day in the late 1950s, Chiang Kaishek, the president of Taiwan, chairman of the *Guomindang*, held a party at his mountain villa. To this party he invited all the well known martial artists in Taiwan, including Zhang Junfeng. At the party, Zhang overheard someone

⁵² Shaw (Shaw 1988) makes a similar argument about success in junior high school education and legitimized life ways in Taiwan in the early 1980s.

making fun of *Taijiquan*. “*Taijiquan* is useless for fighting! All you do is stand there in Single Whip⁵³!”, said the boxer.

Zhang Junfeng became enraged. “*Taiji* is useless? You think *Taijiquan* is no good for fighting? Let me demonstrate. This is Single Whip, right? (Zhang struck the posture) I’ll use Single Whip, and hit you with my left hand on the right side of your face. You defend yourself.”

Zhang used his right hand, struck the opponent on the left side of his head. Then he used his left hand, and struck the startled man on the right side of his face. Slap slap. Zhang settled back into the Single Whip posture. “You see! Even when I tell you what I am doing, you are incapable of defending yourself. Now, don’t say that *Taijiquan* is not good for fighting!”

Chiang Kaishek subsequently asked Zhang Junfeng to teach him *Taijiquan*. Zhang was also invited to teach his martial arts to staff officers of the police and military around Taibei and did so for many years (PKCJ 3(5):7, YC 2000:4). Just as Dong Haichuan and Yin Fu had taught the imperial bodyguard in the late 1800s, Zhang Junfeng taught the Taiwanese president, his bodyguards, military leaders and police.

Zhang Junfeng had three periods of his teaching. In the first period, with the Hong brothers and their classmates, he primarily taught fighting techniques because he thought he would soon be returning to the mainland. For years, the KMT said that the invasion of the mainland was nigh. After Zhang realized that he would not be going back, he spent more time teaching power development in the second period. In the third period he taught more of the “forms”, the routines which codify the physical principles of the martial arts.

The students who trained in each of these periods each believed that they had received the entire system, but in fact they only learned a portion. Many of Zhang’s students say “Teacher told me that This Is The Way” and they are very rigid in their belief. Luo has gone to study with many of them, including Xu Baomei, Zhang’s wife, and has worked for 25

⁵³One of the characteristic postures of *Taijiquan*.

years to reconstruct Zhang's whole system. The whole system of Baguazhang included Gao Yisheng's eighteen palm changes and sixty-four *houtian*, as well as the *tiangan* exercises.

Robert Smith (Smith 1974:7) met Zhang Junfeng, in 1964 or so. He described Zhang in colorful terms.

After more than a year of my badgering, [Hong Yixiang] finally took me to [Zhang Junfeng] early one afternoon. [Zhang]'s house was modest, with five children punctuating the empty spaces. Gone in the kidneys, [Zhang] was severe and humorless. However, his exposition of [Baguazhang] was first rate, and he responded fully to my questions. He gave the linear method [the *houtian*] an authority it had in no other hands. We spent three hours talking; the time galloped as it always does when something of value is occurring.

[Zhang] was a mixed blessing, I reflected; he himself claims to have been taught by [Li Cunyi], [Gao Yisheng], and [Zhang Zhaodong], but his style is harsher and rougher edged than the orthodox method taught by these masters⁵⁴, which makes his claim suspect. He was irascible and laconic. A mainlander, he taught Taiwanese, which reveals something about his feelings for his mainlander colleagues. And everyone he taught, he treated meanly. He was not like that great teacher of painting in Paris who was never known to have done anything except pass behind his students' easels and mutter, "Continuez, continuez." Not at all: [Zhang] was a hard taskmaster and was quick to cuff a student around a bit to gain and keep his attention. These considerations meant nothing after I had seen his technique. I asked [Hong Yixiang] to get me instruction from [Zhang]. Initially [Hong Yixiang] said that [Zhang] refused to take me on. I persisted without success. From another direction I started [Baguazhang] with another of [Zhang]'s senior students...After a month he failed to appear, and I heard that the [Hong] brothers had scared him off, and that, in fact, [Zhang] himself had wanted to teach me for some time, but that the [Hong]s had told him that I was their student.

Apparently Smith never did study with Zhang, but he spent several years with Hong Yixiang and Hong Yimien, who taught him *Xingyiquan*, Baguazhang and grappling.

Zhang Mama, Xu Baomei (b. 1935)

⁵⁴Whom Smith never met.

According to Luo Dexiu, Zhang Junfeng was married in Tianjin, but the trip to Taiwan separated him from his wife. After several years of seeing Zhang alone, his students in Taibei pooled some money, went to the southern part of the island and purchased a bride for the 50 year old Zhang. The other villagers did not like the idea of a bunch of strangers purchasing the girl and attacked Zhang's students. A battle ensued.

At first, 16 year old Xu Baomei hated the old man. She told Zhang Junfeng that she would kill him. Fine, said Zhang, I will teach you my *gongfu* and when you are good enough, you can kill me. So it was that Zhang Junfeng taught his wife *Xingyiquan*, *Baguazhang* and *Taijiquan*, as well as his *qigong*. In their 20 years together, she learned more of the forms, including the weapons sets, than almost all of his other students. She also bore eight children (PKCJ 3(5):10).

Zhang Junfeng's last years were harsh on a man who had been fierce and physical his entire life. After Zhang Junfeng was crippled by illness and drinking bad medicine in 1967, Xu Baomei taught his group classes under his careful eye and quick temper. Luo Dexiu met him several times, in the early 1970s. At that time, Zhang had serious knee trouble and didn't walk much, but his fists swung vigorously and angrily. He was bitter that although he was near 70, his body had deteriorated so quickly, while his mind was still sharp. After his death in 1974⁵⁵, Xu Baomei continued to teach, especially *Taijiquan*. I have heard that she has now retired from teaching, but still lives in Taibei.

When she first married Zhang, his senior students, who had purchased her, tried to flirt with her. "Oh, little sister, do you want to learn martial arts? I'll teach you." Zhang Junfeng's response was to give each one "special training", which left them barely able to

stand. This eventually caused considerable tension between Zhang and his senior students, and they spent less time with Zhang and at his school.

Typically, when a master is past his prime, his senior students will teach his classes. This usually means that the ones who teach the classes are privy to particularly esoteric teachings, so teaching class is usually a coveted honor and after a teacher dies, his students will boast that “I taught his classes for him”. For a while, Hong Yimien taught Zhang’s classes and thereby learned more himself.

In the case of Zhang Junfeng, however, no other student was closer to him than his wife, especially in his last 10 years. She was with him every day, later she taught his classes when he was sick. There being no possibility of superseding Xu Baomei at Zhang Junfeng’s side, Zhang’s senior students eventually quit trying. Some of them opened schools of their own, others did not.

My primary reason for discussing this piece of history was to demonstrate that even a traditional relationship such as that between master-disciple or teacher-student is rife with rivalries, competition and personal feelings. Even voluntary relationships such as these are not wholly determined by custom.

Luo Dexiu went to visit Xu Baomei several times, trying to get her to teach him. The first time he went, he was accompanied by one of his *gongfu* brothers. They brought her dried meat, a traditional gift for holidays, and the payment given to Confucius by his students. She is vegetarian. Luo and his buddy spent two hours peeling vegetables at her house. She was very critical of his peeling technique, but said nothing about martial arts.

⁵⁵Over 3000 people attended his funeral, including many government officials.

The second time, he used more strategy. He went alone to see her. “Oh, you came back”, she said. “No, I did not come to bother you, I only came to worship at grand master’s altar [Zhang Junfeng’s altar in her house].” He prayed, lit incense and left a red envelope filled with money. “Oh, you are a good and proper boy!”, she exclaimed.

She still would not teach him Baguazhang, but if he showed her something, asking “Is this how Zhang *laoshu* did such and such?”, she would correct him. Once when he did something correctly, she became very animated and said, “That’s just how my husband did it! Go immediately and burn incense at his altar”.

Hong Yimien (b. 1920)

Zhang Junfeng was a harsh teacher. Hong Yimien often complained about the pain of holding the postures for long periods. Zhang would respond by telling him to quit if he didn’t like it. In later years, Hong Yimien would say that the only way to achieve a high level of skill was to experience the pain for yourself (PKCJ 3(5):15). Hong Yimien studied Zhang’s *Xingyiquan* for 8 years, Baguazhang for 10 years and martial arts injury treatment for about 3 years.

It is said that Hong Yimien, small, thin and very agile, was Zhang’s best Baguazhang student. Certainly, he learned more of the Baguazhang combat techniques and fighting strategies than any of the others. It was natural, therefore, for Luo Dexiu to go to him when his interest in that art arose in the early 1970s. Similarly Robert Smith studied under Hong Yimien in the early 1960s. Smith records

I began [Baguazhang] with [Hong Yimien] shortly after [meeting Zhang Junfeng]. Fast, cocky, densely packed with pugnacity, and a heavy drinker, he was [Zhang]’s senior student in this art and conducted the master’s classes for

him when he was indisposed [this was in 1964, before Xu Baomei took over]. Reportedly, he had once bested ten men in the street (Smith 1974:7,8).

Hong Yimien was not a professional teacher, however, and was generally reluctant to teach. He did teach Robert Smith in the 1960s. Hong Yimien would not take Luo Dexiu as a student, in part, Luo hints, because Luo was already a student of Hong Yixiang, and the latter did not want his older brother to poach his students. In the 1970s and 80s, Luo would take tea and cigarettes to Hong Yimien, sit with him, and ask him questions. Luo also adopted the strategy of “I’ll demonstrate in front of teacher so badly that he will have to come and correct me”. Most martial arts teachers cannot resist correcting someone when they see them screwing up badly, and Hong Yimien, though reluctant to formally instruct other Taiwanese, would correct what he called “strange behavior”.

Hong Yimien’s last student was Allan Pittman, who studied with the aging fighter in 1982-84. Pittman was Robert Smith’s student and teaching him was a special favor to Smith. This shows the strength of the teacher-student relationship. Fifteen years after he had left Taiwan, Smith was able to send his own student to train with his teacher, knowing that his teacher would accept him, even after he had retired. Smith also sent Pittman to see Wang Shujin, but Wang had already died.

Of course it helped that Allen Pittman is a foreigner. Hong Yimien would teach foreigners when he would take no Taiwanese students. This was a rather unhappy state of affairs for Taiwanese, like Luo Dexiu, who wanted to understand Zhang Junfeng’s Baguazhang. When Allen Pittman was being taught, Luo would accompany him to Hong Yimien’s house, then wait outside, peeking in the window, hoping to catch a glimpse of the

old man's *gongfu*. On one occasion, Luo told his *gongfu* uncle, "You teach foreigners but not Chinese. When you die and go to hell, Zhang Junfeng is going to paddle your behind!"

Hong Yixiang (d. 1994)

Hong Yixiang also studied with Zhang Junfeng for many years. The youngest of the Hong brothers, Hong Yixiang studied with his family's boxing instructor and learned Japanese wrestling and *karate* and several other fighting systems. As a result, when he began studying Zhang Junfeng's *Xingyiquan*, he had little difficulty making the transition. The direct frontal assault methods of *Xingyiquan* suited Hong Yixiang's personality and body type (PKCJ 3(5):18) more than did Baguazhang.

Luo Dexiu described his first teacher on several occasions. "Hong *laoshr* was really big. About your height [I am 5'6"], but very fat. I once saw him eat 200 boiled dumplings, while the best I could ever manage was 50." Robert Smith (Smith 1974:2) estimated that Hong was 5'7" and 220 pounds. Hong was enormous (see Craig 1999:62, or Smith 1974:3 for picture) and extremely powerful.

It is said that when Hong Yixiang had trained with Zhang Junfeng for a while, he asked his teacher if *Xingyiquan* was any good to fight with. Zhang told him to go out, find the top students of all of the martial artists around, and test his *Xingyiquan* against whatever they practiced. If Hong was defeated, he was to study with the teacher of whomever beat him. Twenty-five victorious bouts later, Hong Yixiang returned to Zhang (PKCJ 3(5):18), and practiced *Xingyiquan* for the rest of his life. He became one of the best known martial artists in Taiwan and famous throughout the martial arts world in Taiwan, Japan and the United States.

After training with Zhang Junfeng for several years, Hong Yixiang opened his own martial arts school. He called his school and the system that he taught *Tangshoudao*, the Way of the Tang (dynasty) Hand. The Tang dynasty (618-907 AD) is commonly believed to have been the classic period of China, in *Tangshoudao* it also may refer to the fact that the Chinese are frequently called “the men of Tang”. For these reasons, when used in an organization’s name, the character *tang* in Tang dynasty is often synonymous with China. For this reason, another translation of Hong Yixiang’s school could well be “Chinese boxing method”⁵⁶. Hong Yixiang’s *Tangshoudao* had very little Baguazhang. He mainly taught *Xingyiquan*, Japanese wrestling and Japanese *karate*, and some of the hand techniques of Baguazhang, but apparently not the *xiantian*, *houtian*, *tiangan* complex that Luo teaches (PKCJ 5(4):8,15).

There is a considerable body of English language literature devoted to the martial arts of China, and a good deal of it concerns individuals in Taiwan. A sizable portion of this literature refers to Hong Yixiang and his tradition of martial arts fighters. References to Hong Yixiang can be found in Robert Smith’s *Pakua: Chinese Boxing for Fitness and Self-defense* (Smith 1968), and his *Chinese Boxing: Masters and Methods* (Smith 1974). In large part because of these books, Hong Yixiang is very well known in the English speaking world.

Smith described Hong Yixiang like this:

[Hong Yixiang] was no great historical source, and some of his ideas were curious, but he was an unalloyed fighter. His reputation among boxers was high, secured through many street battles from which he had emerged unscathed. And

⁵⁶ Prior to 1923, the Japanese character *kara* in the Okinawan martial art style *karate* was in fact this same Chinese character *tang*. *Karate* thus meant “Tang fist”, or “Chinese boxing” a reference to *karate*’s origin in Chinese martial arts. When *karate* was introduced to Japan from Okinawa in the early 1920s, the Okinawans, perhaps sensing the nationalism rising in Japan at that time, wisely changed the character from the *kara* that means Tang dynasty to the *kara* that means “empty”. Whatever the reason, today *karate* means “empty fist”, but before 1923 it meant “Tang dynasty fist” (Funakoshi 1973:10).

these fights were tough affairs, swords often being employed. At least two young boxers I knew and practiced with died in such fights. But [Hong Yixiang] survived, and grandly. He was so formidable that he often was asked to referee these battles (Smith 1974:6).

In the last three decades, other people have published their accounts of encounters with the Hong brothers. Hong Yixiang's *Xingyiquan* and Hong Yimien's *Baguazhang* have been featured in Howard Reid and Michael Croucher's BBC documentary and book, The Fighting Arts (Reid and Croucher 1983) for which Luo Dexiu was asked to pose for video and still photographs.

Daniel Reid, a popular author on the subject of Chinese medicine, particularly the more exotic aspects, interviewed Hong Yixiang. In addition to being a famous fighter, Hong was also a bone-setter and Chinese medical doctor. A close comparison of the various ways in which Hong Yixiang is portrayed, one by Reid, writing his Chinese Herbal Medicine (Reid 1986:72-75) in the early and mid-1980s, about Hong Yixiang the Chinese doctor, and Hong Yixiang the boxer that Robert Smith knew in the 1960s, is very interesting.

Daniel Reid is interested in marketing the exotic and strange parts of Chinese culture to Americans. He presents Hong Yixiang as a gentle but gruff Daoist master, a *Taijiquan* teacher of great power and rarefied skill with whom only a lucky few could study.

Robert Smith, on the other hand, said that Hong Yixiang was "not a man to have over for learned discussion or a set of tennis, but I cannot imagine a better ally to have if things tended toward the physical" (Smith 1974:10). Portrayed as a drinker and a fighter, Smith's version of Hong Yixiang agrees more with Luo's descriptions of Hong in the 1970s and '80s, than Daniel Reid's portrayal of Hong Yixiang as a Daoist just come down the mountain. According to Luo, Hong Yixiang's students numbered in the hundreds, not a lucky few.

Dan Miller's *Pakuachang Journal*, published between 1990 and 1997, and Bruce Frantzis' *The Power of Internal Martial Arts* (Frantzis 1998) feature sections about Hong Yixiang's training and skills. In the early 1990s, Miller, with the assistance of several of Luo Dexiu's students, interviewed Hong Yimien and Hong Yixiang about their early years and Zhang Junfeng's training methods. Frantzis, on the other hand, studied under Hong Yixiang for a brief while in the middle and late 1970s and later in the 1980s with Luo Dexiu. Frantzis writes about Hong's physical power, which was considerable, but not about the man's character. Most recently, one of Hong Yixiang's and Luo's students, Marcus Brinkman, talked about Hong's *qigong* training in the 1980s (Craig 1999).

Hong Yixiang taught many students, starting in the early 1960s and continuing until his death in 1994. Some of his students went on to found schools of their own, some of them with the same name, *Tangshoudao*, as Hong's own (PKCJ 5(3)).

Hong Yixiang had a very bad temper. When it came time for the annual martial arts tournaments in 1994, Hong was invited to be a referee. Arriving at the competition site, he found several martial arts coaches from a local university engaged in writing rules for the fighting that was to shortly begin. Hong was enraged. He began yelling at them that they had no idea what real fighting was like, and how could they possibly be writing rules for tournament fighting? Fighting had no rules, as far as he was concerned. Cursing them, he evidently became so angry that he had a heart attack, in front of spectators from around the world, and died because not one of the martial arts masters present knew CPR.

Among the older generation of Zhang Junfeng style practitioners, namely Luo's own *Tangshoudao* brothers, there is more equality of status than between Luo and his students. Currently, Luo's primary business partner is an older foreign gentleman who was a student of

Hong Yixiang prior to Luo and is thus Luo's older brother. Between them there is not the indebtedness of the teacher-student relationship as between Luo and I, but a relationship that resembles brothers undertaking a joint economic venture. The pattern of joint venture between biological brothers in Taiwan was well described by Myron Cohen (Cohen 1976:80-140). It was, of course, as students of Hong Yixiang that Luo and his elder *gongfu* brother met.

With Luo's other *gongfu* brothers the situation is more complicated. While studying under Hong Yixiang, Luo was younger than many of the students. He was consequently kicked around, bullied, constantly corrected and generally treated with little respect, the common situation of youngest brothers in Taiwan. There was, in Hong Yixiang's *Tangshoudao*, a striking lack of the *communitas* spirit that Victor Turner (1962, 1982) emphasizes as the hallmark of Ndembu rites of passage. While the master-disciple is absent between Luo and his *Tangshoudao* classmates, the age hierarchy was violently and physically enforced. Today, though his classmates are more physically gentle with him, they still exert pressure on Luo with which he has difficulty avoiding, especially since he has genuine affection for some of them.

Twenty five years later, however, Luo is still actively practicing his martial arts, both the *Xingyiquan* that he learned from Hong Yixiang, and Zhang Junfeng's Baguazhang. The majority of his older *gongfu* brothers practice very little. As a result, when a few of his older classmates wanted to review their martial arts, they approached Luo and asked them to join them on Sunday morning to review their *gongfu* and drink tea.

Yizong

These Sunday tea drinking meetings eventually led, in the spring of 2000, to the formation of the *Yizong* Martial Arts Association, mentioned in the Introduction. Desiring to become an officially recognized martial arts association, the old *Tangshoudao* fighters drew up a charter and elected a board of directors, of which Luo Dexiu is the “Training Director”. They also published an official membership list with 112 members (YC 2000:16-25). Xu Baomei, Hong Yimien and all of Hong Yixiang’s sons are absent from the list.

Hong Yixiang built himself a school with thousands of current and former students worldwide. He had a tremendous reputation for fighting and would even teach foreigners some things (though not everything, according to Luo, Robert Smith and others).

Hong Yixiang’s son inherited his *Tangshoudao* school. In theory, the inheritor of the school, the person who is at the top of the martial arts social hierarchy, is also the person with the most skill. Here the problems began. In the same set of circumstances as Yin Fu’s chosen successor, Hong Yixiang’s son was not his best student. Indeed, for many years, the son had ignored his father, and studied with other teachers. According to Luo, it was only when foreigners began paying attention to Hong Yixiang and there was some face to be gained by association with his father, that the son began to spend time with the elder Hong.

Of course, Luo, who had become one of the school’s fighting champions, was a direct challenge to the son’s legitimacy. How could Hong’s son claim to inherit the *Tangshoudao* system when Luo was one of its most famous fighters? Not surprisingly, while Hong Yixiang lived, Luo and Hong’s son never got along. Their tense relationship manifested in ways that you might expect a family squabble to manifest: when there was a public

demonstration or a challenge match to be fought, Luo was called in. But if there was a tea party, or a dinner get together among the *Tangshoudao* crowd, Luo was left out.

Luo had begun teaching on his own in 1989. Hong Yixiang died around 1994. After his father's death, Hong Yixiang's son told Luo to stop teaching, because Luo was teaching *Xingyiquan*, material that was part of the *Tangshoudao* curriculum. The younger Hong had not sanctioned Luo as a teacher. Conversely, Luo had not acknowledged the younger Hong as the heir apparent. Luo's response was that the younger Hong could decide what he wanted to teach in *Tangshoudao* and Luo would teach something else. Hong's son persisted in insisting that Luo stop teaching. Luo continued teaching Baguazhang, which was not part of the *Tangshoudao* curriculum, and *Xingyiquan*, which was.

Faced with this kind of tension, Luo increased the social distance between himself and the branch of the *Tangshoudao* society that was closest to Hong Yixiang's son. This is one of the reasons why he does not use the name of *Tangshoudao* for his school or teach anything he learned there except the *Xingyiquan*. He said that because of this kind of closed minded attitude, the *Tangshoudao*, which had been a powerful school for many years, collapsed within a few years of Hong Yixiang's death to a fraction of its former size and reputation.

The *Tangshoudao* men who were not of the younger Hong's faction could not use the *Tangshoudao* name without the younger Hong's sanction. They opted to avoid the troublesome situation by finding a different name. They decided not to pick out a new name, instead, they went back a generation to Zhang Junfeng and used the name of his school, *Yizong* Martial Arts Hall. Though all had been Hong Yixiang's students, few if any had

trained with Zhang himself⁵⁷. It was this new *Yizong* Martial Arts Association which Luo was pressured to join, which made him the Training Director, and at whose first meeting Luo's students, myself included, demonstrated their Baguazhang. Curiously, in the months after the first big *Yizong* meeting, the *Tangshoudao* men gradually stopped inviting Luo to come drink tea.

In this chapter I have traced the transmission of Baguazhang from its founder, Dong Haichuan, to one important present-day teacher, Luo Dexiu. In so doing, I have tried to emphasize the relationships between these individuals, the different groups that they aggregated into, and the different ways in which they transmitted the tradition they carried. The data presented here raises some interesting questions concerning legitimacy and the relationships between factions within the tradition. Some of these questions will be examined in later chapters. In the next chapter, however, I will examine several ways in which this martial arts tradition has been represented at different times by different practitioners.

⁵⁷ It does puzzle me why they did not recruit Xu Baomei (Zhang's wife, who is still living to the best of my knowledge), or Hong Yimien, if only to give them honorary posts. I am sure there are interesting reasons.

Chapter 4

Baguazhang Legends

Without the fist, there is no bravery.

-the Book of Odes (China, 3000 BC)

Studies of “tradition” vary widely as to their theoretical perspective and purpose. For example, Pascal Boyer (Boyer 1990) is concerned with the cognitive aspects of “traditional interaction”, which he defines as repeated, socially memorable events, such as story telling by initiated story tellers or divination rites (Boyer 1990:1-10). Interested in creating an anthropological theory of tradition, he examines a tradition of spirit possession and divination through which initiated specialists make “true statements”. His conclusion is that diviners make true statements, but not because of empirical validation or logical proof. Rather, diviners have in common traditions access to of “hidden agencies or entities” (Boyer 1990:65-67) such that when diviners speak on matters of divination, they draw upon a causal link between the truth of the event and the speech act. Thus it is the “hidden agency or entity”, not the conscious diviner, who, speaking through the mouth of the diviner, informs the listeners of, for example, who is the guilty party in some crime.

What is interesting from my point of view is the manner in which the diviner’s statements are codified. How does a listener know when a diviner is speaking for himself, or when the “hidden agencies or entities” are speaking through him or her? The diviners words are accepted as true because of the special way in which the statements are bracketed. Diviner’s words are accepted to be true utterances because they are preceded by

metastatements⁵⁸, such as the induction of trance states (Jordan 1989, Boyer 1990), the use of archaic and partially unintelligible language (Boyer 1990), and so on. These bracketing metastatements declare that what is uttered by the spirit medium “is the voice of the hidden agency” and therefore a true statement, not amenable to empirical or logical validation.

Baguazhang does not have a tradition of “hidden agencies or entities”, to which Boyer’s study is limited. Statements made by martial artists regarding the truth or effectiveness of their martial arts are always empirically testable, that is what challenge matches are about. This is not to say that all martial artists make true statements, nor that there are no martial arts charlatans, only that they can only fool people with lesser skill. However, the use of metastatements in martial arts rituals is a subject to which I have referred in the first chapter and will again in a later one.

Turning from the diviner’s hut to the guild hall, Craig Calhoun (Calhoun 1983) looks closely at the membership of the revolutions of 19th century Europe. He notes that, in reacting against the industrial revolution and the large capitalists,

the most radical workers were usually artisans, sometimes peasants, and almost always those with at least some prosperity and often many privileges to defend. Their identities and aspirations were largely traditional: they drew much of the social strength of their mobilizations from communal bonds, a good deal less from membership in the new ‘working class’ (Calhoun 1983:887).

In short, the artisan class, traditional and conservative by nature, had much to lose by getting involved in a revolution. The poor, illiterate new “working class”, whom Marx tried to mobilize and make self aware, actually did less in these revolutions than the lower middle classes of artisans and peasants. Calhoun argues convincingly that the artisan classes, by

⁵⁸ I refer to Bateson (Bateson 1972) and his “metamessages”, which are messages about the message. The discussion of play, in Chapter I, used the same concept.

virtue of the fact that they had status and traditional marketing networks, had more to lose from the mechanization of their industries, such as cloth weaving, than did the new workers, who had, in many cases, left overcrowded farms to find any kind of better life in the cities. Moreover, given their long standing guild networks, the artisans were better organized, and thus better able to mobilize in protest once they decided that action needed to be taken. The factory workers, on the other hand, were often recently moved in from the country, and had weaker and smaller networks upon which to draw.

The traditional and conservative artisan guilds, therefore, were seemingly paradoxically, acting rationally when they were more radical in their efforts at self defense against big capital than the exploited factory workers themselves.

The Baguazhang society has always been poorly organized, and though not a new organization, lacked any status or privileges that needed protecting. Rather, practitioners have sought out opportunities to teach their art and make a living doing so when possible. Furthermore, to my knowledge, although they have a network of relationships with one another from which they can draw mutual assistance (a subject I take up in a later chapter), they have avoided political involvement. This may change, however, with the formation of the *Yizong* Martial Arts Association, described in the last chapter.

Another genre of tradition studies has its focus on cultural revival and renewal of identity, especially of marginalized peoples. In one example, Gillian Crowther (Crowther 1994) examines the creation of a new dance tradition by a Native Canadian group on the Northwest Coast. She describes them as challenging anthropological traditions that define native peoples as static, and struggling against an anthropological tradition that represents the past as the present while often ignoring the living tradition. Instead, after years of decline,

the native or marginalized peoples studied in this genre of tradition study are creating new self-identities that may be based on older traditions, but are relevant to their current needs.

The approach I am taking to this brief study of Baguazhang as a tradition differs from all of these approaches. I have found that Baguazhang practitioners represent the Baguazhang tradition in different ways. Taking the same basic material of martial arts, different practitioners have used different origin stories about Baguazhang to highlight one aspect or another. For what purpose they have created or repeated the origin myths must be examined elsewhere, but a first hypothesis would be that the different legends serve to popularize the art among different audiences.

First, there are many stories with the general theme that Dong Haichuan learned Baguazhang from Daoists in the mountains. Second, there are several stories that say that Dong Haichuan, or his teachers, developed Baguazhang through a long and intensive study of the Yijing. Third is a school of thought wherein Dong Haichuan assimilated many styles of martial arts, combined them with the circle walking, and then named the elements of the new martial art using concepts from the Yijing. I present these representations of Baguazhang as legends of the origin of the art. Furthermore, because each of the legends provides some insight into the development of the martial art or to social institutions and popular thinking in China in the early twentieth century, I explain the legends in some detail, specifically regarding Daoism and the Yijing.

Daoism and Baguazhang

We have now traced the evolution of Baguazhang from its creator, Dong Haichuan, to one of its influential present day teachers, Luo Dexiu. However, from whence Dong Haichuan received his art, or whether he developed it himself, is still somewhat unclear. The inscription on his tombstone, erected by his students in 1883 (PKCJ 3(1):10) says that “he encountered a [Daoist] priest who taught him martial arts”. Several legends surround Dong Haichuan, Daoists, divination texts and the creation of Baguazhang.

In one legend, well known in the Chinese martial arts world (Liang, Yang, Wu 1994:38, PKCJ 3(1)), Dong Haichuan didn't learn Eight Trigrams Palm from Daoists. He actually learned a martial art style called *Eight Circling Palms* from a Daoist priest. The story goes on to imply that later Dong Haichuan modified it and called it Baguazhang. The earliest document that contains this story is a 1937 text entitled Yin-Yang Eight Circling Palms, by a certain Baguazhang practitioner.

Another legend in the literature tells a different story of how Dong Haichuan came by his art. In this story, Dong Haichuan traveled to the famous Emei (“uh-may”) Mountain in southeastern Sichuan Province in southwestern China. Emei Mountain is far, both geographically and culturally, from Beijing and Tianjin. Sichuan shares a border with Tibet, among other places (see Figure 1).

At Emei Mountain, Dong Haichuan encountered two Daoists, and they instructed Dong to walk around a tree until it appeared as if the tree were leaning toward him, following him.

After eight years of tree circling, Dong understood what they meant. The tree appeared to follow him as he walked around it.

Returning to them for further instruction, they told him to walk a figure-eight between two trees. Two years after that, having perceived both trees following him, Dong returned. The Daoists inquired as to his feelings, Dong replied that he was homesick. His teachers were pleased that he still retained human emotions. After that the Daoists spent several years teaching him the palm techniques and weapons and then sent him away (PKCJ 3(2):21, Smith and Pittman 1990:20).

These two legends, combined with the inscription on Dong Haichuan's tombstone, demonstrate some kind of connection between Baguazhang and Daoism. As the primary philosophical underpinning of Baguazhang, it is worth examining some of the popular beliefs and practices associated with Daoism in China and Taiwan. The next section will describe Daoism and some of its cultural manifestations.

I. Daoism

This is not a treatise on Chinese religion, but Daoism⁵⁹ and its practice is an important part of the cultural context of Baguazhang, so although I am not an expert on the subject, I will present my understanding of the matter, based on my readings and interviews with Taiwanese.

Daoism is the native religion and philosophy of China. The theory of the *dao*, the way or path of nature, is fairly simple: Everything is transitory and relative and the only thing

⁵⁹Often Romanized *taoism*.

that persists is change. Once something reaches its extreme state, it begins to evolve into its opposite. For example, once a fire is hottest, it begins to cool.

Daoism is expounded in three primary texts. One is the ancient divination text, the Yijing⁶⁰ (Wilhelm 1990). The second is a short book by the legendary Laozi, literally “the old master”, who is credited with writing the Way-Virtue-Classic, in Mandarin Daodejing⁶¹ (Waley 1958, Mote 1971:77). The third book contains the parables of a philosopher named Chuangzi, Master Chuang (Watson 1968).

Laozi lived around the 6th century BC. Chuangzi was born approximately 369 BC and lived during the Warring States period (403-221 BC) (Mote 1971:80), shortly after Confucius. Chuangzi’s life relative to Confucius is clearly evident because Chuangzi uses Confucius as the dupe for many of his parables, much the same as Socrates used Glaucon. While Daoism can be complex, it perhaps can be summarized by saying that these philosophers stressed the importance of dynamic equilibrium in natural and human affairs and that excesses of all kinds are to be avoided. Daoism became very popular as a philosophy and was applied to many fields of endeavor, including warfare. The famous Art of War, by Master Sun (Feest 1980, Sawyer 1993:145-186), is an application of the principles of Daoism in conflict.

The cosmogony of the *dao* is straightforward. Limitless in its creative ability, the *dao* is not a sentient deity, but more akin to an endless river, whose eddies and whirlpools fill the universe with the countless beings. At the beginning there was unity, everything was

⁶⁰Often Romanized *I Ching*. It will be described in a later chapter.

⁶¹Also Romanized *Tao te ching*.

undifferentiated from every other thing. There was no change, no time. This period, or state of being, is called the *wuji*, Emptiness. In the Emptiness, all things were united with their opposites, light with dark, left with right, there were no distinctions between form and matter, all was potential. Nothing existed as we experience reality. In the Yijing the time of this universal unity is called *xiantian*, pre-heaven, the time before Heaven and Earth were separated.

After some time, the Emptiness divided into the *taiji*, the Grand Ultimate. From the One, came the Two, the light and dark, assertive and passive principles of *yin* and *yang*. Light was divided from darkness and Heaven from Earth. In the Yijing, the name given to this period, the period in which we live, is *houtian*⁶², post-heaven, meaning the period after Heaven was divided from Earth. It is this conception of the *taiji* for which the martial art *Taijiquan*⁶³, Grand Ultimate Boxing, is named.

Thereafter, the complementary and mutually generating energies of *yin* and *yang* combined in differing proportions to create the Five Elements of Wind, Fire, Earth, Water and Metal. Still later, the Five Elements combined to form the Twelve Animals and from those, the “uncountable number” of things were brought into being. The Five Elements and the Twelve Animals are used to describe the basic principles of another Chinese martial art, *Xingyiquan*.

In Daoist epistemology, complementary states of being do not exist in a static, diametric opposition to one another, but participate in and dynamically generate one from the other.

⁶² These are the same *xiantian* and *houtian* that are used in Gao Yisheng’s *Baguazhang*, described in Chapter I above.

⁶³ Outside of mainland China. *Taijiquan* is often Romanized *T’ai chi ch’uan* (Cheng 1981).

This is true of *yin* and *yang* and the same is true of the Five Elements: one destroys another and begets a third. For example, Fire consumes Wood, and thus generates Earth. Thus, there can be no Light without Darkness, no Heaven without Earth, no Fire without Wood, and so on. It is on this basis that Chinese medicine operates: an excess of *yin* can be countered with the addition of *yang* (Kaptchuk 1983, Reid 1986, Farquhar 1994, Zhang and Brinkman n.d.).

In the book of Genesis, “when God made heaven and earth, the earth was without form and void” and the universe was created in one creation story by the spoken words (Genesis 1:1-2:4), and in another, formed by the hand (Genesis 2:5-4:26) of God. While in Genesis the world comes from purposive division and creation, in the Daoist cosmogony the division and recombination is undirected by a conscious awareness.

Adrian Snodgrass describes the creation of the Hindu universe as an act of dismembering. He records myths that describe how

in the beginning, Prajapati, who is unmanifested Unity-Totality, desired to multiply. He emanated...in all directions from himself [first] the Word and thence the Waters. Desiring to reproduce himself he penetrated the Waters and an Egg developed, whose shell became the Earth. The gods, demons, men, plants, etc. appeared...By this emanation of the worlds Prajapati is completely emptied out, exhausted, without power...dispersed, differentiated into the world of multiplicity...(Snodgrass 1992:47).

While containing a strong anthropomorphic element, this theme of the division of Unity to create the multiplicity is closely paralleled in the Chinese Daoist cosmology. One fundamental difference is that the creative power of the *Dao* is never exhausted. It is endlessly fecund.

The practice of Daoism has coalesced into two forms, Daoism as a philosophy, the realm of professionals such as scholars, monks and priests, and Daoism as the basis of popular religion. Interaction between the two is considerable. Emily Ahern (Ahern 1981:23) has

shown that Daoist priests in the Qing dynasty and modern Taiwan were assigned intermediary roles between the gods and the people, just as low and medium level officials were intermediaries between the emperor and the people in imperial times. Daoists are also expected to be skilled in controlling, manipulating or banishing ghosts and deceased ancestors (Ahern 1981, Jordan 1989). Geomancy, the interpretation of the spiritual significance of architecture and landscape, is another subspecialty of Daoist studies (Freedman 1966:118-154, Ebrey 1987).

While *yin* and *yang* and the Five Elements interact and change the course of people's lives, they are transcendent. That is, these forces exist outside of people's daily understanding, particularly those with less formal education. Many Chinese, both in the past and present, consult fortune tellers to provide advice on possible courses of action. However, the natural forces being inhuman, there is little to which a normal person can appeal for intercession from floods, earthquakes, misfortune and war.

On the other hand, many of the gods and goddesses, such as General Guan and the sea goddess Mazu, were originally living people. As such, they have histories, rises and falls of fortune, hold offices and possess other human attributes and are more comprehensible than abstract concepts. They are thus immanent, existing in people's daily lives. In their temples, all gods are approachable through prayer and offerings. There is a multitude of Daoist gods, ranging from the nameless Earth God to the King of Heaven. Additionally, there are several kinds of divination (Ahern 1981:45-64) through which people learn of, and manipulate, the will of the gods.

The lay practice of Daoism having been briefly and shallowly sketched, let us turn our attention to institutions of Daoism and their relation to martial arts. In imperial and

Republican China there were Daoist and Buddhist monasteries that supported themselves from donations and from grants of land made by the government. In addition to being centers of religious and philosophical learning, many Daoist and Buddhist monasteries had curricula that included the practice of martial arts. The most famous of this kind of monastery is the Buddhist Shaolin Temple which figures prominently in the origin myths of several anti-Manchu revolutionary movements and many more martial arts styles (Schlegel 1866, Stanton 1894, Ward and Stirling 1926, Morgan 1960, Draeger and Khek 1976, Chow 1977, Draeger and Cheng 1977, Draeger and Chye 1979, al Bakkar 1984, Wang 1988, Takacs 1995). There were several Daoist monasteries that also maintained martial traditions and many martial arts styles have legendary origins there as well. Not all monks were fighting monks, but those that were grew to have good reputations as pugilists.

Martial arts pedigrees consist of information about where a style originated and who its important teachers were, as I detailed for Baguazhang in the last chapter. These pedigrees were transmitted from generation to generation orally and in written form, and were often contested and manipulated in the same way that biological genealogies are. In China as elsewhere, genealogies were frequently political tools generated by ambitious descent groups. “Apparently desiring to enhance their prestige or extend their influence, these kinship groups resorted to the dubious expedient of claiming direct descent from well-known celebrated personages (real or imagined) of antiquity” (Freedman 1966:29). Martial arts instructors often do the same. This is accomplished either by having the founder of one’s martial art spend time in a Buddhist or Daoist monastery, or simply by having as a founder “a Buddhist monk” or “a Daoist priest”. A story claiming that the founder of the martial art system is a

Daoist monk, or even “a Daoist” implicitly links the martial arts in question to the legendary Laozi, the original Daoist⁶⁴.

In the legends recounted above, the references to Daoist priests bring the Daoist religious and philosophical tradition to mind. It implies that Dong Haichuan’s martial arts instructor, a Daoist, possessed a high level understanding of the universe as well as a high level of martial arts skill. Furthermore, the Daoist is assumed to have received a mandate from the Daoist philosophical system, and by implicit extension, Laozi, Fu Xi and the Yellow Emperor. Finally, because Daoist priests were numerous in imperial China, origin stories involving a Daoist would be readily accepted and difficult to disprove.

The Yijing and Baguazhang

There exists another set of origin legends in which Dong Haichuan developed Baguazhang based on the principles in the Yijing and the theory of the Eight Trigrams. That is, Dong Haichuan, or his teachers, studied the *theory* of the Eight Trigrams, as described in the Yijing and then developed a martial arts system based on it. This legend can be found in the literature among Chinese in China (Gong Baozhai in PKCJ 4(5)), Chinese in the United States (Liang, Yang, Wu 1994) and Euro-Americans (Frantzis 1998).

Yin Fu was Dong Haichuan’s first Baguazhang student (see Figure 11). Gong Baozhai studied under a third generation member of the Yin Fu lineage (PKCJ 4(5):6). Gong Baozhai

⁶⁴ The example of *Taijiquan* is a good one. The late Cheng Man-ch’ing, a well known *Taiji* instructor in the United States, wrote that “it was well towards the end of the Sung Dynasty when a [Daoist] by the name of Chang San-feng first applied the philosophy of Huang Ti (Yellow Emperor, 27th. c. B.C.) and [Laozi] to boxing...This marked the beginning of T’ai-chi Ch’uan” (Cheng 1981:5). The connection of the martial art to the legendary founders is explicit. Such statements may also serve as a metastatement, closing off the critical examination of the tradition by bracketing it with a “this comes from the ancient ancestors” metastatement, as

trained in many martial arts when he was young and moved to Taiwan around the time of the 1949 emigration. In the early or mid-1970s, Luo Dexiu approached him about studying Baguazhang under him, but Gong replied that he had not practiced in many years. In the late 1970s or early 1980s, Gong Baozhai began teaching Baguazhang.

According to the 1994 interview (PKCJ 4(5):6), Gong teaches a martial art based on Baguazhang, but uses many other arts as well. He says that Baguazhang, *Eight Trigrams Palm*, is not a complete system, but that what Gong himself teaches, a self-created system called *Eight Trigrams Fist*, is complete. Despite its incompleteness, Gong uses the manuals of Baguazhang, especially the 1916 one written by Sun Lutang (Sun 1970), as his theoretical guide. Gong Baozhai teaches that “while most martial arts such as Shaolin originated with physical movements and then later developed fighting concepts and strategies based on those movements, Ba Gua started with the philosophical idea and then built the physical movements and tactics in accordance with the philosophy” (PKCJ 4(5):6).

Another version of the same legend is found in the United States. Bruce Frantzis started out in New York in the 1960s studying Japanese *karate*. In the early 1970s he traveled first to Japan and later to Taiwan in a series of trips to explore and absorb as much about martial arts as he could.

Frantzis’ *The Power of Internal Martial Arts* (Frantzis 1998) is very “energy” centered. That is, it focuses on the development of a practitioner’s spiritual, psychic and physical energy, rather than how to do fighting techniques. He claims that his energy enhancing

Boyer (Boyer 1990) suggested above, but this line of questioning would require an analysis that is beyond the scope of this work.

teachings, which can be learned at his seminars as well as from the book, can be used to augment whatever martial arts or sports you care to practice.

In Frantzis' writing, Baguazhang becomes a mystical force created by sages. Rather than being a martial art system based on the experience of excellent fighters, Frantzis (Frantzis 1998:207) asserts that “[Baguazhang]...is a unique Daoist art based on the ancient Chinese classic text, the I Ching.” He goes on to describe other non-tangible and apocryphal attributes of the fighting art. “Psychologically, [Baguazhang] is based on the idea of being able to smoothly and appropriately change from one situation to another...Ba gua uses all sixty-four psychological and spiritual paradigms of the 64 hexagrams of the I Ching without becoming fixated on any one of them” (Frantzis 1998:78).

Before I go further, I must roughly outline the Yijing and its relationship to Daoism and Baguazhang.

I. The Yijing

In China during the Age of the Five Rulers (ca. 2800 BC), there lived a legendary king named Fu Xi. According to one ancient text⁶⁵, Fu Xi, “as king under the heavens, looked upward to observe the phases of the heavens. He looked downward to perceive the rules of the earth. He viewed the living birds and animals and their relationship with the earth” (Liang, Yang and Wu 1994:21). He examined the bodies of people and objects outside of them. Fu Xi observed the changes in the seasons and solar days, learned the rules of their changes and described them in writing. From these teachings were devised a system of divination called the *bagua* (Wilhelm 1990: lviii).

⁶⁵ Zhou Book of Changes, that is, the Zhou period (1122-221 B.C.) version of the Yijing. It is also called the Zhou Yi.

Bagua literally refers to the divination sticks used in neolithic and bronze age China (Smith and Pittman 1989:15). In practice, the petitioner asks a question. Then a diviner draws three random sticks from a pile. The sticks may be long (whole) or short (broken). One set of three sticks is a “trigram”, or *gua*. There are two kinds of sticks and three drawings, therefore eight possible combinations⁶⁶, as $2^3=8$. The *ba* of *bagua* is the Chinese character for 8, so *bagua* is literally “eight trigrams”. Typically, in the consultation of the oracle, a second *gua* is drawn and added to the first. The resulting matrix of 8x8 trigrams yields 64 possible double trigram permutations, known as hexagrams.

The *bagua* are often arranged in a circle. There are several such configurations, Figure 5 shows what is called Fu Xi’s Arrangement. When arranged in a circle, the *bagua* is “a representation of the Universe and its Order” (de Groot cited in Ahern 1981:26). As such, it often appears on charms used as commands to the gods to protect, punish or otherwise influence humans or spiritual entities. It is frequently found above doors, where its function is to maintain order by repelling negative energy and ghosts. In this usage, the *bagua* frequently appears surrounding a mirror.

In the divination system, once the relevant trigram is randomly selected, it must be interpreted. The Yijing is the text used to interpret. While a layperson can technically do it, and there are in Taiwan thousands of manuals that teach do-it-yourself divination, most people go to see a professional diviner or fortune teller.

As noted above, in Daoist epistemology, the Five Elements of Wind, Fire, Earth, Water and Metal do not exist in a static, diametric opposition to one another. Rather, each one is

⁶⁶ This can be expressed in binary numbers easily. If we take the short stick to be 0 and the long stick to be 1, the possible permutations are: 000, 001, 010, 011, 100, 101, 110, 111, making 8 sets of 3.

dynamically generated from another. Wood generates Fire, Fire generates Earth, Earth generates Metal, Metal generates Water and Water generates Wood, which begins the cycle again. The result is existence based on interdependence.

At the same time, a cycle of mutual destruction is operating. In this interaction, Wood destroys Earth, Earth destroys Water, Water destroys Fire, Fire destroys Metal, and Metal destroys Wood. It is in the mutual creation and destruction of these five elements that the universe exists. This cosmology and epistemology is the basis of both Chinese medicine and the boxing system *Xingyiquan*.

The same dynamic interaction governs the eight states of being, Heaven, Earth, Thunder, Water, Mountain, Wind, Fire, Lake, embodied in the *bagua*. Thus, there can be no fullness without emptiness, movement without stillness, no action without reaction and so on. Each of these is created and destroyed by one of the others. Not surprisingly, the emphasis in the Yijing is on change. Flexibility within structure is a very significant principle in understanding Daoist philosophy, Chinese medicine, politics, art, fortune telling, geomancy and martial arts.

A third piece of literature that carries the Yijing theme is Emei Baguazhang (Liang, Yang and Wu 1994). These gentlemen assert that, “in fact, Baguazhang is the only style whose theory and applications are based entirely on the Eight Trigrams” (Liang, Yang and Wu 1994:24). “In addition, the strategy of Baguazhang footwork...was derived from...The Book of Lou, which was used in the Bagua discussion in the Zhou Yi⁶⁷” (Liang, Yang and Wu 1994:34).

⁶⁷As noted above, the Zhou Yi is the Zhou dynasty version of the Yijing, also known as the Zhou Book of Changes.

That is, based on their understanding of the divination text, Yijing scholars assembled the fighting system. Even the *xiantian* circle walking is derived from a book used to interpret the theory of the eight trigrams. Everything in the martial art system is derived from the reading of philosophy books.

There is a second school of thought within the Baguazhang tradition that addresses this issue in a radically different fashion and forms the third set of Baguazhang legends I wish to present. According to Sun Lutang's 1916 text (Sun 1970), the Yijing was only used to *name* the different aspects of Baguazhang, after the martial art had been created. Sun wrote one of the earliest and most well known books on Baguazhang, The Study of Bagua Boxing. Sun (my translation) wrote "Baguazhang was named by adopting the changes" (Sun 1970:19) described in the Yijing to the techniques and concepts. Sun Lutang's meaning is not ambiguous. The fighting system was created. Later it was named using the Yijing as a conceptual guide. The Yijing was used to name the martial art's aspects, not as a canon of theory from which to create them.

In Taiwan, Luo Dexiu's account of the creation of Baguazhang is the same. From Chapter 1 the reader will recall that one of the body building exercises in Luo's Baguazhang is called the *tiangan*, a reference to the Yijing. My fieldnotes record what happened when I asked Luo about the meaning of this word. Bear in mind that Luo is himself a trained Chinese medical doctor and has traveled all over China researching the internal martial arts⁶⁸, Baguazhang in particular. He is thus not adverse to scholarship, nor is he generally anti-intellectual.

⁶⁸See Chapter 1 for a discussion of internal martial arts.

I looked up the characters for *tian*, “heaven, sky” and *gan*, “to oppose, to shield”. Together they mean “the 10 Heavenly Stems”. So I asked Luo what it had to do with Baguazhang. He smiled and said that I shouldn’t worry about it.

“The 10 *tiangan* refer to the major parts of the body. A tree is divided into major parts: it has leaves, branches, trunk, roots. The *tiangan* exercise the major divisions of the human body. Which came first? *Tiangan* exercises or Baguazhang? It’s like the chicken and the egg. They developed together.

But don’t think that someone sat down with the Yijing and said ‘Oh ho! I must make a martial art with this technique and that technique.’ Not at all. A man can study the Yijing for 30 years, have a Ph.D., and still know nothing about martial arts. But what if you have studied a hundred different styles of boxing? You say to yourself: I know so many kinds of *gongfu* that I cannot practice them all. But you begin to notice that this technique and that technique look similar, and that if you combine this and that, you get something new and yet still consistent with both the originals.

So in the old days, maybe 200 years ago, these men knew many styles of martial arts. Then one day they read the Yijing and they said ‘Hey, this concept in the book sounds like it describes this technique in our martial art style. Maybe we should call it Baguazhang!’ That is why the Yijing concepts are [in the Baguazhang]. But nobody read the Yijing and then created Baguazhang.

Li Ziming (1890-1993) was a third generation Baguazhang practitioner. Li was a student of Liang Zhenpu, who was himself a student of Dong Haichuan (see Figure 11). Li Ziming wrote a book about Baguazhang in Chinese which his American students translated into English (Li 1993). Li also addressed the relationship between the Yijing and Baguazhang:

Eight Diagram Palm is one of the last classical martial arts developed in history. [Its] creators were able to extract from other boxing styles those particular skills that clearly lent to the success of that style...The walking principles are congruent with the variations of the eight diagrams and their relative position within the overall theory of the Yijing. This is how the name Eight Diagram Palm was derived (Li 1993:17).

Li Ziming taught that the practical aspects of Baguazhang developed first. Later they were found to be congruent with the concepts of the eight trigrams⁶⁹. The fighting system was named after the principles outlined in the Yijing.

Moreover, Li makes it clear that the success of Baguazhang as a fighting system has more to do with the fact that it was developed by experienced boxers than its philosophy. It is equally clear, however, that the system's creators used the experience of older systems of fighting to deduce sound tactics and strategies which are then developed and refined. Good fighting tactics are themselves empirically testable, and in fact, correspond to the principles of the Yijing. However, it is important to note that they were not derived from the philosophy, but that they correspond to it.

It is clear that Sun Lutang, Li Ziming, Luo Dexiu believe that there is a close relationship between the macrocosm and the microcosm. In the world of Baguazhang, the macrocosm is the state of continual change in the universe, while the microcosm is the state of continual change in fighting tactics. The microcosm reproduces the macrocosmic truths. These macrocosmic truths are recorded in the Yijing. However, it was not by a *conscious* attempt by humans to imitate the macrocosm that the microcosm was formulated. Rather, the refinement of fighting skills revealed themselves, after the fact, as the microcosmic application of macrocosmic truths which manifest themselves in all interactions. Adrian Snodgrass made the same observation when he wrote that "laws operating at a lower domain can be taken to symbolize realities belonging to a superior order" (Snodgrass 1992:2).

In this chapter, I have pulled together versions of several legends that surround the origin of Baguazhang. These legends could be considered origin myths, involving not gods, but

⁶⁹Which Li's students occasionally translate as the eight "diagrams".

legendary figures such as Dong Haichuan. In one set of legends, the martial arts were taught by Daoists priests, which links Baguazhang to, and draws legitimacy from, legendary Daoist founders such as Laozi. In a second set of legends, the martial art was created by philosophers and scholars who had studied the Book of Changes and sought to create a fighting system that utilized those principles. A third set of legends states that the martial art was the product of many years of martial arts experience and thoughtful insight, and used the Book of Changes at a later time to name the various corresponding aspects.

One interesting point is that in these several sets of legends are seen several very different, even conflicting ways of a tradition representing itself. These several different representations have been created and used in specific historical and social contexts for a variety of purposes. A close examination of these settings and purposes lies outside the scope of this work, but suggests lines of questioning for future research.

Chapter 5 Chinese Kinship

*Rivers and mountains are easily moved,
Personalities are hard to change*

-Chinese Proverb

In his Outline of a Theory of Practice, Bourdieu contrasts “official kin”, the generally recognized structure of political and economic power in agnatic relations, with “practical kin” (Bourdieu 1993:33-43). Practical kin are those members of the descent group who are able to accomplish things, such as arrange marriages. His example is of an African group who wishes to contract a marriage with another descent group.

In making the first inquiries to the prospective bride’s descent group, the “wife-takers” send a representative. This representative is not a high ranking member of the groom’s kin group. Instead, a low ranking member⁷⁰ is sent, one whose rejection by the bride’s descent group would cause no dishonor upon the high ranking members (Bourdieu 1993:34-36). Later, when negotiations are underway, the high status members attend. Bourdieu names these kin, who make first contact, “practical kin” because they are effective at accomplishing the group goals despite their low status.

Bourdieu is specifically referring to members of a biological kin group, in his words, a “genealogical” group. He uses “practical relationships” to name the total network of people who are organized to achieve some objective. This network “comprises not only the sum

total of the genealogical relationships kept in working order (here called practical kinship) but also the sum total of the non-genealogical relationships which can be mobilized for the ordinary needs of existence (practical relationships)” (Bourdieu 1993:39). Kinship, for Bourdieu, is genealogical.

In the case of Chinese martial arts, the division between “practical kin” and “practical relationships” is less than obvious. Consider this case, recounted in more detail in the first chapter.

Luo Dexiu and Hong Yixiang’s son both studied martial arts under Hong Yixiang. According to Luo, he first entered full-contact tournaments because Hong Yixiang’s son wanted to compete, but Hong Yixiang was afraid he would lose face if his son was beaten. Hong refused to let his son fight. Instead, Hong entered Luo into the competition for two reasons. First, Luo filled the weight category. Second, if Luo lost, Hong would not lose as much face as he would if his son lost. On the other hand, if Luo won, Hong Yixiang would gain considerable face. It was a strategy of minimizing possible damage and maximizing possible benefit.

Here we see the dominant member of the group, the martial arts instructor, selecting a more genealogically distant member of the group to put into harm’s way rather than a genealogically closer member of the group. He does this in order to avoid losing prestige in the event of failure. In fact, Luo is not biologically related to Hong, but the statement still stands: Luo is genealogically more distant from Hong Yixiang than Hong’s own son. Would Bourdieu called it a matter of “practical kin” or “practical relationship”?

⁷⁰Such as an elder brother or paternal uncle rather than the father or grandfather.

Elsewhere Bourdieu highlights the weakness of genealogical relationships in the absence of other social, economic and symbolic factors.

The genealogical relationship is never strong enough on its own to provide a complete determination of the relationship between the individuals which it unites, and it has such predictive value only when it goes with the shared interests, produced by the common possession of a material and symbolic patrimony, which entails collective vulnerability as well as collective property (Bourdieu 1993:39,40).

Examining this statement in terms of Luo's tournament experience above raises some interesting questions. Clearly Luo and Hong Yixiang possessed "shared interests": they both wanted to increase the school's prestige. Of course, Luo wanted to gain fighting experience and make a name for himself. Did Luo and Hong Yixiang enjoy a "common...symbolic patrimony"? Supported by the student-teacher history of Baguazhang, sketched in the preceding chapters, I will argue in more detail shortly that, in fact, they did, Luo as Hong Yixiang's student and Hong Yixiang as a student of his teacher Zhang Junfeng. Did they also share a "common...material patrimony"? Bourdieu evidently uses "material patrimony" to refer to the "shared blood" of agnates. I will argue that "material patrimony" can be shared *via* ritual adoption, in the form of initiations, and, on a second front, that the Baguazhang itself is a material patrimony, being a corporate estate in an of itself.

In this section of the essay, I closely examine the similarities and differences between Chinese kinship and the use of kinship terms and organization in Chinese martial arts, specifically Baguazhang. This will involve an examination of what constitutes kinship and lineages in Chinese society, which I do in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 examines the nature of relationships and behavior in the Baguazhang society to understand more clearly the

relationships between members of agnatic descent groups and those of the martial arts association.

Chinese kinship

It is well known that Chinese society is patrilineal and that postmarital virilocal residence has long been the rule (Yang 1945, Freedman 1958, Harrell 1982)⁷¹. What is less well known is that many of the characteristics of what is called “Chinese kinship” are in fact the kinship practices of the middle and upper classes and not the more numerous poor. This is so because historical documents, such as gazetteers, frequently included family histories of important local families and not poor farmers. Genealogies, the other main source of reliable kinship information, were compiled by families of means and written by the literate minority⁷².

This is not to suggest that the poor did not share the same ideals of kinship behavior as the upper classes, they may well have, but that the former lacked the ability or means to implement them. Like Freedman (Freedman 1958, 1966), Judith Strauch takes lineage orientation as an assumption: “the model of the ‘successful’ elaboration of the principles of patriliney valued equally by all Chinese stands clearly before...multilineage communities, but it is a model they cannot hope to replicate” (Strauch 1983:22). Furthermore, there is little

⁷¹ This has changed in the second half of the twentieth century, but still occurs in Taiwan in a much reduced frequency.

⁷² Barbara Ward (Ward 1977:189) estimated that in the last 1000 years, no more than 20% of the male Chinese population was able to read and write about 1000 Chinese characters, and less than 3.5% could be considered “literati”, the highly educated. The Chinese historian Chow Tsetsung (Chow 1971:9) corroborates this, noting that for the 1917-21 period, illiteracy ran to 80%.

information about their success or failure rate in their attempts to achieve their ideals, whatever they were.

Anthropologists make the assumption that “kinship” is based upon consanguinity. For Chinese kinship relations this is usually well founded, in part because for the purposes of ancestor worship and inheritance, patrilineal descent is necessary.

In a traditional Chinese context, male lines of descent are highly individualized, for it is a man’s major responsibility to insure to the greatest extent possible that he will have male posterity; should he have several sons it is crucial that at least one marries and has male offspring (Cohen 1976:27).

Before the reforms of the Republic, which was founded in 1912, a man’s property was divided equally among his sons, with an extra share going, in theory, to the eldest son. whose responsibility it was to carry on ancestral worship (Freedman 1958:23, 1966:7, Cohen 1976, Harrell 1982:8) and care for the mother, if living (Stafford 1995).

In theory - and the theory formed the background of enacted law until the end of the Manchu [Qing (1644-1911)] dynasty - the duty of offering...[ancestral] sacrifice was not only transmitted through the male line of descent but was concentrated in one person in that line, namely the eldest son by the wife...[However by 1910, Japanese researchers observed that] the old clan law has decayed. Sacrifice to the ancestors is not a privilege of the eldest son by the wife, but all sons are competent to perform it...[In] the provinces of [Fujian] and [Canton], and especially in [Taiwan]...[the] ancestral temple and tombs and the business of sacrifice are in [the] charge of all the sons or grandsons either jointly or one at a time (Henry McAleavy cited in Freedman 1966:7 n.2).

However, not all men were successful in producing a male heir. Cohen (Cohen 1976:29) notes between 10 and 16 percent of sons were adopted by sonless families in rural Taiwan in the early twentieth century. Dennerline (Dennerline 1987:196) points out that over the course of 25 generations in one large, wealthy lineage in Qing dynasty China, “roughly one-fifth of the lines in each generation were continued by adoptive heirs”. Uxorilocal marriage was also used, less frequently, to provide a house with heirs (Freedman 1958, Cohen 1976,

Dennerline 1987). Postmortem adoption of a living son was also not unheard of (Freedman 1966:151).

In Chinese genealogies, distinctions are made between a man's biological son and an adopted son. However, if a man's adopted son acts as his son in matters of *ancestor worship* and inheritance, then what precisely is the role of consanguinity in Chinese kinship? Are a man and his adopted son kin or not⁷³? The fact that an adopted son takes the name of his adopted father and is expected to worship at the adopted father's grave and household altar (Freedman 1958:88), and *not* at his biological father's, suggests that genealogical descent can exceed the bounds of biology. In Nuer initiations, a man was ritually identified with his cattle, after which bovine sacrifice was the symbolic equivalent of human sacrifice (Evens 1999:329)⁷⁴. Was there among the Chinese of the nineteenth century, possibly continuing to today, an adoption ritual wherein the Chinese man and his adopted son come to be considered blood-sharing kin⁷⁵? If so, then might there be other cases wherein individuals of different fathers through ritual become transformed into what functions as consanguineous kin?

⁷³ It is recorded (Ebrey 1987:18) that sons of agnates were only weakly preferred as sources of adopted sons, but Cohen (Cohen 1976:30) notes that kidnapping also was a risky but not unheard of method for acquiring heirs in Taiwan in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

⁷⁴ "Through initiation, the boys are identified with cattle. This theme is given in a number of ways, but it is nowhere more graphic than in the cutting: the lines etched 'from ear to ear' in the boys' brows make the horns of cattle. By forging this identification, the ceremonial creates the abrahamic surrogate and thus the very possibility of bloody sacrifice. The boys shed their blood so that later they might offer up the blood of their beasts instead. Thus, by inscribing in man the equation between him and his cattle, the cutting constitutes what may be thought of as the root sacrifice."

⁷⁵ See Freedman (Freedman 1958:120 n.1), where he cites George Staunton's 1810 text on the Qing penal code respecting secret societies (emphasis mine):

All persons who, without being related or connected by intermarriage, establish a brotherhood or other association among themselves, by the ceremonial of *tasting blood*, and *burning incense* [an act of ancestor worship], shall be guilty of an intent to commit the crime of rebellion...The brotherhood associated by the initiation with blood...shall, immediately after seizure and conviction, suffer death by being beheaded.

Unfortunately, I have neither data nor space to explore the nature of the rituals of Chinese adoption. Other scholars (Schlegel 1866, Stanton 1894, Ward and Stirling 1926, Freedman 1958, Morgan 1960, Ownby 1996) have examined in detail the rituals of Chinese secret societies and brotherhood associations, but not with an eye to their possible transformative nature. Neither have I witnessed the initiations of the Baguazhang society, wherein students are transformed into disciples⁷⁶. These questions are open for further research. Instead, I must argue from less convincing behavioral data.

The ideal behavior of Chinese agnates to one another is expressed in classic texts, namely the *Book of Odes* and the *Book of Rites*, both of which predate the Current Era, as well as in the imperial codes of each dynasty (Freedman 1958, 1966). These books instruct that the proper way for a man to behave is to worship at an altar dedicated to four generations of his male agnatic ancestors. Under these rules, commoners can worship at family altars in their homes, but only princes of the kingdom are permitted to construct free-standing shrines, called ancestral halls, dedicated to their ancestors. The Chinese follow some of these rules very literally; others they follow not at all.

Furthermore, the rituals of funereal mourning, called the Five Grades of Mourning, following the five kinds of mourning clothes, are carefully laid out (Freedman 1958:41-46). Including the immediate family, rules of behavior for first, second and third cousins were detailed, describing the type and style of clothing to be worn, length of mourning period and other specifics. Fourth cousins need not mourn and were not considered by the classics to be kin (Ebrey 1987:18). Patrilineal relations were also under mutual financial obligation: the

⁷⁶This ritual is discussed below.

Odes and *Rites* enjoin a proper man to care for the poor, the widows and orphans of his agnatic line, extending four generations back and out to third cousins.

Marriage between same surnames was generally discouraged if not out and out forbidden (Freedman 1958:5 n.1), justified by the common belief that shared surnames were distant agnates, regardless of ethnic origin (Eberhard cited in Freedman 1966:27). Freedman uses the legal code of the Qing dynasty to make his case.

Whenever any persons having the same family-name intermarry, the parties and the contractor of the marriage shall each receive 60 blows [of a bamboo rod or whip], and the marriage being null and void, the man and woman shall be separated, and the marriage-presents forfeited to [the] government (Staunton 1810 cited in Freedman 1958:4 n2).

Among agnates falling within the mourning grades, marriage was a capital crime. Freedman again cites the Qing legal code:

The punishment for marriage with an agnate was in fact graded. If people of the same known descent but not related within the agnatic mourning grades (i.e. having a common agnatic ancestor not closer than great-great-great-grandfather) married, they were to receive 100 blows. Marriage within the agnatic mourning grades was to be punished by (a) exile, (b) death by strangling, and (c) death by beheading, according to the closeness of the relationship (Freedman 1958:4 n.2).

Interestingly, marriage to the mother's brother's daughter, that is, matrilineal cross-cousin marriage, was permitted by imperial decree in the Ming (1368-1644), and again in the Qing dynasty (Freedman 1958:97 n.4). It was not, however, encouraged (Freedman 1966).

That the classical texts still carried some moral imperative, at least among the educated class, is noted in a late Qing dynasty genealogy. A wealthy family of scholar-farmers arranged to marry their daughter to a poorer family who were part of a large and well organized lineage, one that had several estates dedicated to assisting the lineage poor. The daughter's father is reported to have explained his risky marriage arrangement by saying "a

house that lives by the *Odes* and the *Rites* doesn't count its wealth in money. I'd like my daughter to go there, where she still has some chance of practicing what the *Odes* and *Rites* teach" (Dennerline 1987:171).

The historical development of kinship behavior in China can be roughly traced through genealogies, biographies and local gazetteers. Patricia Ebrey (Ebrey 1987) has written a survey of kinship behavior from the Han period (202 BC - 220 AD) to the Yuan period (1279 - 1368). Her description outlines a gradual increase in the scope of collective agnatic behavior, as well as an increase in the number of purposes to which these activities were directed.

Already by the Han period, records of coresidence among agnatic males existed, females being married out. The same surname marriage prohibition was also in effect. Special kinship terms were used to distinguish a male agnate from a male of one's primary line, that is, "father's brother" and "more distantly related agnatic uncle" were linguistically distinct (Ebrey 1987:18). Male agnates were weakly preferred as sources of adopted male heirs. Finally, among agnates, the wealthy were expected to care for the poor and the educated were expected to be community leaders, especially in times of crisis.

Following Ebrey and Watson (Ebrey and Watson 1987), a Chinese *lineage* properly so called is a subclass of *descent group*, which is a self-aware group of agnates that share descent from a common ancestor, but have different lines of descent. Ebrey and Watson state that Chinese lineages are characterized by corporate property and joint ritual activities⁷⁷. They define lineages as

⁷⁷ Ebrey and Watson's terminology is more specific than Freedman's. Freedman (Freedman 1958:13) wrote that "poor lineages held no common lands", either for sacrificial or charitable purposes. In Ebrey and Watson's

descent groups that have strong corporate bases in shared assets, usually, but not exclusively, land...they also join in corporate activities on a regular basis. Furthermore, members of a lineage are highly conscious of themselves as a group in relation to others whom they define as outsiders. A lineage is not, therefore, a loosely defined collection of individuals (Ebrey and Watson 1987:5).

Chinese descent groups have several distinctive classificatory characteristics, in addition to a self-awareness that they share descent from a common ancestor. The primary attributes described in the literature are

- Descent from common ancestor
- Joint ritual behavior
- Property

Descent from common ancestor

The defining characteristic of an agnatic group is their common descent from a male ancestor (Freedman 1958, Ebrey 1987). Typically the descent in question is biological. However, the frequent use of male adoption or even uxorilocal marriage to continue the patriline brings the nature of descent and “biological descent” into question.

I. Genealogies

“The written genealogy was clearly an important instrument in the apparatus of the lineage” (Freedman 1958:70). Freedman has shown (Freedman 1958:112,113) that although shared descent was generally a matter of historical and genealogical record, and therefore difficult to manipulate, nevertheless, like African oral lineages⁷⁸, affiliations between lineages, of the same or different surnames, could be manipulated to make alliances or enemies (Freedman 1958:70-72).

writing, a lineage with no common land is not a lineage. only a descent group. For Freedman, a lineage appears to be a coresidential agnatic group that wanted to own corporate property. For extra-coresidential agnatic groups, Freedman uses clan or higher order lineage.

In the Tang period (618-906) can be seen the first evidence of elites using genealogies to prove their membership in particular descent groups (Ebrey 1987:20). By the Northern Sung period (960-1126) these genealogies were compiled to a depth of four generations, in keeping with the *Odes* and *Rites*. Earlier generations were sketched in prefaces and postfaces. This definition of a narrow pool of agnates and affines is thought by Robert Hymes (Hymes 1987:128-130) to signify the limits to which a genealogy author had obligations. Hymes argues that at this time, elite Chinese sought build affinal relationships across large geographic distances in order to find avenues for promotion to government offices. Pursuing a “national strategy”, these elites sought at the same time to limit the drain on their resources by having genealogies drawn up outlining precisely to whom the individual in question had obligations.

After the Sung government was forced out of northern China by the Mongolian invasion, the emperor established himself in the south, founding the Southern Sung period (1127-1278). Beginning in the Southern Sung and continuing into the Yuan, the Chinese elite, according to Hymes, gradually abandoned the national strategy and developed a “local strategy”. In this strategy, rather than marrying into families across large distances, marriages were arranged from among other local elite.

At the same time, genealogies expanded from the four generations of the Northern Sung to include many more generations and branches. Thus a man claimed membership in and recognized his obligations to a higher order kinship organization than had previously been the case (Hymes 1987:125-127). Additionally, the role of members of the elite classes in local affairs, such as providing famine relief, sponsoring temple, road, bridge or school

⁷⁸Here (Freedman 1958:71) cites L. Bohannon, M. Fortes and Evans-Pritchard.

construction, or leading and equipping local militias (Hymes 1987:123-125), seems to have intensified. Genealogies were written with long and literary prefaces by noted scholars and government officials from the local area, partially, Hymes argues, as proof of pedigree, and partially as literary introductions to those officials who already had access to the limited resource of government posts⁷⁹.

Hymes thus shows some of the uses to which genealogies, and the descent groups they define, could be purposively directed. On the other hand, Ebrey (Ebrey 1987) points out that the forces that led to the historical development of descent groups need not be the ones that manipulated them in later times. Once formed, descent groups could be manipulated or their goals could change, directed by the purposive decisions of individuals within the system.

Genealogies and ancestral halls appear to be key features of more developed descent groups, and both had major ritual purposes...Location of graves, birth and death dates, and seniority within a generation were all ritually significant items of information. This is not to deny that ritual groups could come to play other roles...But whether or not this happened would have depended on circumstances. I am arguing that there was no internal logic moving all ritual, ancestor focused descent groups in this direction (Ebrey 1987:55).

II. Generational names

One piece of data that is apparent in genealogies is the use of generational names.

Each new generation was given a written character [or character element] which its male members incorporated in their personal names...Chinese formal names nearly always consist of three characters, of which the first is the surname, the last is the purely personal element, and the middle commonly the generation name (Freedman 1958:7, also n. 2).

⁷⁹ Hymes (Hymes 1987:127) explicitly compares the literary nature of the genealogies of this period to the practice, old even in the Sung dynasty, of the young scholar sending poems and essays to the wealthy or to government officials in the hopes of gaining an introduction which could lead to employment or sponsorship.

Thus the sons of two male agnates surnamed Fu might be called Fu *Mingde*, Fu *Mingqing* and Fu *Mingan*. The “*fu*” character is common throughout the entire descent group, and “*ming*” is shared by all of the members of one particular generation, reckoned from a common ancestor. Generation names show a high degree of organization among agnates and as such, their presence is often taken (Freedman 1958, 1966, 1979, Ebrey 1987, Davis 1987, Naquin 1987, Rawski 1987) as evidence of descent group and lineage organization. Naquin (Naquin 1987) argues that the more prosperous the descent group branch, the more likely they are to follow the generational naming system agreed upon by their agnates.

Joint ritual behavior

“Rites,” Freedman wrote “are a variety of heightened behavior...linking the poetry of symbolism and religious belief to the prose of social institutions” (Freedman 1970:163). Chinese religious rituals fall roughly into two categories: those directed towards gods (Freedman 1958:77-91, Ahern 1981, Jordan 1989) and those directed towards patrilineal ancestors (Freedman 1958:41-46,81-91, Cohen 1976, Ahern 1981, Sangran 1984). Deity worship was by and large the decision of individuals, gods occupying a space on the right side of family altars (Freedman 1958:86, Jordan 1989:94).

Ancestor worship was somewhat different. Prior to the Sung dynasty (960-1278) corporate estates, and therefore lineages, were rare and most descent group activities were limited to weddings, funerals, and seasonal sacrifices. Sacrifices at this time were dedicated to recent ancestors, possibly only the four generations mandated in the *Odes* and *Rites*. This of course had a negative influence on the development of higher order agnatic groups. At this time too, ancestral halls and shrines at graves were not common, being the privilege of

the nobility. Some aristocratic families established communal graveyards, others did not (Ebrey 1987:19).

Ebrey (Ebrey 1987:21) emphasizes the role of ancestral rituals performed by the entire, or at least representatives of the entire, descent group in the formation of descent group identity. This required two elements. The first was a single agreed upon time to perform the ancestral rites. Beginning in the Tang period Tomb Sweeping Day⁸⁰ was gradually adopted among the lower classes as the day for collective ancestor worship at the graves of recent ancestors. This festival was later hailed by Sung writers as the most important time for gathering the agnates together (Ebrey 1987:21-24).

The second important factor was location. Sacrifices offered at graves on the same day could only draw agnates together if the relevant graves, that is, of shared agnatic ancestors, were located in the same place. Thus spread the practice, started earlier by some elite families, of building common graveyards for the descent group, and the construction, if one could afford it, of an ancestral hall.

Ancestral halls, free standing shrines that also serve as a focus for family or descent group activities, became more common among the wealthy during the Sung but were never universal (Ebrey 1987:53). Although halls at grave sites were technically only the privilege of the nobility, they were generally allowed under the argument that respect for the lineage and ancestors should be encouraged (Ebrey 1987:52). Although they were dedicated to the worship of the ancestors, they were also a place where descent group business was conducted (Freedman 1958, Ebrey 1987).

⁸⁰ This is the Ch'ing Ming Festival, held 105 days after the winter solstice (Ebrey 1987:21). It is now commonly called Tomb Sweeping Day in English.

By the early Sung period, several scholars were exhorting the wealthy and upright not only to create collective graveyards for members of their respective descent groups, but also gave instructions that members should be buried in accordance to their generation and birth order within each generation⁸¹. So doing de-emphasized individual descent lines and emphasized descent group membership (Ebrey 1987:25-29). Ebrey argues that these combined factors of shared ritual activities in a common place began in the lower classes and were later adopted by the upper classes and catalyzed the awareness of descent groups as social entities.

In the historical and anthropological literature, in nearly every Chinese house, about four generations of patrilineal ancestors⁸² were present in the form of a wooden or paper tablet inscribed with their names (Freedman 1958, Cohen 1976, Ahern 1981, Ebrey 1987, Jordan 1989). They received burned incense, burned paper money and offerings of food and wine at regular intervals. At this stage, ancestor worship was a domestic matter and those performing these rituals “did not link themselves by that act with all their agnates in other families sharing the same ancestors” (Freedman 1958:84).

Each nuclear family was genealogically linked to agnatic branches, sub-lineages and a lineage⁸³, each segment, if wealthy, possessing its own ancestral hall. The ritual connection to other agnates came in the form of rites performed at these ancestral halls (Freedman 1958)

⁸¹ For married males, of course. Wives, unmarried males and unmarried girls were to be buried elsewhere in the graveyard. This raises the very interesting question about where adopted sons would be placed, but for this I have no information, though Ebrey (Ebrey 1987:25-29) mentions that at least one Sung writer insisted that adopted sons be excluded from the genealogies and presumably the graveyards as well. This extreme stance was not widely adopted, the Chinese preferring pragmatism over ritual purity.

⁸² Including father and mother, father’s father and his wife and father’s father’s father and his wife, and so on.

and grave sites (Freedman 1966, Ebrey 1987). Freedman (Freedman 1958:46-50, 85-87) shows that for the southeastern provinces of Fujian and Canton, that after about four generations had passed, the ancestor ceased to exist as an individual and was incorporated into the larger body of agnatic ancestors at the next more inclusive level. This stage of ancestor worship was conducted at a higher level of kinship organization.

It was into one of these higher order ancestral halls that a second tablet, bearing the names of the now distant ancestors was placed, the original tablet being buried or burned. Freedman's social anthropological approach leads him to conclude that the Chinese lineage is a social organization of ancestor worship that can be organized if sufficient economic resources allow (Freedman 1958:48), tying together, as does Leach (Leach 1982) political, religious and economic networks. Once organized, it could simultaneously operate as a political, economic and a religious organization. Freedman's conclusion has a Durkheimian flavor: "ancestor worship in the halls...was essentially a means of group action in which the power and status structure of the community was given ritual expression" (Freeman 1958:91).

Property

In the Tang and Sung dynasties "most historical references to organized groups of agnates were to ones of the form called 'communal families'" (Ebrey 1987:30). Found both among the commoners and the educated, they were characterized by a group of coresidential agnates who pooled their agricultural and financial resources into a common budget. This

⁵³ A large and well organized lineage would have many such segments, a small, poor and poorly organized one might have no segments between the domestic household and the lineage.

was managed, not by a council of senior males, as were lineages (Yang 1945, Freedman 1958:34), but by a single family head, often, but not exclusively, the senior male. They are thus considered by Ebrey to be “proto-lineages” (Ebrey 1987:30), evidently because they lacked distinctions between the various descent lines.

These communal families could include several hundred people and last for ten or more generations (Ebrey 1987:31-34). The imperial government frequently awarded particularly large or old communal families with banners and tax exempt status. Curiously, the communal family, seen as the ideal of traditional moral values of family unity, appears to have worked most effectively if the family were all of the same socioeconomic strata. Once a man passed the civil service examination and accepted a government post, he had to leave his natal home and thus had to divide his living expenses and income from that of his communal family. This often led to divisions and tensions in the family, which encouraged the dissolution of the group.

I. Corporate land

Freedman (Freedman 1958) uses the relative productivity of descent group property to understand the relative success or failure of different descent groups. “In order to explain why some lineages rather than others managed to hold their members together I have adduced the factor of common property” (Freedman 1958:128). Moreover, it was not only the existence of common property, but highly productive land that allowed for the large size and power of southeastern lineages in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The argument that in the south-east the existence of large-scale localized lineages partly depended upon the maintenance of corporate property and that this property was probably made possible at an earlier stage of settlement by the

relatively high productivity of the land, is one which may have a bearing on the more general problem of the uneven distribution of large localized lineages in China (Freedman 1958:129).

In the Sung dynasty, sacrificial estates begin to appear in the historical literature. These are blocks of land, controlled by the lineage, whose produce or rent was dedicated to financing the ancestral sacrifices (Ebrey 1987). In the nineteenth century in Fujian and Canton, they existed as well (Freedman 1958:12), although they were not found everywhere throughout China. In modern Taiwan, these estates are sometimes established by individuals with the same surname who do not have demonstrated or stipulated descent (Sangran 1984).

Charitable estates are blocks of land set aside to support, through direct grain subsidies or cash generated by rent, members of the lineage. These also first appear in the early Sung historical records: "the ideal model of the lineage estate was...that established by Fan Chung-yen (989-1052)" (Ebrey 1987:41). It is with the establishment of these corporate estates, formed of contributions by one or more members and managed by the leaders of several descent lines, that lineages, properly so called, appear.

Some estates were large, 500 acres or more, and supported all members of the lineage, while others were smaller and supported only the poorer members of the lineage, particularly widows and orphans (Ebrey 1987, Dennerline 1987, Naquin 1987). Charitable estates could also be used to provide scholarships for promising young men (Freedman 1958:13, Ebrey 1987, Dennerline 1987, Naquin 1987). Again, like sacrificial estates and ancestral halls, these characteristics appeared between 1000 and 1350 AD (Ebrey 1987:22) and persisted into the twentieth century, but never became universal, even among the wealthy. Management of the charitable estate became a source of intense and often bitter political struggle within the lineage (Freedman 1958, Dennerline 1987:190-193).

II. Corporate non-land resources

Recently historians and anthropologists have disputed Freedman's (Freedman 1966) assertion that large tracts of irrigated land were the necessary base for a lineage. Freedman himself (Freedman 1958) noted that his data and conclusions were specific only to the southeastern provinces of Fujian and Canton of China. Recent research is demonstrating that in fact, Freedman's lineage is a regionally specific variant, if a particularly powerful one. Freedman's land based lineages are now called the "Kwangtung"⁸⁴ type lineage" (Hazelton 1987, Watson 1987).

Keith Hazelton (Hazelton 1987) has recently outlined some of the characteristics of a Lower Yangtze type lineage (see Figure 1 for Yangtze River and Canton), which he distinguishes from both Freedman's Kwangtung type and the unincorporated descent groups found elsewhere (Hazelton 1987:165). The characteristics of the Lower Yangtze type lineage are as follows:

First, the rent from corporate estates is generally insufficient to care for all lineage members. Instead, it is assigned to care for the ancestral hall and/or graveyard and to pay for the annual rituals of ancestor worship. Following Dennerline (Dennerline 1987), corporate estates, if sufficiently large, could be used to support widows and orphans in the lineage as well as lineage schools. These relatively small corporate landholdings, smaller than those described by Freedman (Freedman 1958, 1966) meant that the lineage had little influence over the running of domestic activities.

⁸⁴Another Romanization of Canton.

Second, in all of these Lower Yangtze descent groups and lineages (Hazelton 1987, Dennerline 1987, Hymes 1987, Davis 1987) it was a small group of elites that actively promoted the lineage, through the research and printing of genealogies and other activities. These active elites doubtless had a variety of motives, but they tended to encourage the creation and reproduction of a lineage identity.

Third, a lineage could be identified with a specific location (Hazelton 1987:166), in which case emigrants might or might not be dropped from the genealogies. Alternatively, the lineage might not be associated with a fixed locale, but rather be dispersed and not coresidential.

As an example of a descent group that lacked an extensive agricultural base, Davis (Davis 1987) examines a descent group in the Lower Yangtze River drainage, somewhat north of Canton. His study looks at the rise and fall of eleven generations of one descent group in the Sung (960-1278) and Yuan (1279-1368) dynasties.

The Sung government instituted a protection system for office holders whereby a man could select a certain number of his sons, agnates or affines to take up an entry level government office. The higher the rank of the senior official, the more protected slots he was allotted. This system started as an imperial reward for outstanding officials. It was expected to be of mutual benefit, for through the protection system, the government had access to what should have been individuals of good family background, individuals both educated and loyal. It rapidly transformed from a matter of imperial reward to a privilege the office holders expected (Davis 1987:63-67).

The descent group under Davis' scrutiny generated government officials, both important and insignificant, from the fourth to the tenth generations. One of the five 4th generation

brothers studied for and passed the civil service examination, was given a government post and eventually served a short term as assistant to the chief councilor to the emperor. The five brothers decided that thereafter, their male descendants would have a generational name, either a common character or character element. This began in the fifth generation, where there were thirteen males, and continued at least to the tenth generation, which had one hundred and twenty two male members who all shared a generational name (Davis 1987:70-80).

One fifth generation member, Shih Hao, achieved a high rank and was granted ten protected government slots. These he distributed between his four sons, four younger brothers and two sons-in-law (Davis 1987:69). The group's influence peaked in the sixth generation, when one of Shih Hao's sons held the post of chief councilor to the emperor for twenty-five years. This individual was rewarded with, among other things, no less than seventeen protected slots in the government bureaucracy (Davis 1987:70), several times the normal amount even for an imperial councilor. Both of his sons and fifteen of his grandsons and grandnephews were inducted into government office, without the usual requirement of having passed the civil service exam.

Davis has two interesting conclusions. One is that the Shih were a highly organized descent group, if not a lineage properly so called. In addition to the possession of a genealogy and ancestral halls and their use of generational names, used by the males across all five major descent lines for at least five generations, there was also the matter of agnatic adoption. In the ten generations for which Davis has data, he notes that fifteen of the twenty one male adoptions came from close agnates, or 63%. This clearly signals close contact between the descent lines.

Davis' second point is that "although historical and genealogical sources contain no references to communal landholdings in the form of charitable estates, there did occur a sharing of [protected government office] privileges" (Davis 1987:86). He notes in particular that the powerfully placed senior members frequently opened access to government posts to descent group members outside of their own descent line or positively promoted their careers. Davis concludes that in this descent group, the protected government slot worked "much like a charitable estate except that the common property represented political privilege and not land" (Davis 1987:87).

Moving farther north, away from Freedman's Canton and Fujian and north of the Yangtze River system, Susan Naquin (Naquin 1987) has closely studied a multi-generation descent group of unorthodox millenarian preachers. The White Lotus Wangs lived in Hebei Province, in a small village about 100 miles east of Beijing and northeast of Tianjin. Because of its proximity to these latter cities, the two homes of mainland Chinese Baguazhang, and the time covered by documents that Naquin uses, namely the Qing dynasty, her study is perhaps more relevant to this study of Baguazhang, which developed at that time in that place, than Freedman's study of large lineages in the far south of China.

One of the Wang lineages in Naquin's study were leaders of the infamous White Lotus religion⁸⁵. Naquin suggests that a fifteenth century Wang may have claimed, or was believed to have been, a buddha and his followers were assured salvation. This Wang was very successful and teaching as he did during the formative decades of the new religion, he

⁸⁵ The White Lotus was a millenarian cult that preached "the existence of the Eternal Mother, adherence to correct and pious behavior as the path to salvation [and] the expectation that the...buddha of the future would come to earth to teach the true way" (Naquin 1987:228).

became one of the “handful of White Lotus patriarchs (*tzū*, lit. ancestor)⁸⁶...he also accumulated considerable wealth and property” in and around Beijing (Naquin 1987:228-229). The religion was considered dangerous by the Ming (1368-1644) empire and the White Lotus patriarch Wang died in prison.

Later biological descendants of this White Lotus Wang, also surnamed Wang, inherited the prophecy that the buddha of the future would be born in their family. This, combined with legends of supernatural abilities (Naquin 1987:237) attributed to family members and great oratory skills from more mundane sources, influenced several descent lines to take up sectarian religious conversion as a profession. For the next two hundred years, dozens of male members of the Wang lineage left the home village and converted followers, who in turn made contributions to the family’s welfare. It was a risky undertaking, however, and bitter fruits were reaped when the family, both sectarian and non-sectarian, was discovered and destroyed by the Qing government in a police hunt for another heterodox religious group in the same region between 1813-20 (Naquin 1987:239).

Naquin makes the case that the Wangs constituted a lineage properly so called. They used generational names, built an ancestral hall and graveyard, at which descent group members and White Lotus followers (non-Wangs) worshipped the patriarch Wang and the other great leaders of the Wang lineage. When not out teaching and preaching, the White Lotus Wangs coresided, either in the same or nearby villages. In these respects, they closely followed the ideal of Freedman’s Kwangtung type lineages. They were not, however, landed gentry, nor did they produce students for the civil service exam. They lacked a written

⁸⁶In *pinyin* the character is *zu*, literally ancestor.

genealogy until one was assembled by officials during the 1813-20 investigations. Their corporate resource, Naquin argues, was their reputation and network as White Lotus leaders.

Possession of religious scriptures, a claim to past and future messianic authority, knowledge of a special set of religious practices guaranteed to bring salvation, and familiarity with [the patriarch] Wang Tao-sen's proselytizing networks - these were too valuable to give up. They came to constitute a sort of collective property...Those who were religious teachers in that village occupied a large common residence surrounded by a stone wall, one branch living at the eastern end, one at the western...Their collective religious enterprise should allow us to call those three lines that did practice the sect a lineage (Naquin 1987:233).

It is now possible to make some general statements about the nature of Chinese kinship. Organized descent groups recognize descent from a common male ancestor and use genealogies and generational names to demonstrate their organization. This descent is often biological, but also frequently occurs through the adoption of males. Descent groups maintain joint rituals, centered on ancestor worship and attendance at one another's life crises. Wealthy descent groups have ancestral halls or graveyards and may be coresidential. Lineages properly so called, have, in addition to these attributes, some kind of corporate resource. This was land in the highly productive southeastern regions, but apparently extended to non-land resources such as protected access to government office and information or marketing networks elsewhere.

Freedman (Freedman 1958) created a model of what a Chinese lineage should resemble. He described two points on a continuum, one being the extremely developed manifestation, his type Z, the other being the minimum structural characteristics of a lineage, what he called type A. The latter is worth quoting at length.

Lineage A is small in numbers, with a population of two or three hundred souls. Apart from one or two small shopkeepers and a few craftsmen, its members are cultivators...Their general level of income is low. They own no common

property except for a plot of land which is the grave site of the founding ancestor. Any increase in the pressure of population on resources leads either to a failure to marry and have children or to migration in search of work...Apart from domestic ancestor worship, which is conducted before the simplest of instruments, and annual rites at the tomb of the founder of lineage, [sic] there is no ancestral cult. There is no recorded genealogy, individual men being placed in the system merely by their generation (which is indicated by their personal names) and their ascription to one or other of the sub-lineages which trace their origin from the sons of the founder. No genealogical unit stands between the sub-lineage and the household, nor is there any tendency for groups of closely related households to co-operate economically and ritually. Headship of the sub-lineages and the lineage passes to the oldest men in the senior generation of these units, no other formal leaders being recognized...(Freedman 1958:131)⁸⁷

More recent scholarship in Chinese social organization has broadened its scope from Freedman's time. While some writers (Ebrey 1987, Naquin 1987, Watson 1987, Dennerline 1987) continue to research the Chinese descent group and lineage properly so called, others have gone in new directions. Strauch (Strauch 1983) has challenged Freedman's (Freedman 1958, 1966) assertion, indeed assumption, that single-lineage villages, although rife with internal conflict, are more stable than a villages with multiple lineages and last longer.

Strauch has several significant examples to support her case. In one village just north of Hong Kong, although the village is composed of several lineages with different surnames, "the village men speak of themselves as being 'brothers' irrespective of surname and village exogamy is strictly enforced. Each male who goes through the...initiation ceremony thereby gains a share in the corporate property owned by the village" (Brim 1970 cited in Strauch 1983:24). Thus the village members use (admittedly simple) kinship terms for one another, practice village-wide exogamy and undergo an initiation to become corporate shareholders.

⁸⁷ As noted above, Freedman's use of the term "lineage" is more flexible than that used by Ebrey and Watson (Ebrey and Watson 1987). I doubt that the latter would consider Freedman's type A lineage as anything more than a descent group.

Strauch's own case study is another small village near Hong Kong. Its members also use "village brother" to refer to residents descended from the original 6 surname groups who founded the village. They also practice village exogamy. Furthermore, while they all possess functioning ancestral halls dedicated to their individual biological lineages, they also possess a community hall and conduct community-wide collective rituals to thank and beseech to the local gods (Strauch 1983:24-47). Here joint ritual activity is directed at local place gods, not the ancestors of a single lineage. In other respects, namely the use of kinship terms and exogamy, the members of the multilineage village coexist, "legitimated through a liberal extension of the kinship idiom" (Strauch 1983:22).

Sangran (Sangran 1984) has pushed the theoretical model further. He argues that the large and powerful lineages studied by Freedman and others are simply one extreme example of Chinese social organizations. Outlining the functions, characteristics and recruitment practices of a number of Chinese corporations, he concludes that the corporate property owning, single surname lineage is one of a broad range of Chinese traditions, and that by overly focusing on them, anthropologists have missed a great deal.

His survey (Sangran 1984:402-405) of one Taiwanese township in the late 20th century yielded:

- a coresidential lineage of over 300 people;
- a dispersed residence lineage with a corporate estate and ancestor rituals wherein the responsibility for hosting the annual sacrifices rotates among lineage segments;
- an association that owned property, worshipped five ancestors of the same surname from Fujian Province in mainland China and recruited share-purchasing members of a single

surname who originated in one county in Fujian Province, the responsibility of hosting the annual rites and banquet being rotated among three branches, divided not on agnatic lines, but on place of origin in said mainland Chinese county;

- a single surname group who owned property and worshipped a deity, people of a single surname could purchase shares, ritual responsibilities rotates among ten groups of genealogically distinct families, but who resided in the same market community in Taiwan.

In presenting these case studies⁸⁸, Sangran highlights the fact that although a traditional “Freedman” type lineage is among the organizations found, it is by no means the limit of Chinese social organizational expression. Indeed, in this light, patrilineal lineages become one among many. Sangran concludes that what is “most significant and uniquely Chinese in these associations is the fact of formal group formation itself and the norms that regulate group activities, not the particularist modes of membership recruitment” (Sangran 1984:407). Elsewhere he summarizes the norms that regulate these associations, wherein he finds “the pervasiveness of sequential rotation, decision by consensus, and committee hierarchies” gives them more flexibility and adaptability than the rigid features of Freedman’s “classic lineages” (Sangran 1984:410). If Freedman’s lineages represent one extreme of hierarchical organization, the corporate organization, with rotating responsibility, represents the other end of the spectrum. In social groups where responsibility and control of resources are rotated among several individuals or groups, the organizing principle is not hierarchy but heterarchy.

At the very least, these studies provide sets of characteristics with which to compare other sorts of Chinese social organization and perhaps give some clue as to where guiding

principles and purposes lie. There appear to be two dominant methods of organization at work. One is method uses the “patrilineal” principle, with a strong hierarchy. At the other extreme is the “corporate” principle, which is more heterarchical. Many social groups fall in between these two extremes and display characteristics of both. In the next chapter, I will show the organization, behavioral history and recruitment practices of Baguazhang in an attempt to compare it to Freedman’s lineages and see where it fits in this range of other forms of Chinese social organizations presented here.

⁸⁸Of which I have only summarized a few.

Chapter 6

Baguazhang Kinship

A teacher for a day is a father for life.

-Chinese proverb

Throughout this work I have written of the Baguazhang as a tradition that has been transmitted for several generations. In the first chapter, I examined in detail one modern branch of this tradition as practiced in Taiwan. In the third chapter, I presented the key figures in the formation and transmission of the tradition, particularly Luo Dexiu's branch. In the last chapter, I closely examined the formal and obvious aspects of Chinese kinship, especially those of large lineages and descent groups in late imperial and early Republican times.

In this chapter I compare the formal structural and behavioral elements of the Baguazhang society to those of Chinese lineages. At first glance, the Baguazhang society is not a lineage, because members are not recruited on the basis of agnatic descent (Freedman 1958, Ebrey 1987, Sangran 1984). However, Baguazhang practitioners do not behave, nor is their society organized, as a corporate association (Sangran 1984) or as a multi-surname village (Strauch 1983) as described in the last chapter. The Baguazhang society is organized and its members behave as if they were an agnatic lineage, which is and it is with kinship terms that they talk about themselves. This lineage outlook is perhaps epitomized by Luo Dexiu's statement "Disciples are sons" which I examine below.

An obvious response would be that the Baguazhang society, and the many martial arts traditions organized in the same way, use kinship as a metaphor, knowing that theirs is a “fictive” brotherhood. Evans-Pritchard drew the same conclusion about the Nuer, regarding the latter’s statement “twins are birds” as metaphor or poetry. Terry Evens (personal communication, see also Evens 1989) has shown that the Nuer, as presented in Evans-Pritchard’s ethnography, did not behave as if “twins are birds” was a metaphorical or poetic utterance, while at the same time they are aware that human twins do not have feathers.

In the same rigorous fashion, I intend to demonstrate below that the members of the Baguazhang tradition do not now, nor have in the past, behaved as if their use of kinship terms and lineage organization are metaphorical or poetic. In addressing the three main attributes that characterize Chinese lineages, described in the last chapter, I will argue that:

- regarding descent from a common ancestor, the Baguazhang practitioners
 - I. claim descent from Dong Haichuan,
 - II. compile genealogies,
 - III. recognize segments within the lineage as followers of various teachers,
 - IV. use kinship terms when addressing one another,
 - V. attempted to establish the use of generational names;
- regarding joint ritual behavior, the Baguazhang practitioners
 - I. perform ceremonies at Dong Haichuan’s tomb,
 - II. have rituals of initiation which bestow lineage membership,
 - III. perform *xiantian* circle walking, a circumambulation;
- regarding corporate property, the Baguazhang practitioners

- I. possess the esoteric knowledge of Baguazhang,
- II. possess, or at least have access to, Dong Haichuan's tomb.

Despite, or perhaps because of, these attributes, the Baguazhang society is not a lineage properly so called, as defined in the previous chapter. But neither is it simply a multi-surname deity cult as described by Sangran (Sangran 1984). The Baguazhang society lies somewhere between, perhaps what might be called a "aggregated lineage", that is, an agnatically organized group of individuals who are not necessarily biologically related.

Descent from Common Ancestor

I. Descent from Dong Haichuan

This use of "descent" is not a biological descent, of course, and that makes it the a thorny issue. My use of descent here refers to the fact that most practitioners of Baguazhang acknowledge Dong Haichuan as the founder of the art (Sun 1935, Sun 1970, Smith and Pittman 1989, Liu 1991, Li 1993, Sun 1993, Liang, Yang and Wu 1994, Frantzis 1998)⁸⁹.

The use of "descent" is not simply a problem of wishful thinking, but neither is it biological. In the Chinese literature, Dong Haichuan is called by several titles, increasing with respect as the decades pass. Writing in 1916, Sun Lutang (Sun 1970:1) called Dong *xiansheng*, "teacher". Sun Xikun (Sun 1935:9) called him Dong *laoxianshr*, literally "old teacher", or perhaps, "original master". Liu Fengcai (Liu 1991:26) and Sun Baogang (Sun 1993:17) called him Dong *zushr*. Matthews (Matthews 1975:1002) defines *zushr* as "patron saint, founder of a sect, used of Buddha and Laozi". This character, *zushr*, uses the same *zu*

⁸⁹There do exist, as I have hinted in an earlier chapter, legends of other origins.

that Freedman (Freedman 1958, 1966) says means “ancestor” and Naquin (Naquin 1987) found used as “patriarch” to refer to the White Lotus founder Wang.

Clearly the Chinese make a distinction between a biological ancestor and a teacher ancestor. But the character for “ancestor” is used in both, implying a conceptual continuity. Dong Haichuan is the grand master of Baguazhang and many accept him as the ancestral founder, the patriarch, of the art.

II. Genealogies

When Dong Haichuan died in 1882, he already had many students. In 1883 his students erected a stone monument above his tomb. On it was inscribed the story of Dong’s life and the names of 66 of his students, the first on the list being Yin Fu (PKCJ 3(1):10, Sun 1935:21-23). Since then, each generation of teachers has recorded who they taught, some more systematically than others. For lack of a better term and because they are the terms the martial artists themselves use, I will call these lists “genealogies”, and the organization of student-teacher relationships recorded therein refers to the “lineage”. These genealogies of teacher-student relationships of various breadth and depth have been frequently published (Sun 1935:18, Liu 1991:27, Liang, Yang and Wu 1994:44-47, Frantzis 1998:326, PCKJ). It was from several published versions that I constructed Chapter 3 and Figure 11.

Knowledge of student-teacher relationships is of more than academic interest. It fits an unknown student into the social landscape: is he a friend, an ally, an enemy? Should I respect him, insult him, ignore him? For martial artists, these questions are answered in large part by knowing who the student’s teacher is. Many teachers have long teaching careers. Perhaps the younger man you meet is in fact a student of the teacher you had 10 years ago.

Often students, myself included, are asked “Who is your teacher?” when another martial artist is informed that we study this or that martial art. Who one’s martial arts ancestors are is a mark of pedigree, which really has nothing to do with an individual’s ability to fight, but has much to do with social relations when one is not fighting.

Martial artists manipulate these teacher-student genealogies to suit their immediate or long term purposes. If one martial artist wants to distance oneself from another martial artist, the former can cite the differences between the types of martial arts they practice, even, and often, going so far as to say that only members of former’s lineage have inherited the “true” teachings of the founder. On the other hand, if the same two martial artists wish to establish a connection, build a closer relationship to one another, they may emphasize the fact that their teachers were classmates, or that they both practice some style which, they agree, is naturally superior to any other style, or even that their two different styles are similar, compatible or have similar origin legends.

Bourdieu makes much the same point:

In all cases of genealogically ambiguous relationship, one can always bring closer the most distant relative...by emphasizing what unites, while one can hold the closest relative at a distance by emphasizing what separates. What is at stake in these manipulations, which it would be naive to consider fictitious on the grounds that no one is taken in, is in all cases nothing other than the definition of the practical limits of the group, which can be redrawn by this means so as to go beyond or fall short of an individual one wants to annex or exclude (Bourdieu 1993:41).

Martial artists also manipulate the genealogies to give themselves more prestige. Since being “closer” to the founder of the style is more prestigious⁹⁰, genealogies are carefully scrutinized. This does not mean that attempts are not made to manipulate them.

Bruce Frantzis (Frantzis 1998) studied with a certain Liu Hongjie in Beijing for about three years (see Figure 11). Frantzis claims that Liu studied with Ma Gui, a second generation student⁹¹, as a “private student” (Frantzis 1998:309). This would make Liu Hongjie a third generation lineage member and Frantzis a fourth generation member. This is impressive indeed, as it would put Frantzis in the same generation as the Baguazhang giants like Gao Yisheng and Zhang Junfeng, discussed in earlier chapters. Clearly this is what Frantzis wants his readers to believe. “The author’s ba gua teacher, Liu [Hongjie] studied with a man named...Ma Gui, who lived and studied with [Dong Haichuan]” (Frantzis 1998:208). Obviously, Frantzis is in the fourth generation. Deriving legitimacy from his proximity to Dong Haichuan, Frantzis provides order forms for his books, video tapes and seminars about his “Energy Arts” (Frantzis 1998:344-46). Presenting his martial arts pedigree, as well as his admittedly vast fighting experience, as claims to authority, Frantzis moves to turn symbolic capital into economic capital. All well and good.

⁹⁰ The rarely spoken assumption is that the teachings of the patriarch will diminish with successive transmissions, so the older generation knows more than the younger. This use of “generation” by Chinese and American martial artists (Liu 1991:27. Sun 1935:18. Frantzis 1998:326) is used the same way that “generation” is used anthropologists to refer to biological descent groups (Dennerline 1987. Hazelton 1987. Naquin 1987. Davis 1987. Hymes 1987). In Chinese, they same word, *dai*, literally “generation, period, time” is used in both contexts. By this reckoning, Luo Dexiu is sixth generation in Cheng Youleng’s segment and seventh generation in Zhang Junfeng’s.

⁹¹ Here, already, we have conflicting stories. Frantzis (Frantzis 1998:309) states that Ma Gui was a student of Dong Haichuan, this is supported by the presence of Ma Gui’s name on Dong’s original 1883 stele. Other sources (PKCJ) asserts that Ma Gui was Yin Fu’s student. Possibly both are true. In Figure 11, I have put Ma Gui in the third generation, as a student of Yin Fu, following Frantzis’ teacher’s statement (Frantzis 1998:326).

Except for the certificate given to Frantzis by his teacher Liu Hongjie. This certificate, written in Chinese and translated by Frantzis, is in the back of the book (Frantzis 1998:326). On it, Liu Hongjie has quite unmistakably put himself in the *sixth* generation, and Frantzis in the *seventh*. It is an official document, signed, dated and bearing Liu's own signature stamp⁹². It appears that Frantzis is attempting to manipulate the relationship between Liu and Ma Gui to make Frantzis appear more authoritative than his teacher is willing to publicly announce that he actually is. Liu Hongjie may well have studied under Ma Gui, but Liu himself does not claim to be Ma Gui's student when recording an official genealogy, not fictive ones of no import.

Chinese martial arts practitioners manipulate relationships in the martial arts society in the same way the biological and affinal and other kinds of relationships are manipulated, both in China (Freedman 1958, 1966, Jacobs 1982) and elsewhere (Bourdieu 1993). They act as if relationships in the martial arts world are genealogical, important relationships to be used to advance private as well as group interests, and to thwart the interests of rivals.

III. Segmented lineages

Part of the nature of Chinese lineages is segmentation (Freedman 1958:46-71, 1966) into more or less independent branches or sub-lineages or lineage segments. Baguazhang has undergone segmentation, with different teachers founding their own traditions within the broad tradition of Baguazhang.

In this context, "their own traditions" refers to methods of teaching, what material is taught, the creation stories, such as those recounted in the fourth chapter and other things.

⁹²Which uses red ink, the significance of which is discussed below.

Luo Dexiu, for example, teaches the *tiangan-xiantian-houtian* complex, as outlined at the beginning of the essay. This complex is part of the Gao Yisheng branch of Baguazhang, meaning only practitioners of Gao Yisheng style Baguazhang are taught this complex. As I outlined in the third chapter, Dong Haichuan taught Yin Fu the Lohan Shaolin boxing system prior to teaching him Baguazhang. The Yin Fu branch still learns this system in addition to Baguazhang, but the Gao branch does not. Each segment is distinctive, though they all have the basic element of Baguazhang, namely the *xiantian*, circle walking, in common.

IV. Kinship terms

Martial artists use kinship terms to refer to one another. Saying “Who is your *shrfu*”, meaning literally, “Who is your teacher-father?”, to refer to one’s teacher is as common as “Who is your *laoshr*?”, your teacher. “*Shrxiong*, do you have a moment for me to ask a question?” addresses a martial arts student’s classmate-elder brother. “I want to invite the *xiongdì* to drink tea”, refers to all the older and younger brothers in the club. “Yesterday I went with my *gongfu* brothers to the hot springs” is another common way to refer to the same group.

In Baguazhang, Zhang *shrzu* is the title of the “teacher-ancestor”, grandmaster Zhang Junfeng (YC 2000:4). Using the same characters in different order, Dong Haichuan is also Dong *zushr* (Sun 1993:17) where it means “founder of a sect, patriarch, patron saint”. As mentioned above, each successive group of students is called a “generation”, both in Chinese and in English (Liu 1991:27, Sun 1935:18, Frantzis 1998:326). Thus, Dong Haichuan is the founder, his students are the second generation and so on. Consistent with this concept, they

talk and write about themselves using terms like “lineage”, “ancestor”, and “inheritor” (PKCJ, Frantzis 1998, Liang, Yang and Wu 1994).

Students of the same Chinese martial arts teacher often refer to themselves as *gongfu xiongdi*, that is, *gongfu* brothers. As noted above, the senior student in the group is the class-oldest brother, *shrxiong*. In Chinese martial arts schools, there is great variation in the application of age hierarchy, the senior-junior ranking that is so important in Chinese families. We saw in the third chapter how heavy the seniority among Hong Yixiang’s *Tangshoudao* students lay heavily upon the juniors. Particularly difficult is how, in the martial arts society, an individual is to be ranked.

In a biological family, the senior-junior hierarchy is based upon birth order. Even among agnates, knowledge of birth order is often maintained (Freedman 1958, 1966, Ebrey 1987). Rivalries between brothers are not uncommon, particularly when the older brother is perceived as being less than fair (Freedman 1966, Cohen 1976) or not very competent at handling his responsibilities.

In the Chinese martial arts context, seniority is based not upon biological age, but upon when an individual joined the group. Though I am biologically older than Mr. Lee, he joined the association before I did, therefore, he is senior to me. Perhaps also I have more fighting skill than Mr. Lee, this too, makes no difference in the seniority ranking. It should be obvious that is a source of tension.

Luo Dexiu has an older biological brother. After Luo had been studying with Hong Yixiang for a while, his brother mentioned that he had started to study *gongfu*. The brother studied at a *Tangshoudao* school with one of Hong Yixiang’s students. When Luo discovered that his older brother was studying with a student of Hong Yixiang’s he told his

older brother “You can call me elder uncle”⁹³. A fist-fight ensued. The issue of who should give respect to whom is a thorny issue.

My Baguazhang brothers are not very formal. The senior students are not marked by special clothes, belts or any identifying insignia. Only the senior-most current student is regularly addressed by his title *shrxiong*. The other seniors are addressed with a polite “Mister xxx”. Among the rank and file, we use first names. When introducing one another, especially to outsiders, we often refer to our relationship as “*gongfu* brother”.

At the close of Luo’s class every night, the students arrange themselves in a line. The line faces Luo, with the senior most attending student at Luo’s left, the junior-most at the right. The senior student present calls for “attention”, and then “bow”, and the class pays its respects, thanking Luo with a simple “thank you teacher”. This is the only time I have seen the senior-junior hierarchy physically manifest itself in Luo’s Baguazhang. However, the kinship connections created by the common practice of martial arts extend broadly, and part of a student’s education is learning who these relations are, as illustrated below.

a. The Doctor

From late in high school until the first six months of my fieldwork I suffered from moderately severe asthma. Not terribly serious, but annoying. Before coming to Taiwan, I was treated by a Chinese medical doctor with herbal medicine for this. She suggested that I

⁹³ That is literally what he said in Mandarin. If reckoned as biological descent, the logic is clear: Luo, as Hong Yixiang’s student, is Hong’s son. Luo’s biological brother studied with another of Hong’s student/sons. Two students of Hong Yixiang are brothers to each other. The son of my brother is my nephew. Luo began training in *Tangshoudao* before his biologically older brother, Luo is a senior *gongfu* uncle to his biologically older brother.

continue treatment in Taipei, as she felt that it was likely that Taiwanese doctors could finish the work that she had started.

In Taipei I trained in Baguazhang for two months before I saved up enough money to visit a Chinese doctor. Then I asked Luo if he knew of any good Chinese medical doctors. He said that the two that he knew to be the best were a man and his teacher, but both could be very abrasive at times. I went to see the younger of the two and told him that my Baguazhang instructor had recommended him.

“How annoying”, he said to himself in Mandarin, “I wish he would stop doing that.” But he treated me well. I went to see him a second time, with similar results. My asthma disappeared.

In December 1997, my wife fell ill and, not wanting to use penicillin, we took a trip to see the same doctor. When we walked into his office, he looked at me, then at my wife, and back at me, and the “I know you” look came to his face. He smiled. While he was treating my wife, the doctor asked us in Mandarin:

(Dr.) Are you still practicing that martial arts stuff?

(author) Yes sir, I am really enjoying it.

(Dr.) Do you think it has any use?

(author) Yes of course! The breathing exercises are very useful, and the exercise drills make me stronger.

(Dr.) Sure, sure, but does it earn you money?

(author) Well, no, but neither does anthropology. Earning money is not the most important thing in life.

(my wife) And if you are sick, then you don't earn money either. Practicing martial arts keeps us healthy.

(Dr.) If it doesn't earn you money, it's useless. [grins]

(author) But I really like to do it. Besides, Luo is very dedicated, I learn a lot.

(Dr.) It's useless. You should earn money.

(author) [becoming annoyed] Being a Chinese medical doctor doesn't earn you much money either, I bet. Why do you do it?

(Dr.) [laughs] It's useless too. [at this, his three assistants or understudies laugh.]

On the way home, my wife and I discussed this strange behavior. Why would he insist that practicing martial arts was useless? I thought that perhaps in modern and money oriented Taiwan, something as impractical as martial arts would be frowned upon by serious professionals. But that did not explain why he kept laughing. My wife suggested that he was teasing us, that he probably practiced *Taijiquan* himself, and teased Luo as well. She was right.

Several days later, during Baguazhang class, I asked Luo about the doctor's strange behavior. Luo laughed and said:

In fact, the doctor's father was the elder *gongfu* brother of Hong Yixiang. They trained together under Zhang Junfeng for many years. The doctor's father is my elder *gongfu* uncle. Although he practiced *gongfu* every day, he also smoked and drank and ate greasy food. So, when he was old, the doctor's father had a stroke, and lost the use of his right arm and the right side of his face. Nevertheless, he continued to practice *qigong*. His son, the doctor, learned *Taijiquan*, Baguazhang and *qigong* from his father, and has practiced for most of his life. But because the martial arts practice did not prevent his father from having a stroke, he always tells me that *gongfu* is useless.

Then, of course, it was obvious. The doctor was teasing me because I am the student of his father's junior classmate's student. In the kinship structure of Chinese martial arts, I am the son of his father's younger nephew. I am the doctor's second cousin. The doctor teased me because he knew of the relationship between himself and Luo, I understood his behavior when I understood their, and our, relationship⁹⁴.

⁹⁴ The next time I saw the doctor was in May 2000, at the *Yizong* Martial Arts Association meeting, of which he is also a founding member.

V. Generational names

In 1930, nearly fifty years after the death of Dong Haichuan, his second and third generation students came together and built a third monument at his tomb. This monument consisted of two stellae with the names of new students and stories of Dong Haichuan's life. One interesting part was an inscription that stated that Dong Haichuan had written a poem, and that the poem would be the source of each succeeding generations' generational name. The students were evidently to change their given name when they were initiated into the lineage⁹⁵. The poem reads "Prosperity as expansive as the sea. Longevity as eternal as the mountains. A strong art makes firm the foundations of the country and makes glorious, prosperous and radiant the land. Through morality and virtue Emptiness⁹⁶ is established" (PKCJ 3(1):6). The poem consisted of twenty characters, beginning with "sea", the same "sea" as the second character in *Dong Haichuan*. With Dong Haichuan as the first generation, the next 19 generational names were established.

The project never caught on, at least publicly. Reading the genealogies in the various Baguazhang texts, I can find no systematic use of generational names, related or unrelated to the poem. A few individuals, Yin Fu and Zhang Junfeng, may have adopted the appropriate generational character into their names⁹⁷, or their presence may be coincidence. It is also possible that there exists a private list of students who have been initiated into the lineage,

⁹⁵The initiation is discussed in a following section.

⁹⁶The Emptiness. *wuji*, referred to here is the same as in the Daoist cosmology in Chapter 4.

⁹⁷As is suggested for Zhang Junfeng (YC 2000:4).

along with their adopted generational names and these lists are not published. This seems improbable, however.

Equally improbable is the story associated with the poem, namely that it was Dong's own handwork. It is possible, of course, but appears to me unlikely that a poem written by Dong Haichuan with the purpose of organizing his descendants would have had no effect for the first 50 years after his death! If it were the case that he wrote it, then why, among all 66 students listed on his 1883 tombstone, did only one, Yin Fu, have a "proper" generational name?

What seems more likely is that one member, or a small group of members, tried to retroactively institute the generational name practice. Ultimately they were unsuccessful, but their goal was clear: to organize the generations of the Baguazhang using the same conceptual framework that characterizes organized Chinese descent groups. I believe it is an example of the "officializing strategies" of which Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1993:40, emphasis in original) wrote: "strategies aimed at producing 'regular' practices are one category...of *officializing strategies*, the object of which is to transmute...private, particular interests...into disinterested, collective, publicly avowable, legitimate interests".

What precisely the "private, particular interests" of the small group of Baguazhang men were, I could not begin to speculate. What is important, in my estimation, is that in 1930 members of Baguazhang society attempted to implement a system of organization identical to that used in Chinese agnatic descent groups.

Joint Ritual Behavior

Writing about Chinese social organizations, Sangran (Sangran 1984:400) writes that “most agnatic corporations have a ritual focus in rites of ancestor worship”. Strauch (Strauch 1983) and Sangran (Sangran 1984) both show that other kinds of Chinese corporations have a ritual focus on rites of deity worship. Baguazhang has a ritual focus on neither ancestors or deities, although rites of ancestor worship at Dong Haichuan’s tomb do take place irregularly and the practice of Baguazhang is itself a ritual, as we will see.

I. Ceremonies at Dong Haichuan’s tomb

Dan Miller (PKCJ 3(1)) has described the history of Dong Haichuan’s tomb in enough detail to permit some interesting analysis. As noted above, Dong Haichuan died in 1882. In 1883 a group of his students⁹⁸ assembled and had a stone stele carved and placed over his tomb. The stele possessed an account of the Baguazhang master’s life and a list of 66 of the master’s students⁹⁹ (PKCJ 3(1):8-10).

Ahern (Ahern 1981) discusses the significance of writing in Chinese rituals. In the Qing dynasty (1644-1911)

gifts for ceremonial occasions were detailed in writing. People might prepare a gift list of the number and the name of all items to be sent, place it in a special box, and send it along with the gifts. After the recipient decided which gifts he would accept, he returned an appropriate thank-you note which indicated

⁹⁸ It is not clear whether Dong had any biological sons or not. There are no Dong surnames listed on the stele aside from Dong Haichuan.

⁹⁹ I agree with Dan Miller’s (PKCJ 3(1):8) assessment that the 66 names on the stele were probably those of Dong’s students who had contributed to the stele fund. Freedman (Freedman 1966:154 n.2) wrote of a similar situation occurred in 1867, just 15 years prior to Dong’s death: “The county magistrate and ‘gentry’ of [a county near Hong Kong] raised money for the repair of the local Confucian temple by proposing to build an academy to serve as a shrine in honor of local men. People who contributed to the building fund were entitled to put their ancestors’ tablets in the shrine, in positions of honor varying with the amounts donated.”

whether he had accepted all, part, or none of the gifts and noting what sums were given as tips to the porters (Ahern 1981:20).

In southern China during the Qing dynasty (de Groot cited in Ahern 1981:22) and in modern Taiwan the practice of writing out inventories of gifts extended to funerary goods.

Regarding the practice in modern Taiwan Ahern writes that

an essential part of every funeral ceremony in San-hsia [in northern Taiwan] is the reading of the sacrificial essay. It is a written document addressed to the deceased and read to him, usually by affinal kinsmen, though others may do so as well...The [sacrificial essay] 'tells the dead man what has been offered to him' by the person reading it...

In San-hsia, [Daoist] priests help prepare certain documents for the 'merit ceremony'...The pronouncement states the place of origin of [our kinsman] on the mainland¹⁰⁰...and instructions to [minor gods to beseech greater gods to] eradicate the wrongs of the dead...

At the end of the [merit ceremony] a document much like the [sacrificial essay] is read, listing all the ceremonies performed on behalf of the deceased and all the descendants whom the deceased left behind (Ahern 1981:21-22).

Here I have noted three funerary documents. In one, the deceased is informed about what ceremonies and offerings have been done for him and by whom. The second records the man's ancestral home and has his sins removed. The third lists his descendants. After the documents are read to deceased, they are burned to send them to the deceased in Hell.

The stone stele erected in 1883 above Dong Haichuan's tomb is the petroglyphic equivalent of these funerary documents. They record the life of the deceased and list his students just as man's biological family would document the same. I conclude that Dong Haichuan's students conducted a funerary ritual for him in 1883.

¹⁰⁰ This is interesting because "place of origin on the mainland" refers to the place from which the individual's *ancestors* emigrated anywhere from (in 1980) 30 to 200 years previously.

In 1905, a second stone stele was erected by more of Dong Haichuan's students. In March, 1930, Ma Gui, a student of Yin Fu, led a third group of Baguazhang practitioners to Dong's tomb and erected two more stellae. Ma Gui's name appears on both the 1883 stone and the 1930 one (PKCJ 3(1):10). These third and fourth stones are inscribed with more stories of Dong's life, including the poem that purports to establish the generational name system, and the names of many Baguazhang practitioners of the time. These stellae appear in photographs in Sun (Sun 1935:20)¹⁰¹ as do (illegible) photographs of rubbings presumably from the stellae themselves.

During the Cultural Revolution in China, Dong Haichuan's tombstones were knocked down, buried and the site given over to agriculture. In the late 1970s, "the Chinese National Sports Committee put out a directive encouraging martial arts enthusiasts to conduct research" (PKCJ 3(1):11). In 1980, a group of Baguazhang practitioners, led by Li Ziming and Kang Gewu located, excavated and relocated not only the stellae, but Dong Haichuan's casket. The stellae were placed on display at the Beijing Physical Education College's Martial Arts arena, but were later relocated¹⁰², with Dong's casket, to a public cemetery in western Beijing.

In 1981, nearly 100 years after Dong Haichuan's death, new stellae were erected, in addition to the four old ones. These new stellae were also inscribed with the names of Baguazhang practitioners who had helped, physically or financially, in relocating and reconstructing the tomb. In addition to mainland Chinese, the stellae list many overseas Chinese and even foreigners who contributed to the fund (Li 1993:2, PKCJ 3(2):11).

¹⁰¹Miller (PKCJ 3(1):5) reproduces this photograph as well.

In the 1990s the funeral ceremonies continued. A stele was constructed at the grave site in 1991 (PKCJ 3(2):12) that lists the students of a Baguazhang practitioner who went to Korea during the Second World War and eventually settled there. In 1994, another stone was added to the growing collection, one dedicated to Wang Shujin, a prominent Baguazhang teacher in Taiwan and Japan (PKCJ 6(5):30, see also Chapter 3). Fifty people attended that dedication ceremony.

Although the Baguazhang practitioners are not biological agnates, they clearly have behaved in much the same way as a Chinese lineage would with regards to ancestral tombs. The pilgrimages and erection of monuments at the tomb of their “lineage founder”, although irregular, would be unmistakable acts of ancestor worship were they conducted by agnates.

II. Initiation

There is a Chinese proverb that runs “Rivers and mountains are easily moved, personalities are hard to change.” It illustrates the Chinese belief that it is difficult to change someone’s worldview. We have seen how Luo is similar to and different from his *gongfu* brothers and other Chinese martial arts teachers. I have shown how Luo teaches the mechanics, strategy and theory of his martial arts. What I have not examined is precisely how the Baguazhang society makes its multi-surnamed students into members of what it calls a lineage. It uses an initiation.

Victor Turner (Turner 1982:102) wrote “it is the ritual and the esoteric teaching which grows girls and makes men...It is not a mere acquisition of knowledge, but a change in

¹⁰² Apparently the college students felt it was bad luck to have tombstones outside the front doors of the building (PKCJ 3(1):11).

being.” Turner was writing about Central African initiations, specifically puberty rites, which are initiations into the society of adults. Initiations are one kind of ritual known as rites of passage. Examining southern Chinese and Indian martial arts, the subject of my master’s thesis (Takacs 1995), I was able to find clear markers of other kinds of rites of passage. Coming to Taiwan, I expected to find rites of passage in Baguazhang as well.

Rites of passage are those rituals that mark and facilitate transitions. Arnold van Gennep (van Gennep 1960), who first studied this pattern of rituals at the beginning of the 20th century, described them as rituals that guided one through life’s crises. These crises, the dangerous times in one’s life, include events like birth, puberty, initiations into various societies, marriage, childbirth and ultimately, death. Van Gennep noted that while most of these rites had an emphasis on one aspect or another, they all had three distinct stages:

Rites of separation; followed by
Rites of transition; followed by
Rites of integration

There are other kinds of transitions that are facilitated by rites of passage as well. One of the basic manifestations of these rites marks the departure or return of a traveler, for example the departure and return of the Roman army (van Gennep 1960:19-21) or Cherokee war parties (Gearing 1962). These events were accompanied by public rituals that prepared, marked and permitted the exit and reentry of the smaller group from the larger. The introduction of a stranger to a group, or the entry into a house or temple, is also a passage from one kind of space into another. Because of the preponderance of these early examples, the primary metaphor for rites of passage in anthropology and psychology is that of crossing a doorway or gateway. In this context, Victor Turner (Turner 1962), following van Gennep,

used the Latin word for threshold, *limen*. Therefore, rites of separation are *preliminal*, rites of transition are *liminal* and rites of integration are *postliminal*.

For Durkheim the spatial change was coincident with a shift from sacred to profane or the reverse. As I noted in Chapter 2, Durkheim insisted that sacred and profane are two radically distinct states of being. Nevertheless, he asserted that it was not true that

a being can never pass from one of these worlds into the other: but the manner in which this passage is effected, when it does take place, puts into relief the essential duality of the two kingdoms. In fact, it implies a veritable metamorphosis. This is notably demonstrated by the initiation rites...a long series of ceremonies with the object of introducing the young man into the religious life: for the first time, he leaves the purely profane world...and enters into the world of sacred things. Now this change of state is thought of...as a transformation *totius substantiae* - of the whole being. It is said that at this moment the young man dies¹⁰³, that the person he was ceases to exist, and that another is instantly substituted for it. He is reborn under a new form (Durkheim 1982:39).

Durkheim's reference to "the religious life" is not simply the calling to become a priest, monk, shaman or ritual specialist. He refers generally to the life of an adult, in which sacred places, times and events are found and where prohibitions and taboos regarding things sacred must be followed. As an adult, one is expected to acknowledge and obey the rules of society, regarding not only sacred things, but other people. To illustrate, in traditional Chinese thought, one's body was sacred because it was a gift from one's parents and literally belonged to them. To treat one's body poorly, for example, to commit suicide, was therefore to show disrespect to one's parents.

Victor Turner's (Turner 1962, 1982, 1985) study of Ndembu puberty rituals, as practiced in the 1950s and 60s, includes very detailed accounts and analyses. Ndembu puberty rituals,

and coming of age rites in general, mark the transition from childhood to adulthood. In these rituals the initiand, the one to be initiated, passes through all three stages of rites of passage.

Preliminal rituals are associated with leaving a place or a departure from a social status. In this first stage of rites the traveler stands before the doorway, having not yet crossed. During the preliminal process of puberty rites the initiand is separated from his or her family, wherein they are socially children. This involves the ritual death of the initiand, inasmuch as their previous social person, their child-identity, ceases to exist. This is the death to which Durkheim referred above. The social identity dies, not the human being.

The second stage of rites, the actual transition period, is associated with actually crossing the threshold. This is done while the initiand is socially dead, that is, while they have no identity, no place, in the social structure. These ritual activities are the *liminal* rites. Contrary to Durkheim's summary above, the substitution of the new social person for the old one is not always instantaneous. In fact, after the social death of the initiand, he or she typically spends some time, days or weeks, in this limbo state.

Victor Turner noted that those in the liminal state are generally treated without regard to sexual differentiation, that they "are symbolically either sexless or bisexual and may be regarded as a kind of human *prima materia*" (Turner 1982:98). Second, those who are in the liminal state have nothing. "They have no status, property, insignia, secular clothing, rank, kinship position, nothing to demarcate them structurally from their fellows" (Turner 1982:98,99). This is how he characterized structural invisibility, the social non-existence of

¹⁰³ Victor Turner (Turner 1982:92) noted the same relationship between initiation and death when he quoted Strubacus as saying "initiation and death correspond word for word, and thing for thing".

the liminal state. When undergoing a rite of passage, a group of initiands, whom Turner calls neophytes, possess no distinctions among their individual identities.

If complete obedience characterizes the relationship of neophyte to elder, complete equality usually characterizes the relationship of neophyte to neophyte...This comradeship must be distinguished from [a] brotherhood... relationship, since in the latter there is always the inequality of older and younger...This comradeship transcends distinctions of rank, age, kinship position and...even of sex (Turner 1982:100).

In this liminal stage, the initiand is instructed in the mysteries of the culture system. In her discussion of the Greek Eleusinian mysteries, Jane Harrison (cited in van Gennep 1960:89) defined "mystery" as "a rite at which are exhibited certain *sacra* which may not be seen by the worshipper if he has not undergone a certain purification". Purification, of course, is a ritual of cleansing which removes the contamination of one state of being before another state of being, social or religious, can be entered. Purifications, therefore, are rites of separation, a separation from an unclean state of being, a separation from the profane.

The understanding of *sacra* as a device with which to "stamp into the neophytes the basic assumptions of their culture" was further expanded and developed by Victor Turner (Turner 1982). According to him (Turner 1982:108), there are three types of *sacra*:

- 1) exhibitions, or what are shown to the initiand;
- 2) actions, or what are done to the initiand;
- 3) instructions, or what are told to the initiand.

It is in this liminal period that sacred items are shown, secret lore imparted, and songs and histories taught to the initiand. In rites involving circumcision, clitorodectomy, tattooing, ritual scarification and so on, it is during this stage that ritual cuts are made. If

there is some physical trauma done to the initiand, the liminal stage normally lasts long enough for the trauma to heal.

After the liminal period, the traveler has crossed over the threshold and is acknowledged as being on the other side. Socially, the initiand is integrated into the larger society, where she or he receives public recognition of her or his new status. These are the *postliminal* rituals, and are usually marked by community-wide food sharing and other group activities (Yang 1945, Gluckman 1949, 1962, Eliade 1958, Daniels 1970, 1992, Leach 1982, Turner 1985, Shi and Luo 1988, Huang 1989).

a. Chinese rites of passage

One of the best studied rites of passage in China are the initiations of the Heaven and Earth Society (Schlegel 1866, Stanton 1894, Ward and Stirling 1926, Morgan 1960, Ownby 1996). The Heaven and Earth Society started as a Qing dynasty mutual assistance association (Ownby 1996:47) with millenarian tendencies. Beginning in 1787, they led the first of many Heaven and Earth Society organized anti-government rebellions in Taiwan, with others following on the mainland (Ownby 1996:127-130).

Their initiations, recorded in the form of confessions made to the imperial investigators and papers found by the British administrators of Hong Kong and Singapore, are well documented. Initiations in the Heaven and Earth Society evidently involved sharing blood¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ The popular origin of blood oaths in Chinese culture was a historical one, possibly stemming from the breakdown of biological lineage loyalties. One researcher argues that the religious aristocracy of the Shang (1751-1123 B.C.) and Zhou (1122-221 B.C.) periods were:

defined through sacrifice and warfare, drawn together through kin ties established by the cult of the ancestors and the ritual exchanges of meat, but riven by a segmentary division of authority among men who were devoted to an honor defined by heroism and martial prowess. Interstate wars, inter-lineage conflicts, and vendettas launched to avenge slighted honor generated incessant conflicts

by drinking chicken or human blood mixed with liquor (Ownby 1996:59). Burning incense to the founder of the society, an act of ancestor worship adopted from family worship practices, was another part of the initiation (Freedman 1958:120 n.1, Ownby 1996:59), as was passing "through a gate, generally made up of swords or knives" (Ownby 1996:59). Members also changed their surname to the character *hong*, a character created by the members of the society. Thus the Heaven and Earth Society is also sometimes called the *Hong* Society. Freedman (Freedman 1958:123) wrote of the society that "by this initiation unrelated men were turned ritually into brothers, and becoming brothers in this fashion they then assumed in respect of one another many of the obligations of agnatic kinship".

Heaven and Earth Society doctrine held that initiated members of the society were brothers, and therefore, among other things, sexual relations between male members and the wives and daughters of other male members was in fact incest. The rules and oaths spell this out explicitly. "After entering the [Heaven and Earth Society] doors¹⁰⁵, your brethren's parents become your parents, and your brethren's wives and daughters become your sisters-in-law and nieces...He who commits adultery with a brother's wife, or fornication with a brother's daughter, shall be put to death without mercy" (Stanton 1894:61,67).

Modern Taiwanese society has several rites of passage, none quite so dramatic as those of the Heaven and Earth Society. Myron Cohen (Cohen 1976:149-191) described the ritual stages and economic evolutions through which a Hakka couple in Taiwan went, in the early 1960s, to get married. He did not describe the wedding in terms of a rite of passage, his

that broke down the old hierarchies of ritual and lineage law and replaced them with an increasingly savage struggle for dominance through armed force. In the conflicts of the Spring and Autumn period, the primary means devised to create new ties among men no longer tightly bound by the old Zhou order was the blood covenant (Lewis 1990 cited in Ownby 1996:39).

focus was rather on the social and economic interactions and the establishment of networks, yet it is clear that a rite of passage takes place.

In brief, the bride and groom pay their respects to the local gods and to the bride's maternal and paternal ancestors. The groom comes to take the bride to his father's house, but refuses to get out of his vehicle until a gift exchange takes place between himself and a member of her family. This is his rite of passage, the ritual of separation from his family, followed by the liminal state where he is no longer on his father's territory and not yet a part of his wife's family. His rite of integration begins with a gift exchange, followed by his entry into his bride's natal home. At the bride's natal home, a feast is prepared and consumed, with the groom and his companions as the guests of honor. This marks the acceptance of the groom by the family of the bride as well as the departure of the girl. It appears to have both separation and integration functions.

The bride, with her dowry, are packed and shipped to the groom's father's home, where she too, refuses to disembark until a small exchange of gifts is made. There, the bride and groom pay respects to the family of the groom and his ancestors. The bride presents the family of the groom with slippers, traditionally, ones she herself has made. This is said to embody her ability and symbolize her willingness to work hard for her new family. Later, she presents the female family members and guests with flowers, the male family members and guests with alcohol, cigarettes and betel nuts and more footwear. These last are done to reciprocating gifts of cash in red envelopes given to the bride. Finally, after all of the groom's family and guests have eaten a feast, the bride eats her first meal at the groom's father's home. She is thus publicly accepted as their daughter-in-law.

¹⁰⁵Notice the *limen* metaphor and the use of the gate in the ritual.

The ritual sequence strongly emphasizes the integration of the groom into the family of the bride and the reverse. The latter, wherein the bride is integrated into the groom's family, is further marked by overt demonstrations of the new daughter-in-law's embroidery ability, traditionally seen as a marker of her skill, and her willingness to serve her parents-in-law. Thereafter, her productive loyalties, as well as her reproductive ability, were contributions to the virilocal household, not her natal home. Her overt loyalties were thus expected undergo a radical change. She is transformed, *totius substantiae*, from daughter to daughter-in-law.

The repeated emphasis on integration is consistent, even redundant, with Cohen's economic analysis of the relations between affinal family compounds. That is, they rely heavily upon each other for assistance in the form of agricultural labor exchange. He noted that "relationships through marriage largely provide the network through which 'help' flows" (Cohen 1976:52). Thus the establishment of relationships between two occasionally dependent families is ritually marked by two sets of integration rites, rather than emphasizing the separation of the daughter from her natal group, which is the more traditional view of Chinese marriage (Freedman 1958, 1966, Salaff 1982).

Another rite of passage is significant for Taiwanese men.

Since 1949 there has been universal conscription. All able bodied men have been drafted into one of the armed forces. Military boot camps are one of the most universal of modern male, and increasingly female, rites of passage. In fact, many Taiwanese men have told me that they believe that it was their military service that transformed them from boys into men. Briefly, in a military boot camp, the same three stages of ritual passage are followed.

In the preliminal stage, the new “recruit”, who does not yet deserve the label “soldier” or “sailor”, is stripped of his civilian clothes, shorn of his hair and his name is replaced with a serial number. All of his ties to his civilian identity are severed. His civilian *persona* is dead. During the liminal stage, the recruit is taught the basics of soldiering and is expected to realign his priorities away from a family oriented set of values, to one wherein sacrifice for the nation is paramount (Stafford 1995). Finally, the recruit goes through a public graduation ceremony, at the end of which he is named a “soldier”, “sailor”, “officer” or whatever. Now transformed into a military service man, he is ritually, if not educationally, prepared to serve out his two or three years of service. Following the transformation to into a soldier, he is allowed to reestablish his civilian identity. Namely, his civilian clothes are returned to him and for the first time since his entry into the military, he is given a short period of freedom¹⁰⁶.

Rites of passage cause deep changes in a person’s value system. At least in Taiwanese society, the major rites of passage alter the initiand’s obligations. When a girl marries, a rite of passage alters her and publicly marks the alteration, namely that her loyalties and production efforts will be directed into her husband’s family, not her mother’s. The new military recruit is realigned away from his responsibility to his mother and towards the nation.

b. Rites of passage in Baguazhang

Victor Turner described the attributes of an initiator in Ndembu initiations as being part of a “neophyte-elder” relationship (Turner 1982:99-101). The elder is the “absolute

¹⁰⁶ Taiwanese and American boot camps are nearly identical in these respects. This is not very surprising, as the Taiwanese military has close ties to their American counterparts.

authority”, the embodiment of the tradition, and accepts no compromise or manipulation of the tradition for the whims of the individual neophyte. The initiand, or “neophyte” to use Turner’s term, demonstrates “complete submission” to the elders, questions nothing and seeks recognition by their rule (Turner 1982:99). Initiands accept and obey their initiators as they do their fathers. These things are true in Ndembu initiations and Chinese martial arts as well, where teacher-student and master-disciple relationships are common.

In the Confucian tradition, memorized by every Taiwanese schoolchild, a *laoshr*, teacher, has three tasks. The first is the teaching of morality, the second is the transmission of knowledge, the third is to solve life problems. Whatever else has changed in the Taiwanese educational system, these ideal standards remain the yardstick by which students measure their teachers.

In Mandarin Chinese, *shrfu* is the traditional title and form of address of an instructor of religion, Chinese martial arts, sculpture or painting. *Shrfu* is usually translated as “master”. *Shrfu* literally means teacher-father, and implies obligations of filial piety of the disciple towards the master, that is, it is a lifelong obligation (Lu 1994). Among Chinese the master-student relationship was traditionally behaviorally the same as between father and son. “The relation between father and son was overtly one of severe dominance and submission; a son owed obedience and deference; and a distance was called for between the two men which would allow them to maintain a common front to the world without their entering into great intimacy” (Freedman 1966:45). Following the proverb “a teacher for a day is a father for life”, in the structure of Chinese relationships, both *laoshr* and *shrfu* are one’s father, but *shrfu* has connotations of a more severe relationship and deeper mutual responsibilities than *laoshr*.

Luo Dexiu himself prefers the title of *laoshr* over *shrfu*. My wife asked him why this was so.

In the first place, in the old days *shrfu* meant a master, a really skilled person. Someone who was a great fighter, or painter or teacher would be called that. In today's China, though, they call taxi drivers and noodle sellers *shrfu*. That is not a title I want.

Secondly, I'm not old enough to be called *shrfu*. A real *shrfu* is a real master, a very high title. I know that in America there are many people who call themselves *shrfu* and grandmaster, [he leans back, sticks his belly out and imperiously puts his hands on his hips] but most of them do not really know very much. Maybe in 30 years I will be good enough to be called *shrfu*, but not now...Hong Yixiang and Hong Yimien did not go by the title *shrfu* either.

The follower of a master is a disciple. For two years and three months I neither saw nor heard anything that led me to think that Luo maintained the master-disciple tradition. He goes by the title of *laoshr*¹⁰⁷. His senior students are not marked by special clothes, nor do they have a special class of their own. He often makes statements to the effect that he is an "open" and "democratic" teacher with no secrets. These facts led me to believe that I understood all that there was to understand about his Baguazhang school. There was a wealth of information and lore to be learned in the Baguazhang, but there was no discipleship, only the obvious teacher-student relationship.

The cat slipped out of the bag quite by accident. The youngest student, a high school aged Taiwanese, began asking Luo to make him a disciple. I expected Luo to laugh off the suggestion by saying that he had no disciples. Instead, Luo responded that there was a long line of more senior students ahead of the young man. Naturally, this got my attention. I asked Luo directly if he had disciples, the same question I had asked not two months after I

¹⁰⁷What I myself am called at the university where I teach English.

started training with him. The first time I asked him, he had replied negatively. This time, he acknowledged that he did. I asked him why he had not mentioned this before. He explained that I had not been prepared earlier, but now I was. Luo told me that

being a disciple transforms a person. A disciple is a transformed person. After you are a disciple, it is your responsibility to make sure that the fire of our school does not die out. You receive a small fire of knowledge and build it into a larger one, by practice, research and improving the system. Our grand master was Zhang Junfeng. It is our responsibility to pass on his tradition so that in ten or twenty years, people will not have forgotten what Baguazhang is.

Disciples are sons. Having disciples, some aspects are easy, some are complex. In the old days, the master would tell you to do something and you would do it. But ours is not like that. It isn't a "gun on the table"¹⁰⁸ group. Its not like that at all. We are not trying to control people.

In the old days China was very big, you needed a big society to support you. Today, our society is much simpler. Introducing disciples is also much simpler. I write something on a piece of red paper saying that you are my disciple and I will pass to you what I know. We burn some incense. Then we go and have dinner.

Of course, we help each other. If you open a school and take students, go into business [teaching martial arts], I will say that you are my representative, that your martial arts is good...In fact, if you teach badly, I will not say anything to anyone, in fact I will feel that it is my fault because I didn't teach you well...

Someday I will die. If I can't pass to you the system intact, so that you could be as good as I am, then six generations of work [in the Baguazhang tradition] are wasted. I have a duty to take what is in Baguazhang that I have received from my teachers, develop it and pass it to you so that what was small can become big. We call it "passing the fire". That is why I helped Dan Miller and make those videos and teach the seminars, so that people will know what Baguazhang is. That is why I have such a high standard, so that I can let people see what true Baguazhang looks like.

When you start taking disciples, everyone wants to be a disciple. Really, a disciple must already have a high level of ability. You can't just take anybody who gives you a red envelope as your disciple. Unfortunately, a lot of people make money this way and then say "he is my student".

In this lecture on discipleship and the ritual of initiation, Luo made clear many things that I had suspected and deduced should be the case, but for which I had found no evidence.

¹⁰⁸A "black society", gangster or mafia organization, of which there are many in Taiwan.

He stated that becoming a disciple is transformative, because it forges a father-son relationship between the teacher and the student. Through the initiation into discipleship, an individual is transformed into a lineage member.

I must make clear that unlike other aspects of Baguazhang training described in this text, I have not undergone the Baguazhang discipleship ritual, nor has Luo discussed it on more than one occasion. After he spoke with me about it, I cross checked my understanding of the ritual and its implications with one of Luo's disciples. My understanding of what takes place is poor, and it looks as if Luo wants to keep it that way until he decides to invite me to participate in it. Nevertheless, from their descriptions of the ritual, it is clear that the discipleship ritual is a rite of passage.

According to my notes, Luo said "I write something on a piece of red paper saying that you are my disciple and I will pass to you what I know. We burn some incense. Then we go and have dinner." His disciple told me that Luo wrote names on a piece of red paper, they burned incense in front of the paper, they burned the paper, then they went to dinner. I asked three times if they drank anything during the rites, but he said no. Let me examine each step in detail.

First, Luo wrote a statement on a piece of red paper that declares that a person is his disciple. Luo's disciple told me the contents of the paper. It was a list of the Baguazhang masters: Dong Haichuan, Cheng Tinghua, Gao Yisheng and Zhang Junfeng¹⁰⁹. This is not a certificate of achievement or accomplishment, nor is it a contract: white paper is used for these. Ahern (Ahern 1981:18) examined the significance of red paper in modern Taiwanese

¹⁰⁹Perhaps some others as well.

religious rituals, arguing that they refer to, and draw their ritual authority from, the imperial practice of writing on edicts in red ink. During the Qing dynasty

official notices, warrants, certificates, or papers relating to the delivery of funds or the delivery of prisoners were embellished with a series of special characters written in red ink. The practice...involved adding characters such as...(obey) on official notices...(caution) on papers connected with the delivery of funds...(haste) on a warrant...It also involved marking certain characters in the text of the document with red...a red circle was drawn around...(obey with awe) and...(do not disobey) (Ahern 1981:18).

Ahern concluded that “the fact that the form of the markings was standardized served as testimony that the documents were authentic” (Ahern 1981:18). Red ink is today used with “signature stamps” - commonly called “chop” in America - a small piece of wood or stone carved with one’s name, to sign documents.

Freedman noted that in Cantonese and Fujianese mortuary rites, the tablet containing the soul of the deceased was awakened¹¹⁰ with red ink.

No other [ancestral] tablet could stand for the same person. The uniqueness of the representation was ensured by ‘dotting the soul’ in the tablet during the mortuary rites. When the tablet was made one character in the inscription was left without a dot; this dot was applied in red ink, preferably by a man of high status, in the graveside rites, an act which consecrated the tablet and established the unique relationship between it and the soul with which it was associated (Freedman 1958:82).

Ahern argued that the modern practice of using red paper in charms for bringing good fortune and luck and its use by Daoists to write charms that ward against bad influences and ghosts is a modern transformation of official practices carried on in Qing times (Ahern 1981:22-30). In my understanding, the red paper used in Luo’s initiation ritual is the context

¹¹⁰ “Awakened” is my term, as far as I know. When a statue of a Chinese god is transformed from a art object into a religious one, there is a special ritual called “opening the eyes”. The ancestral tablet has no eyes *per se*, but in these mortuary rites, the tablet comes to house the spirit of the deceased, the tablet is made animate in Tylor’s (Tylor 1979) sense of animism. See Ahern (Ahern 1981) and Jordan (Jordan 1989) for discussions of souls in Chinese religions.

of the writing. To write upon red paper in these ritual contexts makes a metastatement to the effect that “what is written is true, authentic and authoritative”. A statement made on the red paper is thus unfalsifiable¹¹¹. If Ahern is correct, then a statement that so and so is Luo’s disciple, written on red paper, carries with it the weight of a command, an official notice and a formal declaration. It is a declaration to the ghosts of the Baguazhang masters that new descendants are being admitted to the lineage.

The next step of the initiation is to burn incense. Burning incense is a common Chinese ritual element of making offerings to ancestors and gods (Freedman 1958, 1966, Cohen 1976, Ahern 1981, Jordan 1989). In the case of Baguazhang, it appears that the ancestors to whom Luo burns incense are those listed on the red paper. They include Dong Haichuan and Zhang Junfeng, whom Luo calls *shizu*, grand master. This aspect is a rite of incorporation¹¹². In Cohen’s (Cohen 1976:149-191) description of Hakka weddings, burning incense at the ancestral altar was a rite of incorporation. Lacking more detail of the Baguazhang ritual, it is hard to be more precise. However, when a man and his disciple burn incense to a deceased third man, it is ritually identical to Chinese family ancestor worship. Freedman makes the same point regarding ancestor worship and rites of incorporation. “Rites of ancestor worship appear to have included...rites of kinship solidarity, in which ancestors were used as the defining *foci* for determining agnatic units” (Freedman 1958:84).

¹¹¹ Roy Rappaport (Rappaport 1999:280) used “unfalsifiable” to describe a statement that was held to be true, but was subject neither to logical proof or empirical verification. In this case, Luo writes the names of his ancestors, who are not his biological ancestors, and writes the name of the disciple who is his son, but is not his biological son.

¹¹² I expect that somewhere are to be found rites of separation and liminal rites, but until I have seen the ritual myself, I cannot speak with authority.

Luo's disciple told me that after burning incense in front of the red paper, the latter is burned. Burning objects, such as "ghost money" on the first and fifteenth of the lunar month, paper boats at the end of "ghost month", paper images of household items, and of course, incense, is the Chinese method of transmitting the object or image to the underworld, or, in the case of gods, to heaven (Jordan 1989). Burning the paper on which is written the names of the Baguazhang masters and the newest disciple thus transmits the message to the designated and deceased Baguazhang authorities.

The dinner following the ritual is clearly one of the traditional elements of rites of incorporation. Luo's Baguazhang society shares a meal several times a year already, often to welcome new students, say farewell to departing old ones, or to celebrate a special holiday, such as Chinese New Year. Food sharing in Chinese society, such as at weddings (Cohen 1976:149-191), banquets (Yang 1994, Jacobs 1982) and daily meals (Stafford 1995) publicly demonstrates, and some have argued creates, relationships between people.

In this cursory examination of the discipleship initiation ritual, I want to again emphasize that I have not observed or participated in it myself. I cannot be certain that there are no rites of separation or a liminal period¹¹³, but I have no material evidence for them. What the initiation clearly does possess is a series of incorporation rites. Perhaps the lack of obvious rites of separation are significant, since Luo has made no mention of the need to cut off other existing social ties, as is the case for new brides and new soldiers.

Another interesting hint Luo gives is that compared to the past, "introducing disciples is...much simpler." While he did not elaborate on what the more complex ritual entailed, it is

¹¹³ Though the fact that the disciple with whom I spoke was initiated in his third year of practice with Luo suggests a long period when the student was neither disciple nor not-disciple.

not inconceivable that it included rites of separation or a blood oath, as did the Heaven and Earth Society, or a symbolic equivalent, such as drinking alcohol or tea.

Through initiation, a student becomes a disciple, literally, a son, and therefore a lineage member. Which lineage? Clearly that of the Baguazhang. Entering the lineage, one becomes part of a transcendent organization, a subsystem of Chinese society with its own goals and functions. This initiation is expected, by Luo at least, to transform the new disciple into an individual who will put aside his own psychological need for fame and prestige for the long term good of the lineage. Notice too, that the tradition is not perceived by Luo to be static. What is given to the disciple is expected to be improved, refined, and transmitted to others.

In Luo's words

after you are a disciple, it is your responsibility to make sure that the fire of our school does not die out. You receive a small fire of knowledge and build it into a larger one, by practice, research and improving the system. Our grand master was Zhang Junfeng. It is our responsibility to pass on his tradition so that in ten or twenty years, people will not have forgotten what Baguazhang is.

III. *Xiantian* circumambulation

Among the many variants of Baguazhang, taught in the many segments of the lineage, *Xiantian* circle walking, described in the first chapter, is common to all. It is the defining characteristic of the style. I believe that walking the *Xiantian* circle is circumambulation. Circumambulation is a ritual movement around some central point.

At the Buddhist stupa Borabador, in Indonesia (Snodgrass 1992:142), pilgrims walk around the pyramid-like structure while they ascend its heights. As the pilgrims progress, they are confronted with sculptures. The first carvings are of monsters, followed by earthly animals, then men, gods and finally the abstract geometrics of sphere, cube and pyramid.

What the pilgrims expose themselves to are the successive incarnations of the Buddha as he evolved from demon, through countless lifetimes, to the Buddha and thus escaped the cycle of death, rebirth and suffering. Exposing themselves in this ritual fashion to the ideas embodied in the stupa, pilgrims are themselves aided in their own progression toward enlightenment.

Walking the Baguazhang circle is also circumambulation. Roy Rappaport defined ritual as “the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers” (Rappaport 1999:24). Baguazhang circle walking was devised by Dong Haichuan, who, according to the oral and written tradition, learned circle walking in a school of Daoist meditation. The *Xiantian* palm changes taught by Luo Dexiu come from Dong Haichuan *via* Gao Yisheng, passing from each generation to the next more or less unchanged. Baguazhang circle walking is thus a ritual.

While the center point is not a visible or tangible object, an imagined center is normally the focal point of the practitioner’s attention. In the context of Baguazhang practice, the center of the circle is the center of the subjective universe, an *axis mundi* (Snodgrass 1992:185). Thus, because of the ritual nature and the physical revolution around one point, I believe that Baguazhang circle walking is circumambulation.

Corporate Property

The question of what constitutes “corporate property” and its role in descent groups is complex, as I noted in the previous chapter. Freedman insisted that “what is crucial in constituting a formal group is...the existence of a lineage estate” (Sangran 1984:399), especially if the group is not coresidential. In addition to lineage property, ancestral halls are

another ritual marker of both lower (coresidential) and higher (non-coresidential) order lineages. However, possessing ancestral halls and lineage fields is a function of economics. “The ancestral hall and ritual land complex was correlated with the economic circumstances of the localities in question” (Freedman 1966:34). A poor lineage might lack corporate property and ancestral halls¹¹⁴.

The Baguazhang society possesses no corporate land from which collective sacrifices can be funded and from which collective benefits flow. Neither does it possess, though individual teachers may, an ancestral hall¹¹⁵. The Baguazhang society is not bereft of resources, however. It has the knowledge of Baguazhang, and as we have seen above, Dong Haichuan’s tomb.

I. Esoteric knowledge

I would like to return to the statement made by Luo Dexiu, which I cited above at length.

Disciples are sons...In the old days China was very big, you needed a big society to support you. Today, our society is much simpler...Of course, we help each other. If you open a school and take students, go into business [teaching martial arts], I will say that you are my representative, that your martial arts is good.

It is very interesting that Luo literally said “Disciples are sons”. He did not say ‘disciples are like sons’. The meaning is quite different. A son is a lineage member. Sons, as Cohen (Cohen 1976) and Freedman (Freedman 1958, 1966) demonstrated, are

¹¹⁴ Again, as I noted in the previous chapter. Freedman (Freedman 1958, 1966) uses “lineage” to describe a descent group with or without corporate property. Ebrey and Watson (Ebrey and Watson 1987) define a “lineage” as a descent group with property. I follow Freedman’s more open-ended usage.

¹¹⁵ Zhang Junfeng’s *Yizong* Martial Arts Hall functioned as his Baguazhang ancestral hall. It was the place where photographs and drawings of his teachers were displayed and incense burned to them.

shareholders in a family estate, and “in general, brothers held equal rights to the estate” (Cohen 1976:59). Freedman (Freedman 1966:50) notes that the lineage “estate may be increased by good luck or enterprise, or diminished by economic failure”.

Although Freedman stresses the importance of lineage estates for the existence of a large lineage, other researchers, such as those discussed above (Davis 1987, Naquin 1987) have found long lasting lineages that used other resources, namely access to political office and religious teaching networks, to benefit both individuals and the collective. For many of the Baguazhang practitioners, the martial arts skills and their relationships to other Baguazhang practitioners has been a resource upon which they drew to make a livelihood. Furthermore, as I noted above, Luo expects his disciples to “receive a small fire of knowledge and build it into a larger one”, that is, becoming a disciple bestows the responsibility of improving the Baguazhang as if it were a lineage estate.

Many of the Baguazhang practitioners were not of the upper class. Dong Haichuan’s tombstone says that he cared nothing for farming, and lived many years in the mountains, hunting. Yin Fu¹¹⁶ was a farmer’s son and left the farm to sell doughnuts on the street in Beijing. Ma Gui’s family were wood carvers and he died penniless¹¹⁷. Li Yongqing was a jewelry merchant. Men Baozhen’s family was rich although he failed to pass the examination that would make him a military officer.

Cheng Tinghua was an eyeglass maker. Gao Yisheng’s family fortune was lost when he was young. Zhang Junfeng apprenticed as a trader in Tianjin, and later became a shop

¹¹⁶Refer to Figure 11 to see the relationships between these men in the Baguazhang society.

¹¹⁷ This may not be correct, as Frantzis (Frantzis 1998:209) reports that Ma Gui had a “successful lumber company”.

manager. After coming to Taiwan, his shop failed. The Hong brothers came from a wealthy Taiwanese family and housed Zhang Junfeng in his first years in Taiwan. Luo Dexiu's family is not wealthy, but some members were well educated.

The significance here is that for whatever reason, most of these men were not deeply embedded in the agricultural landowning-educated-beaurocratic Chinese upper class, though they may have had family members who were. For the most part they were small businessmen, or farmers, some successful, others not.

As I will show below, Baguazhang practitioners often relied upon their relationships with other Baguazhang practitioners to secure a livelihood. In addition, those with means often cared for their teachers in the latter's later years, precisely the way children are expected to care for their parents (Freedman 1966, Stafford 1995). This supports Luo's comment that "disciples are sons".

Evidently it was through his own abilities that Dong Haichuan obtained a position teaching imperial bodyguards in the house of the Prince of Su in Beijing. Later, he helped his student Yin Fu become an imperial bodyguard instructor as well. Yin Fu became the personal bodyguard to the Empress Dowager during the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911. Yin Fu introduced his student Ma Gui to the imperial bodyguard service, and Ma Gui served both the Qing government and the Republic, becoming a presidential guard after 1912. Li Yongqing, another student of Yin Fu, is said to have avoided a prison sentence for killing a man because Yin Fu knew an influential palace eunuch¹¹⁸. Men Baozhen, Yin Fu's designated Baguazhang heir, became an advisor to the Hebei Provincial Martial Arts Academy. The same Men Baozhen cared for Yin Fu in the latter's last 10 years.

Outside of the Yin Fu branch, Baguazhang relationships were also important. Zhang Zhaodong was born to a poor farm family, he later moved to Tianjin and together with his Baguazhang and *Xingyiquan gongfu* brother Li Cunyi, opened a martial arts school there. Cheng Tinghua's student Sun Lutang became a famous writer about internal martial arts, and taught a semester at the Nanjing National Martial Arts Academy in 1928. His daughter, Sun Jianyun, became a martial arts coach and competition judge in the People's Republic of China, based on Sun Lutang's reputation and her own abilities. Wu Mengxia had enough money to establish an herbal medicine business for Gao Yisheng when the latter was old, and Gao lived with his disciple for several years. Zhang Junfeng was assisted by his students, both in establishing himself in Taiwan and in finding a wife. Xu Baomei, Zhang's wife, was a professional martial arts instructor after the death of her husband.

In Taiwan, Luo Dexiu started several businesses. In his business career, he draws upon the network of *gongfu* brothers from Hong Yixiang's school, both Taiwanese and foreigners. Significantly, he does not undertake business ventures with his biological kin. Luo supports his disciples by giving them recommendations when they open their own schools and traveling across the world to teach seminars which his disciples arrange and host. This gives his students his stamp of legitimacy, improves the next generation's understanding of the art and as a spectacle (Klens-Bigman 1999), draws new members into the school.

The primary, obvious and self-proclaimed function of the Baguazhang society is to improve and pass on the knowledge and skills of Baguazhang. The data that I have presented here is intended to show a secondary set of practical relationships in Chinese martial arts societies in general and Baguazhang in particular. Both in the teaching of martial arts and the

¹¹⁸This is not, strictly speaking, assistance towards securing a livelihood, except in a very broad sense.

economic pursuits necessary to make a living, Baguazhang lineages are a source of assistance. As Luo said, “In the old days China was very big. You needed a big society to support you.” The Baguazhang network puts constraints upon¹¹⁹ the number of relationships that an individual must maintain in order to live with some security. The martial arts practitioners in the Baguazhang lineage provided each other with a common ground on which to build practical relationships and continues to do so today.

In short, although we could in theory maintain that there are as many possible groups as there are functions, the fact remains that...one cannot call on absolutely *anyone* for *any* occasion, any more than one can offer one’s services to *anyone* for *any* end...We may posit that the constants of the field of potentially useful relationships (i.e. those that are actually usable, because spatially close, and useful, because socially influential) cause each group of agents to tend to keep up by continuous maintenance-work a privileged network of practical relationships...(Bourdieu 1993:39, emphasis in original)

Becoming a Baguazhang disciple provides access to this practical network, reduces the “anyone” to a smaller number of choices. It is this practical network of relationships as well as the skills themselves, that I argue comprise a large part of the corporate estate of Baguazhang.

This is not to say that, unlike large lineages, there is no strife among the different members and factions of the Baguazhang lineage. Far from it. In previous chapters I have shown conflicts between teachers and their students, between classmates of the same generation, and the creative responses that some groups of practitioners have generated in order to legitimize themselves without recourse to practitioners they did not get along with. Conflict and cooperation are as evident in the Baguazhang society as it is everywhere else.

¹¹⁹ I am using “constraints” in Bateson’s sense (Bateson 1972) of something that provides information, and

II. Dong Haichuan's tomb

Dong Haichuan was very influential, because his large number of students went on to teach thousands more. Dong's tomb has been a pilgrimage site (Sun 1935:20, Li 1993, PKCJ 3(4)) for over a hundred years. The respect for him is so great that in the early 1980s, the Beijing government authorized the relocation of his tomb. When the tomb was relocated, thousands of dollars were sent from around the world to fund the project, sent by Baguazhang practitioners in many countries (Li 1993:2).

Since then Dong's tomb has become a public shrine and cultural tourist attraction. Based on the numerous, if irregular, building episodes at the tomb site, I have argued above that Dong's grave is a site of ancestor worship, a geographical point of unity for Baguazhang practitioners. This, according to Freedman (Freedman 1966) makes Dong's tomb the equivalent of a lineage ancestral hall. Freedman explains that

the tombs of key ancestors may be used as rallying points for their descendants...to bring together in ritual unity greater and lesser groups within the lineage...And it is important to add that while the graves of key ancestors might function as ritual points of reference alternative or supplementary to ancestral halls, they were sometimes substitutes for them...People pray at their ancestral tombs and by that act place themselves under the hand of their ancestors in no less a fashion than when they offer prayers at the domestic shrine or in the ancestral hall (Freedman 1966:142-143).

There is no need to review the construction history of the grave site again, or even to speculate at the number of Baguazhang practitioners who have visited the site, worshipped or paid their respects, and left no architectural trace. The point I want to make is that the grave functions as an ancestral hall and has been bringing together Baguazhang practitioners for over a century.

reduces randomness to decision making in a system.

Aggregated lineage

In this chapter I have tried to rigorously examine the organizational and functional patterns of behavior in the Baguazhang society. Specifically I have examined the data collected from one branch, Luo Dexiu's, and combed the published and oral history of the society for other data. What I found was curious.

Like Freeman's lineages, the Baguazhang society claims (stipulated) descent from a founding ancestor or grand master, calls itself a lineage, uses kinship terms, conducts rituals consistent with graveside ancestor worship, organizes genealogies of its members in what it terms "generations", conducts initiations that turn students into sons, is organized into segments, possesses the esoteric knowledge of Baguazhang and the network of practitioners for practical problem solving and has a top-down, patriarchal organization. In short, it functions exactly how Freedman described a politically weak, economically poor lineage with a strong knowledge of its descent would function (Freedman 1958:131). They behave as Luo said: "disciples are sons".

At the same time, the members are not biologically related nor do they use generational names, nor do they *regularly* perform joint rituals to a common ancestor. Furthermore, I have heard nothing in the Baguazhang society that resembles exogamy or incest prohibitions, about which there were harsh laws in imperial times.

Like Strauch's (Strauch 1983) multi-surname villages, Baguazhang disciples undergo initiations that make them kin and many segments maintain individual ancestral halls (c.f. Zhang Junfeng's *Yizong* Martial Arts Hall). However, Baguazhang practitioners are not typically coresidential.

Just as in Sangran's (Sangran 1984) corporations and deity cults, members are voluntary and pay membership fees. On the other hand, the Baguazhang society does not have sequential rotation of responsibilities, decision by consensus or committees as do Sangran's corporations.

In short, Baguazhang uses "patrilineality as an ideology of descent", but uses initiation as "a mode of recruitment" (Sangran 1984:394). I concur with Sangran when he writes "taking descent and 'kinship' as the relevant cultural principles and the Chinese lineage as their ideal expression constitutes an impoverished model of a cultural system clearly capable of generating a much greater range of creative organizational responses" (Sangran 1984:411).

Perhaps the Baguazhang society should be considered a newly perceived type of Chinese social organization, as suggested by Strauch's argument for a broader application of the lineage theory to cover multi-surname villages:

The Confucian injunctions to be filial and to venerate the elders, living and dead, obviously extended readily from the family to the lineage. But there is no inherent reason that this extension need stop with the socially constituted kin-group, for the underlying principles involved had more to do with a general order and harmony in society than with bloodlines *per se* (Strauch 1983:45).

Following this, I propose to call the type of organization I have found in the Baguazhang society an "aggregated lineage". It is aggregated in that members are recruited from different surnames and are voluntary. It is a lineage in that its organizational and behavioral patterns most closely resemble Chinese lineages, rather than corporations (Sangran 1984). Having defined these characteristics, future research can support or refute the applicability of this concept to other Chinese societies that use kinship but exceed the bounds of biology.

Chapter 7
A Crisis of Meaning

All heroes think alike.

-Chinese proverb

One of the many Chinese proverbs is “all heroes think alike”, or “heroes share the same view”. I chose this proverb for the title because I felt it expressed a truism: people culturally identified as “heroic” would reasonably have a common worldview. When I explained my idea for the title to Luo Dexiu, he was pleased. I expressed my confusion, however, about what the proverb meant: precisely what view do heroes have? Or did the saying refer to their thinking process? He only laughed and said, “You mean, you don’t know who the heroes are!” For three years I wandered in darkness.

Now I believe I understand better. Students of martial arts are legion. Many can fight very well. There is nothing heroic in that. Those who are accepted as disciples into a tradition, however, are expected to put the needs of the other members and the needs of the tradition before their own personal desires and weaknesses. Many fail. Those that succeed, doing what they believe is correct, good or proper, are recognized by others as heroes.

Naturally, heroes are not limited to the practice of martial arts. In a tradition, any social endeavor that calls for people to put aside their personal wants for the cause of the greater good, will produce heroes. It is their shared ability to do so that makes them heroic and their

awareness of this and willingness to act upon this belief is how they think alike. Heroes are meaningful to themselves and to others.

In this essay I have examined the tradition of Baguazhang in close detail, in no small part to discover who the heroes of Baguazhang are and how it comes about that they think alike. Under the assumption that the Baguazhang is a tradition of knowledge, I have discovered that Baguazhang is furthermore a microcosm of Chinese society. What is transmitted, the fighting system, was relevant in mainland China where violence unchecked by government intervention during certain parts of history was very common, and street battles between rival gangs frequent in Taiwan until recent decades. The architectural features and symbolism of the space in which this tradition of Baguazhang is transmitted draws directly upon common understandings of Chinese symbolism and *fengshui*, the interaction of the landscape and human beings. The way in which the relations between key historical figures of the tradition are organized and presented, namely as a patrilineal descent group genealogy, is a direct application of common Chinese methods of descent group histories. Each of the several ways in which the tradition has been represented draws upon themes from popular Chinese media, both storytelling and print, as well as concepts from uniquely Chinese philosophies. Finally, I have shown that the ritual, economic and political relations between members of the tradition, living and historical, follow the same pattern as those of Chinese descent groups in other parts of China.

In the course of investigating standard anthropological issues such as social organization and symbolism, I have unexpectedly broken new ground. I have argued that looking at Chinese martial arts societies as either a corporation or a biological lineage is fruitless. Rather, a new category, the “aggregated lineage”, a society that is organized and functions as

a lineage, whose members are not initially biologically related, although they become kin through initiation. It is this concept that best describes the Baguazhang society, and its members' relations toward one another. I believe that future research in Chinese social organizations will bear out the usefulness of this approach.

The anthropology of the Baguazhang aggregated lineage is far from exhausted, however. I am planning future research that will investigate the cultural meanings and functions of the circle, by far the dominant symbol of Baguazhang. Exploration of the circle, as it is embodied in the *xiantian* and fighting, as well as symbolically, is a rich subject that I have not even touched upon yet. Another line of research will be towards the repeated use of mountains in martial arts origin stories, and the representations of mountains in popular Chinese imagination and cosmology, issues I only mentioned in passing in the second and fourth chapters. Deeper understandings of the religious aspects of aggregated lineages, the nature of ancestor rites conducted at Dong Haichuan's tomb, the nature and degree of worship of segment founders such as Zhang Junfeng, need to be investigated and documented. Finally, the applicability of the "aggregated lineage" concept, and its usefulness, or lack thereof, in understanding Chinese social organizations needs to be tested in other venues.

What implications does this research have for American readers? Our society is one with a very limited set of measures of a "successful life". As a culture, our yardstick is substantially economic achievement, with education replacing "hard work" as the means as we have become post-industrial. One of the recurrent themes in modern American life is the lack of significance. Many people say that they lack purpose and their lives are empty of meaning. I think of it as a crisis of meaning.

This crisis is evident in the vapid youth culture, the explosion of “ancient” New Age religions and the fascination with extraterrestrials. In my opinion, each of these phenomena point to an awareness of a lacuna in people’s lives, a lacuna that people, given sufficient self-awareness and economic resources, try to fill. The current youth culture is in part an expression of self-absorption and unsatisfied needs, where experiments with sex and drugs are self-created initiations into adulthood, adopted because the adults, who ought to be organizing initiations, have rejected our “pre-modern” or “pagan” past. New Age religions, seeking to legitimize themselves in the past, are partially attempts to create new systems of meaning based on synthesizing older ones with modern science and psychology. The fixation on extraterrestrials seems to point to an acknowledgment that “significance” exists, but not here.

The problem is not that we are condemned to have meaning, but that we are condemned to need it.

The Taiwanese for the most part have some of the same problems. For the bulk of the population, lifegoals are centered on economic success -- not something learned from the West, but a long-standing fixture of Chinese society. In recent decades, this goal has become attainable and once economic success has been achieved, one is left with the *quo vadis?*, “where are you going now?” question. Thus I see among many young, college-educated urban Taiwanese white-collar workers the same search for meaning that I see among Americans of the same education and disposition.

The Taiwanese have some advantages however. Development in Taiwan has been so rapid that many of the old, traditional, alternative measures for self worth and meaning still exist. The rural-urban transition is still only one or two generations old, which means that

the traditions of the past are still largely accessible to the young through their parents. Moreover, the island is very small, which means that not only is everyone's hometown relatively close, but also that even with an urban migration, the rural areas are still populated and growing.

Therefore, Taiwanese social organizations that existed thirty years ago, like small temple associations in rural towns or martial arts clubs, continue to do so. In fact, dozens of new social organizations exist, some public and transparent and beneficial, others secret, opaque and illegal. These organizations cut both with and against the grain of Chinese family relationships, in some a father introduces his son, in others, sons forswear their fathers. Each individual group has its own reason for existing, a purpose that can be experienced on a personal level. Moreover, in addition to social networks, these societies provide additional structures of belonging, self-respect and social interaction. In short, they generate meaning.

The Baguazhang society is one of these organizations. Explicitly it is a society for learning, preserving and developing a fighting system. The sense of belonging and having a purpose, namely to learn and transmit the fighting tradition, ought not be underestimated in terms of an individual's motivation. At the same time, Baguazhang has many more implicit aspects. Its theory draws upon and applies fundamental aspects of Chinese Daoism, particularly the concept of change. Its practice takes place in a space with good manmade *fengshui*, further locating it within the Chinese meaning system. Recruitment into the aggregated lineage is earned through years of hard work, but results in the transformation of the student into a son. The student becomes a son who has brothers, a father, uncles and their life histories and origin legends. The society generates its own meaning in the context of

other Chinese systems of meaning. Listening to members of other societies, it is clear to me that similar forces are at work among them as well.

Like Gregory Bateson, I am opposed to social engineering. Centralized, planned social organizations are not the solution for America's problems. Too much centralization creates a system that does not respond to local needs and a repulsive feeling that an organization is contrived. Moreover, it is obvious that simply transporting social organizations such as Baguazhang into America is doomed to fail, if only because Americans, lacking a lifetime of acculturation in the symbolism upon which Baguazhang is built, would suffer from contrived confusion. Conversely, retreat into the ivory tower will not solve America's crisis of meaning. Completely random, unsupervised individuality is precisely why street gangs are currently so powerful in America's urban areas. A middle ground can be found, where energy and creativity can be organized and intelligently channeled without being choked off, while at the same time, self-destruction can be avoided and culturally relevant symbols drawn upon. This is one direction that anthropology can be made relevant to American society, where it, as no other discipline is equipped, can observe and describe social institutions of other peoples and suggest healthier methods of organization to inform our own.

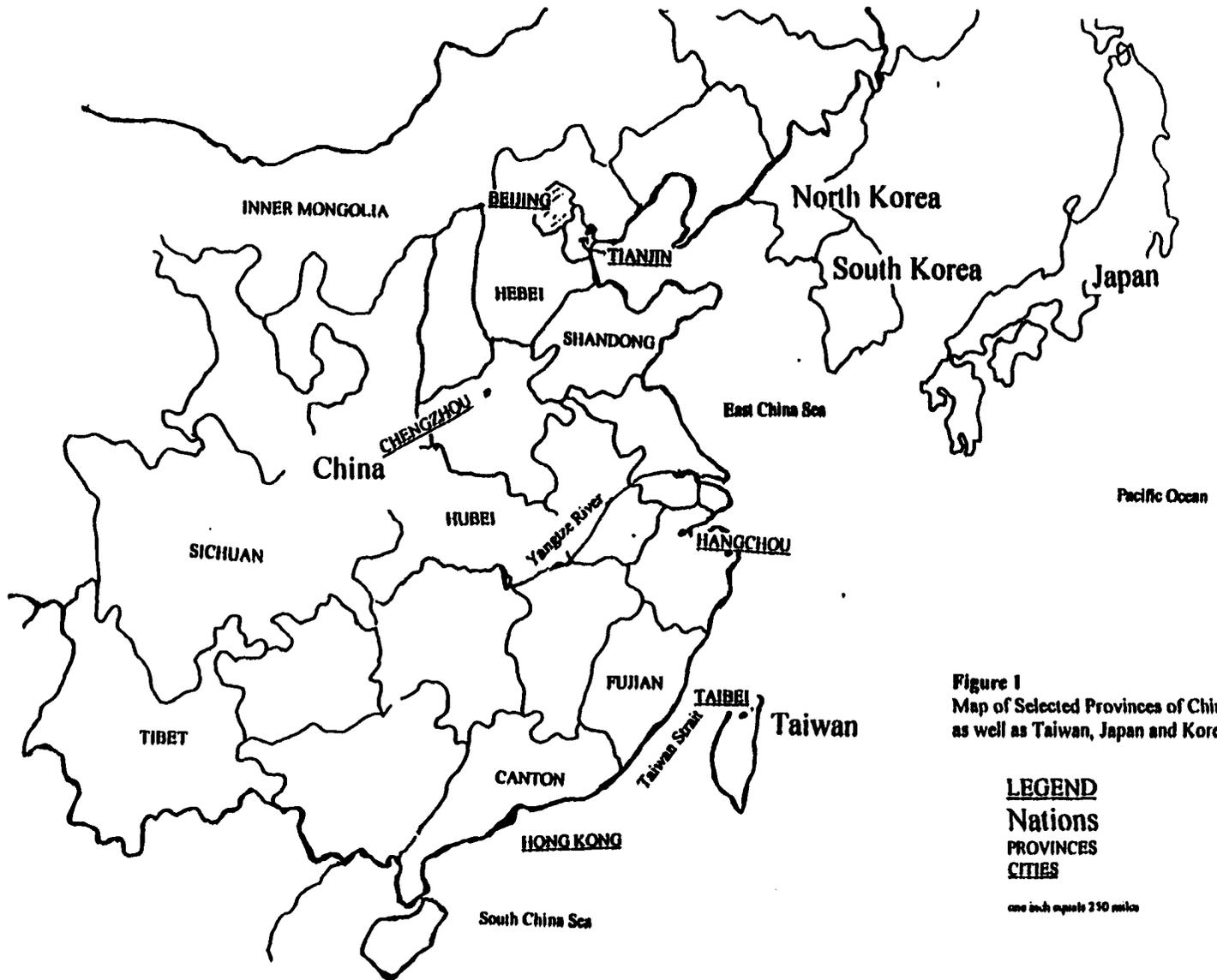
APPENDIX I
GLOSSARY OF CHINESE CHARACTERS IN THIS TEXT

<u>Romanized</u>	<u>Character</u>
<i>bagua</i>	八卦
<i>baguazhang, pakuachang</i>	八卦掌
<i>dai</i>	代
<i>dao, tao</i>	道
<u>Daodejing, Tao-te-ching</u>	道德經
<i>fengshui</i>	風水
<i>gongfu, kungfu</i>	功夫
<i>Guomingdang, Kuomingtang, KMT</i>	國民黨
<i>houtian</i>	後天
<i>laoshr, laoshi</i>	老師
<i>laoxianshr(shi)</i>	老先師
<i>qigong, ch'igong</i>	氣功
<i>Shaolin</i>	少林
<i>shrfu, shifu</i>	師父
<i>shrxiong, shixiong</i>	師兄
<i>shrzuz, shizuz</i>	師祖
<i>taiji</i>	太極
<i>taijiquan, t'ai ch'i ch'uan</i>	太極拳
<i>Tangshoudao</i>	唐手道
<i>tiangan</i>	天干

<u>Romanized</u>	<u>Character</u>
<i>wuji</i>	無極
<i>xianshr, xianshi</i>	先師
<i>xiantian</i>	先天
<i>xingyiquan</i>	形意拳
<i>xiongdi</i>	兄弟
<i>yang</i>	陽
<i>Yizong guoshu zhong guan</i>	易宗國術總館
<i>Yizong wushu xiehui</i>	易宗武術協會
<i>Yiguandao</i>	易貫道
<i>Yijing, I-ching</i>	易經
<i>yin</i>	陰
<i>yuan</i>	園
<i>zu</i>	祖
<i>zushr, zushi</i>	祖師

**APPENDIX 2
MAJOR DYNASTIES OF CHINA**

<i>Dynasty</i>	<i>Dates</i>
Xia	2183-1752 BC
Shang	1751-1123 BC
Zhou	1122-221 BC
Warring States Period	403-221 BC
Qin	221-207 BC
Han	206 BC-220 AD
Western Han	206 BC- 23 AD
Eastern Han	25-220 AD
Three Kingdoms Period	220-280 AD
Chin	265-419 AD
Northern Wei	386-534 AD
Northern Qi	550-577 AD
Northern Zhou	557-580 AD
Six Dynasties (Southern)	420-589 AD
Sui	589-618 AD
Tang	618-907 AD
Five Dynasties	907-959 AD
Northern Sung	960-1126 AD
Sung	1127-1279 AD
Yuan (Mongol)	1280-1368 AD
Ming	1368-1643 AD
Qing (Manchu)	1644-1911 AD
National Republic	1912-1949 AD
People's Republic of China	1949-present AD
 <i>Taiwanese History</i>	 <i>Dates</i>
Dutch occupation	1624-1661 AD
Ming territory	1661-1682 AD
Qing territory	1682-1895 AD
Japanese occupation	1895-1945 AD
Republic of China on Taiwan	1945-present



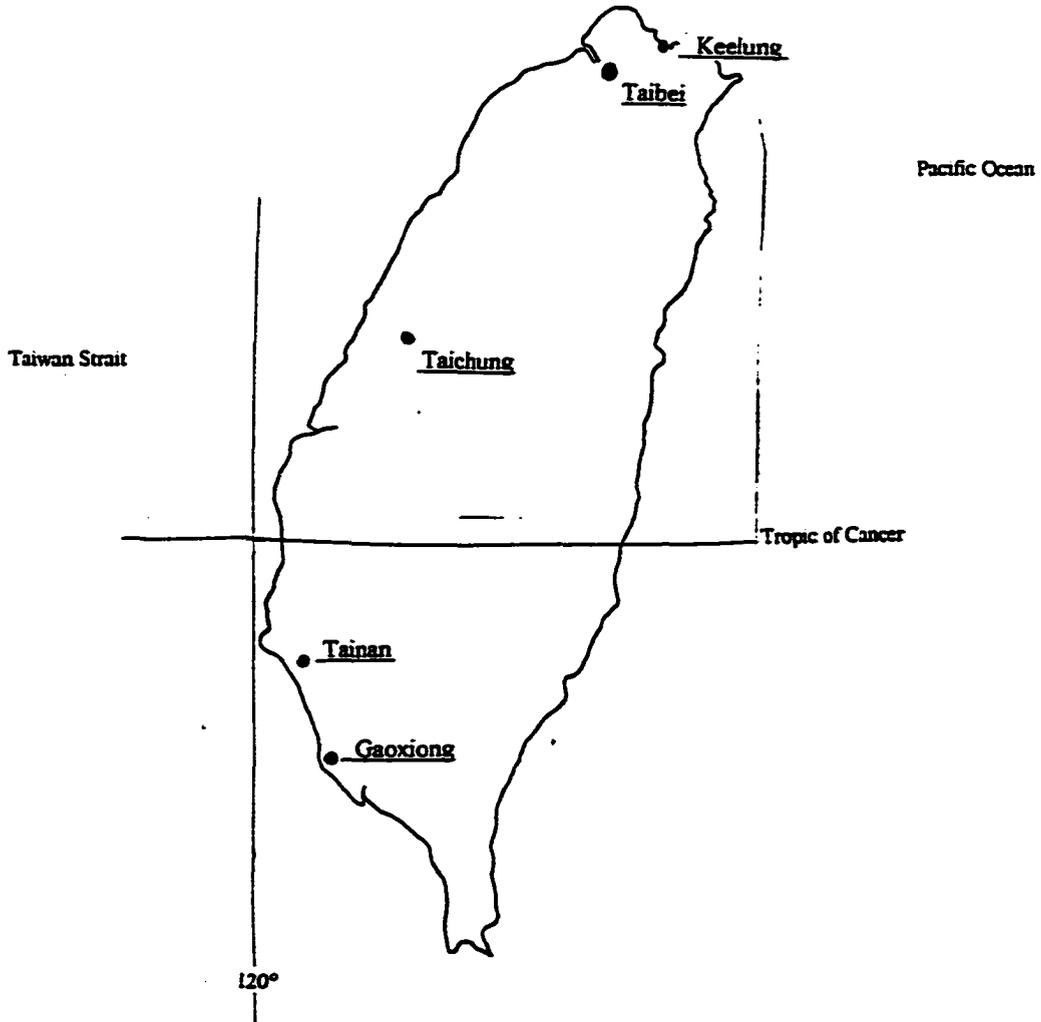


Figure 2
Map of Taiwan

1



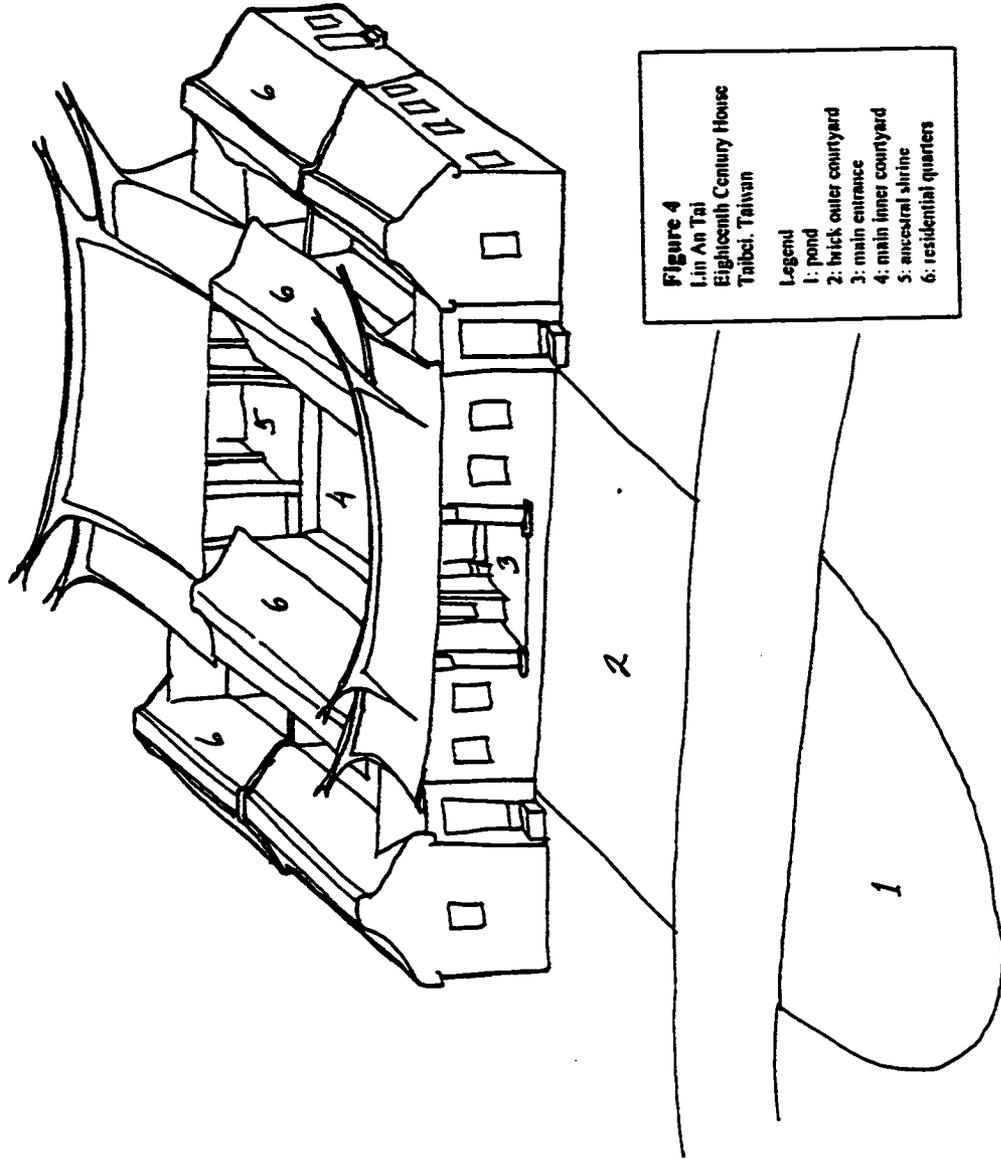
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3



Figure 3
Simple Change Palm



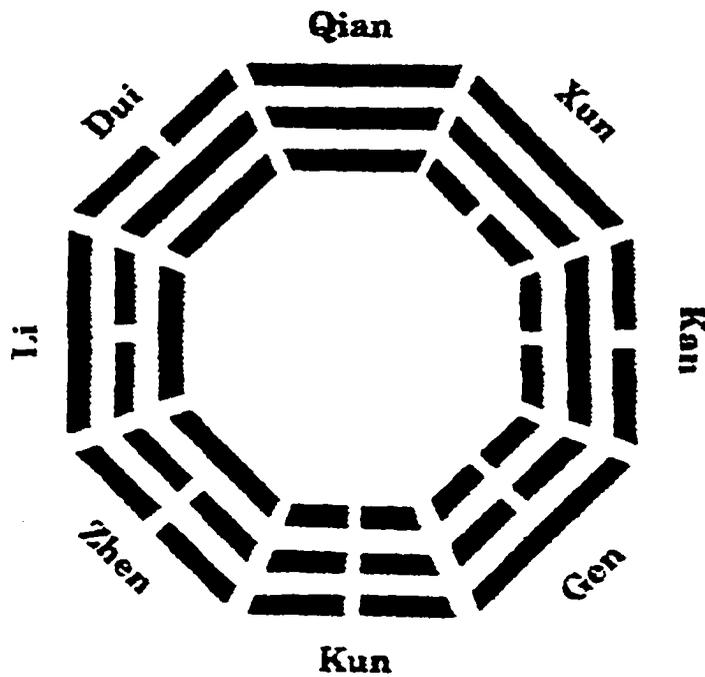


Figure 5
Fuxi's Bagua arrangement

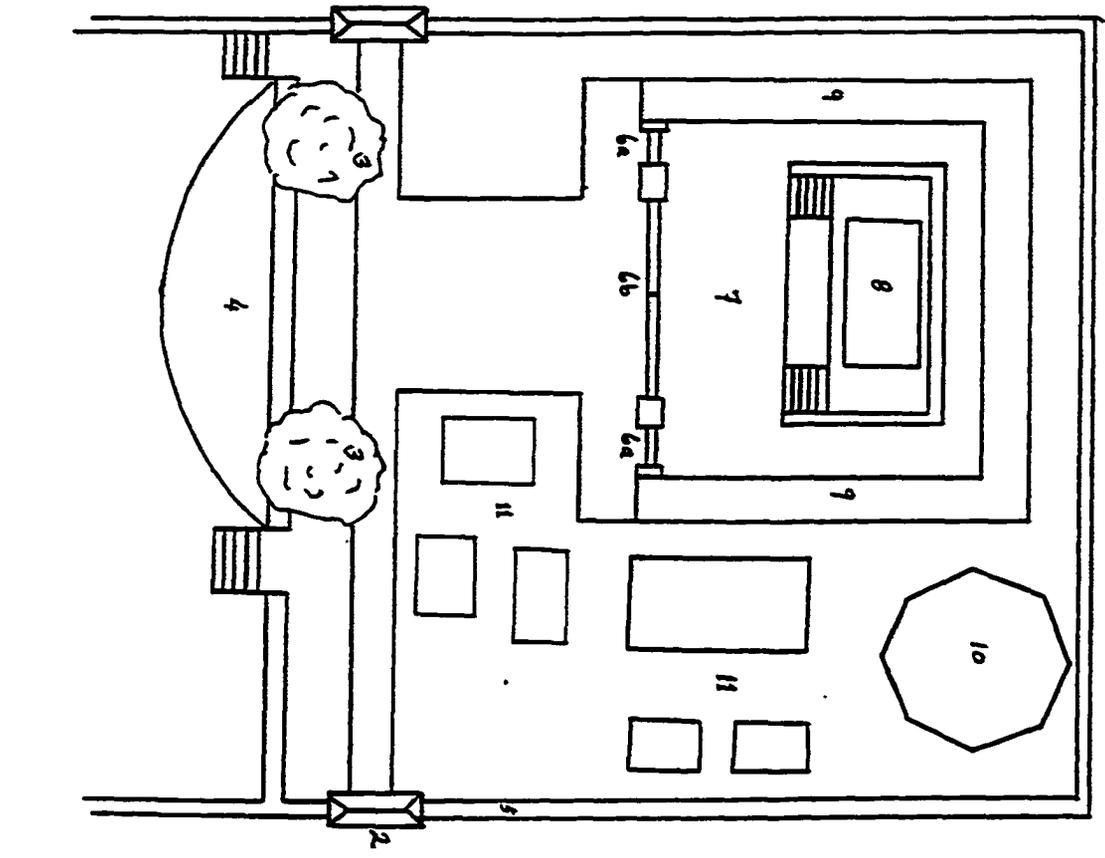
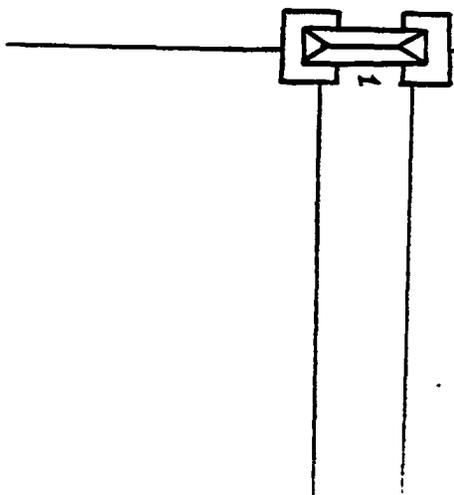
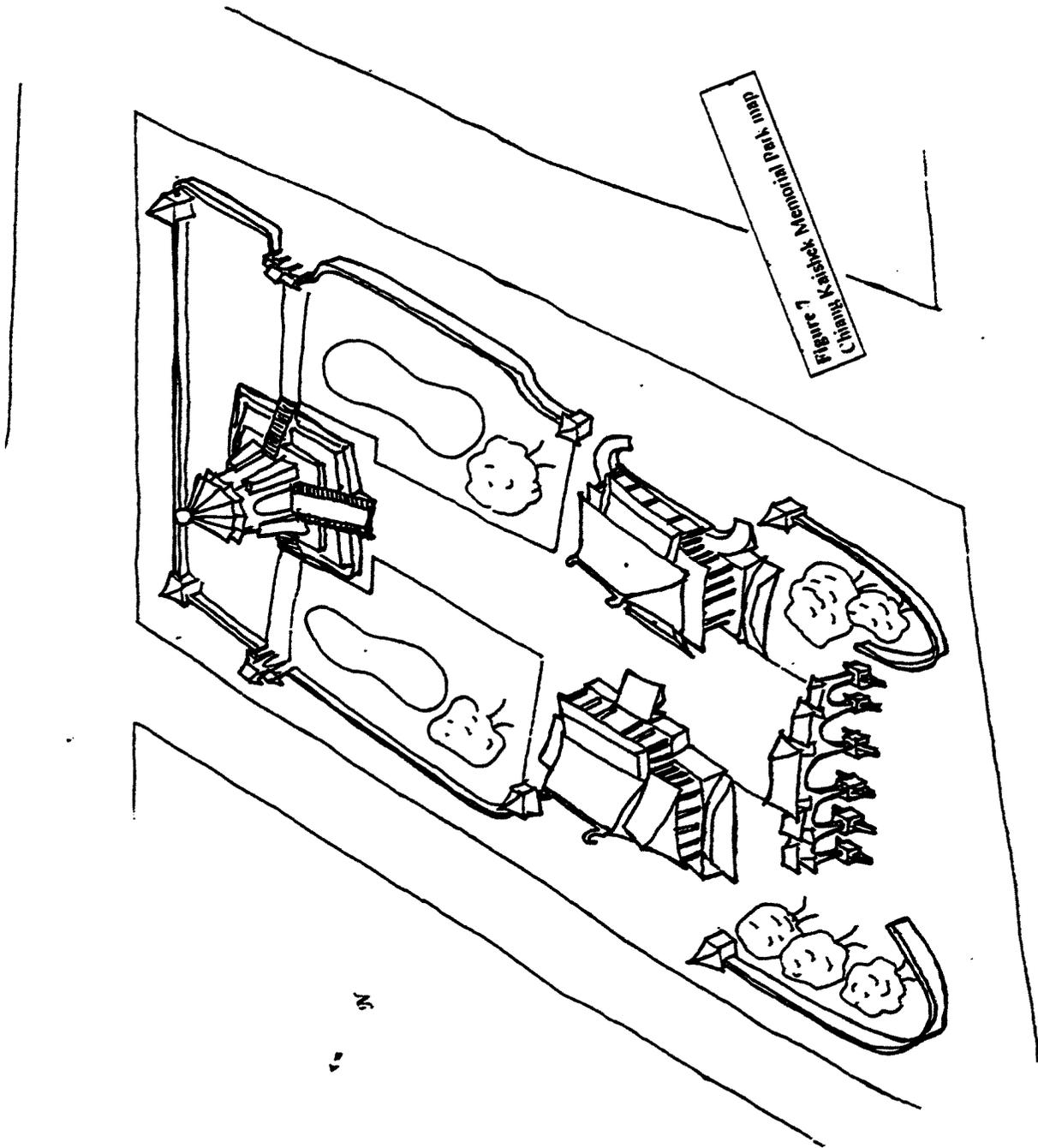


Figure 6
 Confucius' Temple
 Tainan, Taiwan

Legend

- 1: Japanese torii gate
- 2: Outer courtyard street entrance
- 3: Banyan tree
- 4: pond
- 5: Outer courtyard wall
- 6a: Inner courtyard gate, open
- 6b: inner courtyard gate, closed
- 7: Inner courtyard
- 8: main Confucius shrine
- 9: secondary shrines
- 10: Buddhist pagoda
- 11: tertiary shrines





Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Park Map

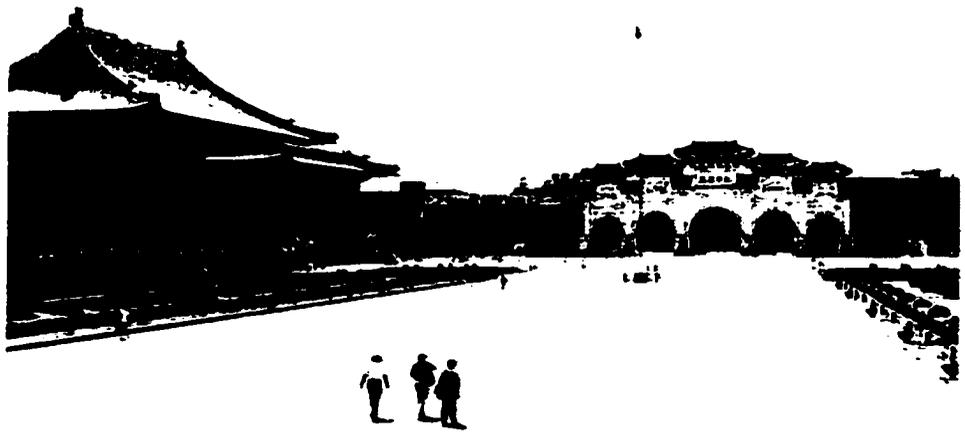
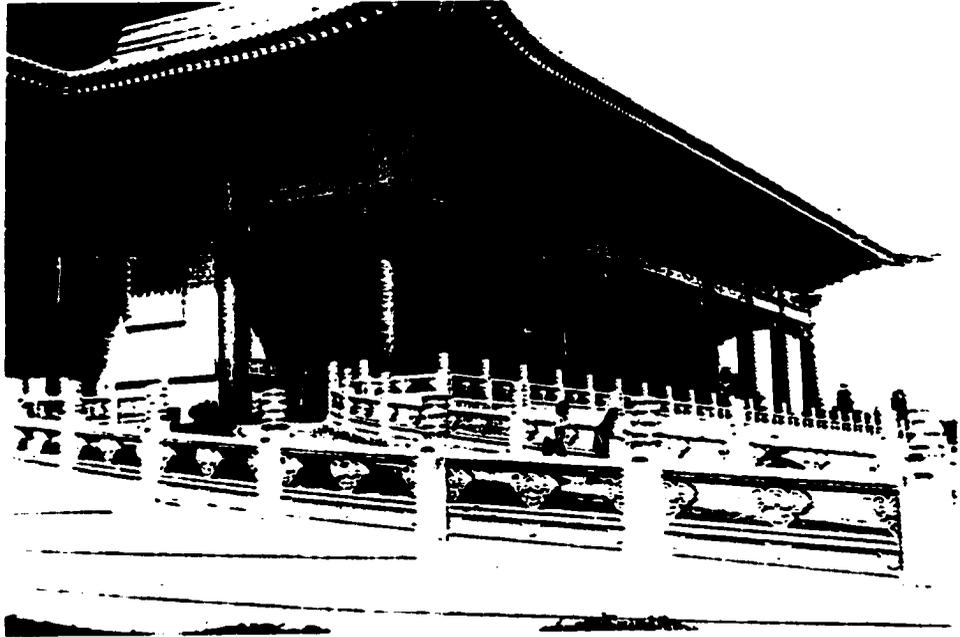


Figure 8

Top: National Theater, CKS Memorial Park

Bottom: National Theater, left: plaza and Gate of Upright Centrality, center

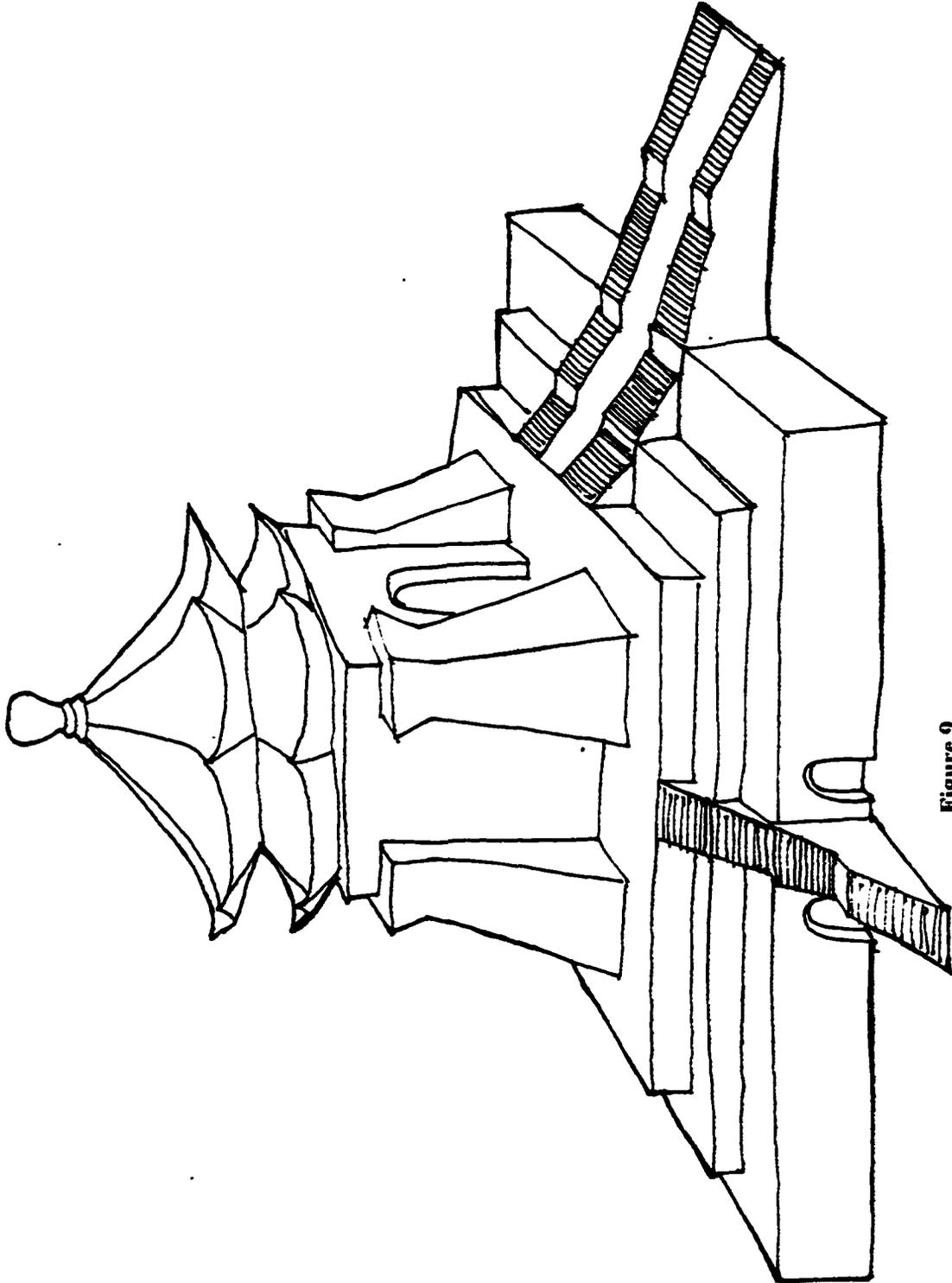


Figure 9
Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall

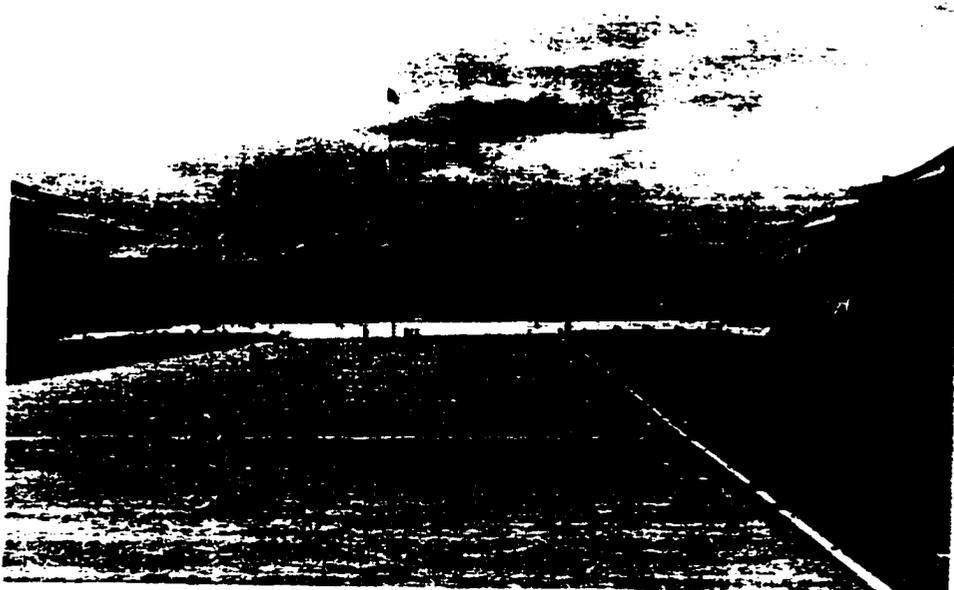
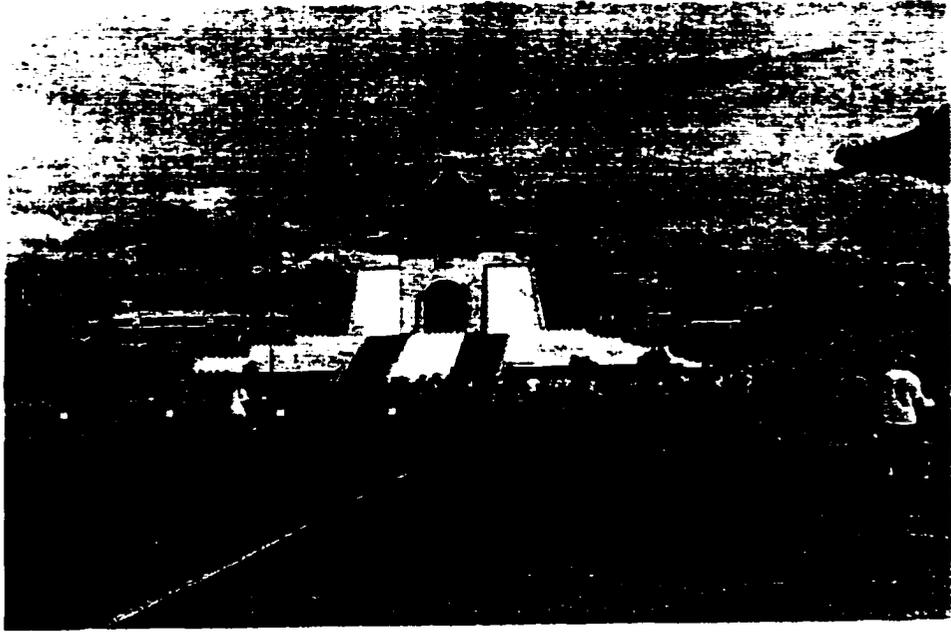


Figure 10

Top: Chiang Kaishek Memorial Hall

Bottom: view from CKS Hall: National Theater, left:

plaza and Gate of Upright Centrality, center.

National Concert Hall, right

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