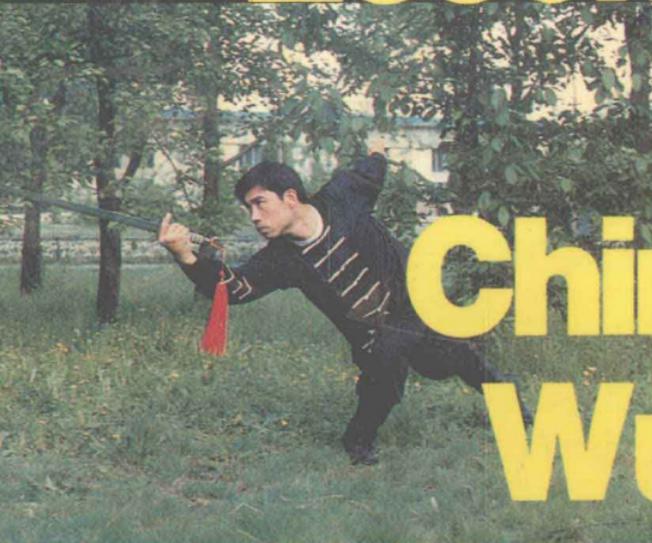


# Essentials of Chinese Wushu



**T**HE Wushu Research Institute of China is an authoritative body for conducting Chinese Wushu research. The book *Essentials of Chinese Wushu* was written by Wu Bin, Director of the Teaching and Research Section of the Institute, Li Xingdong, Wushu researcher, and Yu Gongbao, Qigong researcher.

The authors give a simple and clear introduction to the history and characteristic features of Chinese Wushu; its health-keeping effects and entertaining value, various schools and styles of Chinese boxing, and weapons, and Chinese Wushu's morality, etiquette and competition rules.

This book also introduces over 30 different schools of Chinese boxing and almost the same number of apparatus, including short apparatus, long apparatus, hard apparatus, soft apparatus and hidden weapons used in ancient China.

From the book, readers may gain a general understanding of Chinese Wushu, its history and its current state.

Included in this book are some 70 pictures, from which readers can vividly see graceful postures of various kinds of Chinese boxing and Wushu apparatus.

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**Chinese Wushu Series**

# **Essentials of Chinese Wushu**

**Wu Bin, Li Xingdong and Yu Gongbao**

**FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS BEIJING**

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# ***Chapter One***

## **General Description**

### **1. Concept**

Wushu (also known as kung-fu or martial arts) is one of the typical demonstrations of traditional Chinese culture. It is a sport which utilizes both brawn and brain.

The theory of Wushu is based upon classical Chinese philosophy, while the skills of Wushu consist of various forms of fighting: fist fights, weapon fights, and other fighting routines (including such offence and defence acts as kicking, hitting, throwing, holding, chopping and thrusting) and unarmed combats (Figs. 1, 2 and 3).

Wushu is not only a sporting exercise but also an artistic form. It is used to cure illness as well as for self-defence and is a comprehensive form of culture of the human body.

Wushu enjoys a long history and great popularity in China. Thanks to its uniqueness and charisma originating from traditional oriental culture, Wushu is captivating the attention of more and more people in other nations.

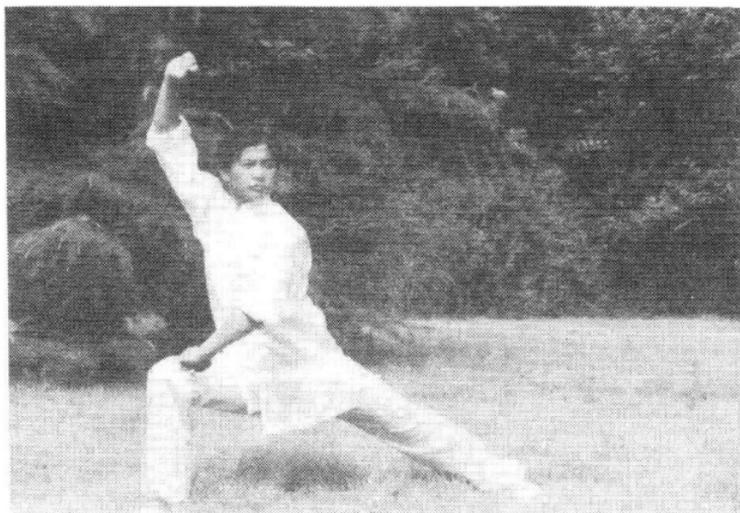


Fig. 1: Fist fights.

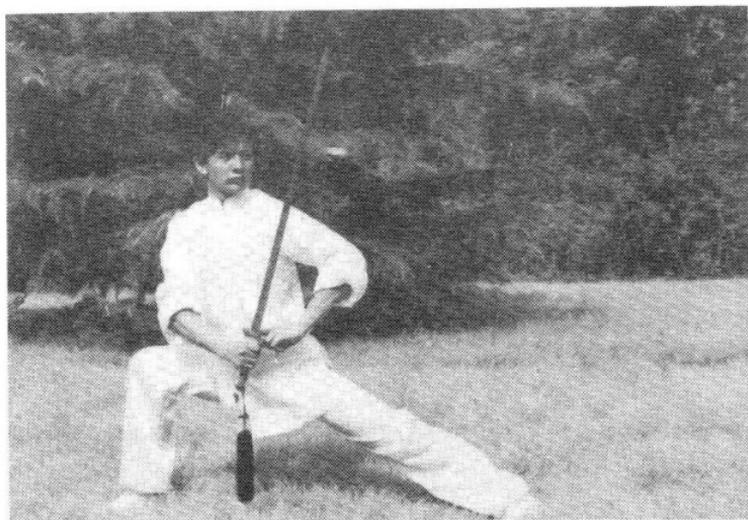


Fig. 2: The sword, a popular weapon in Wushu.

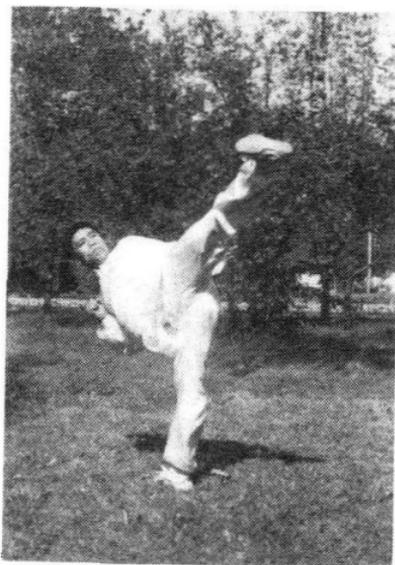


Fig. 3: Unarmed combat.

## 2. Characteristics

As one of the earliest and long-lasting sports, Wushu has developed its own characteristics over time. Major characteristics are listed below:

(1) Because of its long history incorporating differences in culture, ideology, region and usages, Wushu has developed into a great variety of schools and styles. While some schools emphasize the use of fists and hand technique, others emphasize leg technique and footwork (Fig. 4). Some take interest in the variation of acts whereas others prefer simplicity. Some focus on keeping opponents at arm's and leg's length while others like to fight in close contact. The assortment of schools and styles displays the colorful features of Wushu and gratifies the various needs of people.

(2) Wushu includes the use of many weapons.

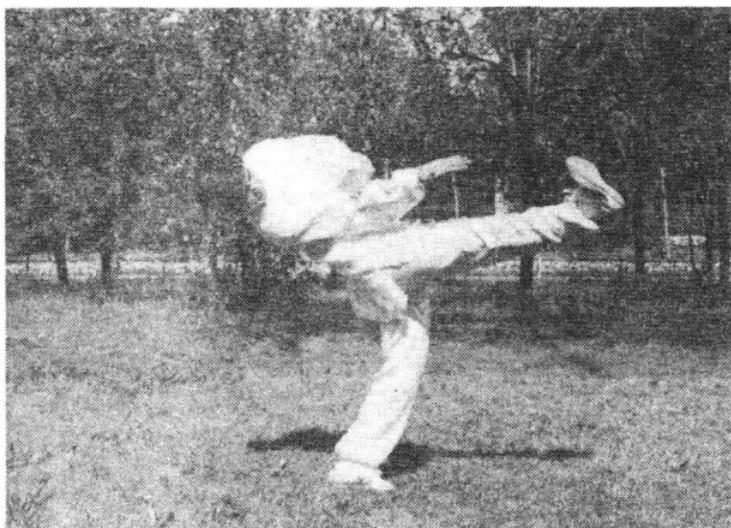


Fig. 4: A fight stressing the use of legs.

Chinese ancients named the Wushu arsenal the "Eighteen Arms," but there are many more in use. Almost all fights are accompanied by weapon usage of one kind or another. The combination of fist fights and weapon usage allows for a fuller and more efficient application of Wushu skills while sharpening the insight of combat and control and enriching the program of Wushu exercise.

(3) The combination of offence and defence is the essence of Wushu. Implications of offence and defence permeate the complete gamut of Wushu exercise. They are fully demonstrated in both practice and real combat. Even a solo practice implies the atmosphere of offence and defence against an imaginary opponent in time and space. Wushu masters have systematically summed up the contradictions of offence and defence and established a set of theories and techniques on combat.

(4) The movement of the human body is only the

external display of Wushu. Wushu is by no means limited to the external movement, but also emphasizes the full display of the internal temperament, mental attitude and potential of the human being. The practice of Wushu not only strengthens the bones and muscles but also the internal organs and intelligence. Coordination and cooperation are called for with each and every movement of the hand, eye, body, foot and form of movement. Wushu stresses that the mind directs the circulation of air flow within the body and that the inner circulation of air generates the external strength, so demonstrating the combination of external and internal forces. Cultivating air flows inside the body in order to improve the basic structures inside the body is an important purpose of Wushu exercises (Fig 5).

(5) Ingenious applications of substantial and insubstantial blows are incorporated in the movements and forces of Wushu. Motion and stillness alternate with

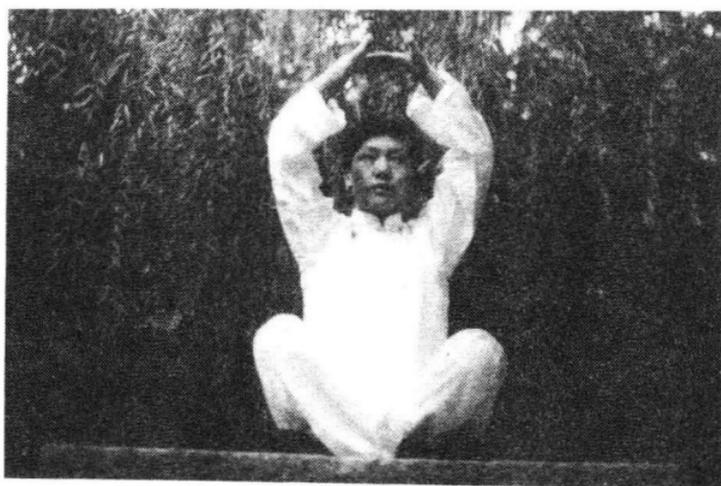


Fig. 5: An exercise of inner circulation of air flows.

each other, while hardness and softness supplement one another, greatly enhancing the artistic expression and the practicality of Wushu, and demonstrating its inclusive and equilibristic nature. Once in action, the movements can be as fast and forceful as a gust of wind, while being still, the body looks as steady as a mountain. Hard blows are like lightning and thunderclaps, whereas soft punches are like breezes delicately caressing willow twigs. Human feelings and abilities are clearly demonstrated through the rhythmic movements of opening and closing, and the emotions excited in doing exercises (Fig 6).

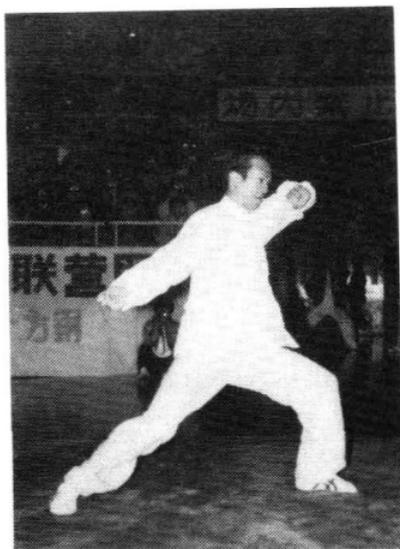


Fig. 6: A forceful exertion.

### **3. Functions**

Wushu boasts versatile functions, of which the most outstanding are:

#### **(1) Moral Cultivation**

As a human practice which stresses cultivation of moral characters and demonstration of spirit and temperament, Wushu is conducive to developing good manners and conduct. It also helps adjust one's psychology. The moral characters and etiquette are held in esteem by all schools of Wushu masters.

#### **(2) Offence and Defence**

Wushu practitioners can master various offence and defence techniques of armed and unarmed combat for self defence through a great number of training exercises. Many of the Wushu techniques can also be utilized in military and police training programs.

#### **(3) Curative Effect**

*Taiji Quan*, one of the traditional schools of Chinese shadow boxing, and the various still standing exercises emphasize the adjustment of one's breathing, thinking and psychology. These exercises have been proven to have good curative and rehabilitative effects on sufferers of chronic diseases of many kinds. As these exercises help strengthen the coordination of the human body and its immunity, they are ideal for preventing and curing diseases.

#### **(4) Health Improvement**

The practice of the basic exercises and routines of

Wushu are effective methods for improving the pliability of the joints and the suppleness of the back and legs. The generation of energy, the jumping and leaping and the changes from one stance to another, all help enhance human strength and speed of movement. Wushu, therefore, can be taken as the basic exercise for other sporting activities.

### **(5) Artistic Effect**

The graceful movement of the body, especially the typical oriental charm revealed during exercises and practice of Wushu, has an impressive artistic effect and provides visual delight. People can benefit mentally as well as physically from the display of the Wushu offence and defence skills and the exertion of forces through the display (Figs. 7 and 8).



Fig. 7: A graceful Wushu stance.



Fig. 8: A broadsword practising stance.

## **(6) Intelligence**

While stressing the development of physical prowess, Wushu also emphasizes the exercise of thinking. By adjusting various human functions, Wushu also helps improve the nervous system and is therefore good for intellectual development.

## **4. A Brief Survey of Wushu Development**

Wushu originated from the human activities of production and pursuit for survival, health and prosperity.

In primeval times, production tools were simple and crude while the level of productive forces was very low. Since wild animals presented a great menace to the human race, hunting in groups turned out to be a necessity for self-defence and food acquirement. The hunting activities not only helped sharpen human intelligence and physique, but also helped people develop some armed and unarmed grappling techniques, using simple weapons and devices such as hitting, dodging, jumping, chopping, axing, thrusting, stabbing and hurling. The most primitive and simplest weapon is the cudgel being the easiest to find, prepare and use. Along with improvements through actual usage and the advent of metallurgy, the materials for making weapons also changed from stone to metals. To the Wushu arsenal were added spears, swords and axes (Figs. 9 and 10).

Wushu, at its early stage of development was practised primarily for self-defence and for the acquirement of means of subsistence. At that stage, it was not an intentional, planned or organized sport. As human societies evolved and developed and as productive, cultur-

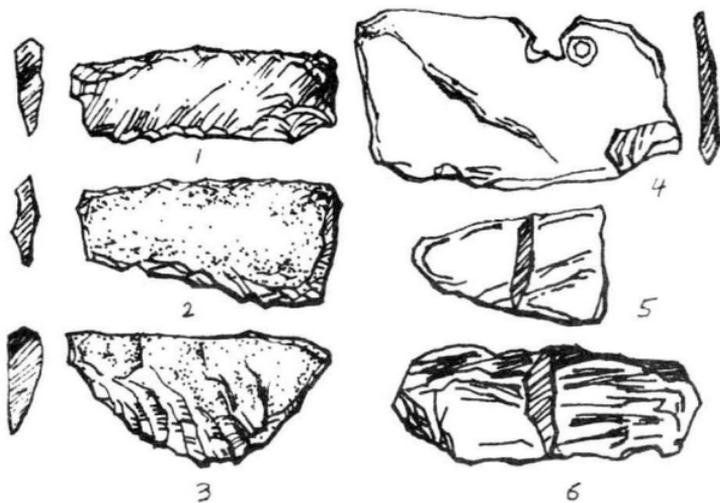


Fig. 9: Ancient stone weapons.

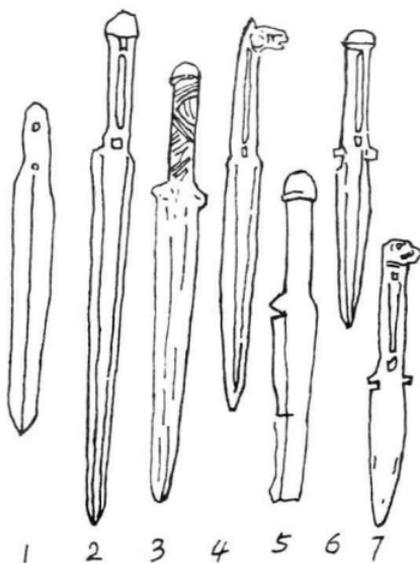


Fig. 10: Bronze swords of (11-17 B.C.)  
Western Zhou Dynasty.

al and scientific activities became more and more prosperous, innumerable people tempered and processed Wushu routines in different ways. By the time of China's Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1911), Wushu had formed its basic patterns (Figs. 11 and 12).



Fig. 11: Performing a sword-dance by a woman of Han Dynasty (206-220 B.C.)



Fig. 12: Practising Wushu in the third or fourth century.

## **(1) How Wars Promoted Wushu and Reinforced Its Applicability**

State and regime appeared as the slave society replaced the primitive society. Consequently, armies also were formed. Intense military conflicts served as catalysts providing conditions for developing Wushu. During China's Xia, Shang and Zhou periods (21st century to 771 B.C.), Wushu, used for military purpose, matured and formed complete systems for offence and defence, with the emergence of various bronze weapons in quantity. During the period of the Warring States (B.C. 770 to B.C. 221), conflicts and disputes were aggravated and the dukes and marquises of different states advocated Wushu in their armies, and even the emperors and ministers kept Wushu masters for their own purposes.

Military Wushu developed more systematically during the Tang and Song dynasties (618-1279) and exhibitions of Wushu arts were held in the armies as morale boosters and military exercises. The Tai Zong Emperor of the Song Dynasty selected several hundreds of warriors for training in the display and use of swordmanship. Also at this time, some military generals introduced Wushu into military exercises and training in order to build a practical basis for military usage of Wushu. For example, Song Dynasty general Yue Fei taught his soldiers to use Wushu weapons so as to increase their combat effectiveness. His army was known at the time as the "Brave and Formidable Army of the Yue Family" (Fig. 13). In the Ming and Qing dynasties, the general development of Wushu was at its height. Military Wushu became more practical and meticulous and was systematically classified and summarized. General Qi Jiguang of the Ming Dynasty delved into Wushu study



Fig. 14: An illustration from *A New Essay on Wushu Arts*.

Fig. 13: A stance of the Wushu style which is said to be created by General Yue Fei (1103-1142) of the Song Dynasty.

and wrote *A New Essay on Wushu Arts*. This essay collated many fist and weapon fighting skills (Fig. 14) and elaborated on each style and so became an important book in China's military literature.

The military demand for Wushu increased its applicability and caused the whole society to attach greater importance to it. As a result, Wushu obtained its legal position in the society and an official military examination on Wushu arts emerged.

## **(2) How Civil Wushu Developed Rapidly into a Multi-functional System as the Mainstay of Chinese Wushu**

Because of its strict selectiveness, military Wushu did not develop into colorful schools or styles. By com-

parison, civil Wushu developed in many ways through its popularity among the common people. During the Warring States Period, some civilians earned their livings by acting as individual Wushu practitioners who were ready to enforce justice and offer help to the weak. By the time most of the Wushu arts were discontinued by the military, they became useful in other ways. They were practised for physical fitness, for competition, and for performance. They had become entertainment in imperial courts as well as among the people. To suit these purposes, Wushu arts were programmed into various routines with people from different walks of life stamping their individual marks on it and so forming different schools and styles. Over the years, Wushu developed in an organized and socialized way. Wushu organizations mushroomed, enabling some Wushu arts which had been disappearing among the military to flourish again. For example, sword play has become a performing art and is practised for exercises, thus winning wide recognition among people.

### **(3) How Wushu Theory Evolved with Its Techniques**

As a social activity, Chinese Wushu has been tinted with philosophy and dialectics. Stressing rationalism and spirit is part of the tradition of Chinese culture. This has led Wushu practitioners to pay equal attention to both practice and theory. The latter developed alongside the skills and techniques. Wushu theories have extensively absorbed Chinese philosophy and integrated different schools and styles as explicated in many books of great importance in different historical periods of China. In the philosophical work of *Zhuang Zi (The Book of*

*Master Zhuang*) a chapter, "On Swords," is deemed to be the earliest written work on Wushu theory. A number of Wushu publications deal with various aspects of the structure and pattern of Wushu; the schools and basic styles; the essentials of various weapon fighting skills; the realm of mentality as well as the external and internal forces. Among the most influential works are *Fist Fight Classics*, *Sword Play Classics* and *On Taiji Quan*.

Before 1949, there were several hundred known Wushu writings and books. But since most of China's ancient Wushu writings were private copies of transcripts, which were seldom shown in public, many have been lost over the years. Following the founding of new China, many Wushu books were reprinted while many new writings about the arts came into being, enriching the theoretical treasure house of Wushu.

#### **(4) How Wushu Has Blended with Various Cultural Forms**

During its long process of evolution and development, Wushu took nourishment from traditional Chinese culture while at the same time influencing ancient Chinese cultural forms.

In classical Chinese literature considerable attention is given to Wushu masters and their deeds. Such examples are the *Outlaws of the Marsh* and the *Romance of Three Kingdoms*. Classical poems, the cream of ancient Chinese culture, also contain many narratives about Wushu.

Traditional Chinese operas, known worldwide as the Peking Opera, have used many Wushu styles and routines in their performances, some having Wushu arts as their major content. Specialized actors and actresses

have to be trained for performances in fighting scenes. Some Peking Opera maestros, such as Mei Lanfang and Ma Lianliang, had emphasized Wushu exercises and practices. The same is also true for other local operas in China.

Classical Chinese music stresses inner thought and feeling through melody. The high-spirited, progressive and positive mentality of Wushu has inspired Chinese composers and musicians. Ancient pieces of music based on Wushu arts have turned out gems of China's music classics. The *pipa* music of *Ambushing from All Sides* describes the grandeur and magnificence of ancient battlefields while Tang Dynasty music of *Emperor Qing Shihuang Breaking Through the Enemy Formation* displays the heroism and excitement of ancient warriors.

In addition, Wushu also permeates the realms of dancing, painting and religion in China.

It is worth mentioning that Wushu has been combined with many modern artistic forms, broadening the horizon of the martial arts. Wushu arts and film and television combine to produce martial arts films and television plays, which play an active role in entertaining the people and disseminating Wushu arts.

### **(5) The Development of Wushu Before and After the Founding of New China**

Folk Wushu groups and clubs flourished at the beginning of this century. The biggest and most influential was the Wushu Masters Society in Shanghai which had affiliates outside the city and abroad. In 1928, the National Center of Wushu was set up, with sub-centers in some Chinese provinces and cities. Wushu contests and competitions started in 1932 and in 1936, China



Fig. 15: Simplified *Taiji Quan*.

sent a group of Wushu masters to Berlin for the 11th Olympic Games.

Since the founding of New China in 1949, Wushu has been developing in a comprehensive way and is listed as an official competition sport at the national games. A national Wushu organization—the All-China Wushu Association, was established in 1958. As a result Wushu societies, clubs, part-time Wushu schools and research institutes appeared at all levels in urban and rural China. Wushu seminars were also conducted. The Chinese State Commission for Physical Culture and Sports has organized experts to compile a simplified routine of *Taiji Quan* from traditional Wushu arts as well as other fist and weapon fighting routines (Fig. 15). All these efforts have popularized and boosted the development of Wushu arts.

All sports and physical education institutes and

teachers' colleges have set up Wushu departments or programs in order to specialize in the teaching of Wushu and train Wushu practitioners. In 1979, the State Commission for Physical Culture and Sports assigned a special group to investigate the development of Wushu in some Chinese provinces and cities. A national work conference was called in 1982 to discuss the subject of Wushu. The meeting promoted the systematic and scientific development of standards in the martial arts. To cater to the development of Wushu, the Chinese National Research Institute of Wushu was established in 1986. It is the authorized institute for researching and administering Wushu activities.

Chinese Wushu delegations have toured abroad from time to time since 1949 and China also dispatched Wushu masters to coach abroad. And more and more



Fig. 16: Foreigners practising Wushu.

foreigners have come to learn Wushu in China while international Wushu activities are often held. The martial arts of Wushu are captivating more and more people around the world (Fig. 16).

## ***Chapter Two***

### **Content and Classification**

The content of Wushu is colorful and profound. Different fist and weapon fighting skills display different characteristics. According to the form of routines, Wushu can be classified into several major categories including solo practice, group practice, sparring and duet with weapons, exercises for building inner strengths and forces, etc.

#### **1. Solo Practice**

Solo practice is the basis of Wushu. This includes exercises for basic movements and skills and various still standing exercises. Some are aimed at developing the physique of Wushu practitioners, while others are aimed at strengthening the circulation of air flow inside the body so as to keep the practitioners in good health. Still others stress improving their standard of fighting skills (Fig. 1).

##### **(1) Basic Exercises and Movements**

Wushu basics include the movements of shoulder, arm, waist, leg and hand as well as footwork, jumps, leaps and balancing.

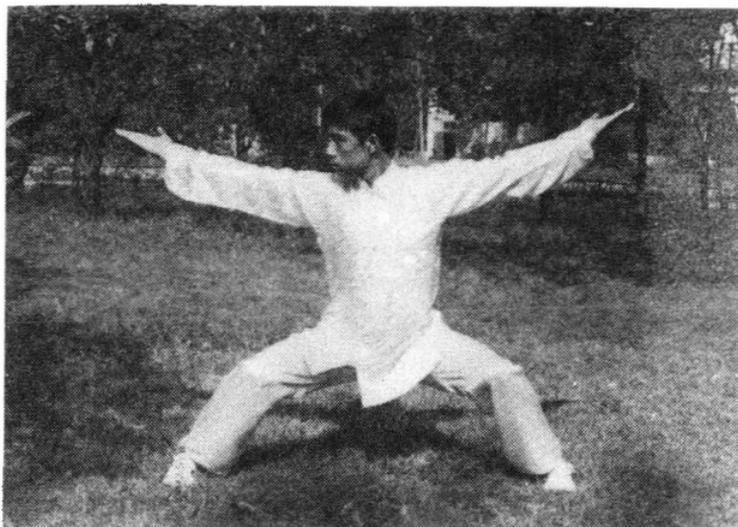


Fig. 1: A solo practice—supporting the heavens with horse-riding stance.

Both Wushu amateurs and professionals have sorted out many good methods of doing exercises and gradually formed a complete and systematic set of basic skills and techniques.

Through the exercises of Wushu basics, Wushu practitioners can have their entire bodies trained and improved to meet the demands of the special martial arts. The basic exercises help lay the foundation for learning and mastering the fighting skills and for improving their Wushu arts standard (Figs. 2 and 3).

Doing the basic exercises in a regular way will enhance the pliability and suppleness of joints and ligaments of the body, and the control and increment of the necessary elasticity of the muscles, so as to enable Wushu practitioners to execute their acts with quality and to speed up their mastery of Wushu skills. These



Fig. 2: Standing exercises.

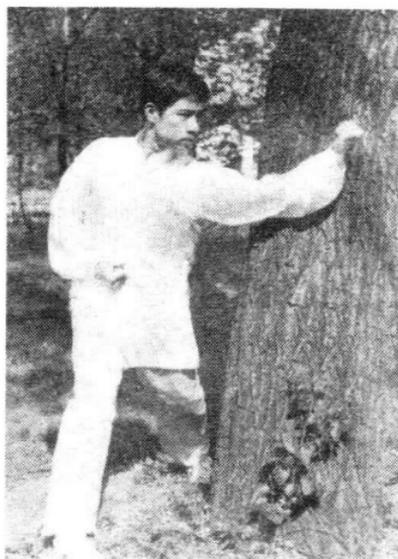


Fig. 3: Hitting exercises.

exercises can prevent and reduce injuries likely to occur during exercises.

## **(2) Still Standing Exercises**

The standing exercises are the unique method of practising Wushu. It is an art of using stillness to control motions and movements. The muscles and nerve system are more coordinated and the power is more fully developed through the standing exercises. While practising standstills, the practitioner is advised to dispel unrelated thoughts from his mind in order to concentrate, and keep his body in a fixed posture for a comparatively long time. By so doing the practitioner can better mobilize the inner circulation of air flow and guide it to reach out to all extremities in order to

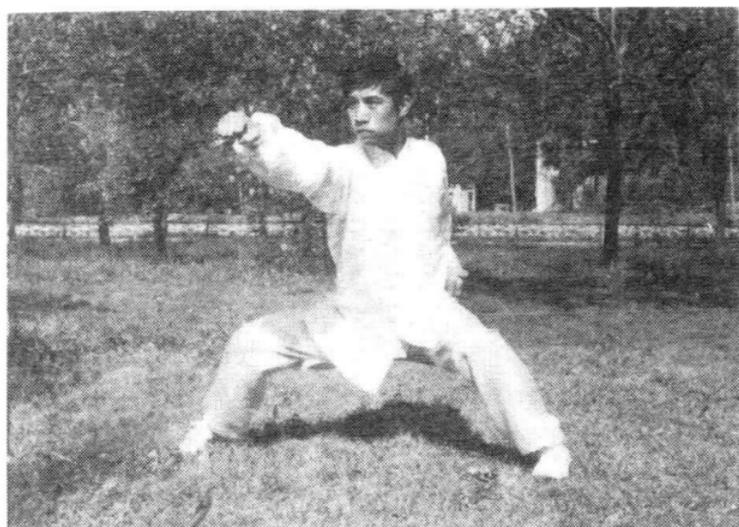


Fig. 4: A fighting exercise.

synthesize the external and internal forces. Standing exercises focus on exercising the mind, and call for natural breathing, high concentration, and proper posture of the body. Unadvisable or stiff movements should be avoided.

The standing exercises have health enhancing as well as fighting functions. Different standstills are done for different purposes (Fig. 4).

## **2. Routines**

The bare-handed fighting routines take such fighting skills as kicking, hitting, wrestling and holding as basic offence and defence techniques. They are then organized in line with the needs of the physical exercis-

es for different parts of the human body into different routines for offence and defence, incorporating actions and stills, substantial and insubstantial blows, charge and retreat, fast and slow movements. The shadow boxing routines have a long history and are seen in urban and rural China in various forms, such as *Taiji Quan*, *Xingyi Quan*, *Bagua Zhang*, *Shaolin Quan*, *Nan Quan*, *Chuojiao*, *Xiangxing Quan*, etc. Some routines have long programs while others have short ones. Some are particular about forcefulness and valiantness whereas others stress gentleness and smoothness. Some emphasize agility and speed while others pay attention to variation and changes. However, most fighting routines stress fluent continuity of movements, changes of actions, alteration of tempo, clear-cut acts and speed and agility. The *Taiji Quan* emphasizes slow and soft movements.

Routines are one of the major forms of Chinese Wushu. When doing the exercises, practitioners are required to execute all acts with offence and defence implications; a close cooperation of eye and hand is demanded and eyes should follow the movements of hands, which should also cooperate with the feet to complete the coordination of the upper and lower body. Practitioners should let the mind lead the body, let inner circulation of air flows generate forces so as to achieve unity of mentality, breathing and action and the combination of mentality and physique. When moving, it should be fast and forceful; when standing still, it should be steadfast like a rock, definite rhythm is asked for in both exercises.

### 3. Group Practice

Group practice is a collective event in which a group of people practise together bare handed or with weapons. Group practice was listed as one of the Wushu competitions after the founding of New China. In group practice, all practitioners are required to do exercises according to a prescribed pattern and follow every movement as closely as possible to the accompaniment of music. The exercises include demonstrations of footwork, leg techniques, movements of the body, hand techniques, jumps and leaps as demanded in the Wushu arts (Fig. 5).

Group practices are highly disciplined exercises, which call for high concentration, skillfulness and close cooperation on the part of every participant. The group performances are often grandiose, impressive and captivating. Delight and pleasantness are added to by



Fig. 5: Group practice.

merry and rhythmic melodies of characteristic Chinese classical and folk music as well as by appropriate costumes. Fashionable group practices include bare hand exercise, sword play, sabre play, nine-section cudgel play, two-prong spear play, etc.

#### **4. Weapons**

The weapons used in Wushu originate mainly from ancient military weapons. Wushu weapons are the products of wars and they have been improved and modified according to the need of wars and with the development of sciences.

Military weapons used in ancient battles were numerous and different. They were suited to the requirements of military conflicts and wars of the time. Every weapon has undergone the process of developing from simplicity to complexity. The earliest weapons were dagger-axe, spear, bows and arrows. They were simple and unwieldy and often had no cutting edges. Through trial and error by generations of people, some weapons became useless and obsolete while others are still in use today by Wushu practitioners. All of those weapons which are still being used are easy to use and technically sophisticated. Examples are sabres, spears, swords and cudgels. Some weapons exist only in legends and fairy tales. Though never used in real battles, these weapons have developed into Wushu apparatus as soon as their features and methods of use became known. An example is the E'mei needle (E'mei prick).

The general term for weaponry has changed over time. Five-weapons, five-guards, sabre-weaponry,

weapon-and-armour and battle-arms were used in different historical periods. In the Song Dynasty, the "Eighteen-Arms" was first used as the general term for the weaponry and to describe the variety of skills and techniques in using such weapons. The eighteen arms are generally listed as sabre, spear, sword, halberd, axe, battle-axe, hook, fork, jointed iron staff, mace, hammer, talon, trident halberd, cudgel, lance, short cudgel, stick and meteor hammer. Of the eighteen arms, there are both long and short weapons; singles and twins. Some are used at a distance while others for close fights. Some are overt whereas others covert and some hard while others are soft. Their functions are broad: sweeping, chopping, thrusting, shooting and blocking with cutting edges, hooks or pricks. The rich assortment of weapons has added to the colorful programs of martial arts.

After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, detailed requirements were introduced about the weight, length and thickness of Wushu weapons, as well as materials for making them so as to protect those participating in exercises and Wushu demonstrations and competitions. These regulations have helped upgrade Wushu standards.

## **5. Sparring**

Sparring is one participated in by two or more Wushu practitioners either unarmed or armed. The routines for sparring include such offence and defence techniques as kicking, wrestling, holding, beating, thrusting, chopping, lifting, axing, finger-hitting at certain parts of the body, jumping and leaping. Sparring

can help participants to further understand the implication of the acts they have learned through solo practice and promote their standards of martial arts. Because they demand a real combative atmosphere and skillfulness as well as close cooperation, sparring helps practitioners to cultivate bravery, intelligence, agility and cooperation.

Sparring falls into three categories: unarmed, armed and unarmed versus armed.

### **(1) Sparring Without Weapons**

Sparring without weapons is a sparring routine of fist, hand, leg and body movements and actions of the same style as in the solo practice. The combative arrangements include offence, defence and counterattack. The *Chang Quan* (long-style boxing) sparring includes in its program, jumps, leaps, hops and rolls, and the program requires practitioners to be quick and agile. The holding practice is an exercise which uses catching, seizing, holding, locking, moving and pointing at certain parts of the body to arrest, control, or extricate oneself, by forcing the opponent to maneuver their joints in reverse directions (Fig. 6).

### **(2) Armed Sparring**

Armed sparring is one in which two participants exercise together, using similar or different weapons. Different weapons result in different styles. Sabre sparring displays the characteristics of valour, resolve and speed. Sword play stresses the combination of hardness and softness as well as gracefulness. The sparring between spear and long-handled sabre demonstrates braveness and intrepidity. The sparring between three-



Fig. 6: An unarmed practice.

section articulated cudgels requires compactness and speed, which make the practice intense and exciting. Weapon sparrings also include such sparrings as broad sword versus spear, dagger versus spear and cudgel versus spear. These sparrings are between long and short, single and twin weapons.

### **(3) Sparring Between the Unarmed and Armed**

The sparring between the armed and unarmed are ones which are often programmed for the unarmed to try to deprive the armed opponent of his weapon. Such sparring programs include unarmed versus sabre, unarmed versus spear, unarmed versus twin spears, unarmed versus sword, etc. The practices require that the

armed side should be good at using his weapon. These practices also require that the unarmed side should be quick at dodging the attacks by the armed side, and look for chances to counterattack.

The technical programming of weapon practices generally takes into consideration the following points:

Rational offence and defence. Army side of the duet must wait for the attack launched by the other side to decide what defence to use and how to counterattack, otherwise he has to act aimlessly and may even disrupt the duet program.

Correct moves and tricks. Wushu sparring are simulated combats, not real ones. All attacks, defences and counterattacks are symbolic. This point is very important in weapon practices. The spear man is required to use his weapon as in real combat but has to be sure that he will not injure his partner. To do so, the spear man has to be sure as to where to direct his weapon so as to make the duet look exciting but safe.

Identical rhythm. The two sides must cooperate by tacit understanding. If one side is faster than the other, the rhythm of the duet may be broken while the partners may sustain injuries or even get killed by mistake. The participants, therefore, are required to act in perfect time either in attack or defence.

Appropriated distance. The participants must adjust the width of their steps, for if they stand too far away from each other, the attack and defence will not look real and the actions and movements will be sloppy, but if they are too close to one another, neither can move freely and their acts will be affected.

## 6. Duel

Duel is the essence of Chinese Wushu. The categories of duel now in practice are: *Sanshou* (free sparring), and weapon fighting.

### (1) *Sanshou* (free sparring)

*Sanshou* is a new modern Wushu variety which is based on the tradition of martial arts. Attack is the essence of Wushu. In ancient times, there were combative contests. In view of the development of Wushu both at home and abroad, the Chinese Wushu Association made extensive investigations and practices before making *Sanshou* an official competition event. The first international *Sanshou* invitational tournament was staged at the 1988 International Wushu Festival.

In *Sanshou* the contestants compete with such techniques as kicking, hitting and wrestling under certain regulations. They are permitted to use both hands and feet, which facilitates flexible moves and tricks. To keep themselves safe, they have to wear safety gear (head gear, boxing gloves, groin cover and shin guards).

### (2) Hand Pushing

Hand pushing is one type of grappling which depends upon pushing, shoving, elbowing, leaning against, pressing, shouldering, thrusting and jamming, to get the better of one's opponent. Hand pushing can enhance the combative ability of hand pushers and increase their combative insight and flexibility. Hand pushing usually means the hand pushing of *Taiji Quan*. Some other fist fighting styles also have hand pushing exercises (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7: Hand pushing.

### **(3) Weapon Fighting**

In weapon fighting, combatants use various long and short weapons to fight in accordance with certain regulations. At present, weapon fighting is not as popular as *Sanshou* or hand pushing. Major programs of weapon fighting include duels between short weapons such as sabre and sword, and between long weapons like spears and cudgels.

## **7. *Neigong***

*Neigong* is classified as inner exercises and falls into two categories. One is to improve health for the prevention and cure of diseases. Exercises in this category include breathing exercises, mental exercises and stand-

ing exercises. Chinese Wushu advocates reinforcement of the physique before beginning to learn fighting skills. Therefore maintaining good health has become one of the major concerns of inner exercises. The other category is concerned with improving one's ability to defend and attack. Such exercises include self-beating and self-hitting (this exercise prepares one to take and receive attack from his opponents), palming (this exercise increases the hitting force of the palm), and roving around and through wooden piles (this enhances agility of the body by meandering through piles).

*Neigong* is unique to the Chinese Wushu training system. Some of the inner exercises have become independent of their original schools and styles and have mixed with similar exercises from other schools, making them more comprehensive.

## ***Chapter Three***

### **Schools of Chinese Boxing**

Limited by space, this booklet finds it impossible to describe each and every school of Chinese boxing in Chinese Wushu. Therefore only the most representative and influential schools are dealt with. The origins, features, basic theory and technical characteristics for several dozen schools are discussed here. From this chapter one can gain a general understanding of Chinese Wushu.

#### **1. *Shaolin Quan* (Shaolin Boxing)**

*Shaolin Quan* or Shaolin boxing originated in the Shaolin Temple on Mount Songshan at Dengfeng in Henan Province. It was named after the temple. The founder of the *Shaolin Quan* was said to be an Indian monk, Bodhi-dharma. The proposition, though very influential, was proved to be false, for there was a monk named Bodhi-dharma but he knew nothing at all about Chinese boxing. In fact, *Shaolin Quan* was the manifestation of the wisdom of the monks of the temple, secular Wushu masters and army generals and soldiers (Fig. 1).

According to historical records, the Shaolin Temple was built during the Northern Wei Dynasty in the 19th



Fig. 1: *Shaolin Quan*.

calendar year of the reign of Emperor Taihe (495) and is one of China's most famous ancient temples. The Shaolin Temple once had many monks on its premises. Those monks of the lower level mostly came from the secular society and some of them knew some martial arts before entering the temple. Those who knew martial arts taught and helped each other to improve their skills. They also absorbed the experience of their predecessors and gradually developed their martial arts into the unique Shaolin school.

During the Northern Qi Dynasty (550-577), Shaolin monks could lift hundreds of kilograms in weight and were good at boxing and horse riding. By the end of the Sui Dynasty (581-618), Li Shimin, king of the Qin state, fought with the self-appointed emperor of the Zheng state, Wang Shichong. Shaolin monks Zhi Cao, Hui Yang,

and Tan Zong took the side of Li and helped him catch the latter's nephew Wang Renze to force the self-appointed emperor to surrender. After Li Shimin was enthroned as the first emperor of the Tang Dynasty, he awarded his followers according to their military merits and contributions. Monk Tan Zong had the title of chief general conferred on him, while the Shaolin Temple was given large grants of land and money to expand the temple complex. The Shaolin Temple was allowed to organize an army of monk soldiers, who acted as military people in warring times and as monks in peace time. The Shaolin school of boxing improved and developed through the trials of battles and wars.

The Shaolin monks in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) were all taught to practise Wushu. In the 32nd calendar year of the Jiajing reign (1553), the Shaolin military monks took part in the battles against Japanese invaders in southern China and accomplished many military exploits. Wang Shixing of the Ming Dynasty wrote in his *Tour of Mount Song*: "All of the 400 Shaolin Temple monks have good Wushu skills." "Fists and cudgels were wielded as if they were flying during practice." Cheng Chongdou also of the Ming Dynasty wrote in his book *The Dossier of Shaolin Cudgel Fight*: "Shaolin monks are best known for their cudgel fights." Ming general Yu Dayou, who was reputed for his anti-Japanese military service, went to teach cudgel fighting skills in the Shaolin Temple. It was in the latter half of the Ming Dynasty that Shaolin monks switched from cudgel fighting to fist fighting, so that fist fights could be promoted to match cudgel fights.

In the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the people living around the Shaolin Temple were very active in practis-

ing Wushu, which boosted the development of the Shaolin school of martial arts. In the Shaolin Temple, the rear hall was used for Wushu exercises, where various kinds of weapons were displayed on the weapon stands ready for use at any time. Some monks practised fist fighting to safeguard the temple. After years of exercises and practising, foot prints were stamped on the brick floor of the rear hall and these prints can be seen clearly even today. On the north and south walls of the White-Clothes Hall, there are Qing Dynasty murals vividly depicting the exercises practised by monks in the temple.

In the fifth calendar year of the Yongzheng reign of the Qing Dynasty (1727), people were not allowed to practise Wushu. However, they could not be stopped either in the secular society or in the Shaolin Temple, where Wushu was practised underground.

Apart from the Shaolin Temple on Mount Songshan, the Shaolin Temple was said to have set up more than a dozen Shaolin affiliates in other temples in the country. The Shaolin Temple on Mount Nine Lotus in Fujian Province during the Ming Dynasty was famous for developing the *Shaolin Quan*.

Around the 1911 Revolution against the Qing Dynasty, the Shaolin martial arts underwent further developments. Wushu clubs were established all over the country and most of them took the *Shaolin Quan*. Lots of patriots organized sabre and flying sword groups in order to overthrow the dynasty. They constantly practised their skills and contributed greatly to the cause.

The Shaolin school is very popular in secular society with a myriad of followers. Over the years it was enriched theoretically and its techniques perfected to form

a colossal system of fist fight.

Compactness is a feature of the Shaolin school. The moves and tricks of this school are short, simple and succinct as well as versatile. While fighting, Shaolin boxers would advance and retreat straightforwardly. They need only a small space to execute their style of fist fight which is described as "fighting along a single straight line." *Shaolin Quan* is powerful and speedy with rhythmic rising and falling of body movements. It stresses hardness of actions and blows but it also advocates softness in support of the hardness. The motto of the Shaolin fist fight says "hardness first and softness second." When jabbing or palming, the arm is required to be neither bent nor straight, in an attempt to blend external and internal forces.

## **2. *Chang Quan* (Long-style Boxing)**

*Chang Quan* or the long-style Chinese boxing is the general term for a dozen schools of boxing. These include *Cha Quan* (Cha-family boxing), flower-style boxing, China-style boxing, *Paochui* (cannon boxing), Hong-family boxing, red-style boxing, Shaolin boxing, *Fanzi Quan* (tumbling boxing), etc.

According to historical records, by the latter half of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) classifications of fist fights and boxing schools and styles had appeared. This classification became more detailed in the Qing Dynasty. Ming Dynasty general, Qi Jiguang, and Wushu master Cheng Chongdou both pointed out the difference between the long-style boxing and the short-range fighting. They categorized the 32 stances practised by the

first Song Dynasty Emperor Taizu (also known as Zhao Taizu *Chang Quan*) as the long-style boxing and the Mianzhang boxing as the short one. The modern long range fist-fighting has programmed into its routine the strong points of the Cha-family, flower, cannon and red boxing skills. The basics in the different forms of hands, hand techniques, footwork, step forms, ways of manoeuvring, stances of the body, movements of the eyes and legs, balancing, jumping and leaping are standardized and choreographed in accordance with the direction of movement of the long-style boxing. The jumps, leaps, rises and falls are programmed into different training routines with different degrees of difficulty, such as the long-style boxing for beginners and long-style boxing for youths.

The main characteristics of the long-style boxing are expansiveness and gracefulness in posture and agility and speed in movement. Long-style boxers fight to the extreme of their arms' length. They move fast, jump high and far and combine hardness and softness, fast and slow moves, motions and stillness. Their movements are clearly rhythmical. Their generation of energy is powerful and the origin and outlet of the energy are clear. The bones and ligaments of the long-style boxers are compatible with their movements and actions (Fig. 2).

*Chang Quan* is more suitable to youngsters who can enhance strength, speed, agility, elasticity and endurance through exercise and practice. It helps develop the physique and teach the techniques and skills in offence and defence.



Fig. 2: The long-style boxing.

### **3. *Taiji Quan* (Shadow Boxing)**

The word *Taiji* first appeared in *Book of Changes of the Zhou Dynasty*. The essay says: "Where there is *Taiji*, there is peace and harmony between the positive and the negative." *Taiji* means supremacy, absoluteness, extremity and uniqueness. *Taiji Quan* takes its name for the implication of superiority. *Taiji Quan* got its name when Shanxi secular Wushu master Wang Zongyue used the philosophy of the positive and negative from the *Book of Changes* to explain the principles of the boxing.

There are different opinions on the origin of *Taiji Quan*. Some think it was created by Zhang Sanfeng of the Song Dynasty (961-1279) while others believe it was created by Han Gongyue and Cheng Lingxi in the Liang Dynasty (502-557). Still others say that it was created by

either Xu Xuanping or Li Daozi of the Tang Dynasty (618-907). Yet all propositions cannot be proved from authentic historical records. According to the research of Wushu historian Tang Hao, *Taiji Quan* was first exercised and practised among the Chen family members at the Chenjia Valley which is located in Wenxian County in Henan Province. The earliest choreographer of the *Taiji* boxing was Chen Wangting who was both a scholar and a martial artist. Chen combined his knowledge of ancient psychological exercises; the positive and negative philosophy describe in the *Book of Changes* and Chinese medical theory of passages and channels of blood, air flow and energy inside the human body with the exercises and practices of Wushu. He absorbed the strong points from various schools and styles of martial arts of the Ming Dynasty, especially the 32-move Qi Jiguang style of boxing (long-style boxing), to form the school of *Taiji Quan*.

After years of dissemination, many styles of *Taiji Quan* were created. The most popular and widespread are the following five styles:

### **(1) Chen-style *Taiji Quan***

The Chen-style *Taiji Quan* falls into two categories—the old and new frames. The old frame was created by Chen Wangting himself. It had five routines which were also known as the 13-move boxing. Chen Wangting also developed a long-style boxing routine of 108 moves and a cannon boxing routine. It was then handed down to Chen Changxing and Chen Youben, boxers in the Chenjia Valley who were all proficient at the old frame (Fig. 3). The present-day Chen-style boxing boasts of the old routine, the cannon routine and the new



Fig. 3: The Chen-style *Taiji Quan*.

routine.

The Chen-style *Taiji* boxing is the oldest form, all the other styles of *Taiji Quan* having derived from it either directly or indirectly.

## **(2) Yang-style *Taiji Quan***

The originator of the Yang-style *Taiji* boxing was Yang Luchan (1800-1873) from Yongnian in Hebei Province. Yang went to learn *Taiji* boxing from Chen Changxing in the Chenjia Valley as a boy. When grown up, he returned to his native town to teach the art. To suit the need of common people, Yang Luchan made some changes, and dropped some highly difficult moves, such as force irritating, broad jumps and foot thumping. His son shortened the routine which was further simplified by his grandson. The grandson's form of the Yang-style *Taiji* boxing was later taken as the



Fig. 4: The Yang-style *Taiji Quan*.

protocol of the Yang-style boxing. Because of its comfortable postures, simplicity and practisability, this form has become the most popular routine for exercise and practise (Fig. 4).

The Yang-style *Taiji* boxing features agreeable movements and actions combining hardness, softness and naturalness. When practising, practitioners should relax to form softness which transforms into hardness, thus combining the hard and the soft. The Yang-style *Taiji Quan* is divided into three sub routines, namely high-posture, middle-posture and low-posture routines, all with comfortable and agreeable movements and actions.

### **(3) Wu-style *Taiji Quan***

Wu-style *Taiji* boxing was created by Quan You (1834-1902) who lived at Daxing in Hebei Province



Fig. 5: The Wu-style *Taiji Quan*.

(now under Beijing Municipality). Quan You was of the Manchu nationality of China. He learned *Taiji Quan* from Yang Luchan and later followed Yang's second son Yang Banhou to study the short program. Quan You was known for his ability to soften his movements. Quan's son Jianquan changed his family name to Wu as he was brought up as a Han national. Wu Jianquan (1870-1942) inherited and disseminated a style of *Taiji* which is comfortable and upright. His style is continuous and ingenious and because his routine does not require jumps and leaps, it spread far and wide among common people. Since this style of *Taiji Quan* was disseminated by the Wu family, it became known as the Wu-style *Taiji* boxing (Fig. 5).

#### **(4) Wu Yuxiang Style of *Taiji Quan***

Wu Yuxiang (1812-1880) was the creator of another

style of the *Taiji Quan*. A Yongnian resident in Hebei, Wu Yuxiang learned the ABC's of *Taiji* from fellow provincial Yang Luchan. In 1852, Wu Yuxiang went to work for his brother at Wuyang. On his way to Wuyang, he learned the new routine of *Taiji Quan* from Chen Qingping and mastered it. At his brother's home, Wu Yuxiang got hold of a transcript of Wang Zongyue's *On Taiji Quan*. So upon returning home, Wu Yuxiang delved into the book and practised the principles stipulated in it. Wu eventually wrote *Ten Essential Points of Martial Artists* and *Four-Word Poetic Secrets of Taiji: Apply, Cover, Combat and Swallow*, which have become the classics of Chinese Wushu writing.

The Wu Yuxiang style of *Taiji* features compactness, slow movement, strict footwork and distinguishes between substantialness and insubstantialness. The chest and abdomen are kept upright while the body is moving around. The outside movement of the body is initiated by the circulation of air flows inside the body and by inner adjustments of substantialness and insubstantialness. The two hands are in charge of their respective halves of the body—one does not infringe upon the other. The hand never goes farther than the foot. Li Yishe (1832-1892), son of Wu Yuxiang's sister, inherited the Wu Yuxiang style of *Taiji*. He wrote about his experience of practising *Five-Word Essentials*, *The Secret to Relaxation: Lift, Guide, Loosen and Release* and *Essentials for Taiji Movements and Actions*. In the first year of the Republic (1911), Hao Weizhen (1849-1920) from Yongnian County taught the Wu Yuxiang style of *Taiji* in Beijing, and later in Nanjing and Shanghai.

### (5) Sun-style *Taiji Quan*

The initiator of the Sun-style *Taiji* boxing was Sun Lutang (1861-1932) from Dingxian County in Hebei Province. Sun was a master of *Xingyi Quan* (free-mind animal-imitating boxing) and *Bagua Zhang* (Eight-diagram Palm). In 1911, he followed Hao Weizhen to learn the Wu Yuxiang style of *Taiji*. He later created the Sun style of *Taiji* boxing by blending the cream of the Wu Yuxiang style of *Taiji*, *Xingyi Quan* and *Bagua Zhang*. The feature of the Sun-style *Taiji* is that practitioners advance or retreat freely with quick and dexterous movements, which are connected with each other either in closing or opening stances when the direction is changed (Fig. 6).

Besides the above-mentioned five style of *Taiji* boxing, there is another style called Five-Star *Taiji*. This style was initiated by Wang Lanting, butler of Prince Duan of



Fig. 6: The Sun-style *Taiji Quan*.

the Qing Dynasty. Wang Lanting learned *Taiji* from Yang Luchan who served as Wushu master to Prince Duan. After mastering the boxing art, Wang Lanting passed it onto Li Ruidong and Si Xingsan. Li Ruidong then absorbed the cream of other styles of *Taiji* to form the Five-Star *Taiji*.

The Chanmen *Taiji Quan* or Buddhist *Taiji Quan* which is popular in the area of Pingdingshan in Henan Province was developed by monks in the Shaolin Temple according to the *Infinitely Merciful Dharani Scripture*. By the end of the Qing Dynasty, it had also absorbed the best of the martial arts practised by followers of Taoism and Confucianism. As it was first created by Buddhist monks, it was called Chanmen or Buddhist *Taiji Quan*.

To further popularize *Taiji Quan* among the people after the establishment of the People's Republic of China, a simplified set of the Yang-style *Taiji Quan* was compiled in 1956, by dropping the repeated and difficult movements. The simplified set consists of 24 forms. In 1979, the Chinese State Physical Education and Sports Commission absorbed the strongest points from the Chen-style, Yang-style and Wu-style *Taiji*, as well as *Taiji* Wushu, to form a popular, 48-form *Taiji Quan* (Fig. 7).

Although different in style and form, all *Taiji* boxing routines require their practitioners to be tranquil, calm, relaxed but concentrative. In *Taiji Quan* the spine is the pivot around which the body moves. Forces and energy should be generated from the spine and waist before reaching the arms and legs. The movements are executed slowly, continuously and softly, but hardness is implied in softness. Substantialness should be distin-



Fig. 7: The 48-form *Taiji Quan*.

guished from insubstantialness. Practitioners are required to breathe regularly and smoothly. The inner strengths and energy should be exuded through external movements and actions.

The theory of *Taiji Quan* was developed when Wang Zongyue wrote his *On Taiji Quan*. *Taiji Quan* theories matured with later writings of the *Thirteen-form Frame*, *Thirteen Postures*, *Secrets of Thirteen Stances*, *The Essentials of Martial Artists*, *Martial Artists' Ballad*, *Taiji Combats* and *Five-Word Essentials*.

As mentioned earlier, the *Taiji Quan* has health enhancing and disease curing functions. This is largely due to its effect on brain function. Practising *Taiji* enables part of the cerebral cortex to enter a protective inhibition so that partial rest is possible while other parts are excited. As a result brain function can im-

proved and rehabilitated through conscientious and protracted exercises and practices of *Taiji Quan*. Various chronic diseases resulting from the malfunction of the nerve system can thus be cured or ameliorated.

#### 4. *Fanzi Quan* (Tumbling Boxing)

*Fanzi Quan* or tumbling boxing is also known as *Bashanfan* (eight-flash boxing). It is so called because of its eight major flashing movements, which are executed as fast as lightning and thunderclaps. The movements in tumbling boxing are varied and continuous.

The *Fanzi Quan* ballad says: "Wu Mu has passed down the *Fanzi Quan* which has mystery in its straight-forward movements." Wu Mu is the other name for Yue Fei, a famous general of the Southern Song Dynasty. Some people have taken this to mean that *Fanzi Quan* was created by Yue Fei, but no historical record has verified this.

Earlier mentions of *Fanzi Quan* appeared in *A New Essay on Wushu Arts* written by anti-Japanese general Qi Jiguang of the Ming Dynasty. In Volume XIV of *Quan Jing (Boxing Text)*, it says: "Throughout the history of fist fights, there have been the 32-form *Chang Quan* of Emperor Taizu of the Song Dynasty, *Liubu Quan* (six-step boxing), *Hou Quan* (monkey-imitating boxing), *E'quan* boxing, etc. Though their names are different, the routines are roughly the same. As for today's 72-move Wen-family boxing, 36-move locking fist fight, 24-move reconnoitre boxing, eight-flash boxing and 12-move short style boxing, they are among the best styles."

The eight-flash boxing mentioned by Qi Jiguang is exactly tumbling boxing of today. *Bashanfan* was the old name used in the Ming Dynasty. From Qi's account, it is evident that *Bashanfan* was already a comparatively complete and perfect style of fist fight in the Ming Dynasty. *Fanzi Quan* centers on the *Bashanfan* (eight-flash moves) while others are merely derivatives of this.

During the Qing Dynasty, *Fanzi Quan* was popular in north China, especially in Raoyang, Lixian and Gaoyang areas in Hebei Province. During the reigns of Qing emperors Xianfeng and Tongzhi (1851-1874), a recluse called Zhao Canyi lived at Raoyang in Hebei. Zhao was not only proficient at *Fanzi Quan* but was also well known for his mastery of *Chuojiao Quan* (feet-poking boxing). He taught the boxing arts to Duan and Wang families respectively. The brothers of Duan Zhixu and Duan Zhiyong learned *Chuojiao* while Wang Laozi and Wang Zhan'ao studied *Fanzi Quan*. Later on, the two families taught each other and exchanged their knowledge. *Fanzi Quan* stresses the use of hands, whereas *Chuojiao* emphasizes the use of feet. Modern *Fanzi Quan* experts often practise feet-poking skills as well.

*Fanzi Quan* spread far and wide after it was introduced into Hebei, developing many branch styles. The eagle-claw tumbling boxing was evolved on the basis of a combination of the eagle-claw moving boxing, eagle-claw running boxing and tumbling boxing. When hitting, the hand is in the form of clenched fist. When retrieving, it is in the form of an eagle claw. Fist jabbing can be as fast as the swing of a whip and as relentless as teeming rain. Another combination is *Digong Quan* (ground stroke boxing) and *Fanzi Quan* tumbling boxing, called *Digong Fanzi Quan* (ground stroke tumbling

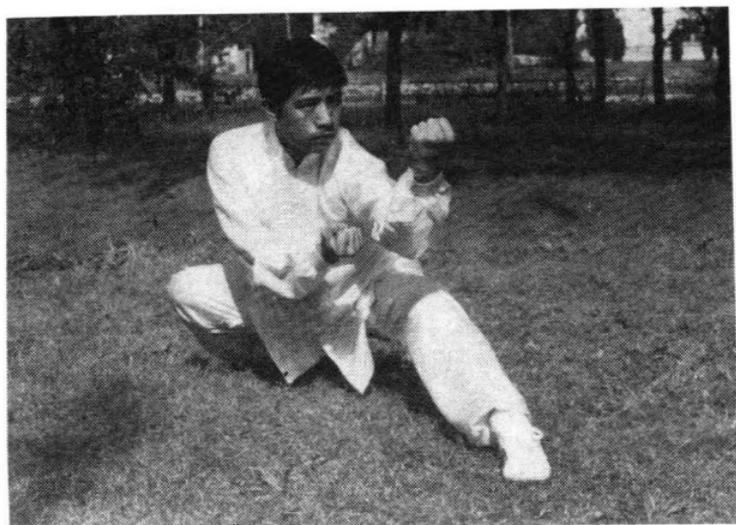


Fig. 8: *Fanzi Quan*.

boxing). It absorbs both the tumbling boxing tricks of fastness and variation and the ground stroke boxing moves of falling, pouncing, wrestling and leg locking. Because there are some feet-poking tricks in the ground stroke tumbling boxing, it is also called by some the feet-poking tumbling boxing. Other combinations include Shaolin tumbling boxing, long-style tumbling boxing, short-style tumbling boxing, Yanqing-style tumbling boxing and soft palming tumbling boxing (Fig. 8).

Contemporary *Fanzi Quan* master Yu Boqian not only inherited the tumbling techniques from his predecessors but also improved it by programming two new routines of wave-poking tumbling boxing and back-rolling tumbling boxing.

*Fanzi Quan* stresses the combination of external

and internal strengths and energies. Exercises involving the circulation of air flows inside the body are carried through the water conduit, blood vessels and network of sinews which Chinese medicine believes exist in human bodies. These three networks and channels merge under the guidance of the mind. Tumbling boxers take root in their legs while emphasizing hand tricks and movements. The tumbling exercises are divided into two classes of major moves and minor moves. The major moves include jabbing, axing, elbowing, jamming, wrestling, rubbing and holding. The minor moves are rolling, lifting, turning, penetrating, slipping, hammering, provoking and flicking. In tumbling boxing, the routine is made rhythmic by slow and fast movements, continuous and intermittent actions. Tumbling boxers prefer to fight in a straightforward way. They change freely from hardness to softness and vice versa. When the hand hits out, the foot follows with a quick step. The body clutches together while moving around fast. The fist never hits out aimlessly nor does the hand retreat without trying to attack on its way back.

The routine of tumbling boxing is short and terse. Its movements are agile and quick and arranged in compact patterns. While practising, the footwork is steady, posture upright and square, and actions are versatile. One moment the two fists hit straight and the next they are rounded for their attacks. Various tricks and moves are like whirl-winds and the entire routine is completed as if in one breath. The fist hits of tumbling boxing are described "as dense as rain drops and as fast as a burning string of small firecrackers." The tumbling boxing stresses crisp, fast, hard and resilient movements.

## 5. *Cha Quan*

*Cha Quan* or the Cha style of boxing is popular in north China. According to the chronicle of the Cha-family boxing, a Tang Dynasty (618-907) crusade went on an expedition to east China. When the army reached Guanxian County in today's Shandong Province, a young general named Hua Zongqi had to remain behind to recover from a serious wound. When he recovered and rehabilitated, thanks to considerate care by local residents, General Hua Zongqi taught the local people his martial art *Jiazi Quan* (frame boxing) in appreciation. Because Hua had good Wushu skills and taught his art very earnestly, a great number of people followed him. Since he could not handle them all alone, Hua invited his senior fellow apprentice Cha Yuanyi from his residence to help him. Cha Yuanyi was proficient at martial arts, especially the body posture boxing. Cha and Hua stayed together and became esteemed Wushu teachers.

*Jiazi Quan* had fully extended movements and was called *Dajia Quan* (big frame boxing). The body posture boxing is compact and fast and it was called *Xiaojia Quan* (small frame boxing). After Cha Yuanyi and Hua Zongqi died, their followers named the two styles of *Jiazi Quan* after their tutors in their memory. The body posture boxing passed down by Cha Yuanyi was called the Cha-style boxing, while the *Jiazi Quan* taught by Hua Zongqi was named the Hua-style boxing.

Later on, the Cha-style boxing and the Hua-style boxing were known as one style. Those who were good at Cha-style boxing were also good at Hua-style boxing. Subsequently, this style of fist fight became known as

the Cha-Hua boxing.

The Hua-style boxing has four routines. Three of them are long programs with varied tricks and moves, which are considered the cream of *Jiazi Quan*.

The Cha-style boxing or body posture boxing has 10 routines. During the reign of Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty (1736-1795), the Cha-style boxing divided into three technical schools at Guanxian County and Rencheng County in Shandong Province. The Zhang-style of the Cha-style boxing, represented by Zhang Qiwei from Village Zhangyin at Guanxian, is fast, agile and compact. The Yang-style of the Cha-style boxing, represented by Yang Hongxiu from the southern part of the town of Guanxian, is upright, comfortable and graceful. The Li style of the Cha-style boxing, represented by Li Enju from Jining, is powerful, contin-



Fig. 9: *Cha Quan*.

uous and masculine.

Wushu masters Wang Ziping, Chang Zhenfang and Zhang Wenguang, well-known in China, were all experts in the Cha-style boxing and they have contributed to the dissemination and development of this school.

The characteristics of the Cha-style boxing lie in the fact that its movements are graceful, comfortable, clear, continuous and rhythmic. The generation of strengths and forces are abrupt, and the use of energy is economical. This style of boxing stresses the usage of both hands and feet at the same time in executing the movements. Various tricks and moves are combined and linked to facilitate continuous attacks (Fig. 9).

## 6. *Xingyi Quan* (Form and Meaning Boxing)

*Xingyi Quan* or the form and meaning boxing is also called *Xinyi Quan* (free-mind boxing), *Xinyi Liuhe Quan* (free-mind six-combination boxing)\* or *Liuhe Quan* (six-combination boxing). There are two propositions about the name of this school of boxing. One holds that the body actions and movements should be guided by

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\* *Liuhe* (six combinations) is a special term used in Wushu, Chinese martial arts. In the Shaolin school of Wushu, there is a special branch called *Liuhe Men* (six-combination-group), which includes *Liuhe Quan* (six-combination boxing), *Liuhe spear* (six-combination spear), *Liuhe sabre* (six-combination sabre), etc. One explanation is that the six combinations mean spirit, breath and mind (inner three combination) and hand, eye and body (outer three combination). Another explanation is that the six combinations are the combinations of eye and heart (or mind), heart (or mind) and breath, breath and body, body and hand, hand and foot, foot and hip.

mind and that this school of boxing is an identity of mind and body; the other proposition states that this school of exercises are mere imitations of animal actions and movements and adopted the form and meaning of animal movements.

According to historical records, the creator of *Xingyi Quan* was Ji Jike (1602-1683) from Village Zuncun in Yongji County in Shanxi Province. A resident of the late Ming Dynasty and early Qing Dynasty, Ji Jike was also known as Ji Longfeng. On his trip south to the Shaolin Temple and Luoyang in Henan Province and Qiupu in Anhui Province, Ji Jike passed his art on to Zeng Jiwu. During the reign of Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty, *Xingyi Quan* was spread in Henan, Hebei and Shanxi provinces. Ma Xueli, a Luoyang resident in Henan, Dai Longbang, a resident of Qixian in Shanxi, and Li Luoneng, Dai's disciple from Hebei, all contributed to the dissemination and development of the boxing. Over centuries, this school of boxing is now practised in different styles. The Shanxi style is compact, delicate and yet forceful while the Henan style is powerful, vigorous and substantial. The Hebei style stresses steadiness, sturdiness and comfort. As regards routines of fist fight, a similarity is seen between the Shanxi style and the Hebei style, both using three postures of the body, five major movements of axing, bursting, penetrating, hurling and traversing and imitations of 12 animal forms (dragon, tiger, monkey, horse, turtle, chicken, hawk, swallow, snake, owl, eagle and bear). The Henan style mainly imitates 10 animal forms (dragon, tiger, chicken, eagle, snake, horse, cat, monkey, hawk and swallow) (Fig. 10).

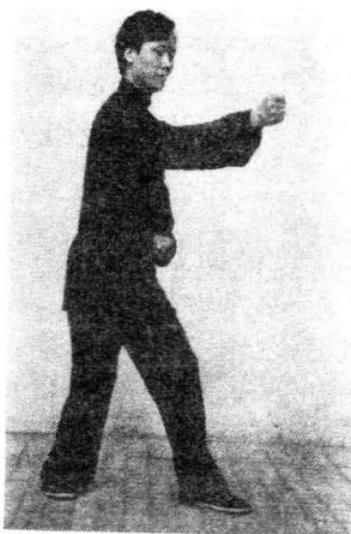


Fig. 10: *Xingyi Quan*.

## 7. *Bagua Zhang* (Eight-diagram Palm)

*Bagua Zhang* or the eight-diagram palm is one of the most popular schools in China. It is also called *Youshen Bagua* (roving eight-diagram), *Longxing Bagua* (dragon-shaped eight-diagram), *Xingyi Bagua* (*Xingyi* eight-diagram boxing), *Yinyang Bapan Zhang* (positive-negative eight-plate palm), etc.

There are different stories about the origin of this school of boxing. Some say it originated among the anti-Qing Dynasty cliques while others believe that it was created by the two Taoist priests of Bi Yun and Jing Yun on Mount Emei in Sichuan Province during the late Ming Dynasty and early Qing Dynasty and it has been passed down to its ninth generation of practitioners.

Most of *Bagua Zhang* boxers are found in Hebei Province. Some of them learned *Bagua Zhang* from

scratch from their tutors, while others asked the masters for advice to improve their own skills. Over the years various routines of exercises were cultivated in different styles. The most popular ones are:

The Dong Haichuan-style *Bagua Zhang*. A native of Zhujiawu, south of Wenan County in Hebei Province, Dong played an important part in the dissemination of the eight-diagram palm, teaching many people in Beijing. Most reputed disciples of Dong included Yin Fu, Cheng Tinghua, Liu Fengchun and Li Cunyi who all contributed to the dissemination and development of the boxing style. Some of the eight-diagram palm styles are named after these disciples, for example the Yin-style, Cheng-style, Liang-style and Sun-style eight-pictography palms.

The Li Zhenqing style of *Bagua Zhang* or the positive-negative eight-diagram palm Li (a. 1830-1900), a native from Weijiaying in Hebei Province, went to Henan Province to learn the positive-negative eight-diagram palm in order to improve the boxing techniques which he had already mastered. After returning home in about 1870, Li taught his skills to his villagers. A follower of Li Zhenqing, Ren Zhicheng wrote a book on the *Yinyang Bapan Zhang* (positive-negative eight-plate palm) in 1937 and the book has been passed down.

The Tian Ruhong style of *Bagua Zhang*. Tian, whose style of boxing is called the *Yinyang Bagua Zhang* (positive-negative eight-diagram palm), was a native of Shandong Province, but later moved to Dengshangu Village at Tanggu in Hebei Province in the late Ming Dynasty. On a tour of Emei and Qingcheng in Sichuan Province, Tian saw wrongdoings and volunteered to do

justice. When he was in danger, two Taoist priests rescued him. After the incident, Tian Ruhong acknowledged the priests as his Wushu tutors and followed them for 12 years mastering their style of martial arts. When the Ming Dynasty gave place to the Qing Dynasty, Tian said good-bye to his tutors and returned home. Due to his resentment of the autocracy of the local authorities in the Qing Dynasty, Tian left his home village once again and took with him a youngster called Tian Xuan. Years after, Tian Xuan came back to teach the eight-diagram palm to Tian family members. In the beginning, this style of boxing was known only among Tian family members. It is only in recent times that it has been taught to others outside of Tian family.

The eight-diagram palm is based on the old Chinese philosophy of eight combinations of three whole and broken lines used in divination. While practising, the practitioner moves according to the eight diagrams. There are eight basic palm plays. A total of 64 palm tricks and moves have come from the original eight basic palm plays. Apart from solo practices, there are also sparrings, *Sanshou* (free sparring) and fighting with weapons, such as *Bagua* sword play, *Bagua* sabre play and *Bagua* cudgel play, and *Bagua* play of shaft decorated with seven stars, etc. While practising these routines, practitioners rove around like a dragon moving amidst clouds (Fig. 11).

*Bagua Zhang* features dexterity and agility. When moving around it is like walking in a muddy place, with foot steps changing all the time like running water. Palm tricks and body movements follow one after another. The roving around looks like endless circles which overlap one another. The body turns around from the



Fig. 11: The eight-diagram palm play.

waist during walking, roving, turning, rising and falling. Palm tricks change with the movements of the body. When the upper body protrudes, the lower part of the body squats back to keep balance. When the arms are sent out, the feet are drawn back. When moving it is like a roaming dragon; when squatting it is like a sitting tiger; when looking around it is like a monkey on the lookout; when roving it is like a circling eagle.

## **8. *Pigua Quan* (Axe-hitch Boxing)**

*Pigua Quan* or axe-hitch boxing was known in ancient times as armor wearing boxing. Ming Dynasty General Qi Jiguang included the move of putting on armours while fighting as laid out in his book, *A New*

### *Essay on Wushu Arts.*

When the National Wushu Institute was founded in Nanjing in 1928, *Pigua Quan* specialist Ma Yingtu was put in charge of the fist play department of the Institute. He invited another *Pigua Quan* pugilist Guo Changsheng from Hebei to lecture. The two of them delved into the boxing adjusting the moves but keeping the excellent essentials and adding speed and explosive power as well as the skills from the 24-form *Tongbei Quan*. The revised edition of *Pigua Quan* turned out to be a completely new art, which was said to be feared by even deities and demons.

*Pigua Quan* in fashion at present has come mainly from this revised version. The axe-hitch boxing which is popular in Gansu Province consists of axe-hitch, blue dragon, flying tiger, *Taishu* and *Dajiazi Quan* (big frame boxing ) while the popular version in Cangzhou is made up of axe-hitch, blue dragon, slow and fast axe-hitch and cannon boxing.

Execution of the axe-hitch boxing demands accuracy, fluency, agility, continuity, speed, power, dexterity, excellence, subtlety and uniqueness. Be it single moves, combinations of moves, or the entire routine, the axe-hitch boxing requires a learning process which ranges from simplicity to complexity. In the first place, the stance and execution of movements must be accurate and standard. The emphasis then goes from accuracy to fluency, to agility and continuity, and then to speed, power, dexterity, excellence, subtlety and uniqueness (Fig. 12).

*Pigua Quan* also concentrates on combinations of movements which are complementary to one another and is known for its slowness in pitching stances but its

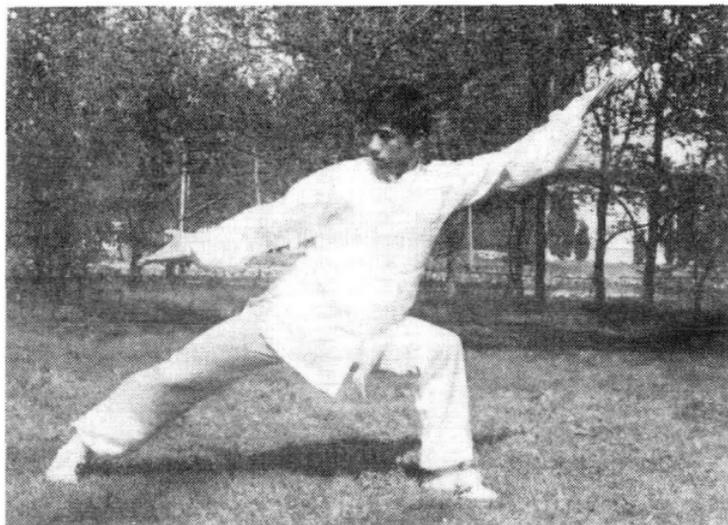


Fig. 12: *Pigua Quan*.

swiftness in delivering fist blows and its subtle use of tricks. The execution of moves and tricks involves tumbling, strangleholding, axing, hitching, chopping, unhitching, scissoring, picking, brushing, discarding, stretching, withdrawing, probing, feeling, flicking, hammering and beating.

The features of the axe-hitch boxing include abrupt starts and stops, powerful axing and hitching, straightening arms, holding arms and connecting wrists, twisting waist and hips, restraining chest and protruding back, standing high and creeping low, closing knees and clawing feet to the ground, lowering shoulders and breathing deep, as well as continuity of movements. Different styles of axe-hitch boxing, however, have different stresses in execution.

## 9. *Baji Quan* (Eight Extremes Boxing)

*Baji Quan* or the eight extremes boxing is also known as the open-door eight extremes boxing, which is one of the traditional Chinese boxing schools. *Baji Quan* is known for its force-fullness, simplicity and combative techniques. According to Wushu proverbs: "For ministers, *Taiji Quan* is used to run the country and for generals, *Baji Quan* is used for defending the country." From this it can be seen that *Baji Quan* holds a significant position among various Chinese boxing school. The Meng Village of Cangzhou in Hebei Province is the birthplace of the Eight Extremes and while it is mainly practised in north China, it is also found in some places in the south. The Wu-style eight extremes boxing is said to have a history of more than 260 years. It was passed on from a traveling senior monk to Wu Zhong of the Meng Village. The book of *Secrets of the Eight Extremes Boxing*, therefore, proclaims that the Monk was the creator of the eight extremes boxing and Wu Zhong was the first successor. Because of his excellence at spear play, Wu Zhong was known as Spear God Wu, the number one spear fighter from Nanjing to Beijing.

The eight extremes boxing is simple and plain. It consists of short and yet menacing moves which are forceful, powerful and abrupt and demands hard play in both attack and defence. Elbows are often used in straightforward ways. The explosive powers generated are stimulated through breathing which is articulated by two sounds of "Heng" and "Ha." Powerful blows are delivered from elbows and shoulders in close combat against the opponent (Fig. 13).



Fig. 13: *Baji Quan*.

## 10. *Liuhe Quan* (Six-combinations Boxing)

*Liuhe Quan* or the six-combination boxing is combat orientated. It is believed to be a derivative of *Shaolin Quan* and to have been passed on from an old boxer named Cao who lived at Botou in Hebei Province during Emperor Daoguang's reign in the Qing Dynasty (1821-1850). This style of boxing was handed on from Cao to Li Guanming; from Li to Wang Dianliang, Tong Zhongyi and Li Shuting. Tong Zhongyi, known as one of the twin heroes in Cangzhou, opened a club in Shanghai to disseminate it further.

*Liuhe Quan* features strong, yet graceful stances. Its moves look comfortable, compact and vigorous. They are powerful with a clear-cut difference between sub-



Fig. 14: *Liuhe Quan*.

stantial and empty moves. The moves of six-combinations boxing imitate those of the dragon, tiger, crane, rabbit and monkey, and boxers rove in accordance with the Chinese eight diagrams. Resourcefulness and dexterity are demanded in executing the moves of evading, extending, jumping and moving either fast or slow, heavily or lightly (Fig. 14).

## 11. *Hua Quan* (China-style Boxing)

*Hua Quan* or the China-style boxing originated in Jining of Shandong Province (ancient Rencheng). It is said that during the Kaiyuan reign of the Tang Dynasty (713-741), a Mount Hua knight named Cai Mao killed his enemy of a noble family of Chang'an, and went to hide in Rencheng. Cai Mao was excellent at combat and

sword play. About 400 years later Cai's offspring, Cai Tai and Cai Gang, were also proficient at combat and were often chosen to compete in prefectural and national Wushu contests. They developed their style into the present-day *Hua Quan*. Cai Wanzhi of Jining, during the Jiaqing reign of the Ming Dynasty (1522-1566), put the finishing touch to *Hua Quan* by writing a book *The Secrets of Hua Quan*. He based his book on the traditional philosophy of combining spirit, breath and ego.

Cai Guiqin, grandson of one of the few remaining martial artists of Caixing, a village in Jining, was born in the third year in the reign of Emperor Guangxu of the Qing Dynasty (1877) and was fond of Wushu as a little boy. He learned martial arts from his grandfather and after his death, was forced by poverty to move away from Caixing to a district outside the southern gate of the city wall of Jining. Thanks to this migration, Cai Guiqin met with Ding Yushan, a well-known expert in Shandong Province for his mastery of *Hua Quan*. Cai studied with Ding for three years and later became a contemporary *Hua Quan* master during the late Qing Dynasty.

In the 23rd year of the reign of Emperor Guangxu of the Qing Dynasty (1897), Cai Guiqin traveled alone in south China. Eventually he met and discussed martial arts with Qiu Jin, a woman revolutionary from Shaoxing in Zhejiang Province, in Shanghai in 1906. In the ninth year of the Republic (1920), Cai Guiqin met with Dr. Sun Yat-sen before going to teach Wushu to government officials in the headquarters of the Republic in Guangzhou. After the death of Sun, Cai went on traveling before settling in Shanghai for the rest of his life. *Hua Quan* was spread as he traveled through Hubei, Jiangxi,



Fig. 15: *Hua Quan*.

Hunan and Henan provinces.

*Hua Quan* is characterized by its flawless, well connected movements, lightening-like speed and rock-still stances. Boxers breathe deeply to spread air flows throughout the body and body movements are a result of mental activity (Fig. 15).

## **12. *Sanhuang Paochui* (Three-emperor Cannon Boxing)**

*Sanhuang Paochui* or the three-emperor cannon boxing is also known as the cannon boxing. It is said to have originated from the three legendary emperors of Fuxi, Shennong and Gonggong in prehistoric China. Others believe them to have been the heaven, earth, and human emperors. Both beliefs are intended to describe

the long history of the cannon boxing, which is popular in Beijing, Hebei, Shanxi, Shandong, Liaoning, Henan and Jilin. This style of boxing owes its name to its rapid and powerful fist blows which are likened to firing cannon balls.

According to ancient chronicles, at the turn of the Ming and Qing dynasties, Monk Puzhao toured Mount Emei in Sichuan Province, where he met a Daoist priest from whom he learned the boxing. After mastering the art, Monk Puzhao taught it to Qiao Sanxiu and Gan Fengchi during Qing emperors Kangxi and Yongzheng's reigns (1622-1735). He taught Qiao to temper suppleness through hardness, with suppleness as the core and hardness as the outward application. In contrast, he taught Gan to temper hardness through suppleness, with hardness as the core and suppleness as the outward application. The Gan-style focuses on maintaining health. The two styles gained their respective followers. During the reign of Emperor Qianlong (1736-1795), Qiao Sanxiu passed his boxing on to Qiao Heling whereas the disciples of the Gan Fengchi-style are unknown. Decades later Qiao Heling passed the three-emperor cannon boxing onto Song Mailun and Yu Liandeng. Yu stuck to the original style of boxing while Song combined it with more than a dozen other schools of boxing to form different routines and was later known for his invention of three-hand holds. Eventually, people designated the gun boxing as the Song-style and Yu-style three-emperor cannon boxing while others further divided the cannon boxing into Yu's fists and Song's hands.

*Sanhuang Paochui* is based on the theories of the positive and negative, hard and supple, substantial and

insubstantial, attack and defence, as well as advance and retreat. Cross-hand fist blows are the foundation of the skills and rounded squatting stance is the basic stance. The three-emperor cannon boxing requires organic combination of eye, hand and body movements, footwork, spirit, mind, breathing and generation of force. It pays attention to the close blending of mentality, breathing and movements. While practising *Paochui*, practitioners should maintain a still mind and concentration. When building up power, it is like pulling a bow and when releasing power, it is like discharging an arrow (Fig. 16).

Cannon boxing uses suppleness as its core and hardness as its application and requires its boxers to be consistent in both attack and defence. According to cannon boxing theoreticians, attack is defence and ad-

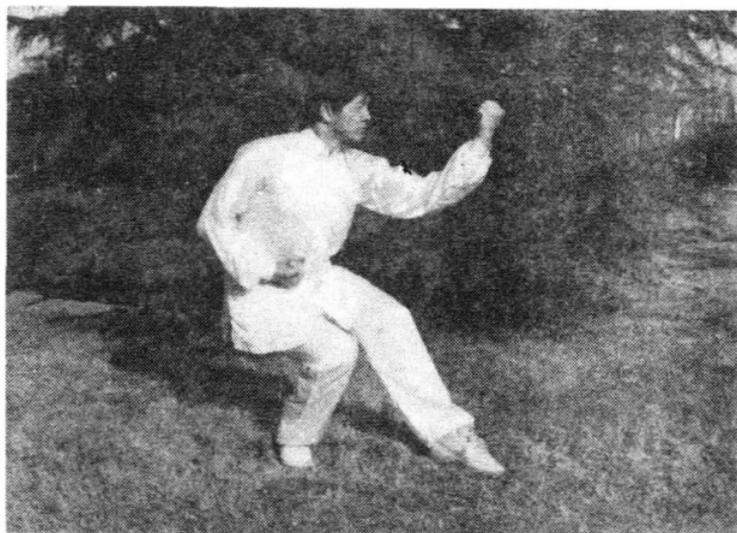


Fig. 16: *Sanhuang Paochui*.

vance is retreat, and vice versa while the positive and negative supplement each other.

### 13. *Nan Quan* (Southern-style Boxing)

*Nan Quan* or the southern-style boxing is widely practised in south China. It evolved during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), and has many different styles. Among the famous are the five major styles: the Hong-family, Cai-family, Liu-family, Li-family, and Mo-family boxing. Dozens of other less-known ones include the five-ancestor boxing and black tiger boxing.

*Nan Quan* emphasizes squatting stances with a low center of gravity and steady footwork. Its fist blows are forceful. It is characterized by combinations of short moves with few jumps. Power is generated through breathing and sound articulation. Because southern-

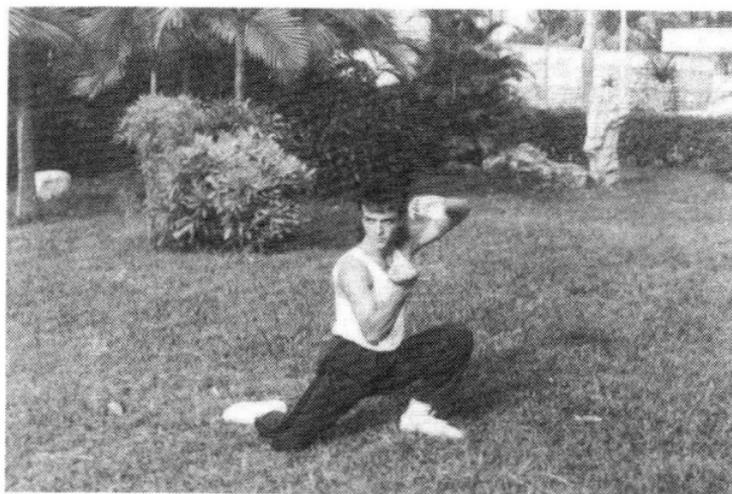


Fig. 17: *Nan Quan*.

style boxers keep their elbows and arms stiff and strong, their movements are alive with combating tricks (Fig. 17).

Thanks to its forcefulness and strength, *Nan Quan* has been a hit with youth and it is now one of the major events in Wushu competitions.

## 14. *Tongbei Quan* (Back-through Boxing)

*Tongbei Quan* or back-through boxing, also called *Tongbi Quan* or arm-through boxing, is one of the schools popular in north China. Due to its long history, it boasts of various names in different places, such as the Wuxing (five elements—metal, wood, water, fire and earth), six-combinations, five-monkey, axe-hitch and the Shaolin. Although there are different names, the different styles of *Tongbei Quan* are all based on the same boxing theory and have the same origin. The major schools and styles of *Tongbei Quan* are as follows:

1. In 1937 Wu Tianxu wrote in his book *Tongbei Quanshu* that this school of boxing had been called the back-through which was later changed to the white ape school and long-armed ape school. Qing Dynasty practitioners called it the traveling, traveling boxing or *Chang Quan* (long-range boxing).

2. Some say that *Tongbei Quan* was created in the period of the Five Dynasties (907-960) or in the Song Dynasty (960-1279). One theory is that it was created by Han Tong, recorded in some boxing literature as one of the 18 boxing masters of the ancient times. Another proposition says that it was created by Chen Tuan in the early Song Dynasty and in the middle of the Qing

Dynasty Lu Yunqing taught it to Qi Taichang. In his book *Wushu Theory*, Xu Yusheng wrote that Chen Tuan, also called Chen Tu'nan, lived in seclusion in Mount Hua during the Five Dynasties. He could sleep for 100 days without getting up. Emperor Taizong of the Song Dynasty conferred a designation of Dr Xiyi on him. Chen was said to have created 12 sitting exercises.

3. Huang Zongxi, a well-known scholar of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), wrote in his *Essay of Southern Thunderbolts*, that *Tongbei Quan* was the best among all boxing schools. Later, Huang Baijia in his biography of Dr Wang Zhengnan said that *Tongbei Quan* is *Chang Quan* or long-range boxing. The arm-through boxing can thus be said to have been popular in the Ming Dynasty.

4. According to the boxing chronicles by Xiu Jianchi (1931), Qi Xin of Zhejiang went to teach the back-through boxing at Gu'an in Hebei Province in the middle and latter half of the Qing Dynasty. His style was then called Qi-style boxing which was later named as *Tongbei* or back-through boxing. Qi's son, Qi Taichang improved and developed the boxing techniques. People then divided *Tongbei Quan* into an old style (represented by father) and a new one (represented by son). The old style emphasizes simplicity and power whereas the new style concentrates on exquisiteness and suppleness. Many masters emerged in this school later. *Tongbei Quan* now in practice is generally divided into two styles. One has been passed down from Qi Xin, the father and the other from Qi Taichang, the son. Xiu Jianchi, a successor to the new style, combined the best elements of his predecessors and left his theoretical summaries on stances, methods and philosophy of the

boxing to his followers, Xiu's writings are precious materials for the study and research of *Tongbei Quan*.

Originally *Tongbei* did not refer to a school of boxing but to a way of exercise. "Tong" (through) means to pass through and reach, "Bei" (back) means the human back. When the exercises are done, power is generated from the back to pass through the shoulders and then reach the arms. In this way, heavy blows can be delivered at the arm's length to control the opponent. *Tongbei Quan* emphasizes the combination of inner core and outward application. It takes the five elements as its core and back-through as its application. Back-through boxing takes the five elements of traditional Chinese philosophy as its basic theory. This philosophy holds that the heaven is a big world while the human being is a small one. The five elements of the heaven are metal, wood, water, fire and earth while those of the human being the heart, liver, spleen, lung and kidney. The five elements of boxing are wrestling, batting, piercing, axing and boring. The Chinese boxing philosophy believes that everything in the world finds its roots in the five elements while all boxing schools are also based on its five elements. The following table demonstrates the interrelations among the five elements of the heaven and those of the human being and boxing:

Lung—metal—wrestling—exploding—lightening  
Liver—wood—batting—pushing—fog  
Kidney—water—piercing—hammering—star  
Heart—fire—axing—hitting—thunder bolt  
Spleen—earth—boring—tossing—arrow

Back-through boxing is characterized by movements based on birds and animals—monkeys, eagles,

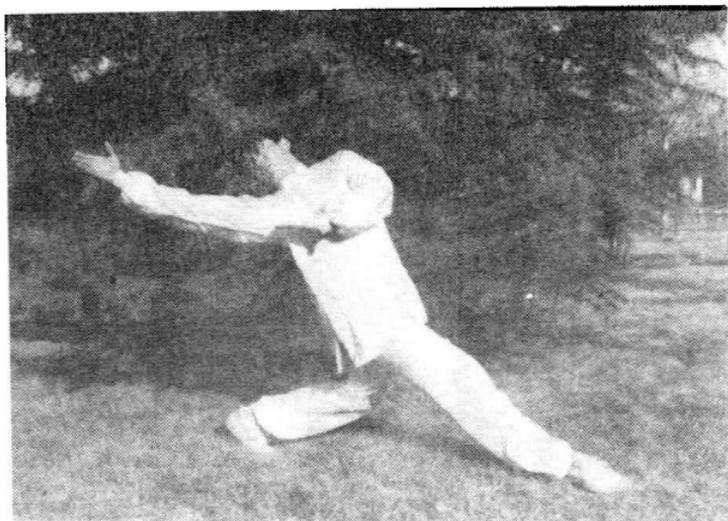


Fig. 18: *Tongbei Quan*.

cranes and cats (Fig. 18).

## **15. *Xiangxing Quan* (Animal-imitating Boxing)**

This school of boxing imitates the forms and movements of animals with the stress on the hitting features of their movements and actions. These are then developed into fist plays by combining the offensive and defensive skills of the martial arts. Such animal-imitating boxing styles include monkey boxing, mantis boxing and eagle claw boxing. The movements look like a dragon flying, a tiger jumping, a clever monkey clattering, an eagle soaring, a crane standing, a snake roving, a duck waddling, a dog leaping, a rooster pecking and

a mantis wielding its forelimbs. Animal-imitating boxing has a long history. *The Book of History* compiled before Christ records dances that imitate the movements of 100 animals. The ancient book of *Huainanzi* also recorded the exercises of ducks bathing, monkey looking for food, hawks roving and tigers watching. The six-animal exercise of the Han Dynasty and Doctor Hua Tuo's five-animal exercise as well as Ge Hong's animal-imitating exercises are all indispensable to the creation of the animal-imitating boxing. Ge's animal-imitating exercises included movements of dragon flying, tiger walking, bear strolling, turtle swallowing, oriole flying, snake coiling, bird spreading wings, monkey squatting, and rabbit being startled.

Tricks in the animal-imitating boxing, and animal-imitating moves in other boxing styles are numerous. In the Shaolin boxing there are five animal-imitating routines—dragon, tiger, leopard, snake and crane. Fiery dragon boxing is featured in the Emei boxing school while crane, dog and tiger-crane movements are incorporated in the southern-style boxing.

In *Taiji Quan* there are white crane spreading wings, wild horse dividing mane, golden roosters standing on one foot and white snake hissing and protruding the tongue. The eight-diagram palm play has such animal imitations as hawk soaring, monkey picking fruit, swallow skimming the water surface, eagle spreading wings and lion opening mouth. The back-through boxing has lone swallow leaving a hoard, monkey jumping out of a cave and swallow piercing through clouds.

The animal-imitating boxing does not merely confine itself to the imitation of animal movements. The movements are frequently a refinement of the animal's.

For instance a real mantis cannot wield its claws as rapidly as an animal-imitating boxer wields his fists.

Those animal-imitating boxing routines now in fashion are more concerned with the successful execution of imitations and adding difficult turns and twists. An excellent routine of the animal-imitating boxing is one which combines true-to-life imitation and the attack and defence skills of the martial arts.

## 16. *Chuojiao* (Feet Poking Boxing)

*Chuojiao* or feet poking is one of the oldest boxing styles practised in north China. It is known for its range of feet and leg plays. Most of the boxing styles of the north feature these, so their style is called "Northern Feet." Boxing proverbs about this school say: "Fist plays

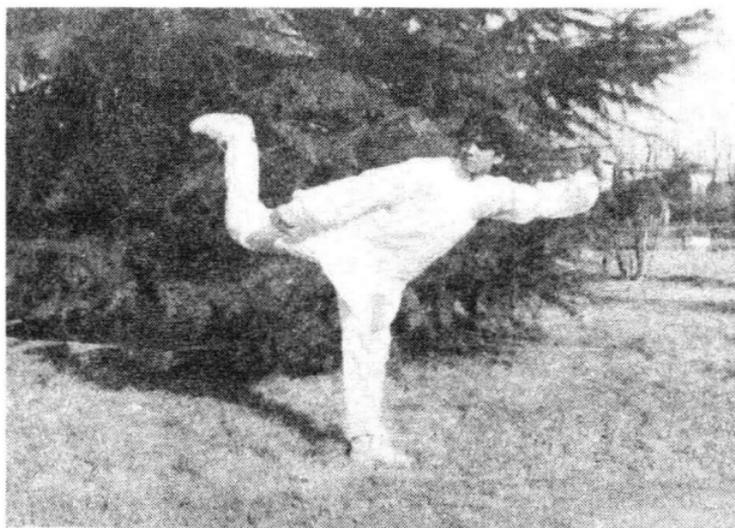


Fig. 19: *Chuojiao*.

account for 30 percent whereas feet plays for 70 percent"; "The hands are used as doors for protection but it is always the feet used for attack." (Fig. 19).

*Chuojiao* originated in the Song Dynasty (960-1279) and became popular during the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1911). It is said that Deng Liang created the boxing on the basis of the 18 basic feet plays. He developed the basics according to calculations of the Chinese abacus to form a chain of feet plays incorporating 108 tricks. It was passed on to Zhou Tong who taught Song Dynasty General Yue Fei who became revered as the founder of the school. As some of the outlaws described in the classic novel *Outlaws of the Marsh* were specialists in feet poking, it has been known as the water margin outlaw school of boxing.

Shi Dakai, one of the leaders of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (1851-1864) in the Qing Dynasty, is known for his scholastic and martial arts abilities. He taught the jade ring and mandarin ducks tricks as his consummate skills to his selected soldiers in training. In Volume 20 of the *Unofficial History of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom*, it recounts how Shi's soldiers fought Qing Dynasty troops. They stood in front of the enemy line with their eyes covered by their hands, and then jumped back about 100 steps. When the enemy came close, they used both feet to kick the enemy soldiers in the abdomen or groin. If the enemy soldiers were stronger, they doubled their kicks and turned their rings simultaneously to defeat their enemy. These selected soldiers were called the braves of Shi and won many battles against the Qing army.

Zhao Canyi, a general in the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, was also good at *Chuojiao*. After the northern

expedition of the Taiping army failed to take the city of Tianjin, Zhao Canyi lived in seclusion at Raoyang in Hebei, where he taught the feet poking boxing to Duan Yongqing and Duan Yonghe and the Yan Qing tumbling boxing to Wang Laozi and Wang Zhan'ao. The Duan's and the Wang's often taught each other while practising their own styles of boxing. As a result, their followers mastered both *Chuojiao* and *Fanzi Quan*. At the end of the Qing Dynasty, *Chuojiao* was spread to Shenyang in northeast China.

The northeast China style of *Chuojiao* falls into two categories—martial and scholarly routines. The Beijing *Chuojiao* does not have any such division. It is called *Chuojiao Fanzi*, which is short for *Chuojiao* (feet poking boxing) and *Fanzi Quan* (tumbling boxing). There is still another style which combines the martial and scholarly routines.

The martial routine was the origin of *Chuojiao* (feet poking boxing). The martial routine in Shenyang later became known as the Hao-style *Chuojiao*, namely feet poking boxing named after Hao Mingjiu. It features powerful but comfortable moves and its blows are accurate and incorporate a variety of subtle feet tricks. Hands and feet cooperate well for better advantage and longer reach. Its strikes are short but fatal. Hardness is the core of *Chuojiao* which it combines with suppleness. Its routine consists of nine inter-connected twin feet routines. These routines can be practised either one by one, or linked together. The feet plays call for close cooperation between the feet which is why it is called twin feet play. Another feet poking boxing is called nine-tumble 18-fall boxing.

The scholarly routine is a derivative from the mar-

tial routine. It is said that during the reign of Emperor Guangxu (1875-1908) of the Qing Dynasty, boxer Hu Fengsan of Shenyang learned of the fame of *Chuojiao* masters, the Duans in Hebei Province, and traveled 500 kilometers to study with him. After years of hard work, Hu came to understand the secrets of *Chuojiao* and went back to his native town, where he further developed the art into the scholarly routine, known later as the Hu-style *Chuojiao*. It is characterized by its exquisite and compact stances and clear-cut, accurate and varied movements. It is also very fast in delivering both fist and feet blows. The scholarly style features such routines as 12-move boxing, 18-move boxing, flying swallow boxing (small flying swallow boxing), arm boxing, turning-ring boxing, jade-ring boxing, six-method boxing, two-eight boxing, two-eight feet plays, 16-move boxing, 24-move boxing, 32-move boxing, soft tumbling boxing, one-legged 80-move feet plays, one-handed 81-move fist plays, etc.

The martial-scholar tumbling boxing has combined the strengths of the martial and scholar routines, especially the combative techniques. It is arranged according to the rhythms of offence and defence of the martial arts and combines high-low, release-catch, extension-flexion and straight-rounded movements. Its tricks, combinations of motions, still exercises, hardness, suppleness, substantial and insubstantial moves are well planned and accurate. New tricks include ground skill feet poking, feet poking tumbles, Shaolin feet poking, leg flicking feet poking, free-mind feet poking, eight-diagram feet poking, etc. All these have their own styles, forms, rhythms and techniques.

## 17. *Tantui* (Leg Flicking Boxing)

*Tantui* or leg flicking boxing is also called pond legs. It has 10 routines and was therefore called 10-routine pond legs. When Shaolin monks added two more routines, it became the 12-routine pond legs. As many Moslems in China practise the boxing, it is also called religious leg flicking boxing.

*Tantui* concentrates on feet plays with fist plays as support. Its movements are not complicated but complete and executed flawlessly. A symmetry is maintained by placing the feet one by one taking wide steps while keeping the body in a crouched position (Fig. 20).

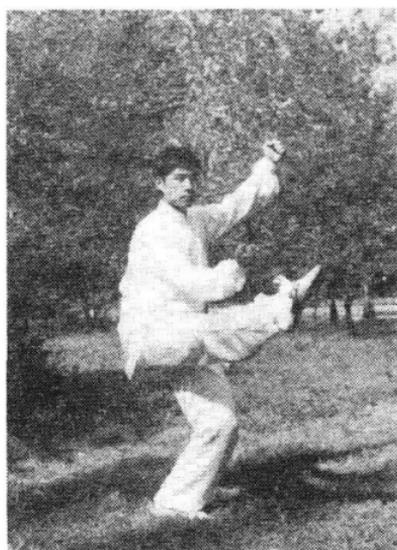


Fig. 20: The leg flicking boxing.

## 18. *Hong Quan* (Hong-clan Boxing)

The Hong clan, named after Hongwu, the title of the reign of the first Emperor of the Ming Dynasty, was one of the secret associations in the Qing Dynasty. It is believed to have been set up in the 13th year of Emperor Kangxi's reign (1674).

Hong-clan boxers practised their own style of boxing, which has been passed on to the people for about 300 years. During this time it exerted great influence on the people and many branch styles developed, such as the *Hong Quan* of Guangdong Province and the *Hong Quan* of Hubei Province.

Most of the routines of the Hubei *Hong Quan* are hand plays, such as the general hand plays, defensive hand plays, Jingang (Buddha's warrior attendant) hand plays, etc. Influenced by the Wudang-style boxing, one of the famous schools in China, the Hubei Hong boxing also includes newly developed routines called Jiugongshou, nine-palace hand plays and Laojuntang, the Hall for Laozi, founder of Taoism. Two-way spear holding plays are the main methods to deal with the Hubei *Hong Quan*, which emphasizes both attack and defence.

The Guangdong *Hong Quan* is a routine of animal imitating movements of the dragon, snake, tiger, leopard, crane, lion, elephant, horse, monkey and small-sized wild beasts.

The *Hong Quan*, which places an emphasis on stances, is powerful and mighty. The Guangdong style concentrates on interim actions and turns on the ground to ward off the attack from the opponent. The Hubei style focuses on generating power when delivering feet and fist blows. It demands hard blows and



Fig. 21: The Hong-style boxing.

straightforwardness (Fig. 21).

## **19. Yuejia Quan (Yue-family Boxing)**

There are many styles of boxing named after General Yue Fei of the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279). These include Yue-family boxing of Hubei, Henan and Anhui provinces, Yue-school fist plays of Hunan and Sichuan provinces, Yue-family martial arts of Guangdong Province, Yue Fei *Sanshou* and Yue-style chain of fist plays. These different boxing styles have been influenced by local culture and practices as well as individual styles. Although it has combined the old and new boxing theories and practices, the Yue-family boxing is based primarily upon the principles of combining inner and outer bodies, theory and application. Its various

tricks stem from its principal philosophy of the positive and negative and the five elements of the heart, liver, lung, spleen and kidney in the human body.

Investigation has found that the Yue-family boxing practised in Huangmei County of Hubei Province is simple and uncomplicated and has a close relationship with the Yue family. It is believed to have been created by General Yue Fei and passed down by his sons, Yue Zhen and Yue Ting, and his subordinates. They taught the arts of Yue-family boxing in Huangmei, Guangji, Qichun in Hubei as well as the southeastern part of the province. This style of boxing has been practised by 20 generations over about 800 years. It is recorded that General Yue Fei had been to Huangmei twice, and Yue Zhen accompanied his father and stayed in Huangmei. After Yue Fei was framed and secretly killed by treacherous officials of the Imperial Court, Yue Ting went to join Yue Zhen in Huangmei. The Yue's practised the boxing and trained their army men in an attempt to avenge their father's death until the Song Dynasty perished. However, the Yue-family boxing was passed down from generation to generation.

The Yue-family boxing now practised in Henan Province is said to have been passed on by a person named Fan from Tangyin in Henan, who followed Yue Fei in his expedition against invaders from the Jin Dynasty in the north. When Fan returned to his native town, he taught the Yue-family boxing and weapon plays to his offspring, including Fan Ju who mastered the arts and continued to pass them down.

In Anhui, the Yue-family boxing is called King Yue boxing. Fang Yinglong, a native of Shandong Province, learned the basics from his grandfather and then fol-

lowed Ji Qingshe to learn the Yue-style hammer play. Fang served as a martial arts instructor in the army of warlord, Feng Yuxiang. Before the establishment of the People's Republic of China, he went to Bengbu to teach the Yue-style hammer boxing. Some of Fang's disciples were also found in Guangxi.

There are two theories about the evolution of the Yue-family boxing in Sichuan Province. One is that Zhang Tianhu of Hebei taught the Yue-family boxing in Sichuan in the middle of the Qing Dynasty while Tao Rujie of Shuangliu County taught the arts in Chengdu and other places. The other says that Wu Daoren of Hubei Province passed it on to Sichuan in the late years of the Qing Dynasty.

In Emperor Daoguang's reign (1821-1850) of the Qing Dynasty, martial arts instructor Liu Shijun of Hebei taught a nine-move Yue-style fist play in the barracks of Beijing garrison. His disciple Liu Dekuan developed the style to make it an easy-to-learn, well-linked style of unarmed play. Thus it is called Yue-style linked boxing.

According to the remnants of the manuscripts of *Yue-Family Boxing* by Huang Chunlou, this style of boxing was spread to Guangdong Province when Huang taught it in Meixian County in the late years of the Qing Dynasty. Because most local people referred to it as "discipline," this style of the Yue-family boxing came to be called the Yue-family discipline.

The Yue-family boxing features simplicity and steadiness. Its tricks are clear and clear-cut. When delivering blows, boxers articulate sounds to help generate power. This style of boxing combines breathing and mentality to make fist blows powerful and complete. It resorts more to fist plays than to feet plays and does not



Fig. 22: The Yue-family boxing.

lift the knees, nor does it wield elbows away from the body (Fig. 22).

The Henan-style Yue-family boxing requires low stances and closed knees. When generation power, boxers jerk elbows and turn shoulder to pass energy to the fists.

## **20. *Zui Quan* (Drunkard Boxing)**

In *Zui Quan* or the drunkard boxing boxers' falter, waddle, fall and sway just like drunkards.

*Zui Quan* can be used for both fighting and maintaining health (Fig. 23). However, the drunkard boxers go out of their way to stress the combative side of their style. They blend a series of movements, actions and skills of the martial arts and try to confuse their op-

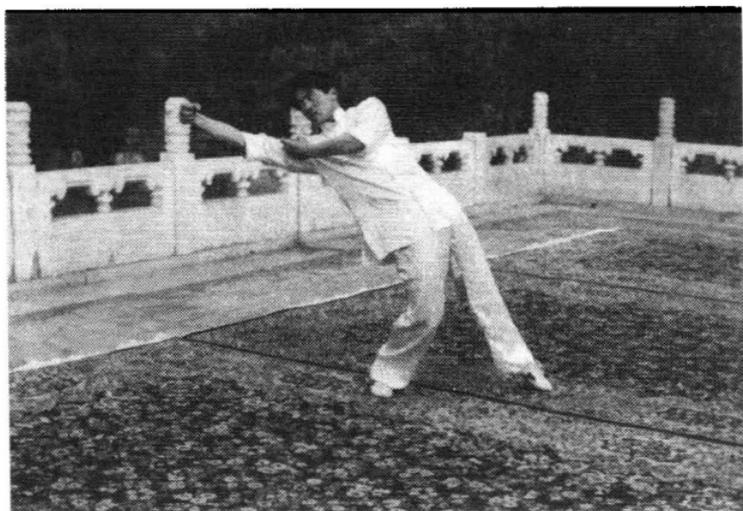


Fig. 23: The drunkard boxing

ponents with special skills which often lead them to surprise triumphs.

Execution of the drunkard boxing demands extreme flexibility of the joints as well as suppleness, dexterity, power and coordination all of which can be developed in the course of practice.

The main feature of the drunkard boxing is to hide combative hits in drunkard-like, unsteady movements and actions so as to confuse the opponent. The secret of this style of boxing is maintaining a clear mind while giving a drunken appearance.

Drunkard boxers are required to be responsive with good eyesight and fist plays. They move in unconnected steps but with a flexible body combining hardness and suppleness. They have to be fast to get the better of their opponents but their main tactic is to feign defence while trying to attack and aiming in one direction but attack-

ing in another. Various degrees of drunkenness are demonstrated by different ranges of movements and expressions in the eye.

## **21. *Yingzhao Quan* (Eagle Claw Boxing)**

*Yingzhao Quan* or the eagle claw boxing is a traditional animal-imitating style of fist play that incorporates the movements, tricks and methods of the eagle. It is a mixture of the Yue-style boxing and the school of tumbling boxing. It is also called *Yingzhao Fanzi Quan* (eagle claw tumbling boxing). Because boxers form their hands into the shape of an eagle's claw, their style came to be called *Yingzhao Quan*.

The traditional routines of the eagle claw boxing are said to have been created by Song Dynasty General Yue Fei. Li Quan, a monk of the Ming Dynasty, mastered the essentials of the Yue-style boxing before combining the eagle claw and tumble boxing to form the eagle claw tumbling boxing. Li taught the style to Monk Fa Cheng who later passed it on to Liu Shijun of Xiongqian County in Hebei Province.

Liu Shijun, born in a poor family, used to sell flue-cured tobacco for a living but he was deeply fond of martial arts. One day, when out selling tobacco till late, he stayed at a small inn. As he practised his martial arts by himself, Monk Fa Cheng who happened to be staying at the same inn, was woken up by the sounds of Liu's movements and actions. After he completed his exercises, the monk told Liu that his routines were good for maintaining health but not for fighting enemies. Liu, annoyed by the monk's remarks, asked Fa Cheng to

fight with him. The two fought a practice bout. Eager to win, Liu unleashed three attacks in a row but all were easily warded off by the monk. As he launched his fourth attack Monk Fa Cheng used the eagle claw trick to catch Liu's wrist. Although he tried all he could, Liu could not shake off the monk's hand. Fa Cheng then touched an acupoint on Liu's back and Liu felt sourness and numbness spread throughout his body and fell to the ground. Realizing the monk was excellent at martial arts, Liu begged the monk to teach him. He followed Fa Cheng and learnt the eagle claw boxing and its secrets. Three years later Liu left his master to travel alone and spent the rest of his life studying the art of fist plays and teaching youngsters. Liu Shijun served as martial arts instructor at the barracks of imperial guards in Beijing during the Qing Dynasty and taught the eagle claw boxing to Liu Dekuan, Ji San, Ji Si and nephew Liu Chengyou. Liu Chengyou passed it on to his sister's grandson Chen Zizheng who went to teach the art in northeast China, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

The eagle claw boxing features simple but powerful moves. When moving, the boxer attacks relentlessly and looks formidable, but when standing still, he looks like an eagle awaiting the chance to pounce on rabbits. The northern-style eagle claw boxing features comfortably spared movements which are aesthetically pleasing while the southern-style features delicate but spectacular acrobatic tricks (Fig. 24).

There are many branches of eagle claw boxing, including the eagle claw fist play which imitates all the movements of an eagle, the eagle boxing which stresses both the claw, and the flapping and fanning of wings, and the rock eagle boxing which imitates the eagle



Fig. 24: The eagle claw boxing.

flying up and down a rock cliff.

The eagle claw boxing is spectacular with boxers jumping high one minute and walking in a low position like an eagle diving into the woods for prey the next. Sometimes they run as fast as a shooting arrow while at others they stand steadily like an age-old pine tree. They demonstrate to the full, the bravery and flexibility of an eagle.

## **22. *Tanglang Quan* (Mantis Boxing)**

*Tanglang Quan* or the mantis boxing is also an animal-imitating style of fist play. It copies the form and actions of a mantis adding the attack and defence skills of the martial arts. This unique style of boxing boasts an assortment of routines which generally fall into the

northern and southern styles.

The northern-style mantis boxing is said to have been created by Wang Lang of Jimo County in Shandong Province at the turn of the Ming and Qing dynasties. Legend has it that Wang was fond of martial arts and went to study Wushu at the Shaolin Temple in Henan Province. After the temple was burnt down by the imperial army, Wang Lang returned to Jimo where, because of his shorter stature, he was beaten again and again by his senior fellow apprentice.

Wang resolved to practise hard for three years but, much to his dismay he lost the duel again. One day in the forest, he saw a mantis wielding its forelegs while fighting a big cicada in a tree. Before long, the mantis killed the cicada. Wang found that the mantis had a good rhythm in attack and defence and controlled its catch and release well. It fought both from distance and close-up with hard and soft blows characteristic of martial combats. He captured a number of mantis and took them home. Watching them closely while they fought, Wang Lang compiled a mantis boxing by adding the essentials of the Shaolin boxing to the actions of the mantis, even including the expression of the mantis. There are two other propositions about the origin of the mantis boxing. One holds that Wang Lang created it while fighting the long-style boxers of the school created by the first emperor of the Song Dynasty; the other believes that between his fights with back-through boxer Han Tong, Wang saw a mantis capture a cicada and fight a snake and so created the mantis boxing.

The mantis boxing has many routines and branches. The major five schools are as follows:

1. Seven-star mantis boxing, which is also called

Arhat mantis, features seven-star steps, hard-hitting, and vigorous movements. It tends more towards hardness than suppleness and its stances are comfortably spread and extended. The basics of this school include waist technique, leg technique, shoulder technique as well as standing skills and hitting skills.

2. Plum blossom mantis boxing, also called *Taiji* plum blossom mantis boxing, uses small steps and its movements are continuous, deft and smart, like blossoming plums. It is almost an exact copy of the mantis. This style of boxing demands clear-cut rhythms in unleashing the tricks and emphasizes a smooth, deft and supple generation of power. It uses more sideway than straightforward force.

3. Six-combination mantis boxing, also known as monkey mantis boxing, stresses the inner and outer, three combinations which make six combinations. It uses mind to guide the movements of the body and pays equal attention to both the mental and physical. It uses hidden, rather than obvious hardness and resorts more to inner forces.

4. Hand-wringing mantis boxing is also called plum blossom hand-wringing mantis boxing. It comes from the plum blossom mantis boxing but because it uses hand wringing tricks in its routines, it came to be called hand-wringing mantis boxing. When delivering blows, the hands are in the shape of palm; when retreating, they are in the form of hooks.

5. Twin mantis boxing. This style of boxing also comes from the plum blossom mantis boxing. Its movements have a delicate symmetry and thus it is called twin mantis boxing.

The mantis boxing features force, power, dexterity,



Fig. 25: The mantis boxing.

speed, a combination of hardness and suppleness, of substantial and insubstantial tricks and blows and of attack and defence. It necessitates a good command of catch and release and a variation of actions. Mantis boxers will attack if provoked; they will not attack if untouched by opponents; they deliver fist blows in quick succession when offended. These characteristics of the mantis boxing are well known among Chinese martial artists (Fig. 25).

A common feature of various styles of the mantis boxing is that their actions are accurate and performed in earnest. Mantis boxers move lightly, yet powerfully and their attacks are very strong with tricks that are delicately connected. The mantis boxing stresses eyesight, hand play, footwork and body movements as well as speed, agility, steadiness and careful choice of moves. Its power generation is strong but not stiff, supple but

not soft, quick but not unconnected nor out of rhythm.

The mantis boxing boasts of many skills and techniques and can beat its opponent with unpredictable changes of tricks and combinations of hardness and suppleness.

### **23. *Ditang Quan* (Ground Tumbling Boxing)**

*Ditang Quan* or the ground tumbling boxing is also called ground skill boxing. It is said to have originated in the Southern Song Dynasty (1129-1279) and was first practised in Shandong Province from where it spread to other parts of the country. After the founding of People's Republic of China, it was included in the martial arts competition programs.

*Ditang Quan* has absorbed the tumbles, falls, turns, somersaults and aerial acrobatics of the drunkard boxing, monkey boxing and other boxing styles, developing into a routine of beautiful and delicate moves and actions. Ground tumbling boxers can jump high and perform extremely difficult tricks.

Attacking blows, hidden in the movements of tumbling, falling, turning and somersaulting are a major feature of this style. Tumbles and falls are used to confuse and mislead the opponent into the trap and to launch attacks. With the upper limbs, they charge, push, rake, rub, hammer, pick and upswing while they use the lower limbs to kick, stamp, swing, flick, hook, hitch, and high kick. Besides jumping, shunning, extending and retreating, ground tumbling boxers also emphasize grabbing, crushing, wrestling, wringing, turning and

coiling.

During execution of the ground tumbling boxing, dangerous moves follow in quick succession creating an exciting spectacle for viewers. At the same time the delicacy, agility and boldness of the movements is aesthetically pleasing.

However, the ground tumbling boxing is not just an artistic display. It is a fist play with attacks and defences ingeniously mixed with difficult, delicate and beautiful actions.

It not only trains people in self-defence skills but it can also keep people fit and exercise their will power. Persistent practice can strengthen the functions of human bones, ligaments, muscles and internal organs, so preparing people to soak up the impact of outside forces and blows. It is an excellent form of health-preserving exercise.

## **24. *He Quan* (Crane Boxing)**

*He Quan* or crane boxing is the general name for five styles of crane-imitating boxing. The five styles are jumping crane boxing, flying crane boxing, crying crane boxing, sleeping crane boxing and eating crane boxing, all of which have a history of some 300 years. The five crane boxings formed their respective styles by the end of the Qing Dynasty. All the five styles are practised in the south of China (Fig. 26).

### **(1) *Zonghe Quan* (Jumping Crane Boxing)**

In the reign of Emperor Tongzhi (1862-1874) of the Qing Dynasty, Fang Shipai, a native in Fuqing County of



Fig. 26: The crane boxing.

Fujian Province, went to learn martial arts at the Tian-zhu Temple on Mount Chashan. After 10 years of hard training he had achieved a great deal. He saw a partridge perching in a tree and the tree shaking when it cried. He realized that it was an articulation of energy. When he saw shrimps jumping out of water and dogs shaking off the water on their bodies after a swim, he realized that it was the force of vibration. Fang Shiwei then tried to combine these forces in his style of boxing to create *Zonghe Quan* (the jumping crane boxing). His main disciples included Lin Qinnan and five brave generals of Fujian—Fang Yonghua, Chen Yihe, Xiao Kongpei, Chen Daotian and Wang Lin. They in turn helped disseminate the jumping crane boxing.

## **(2) *Minghe Quan* (Crying Crane Boxing)**

In the later years of the Qing Dynasty, Lin Shixian,

an expert in the Yongchun white crane boxing, went to teach his martial arts at Fuzhou. He passed it on to Pan Yuba who spread it to others. When it was passed on to shoemaker Xie Chongxiang in Changle, Fujian Province, it had undergone many changes. Xie set up a martial arts club to teach the crying crane boxing.

### **(3) *Suhe Quan* (Sleeping Crane Boxing)**

Lin Chuanwu from Chengmen of Fuzhou went to study this style at the Shimen Temple. Lin studied with Monk Jue Qing for five years and then went back to Fuzhou and set up a club to teach the fist play.

### **(4) *Shihe Quan* (Eating Crane Boxing)**

At the turn of the Qing Dynasty and the Republic, after learning the eating crane boxing, Fang Suiguan from Beiling of Fuzhou passed it on to Ye Shaotao from Changshan of Fuzhou. Ye also followed Zhou Zihe to master the essentials of the eating crane boxing and all its 36 tricks. Ye practised hard for life and taught it to many disciples, making himself the master of the style.

### **(5) *Felhe Quan* (Flying Crane Boxing)**

In the middle of the Qing Dynasty, Zheng Ji, master of the third-generation of disciples of the Yongchun white crane boxing, was fond of the flying crane boxing and learned the essentials from Zheng Li. Zheng Ji was famous in Fuqing and Qingzhou. His style of fist play was passed down to three more generations and is still practised today. In the execution of the jumping crane boxing, boxers are required to rove around in circles with their bodies and arms relaxed. They build the power and energy throughout their body before passing

it to their shivering hands which are held out straight.

The crying crane boxing emphasizes forceful palm plays. The sleeping crane boxing stresses trapping the opponent by pretending to be half sleep and half wake. Its actions are fast and hidden, its hand intensive and powerful, and its footwork steady and sound. It imitates the sharp claws of the crane utilizes the power and force of opponent. The eating crane boxing pays attention to hand tricks of claw, palm, fingertips and hooks. It centers on single-hand attack and three-point, five plum blossom stances which are steady. The flying crane boxing imitates the flight, leap, wing extension, walk and stand of a crane. Its movements are comfortably extended, spread out, and true to life. The upper limbs are more used in the actions and movements which have a great variety of changes to deal with different situations. When the opponent is hard, flying crane boxers play supplely to soak up the hardness; when the opponent is supple, they play hard to penetrate.

## **25. *Yongchun Quan* (Ode to Spring Boxing)**

*Yongchun Quan* or the *Yongchun* boxing is said to have been created by Yan Yongchun of Liancheng County in Fujian Province. It is said that during the reign of Emperor Jiaqing (1796-1820) of the Qing Dynasty, there was a Shaolin boxing master Yan Si in Quanzhou of Fujian. To escape oppression, he left the city to take refuge with his family, and stayed in seclusion at Liancheng. Yan Si had a daughter called Yan Yongchun. She followed her father to practise martial arts since child-

hood and later became a Wushu master herself.

One day, when Yongchun was washing clothes at a riverside, she noticed a white crane fighting a green snake. She watched the fight carefully for a long time and came to understand their fighting rules. Thereafter, she combined the tangling and hissing of the crane and snake with the movements of the white crane boxing and the southern-style *Shaolin* boxing, forming the original *Yongchun* boxing.

After Yan Yongchun married Liang Botao of Jiangxi Province, she taught her boxing to her husband. They set up a Wushu club at Liancheng to teach the art. After the death of their father, Yan Yongchun and her husband traveled in Jiangxi before settling down in Guangdong Province, where they taught the *Yongchun* boxing at Zhaoqing.

In the 20th year (1815) of the reign of Emperor Jiaqing during the Qing Dynasty, martial arts actor Huang Baohua went to perform at Zhaoqing and met Liang Botao. Liang taught Huang the *Yongchun* boxing while Huang taught Liang cudgel plays. They both mastered the arts. In his later years, Huang Baohua passed the martial arts of the *Yongchun* boxing and his cudgel plays to Liang Zan who, after mastering the arts, developed them into the present-day *Yongchun* boxing. Meanwhile, the *Yongchun* boxing became popularized through the efforts of other boxers who combined to improve and develop the art.

The *Yongchun* boxing features: steady stances, generation of forces, three tricks with six forces, fists playing close to one's own body, usage of explosive power, stressing on real combat, focusing on completion of movements, combination of offence and defence by

forcing up or crushing down the fists or feet from the opposing side. This style of boxing emphasizes speed of play, keeping fists and feet close to one's body for better protection, as well as to prepare for attacks and fighting the opponent at close range. When fighting, *Yongchun* boxers contain their chest, arch the back, close their elbows and knees, draw in their ribs, keep their thighs closed to protect the groin. When they use their feet for attack, they must also use their hands in cooperation. When they kick they do not expose their groin and when they deliver fist blows, their hands do not leave the front of their body (Fig. 27).



Fig. 27: The *Yongchun* boxing.

## **26. *Luohan Quan* (Arhat Boxing)**

*Luohan Quan* or the Arhat boxing originated from the Shaolin-style boxing. It has been called the 18-hand tricks of Arhat, which consisted of 18 combating skills

and techniques. Along with its 24 movements in advancing and retreating, the Arhat boxing uses six routines of fist plays, two routines of palm plays, one routine of elbow play, four routines of feet plays and five routines of holding and strangleholding, each of which has its own practical value and health-building effect.

The original *Luohan Quan* was called the 18-form Arhat boxing which was improved and developed through years of practice. It later became the 27-form small Arhat boxing, the 54-form big Arhat boxing and the 108-form Arhat boxing. While practising, Arhat boxers can be as soft as willow twigs, as agile as a smart monkey jumping over a mountain gully, as mighty as a lion, and as powerful as a dragon stirring the sea. According to the practice proverbs of the Arhat boxing, the head of the Arhat boxer is like a wave; hands are like meteorites; the body like a willow twig; footwork is like that of a drunkard; blows are triggered by the mind and power is generated throughout the body. It should be difficult to tell whether one is playing with hardness or suppleness and whether the hits are substantial or empty. Free application of the Arhat boxing skills can be achieved through years of practice and exercise (Fig. 28).

*Luohan Quan* was created by monks in the Shaolin Temple from watching and imitating the different forms and expressions of the different Arhat statues in the temple, and through meditation. They added to these movements the skills of combat. There are quite a few Arhat boxing maestros among the generations of Shaolin monks. The best in the contemporary period was Maestro Miao Xing. Maestro Miao Xing had been



Fig. 28: The Arhat boxing.

called "Gold Arhat." He was a native of Dengfeng in Henan Province and knew the combat skills as well as being fond of literal arts, especially Buddhism. He used to work on his farmland, and chanted Buddhist scriptures and practised martial arts after work. Later he traveled throughout the country and met with many Wushu masters. In this way he mastered the martial arts of different styles of boxing. Several years later, Miao Xing shaved his head to become a monk of the Shaolin Temple but he continued to practise his martial art in his spare-time delving into the skills of combat.

Once he was seen practising his martial art by the abbot of the temple who praised him and taught him the Shaolin style of boxing and cudgel plays. The abbot also taught Miao Xing the Arhat boxing, acupoint touching, joint dislocating, holding and strangleholding, breathing exercises and other Shaolin-style martial arts.

Whenever challengers of the Shaolin martial arts came, the abbot would appoint Miao Xing to meet them and Miao was always the winner, thus earning the respect from among other monks. Eventually Miao was promoted to be the supervisor of the temple and was asked to teach the martial arts to other monks. After the death of the abbot, Miao Xing succeeded him and also served as the chief of the Shaolin martial arts masters. He had some 5,000 monk disciples and 200 laymen disciples. In 1939, Maestro Miao Xing passed away at the age of 58.

The characteristics of the Arhat boxing are plain and simple. It combines simplicity with the beauty of the expressions of the Arhats. It hides its combative skills and blows in the Arhat-like actions. Movements are smoothly comfortable and fully spread out with clear-cut rhythms and the cooperation and coordination of attack and defence are rational. After practising for a long time, the Arhat boxing can strengthen the physique, tone up the body, give one self-defence skills and cure diseases.

## **27. *Yi Quan* (Mentality Boxing)**

*Yi Quan* or the mentality boxing, also called *Dacheng Quan*, was created by Wang Xiangzhai during the reign of Emperor Guangxu (1875-1908) of the Qing Dynasty. Wang (1885-1963) was born in Shenxian County in Hebei Province. From a young age, he followed *Xingyi Quan* master, Guo Yunshen to learn the art. After years of hard practice, Wang mastered the art of *Xingyi Quan*, got its gist, and ventured off the track to create *Yi Quan* by absorbing the suppleness of *Taiji*

*Quan*, and the agility of *Bagua Zhang*.

*Yi Quan* centers on standing stances and uses the mind to guide the movements and actions in order to achieve the coordination and cooperation between the mind, the body and the external world. It stresses the development of energy and potential of the human body. The mentality boxers believe that looseness and tightness form the basic contradiction of the movements of the human body. The physical qualities—power, speed, agility, coordination and endurance—are all conditioned by the looseness and tightness of the muscles. *Yi Quan*, therefore, is intended to solve the question of how to correctly control and use looseness and tightness through practice. When we talk of looseness or tightness, we talk not only of loose or tight muscles but also of a loose or tight mind. The latter is in fact



Fig. 29: The mentality boxing.

more significant. Therefore, this style of boxing came to be called the mentality boxing (*Yi Quan*).

The major features of mentality boxing lie in the fact that it does not have fixed routines and that it stresses mental function. It requires relaxation, concentration and calmness—its movements are like running water, while its standstills are like floating air. It passes explosive forces throughout the body. Mentality boxers do not expose their bodies to the attacks of the opponent during a fight, nor do they display their thoughts. They seldom generate power but when they do they do it completely and thoroughly and often benefit from the force of the opponent (Fig. 29).

## 28. *Hua Quan* (Flower-style Boxing)

*Hua Quan* or the flower-style boxing is a close-range fist play which is said to have been taught by Gan Fengchi of Nanjing in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces during the early Qing Dynasty (1662-1735). The flower-style boxing starts with a gesture whereby the boxer uses his or her right hand to palm the back of the left clenched fist facing outside. The boxer forms the arms into a circle and draws an arc in a clockwise direction in front of the chest. This was said to mean opposing the Qing Dynasty and rehabilitating the preceding Ming Dynasty.

The flower-style boxing has 120 forms of *Sanshou*, 72 holding and strangleholding techniques, 36 leg techniques, 24 stances and 88 falling tricks. It can be viewed as a collection of wrestling and falling methods. A veteran boxer can co-ordinate his up and down, right

and left movements and actions without any trouble. As soon as he touches, the opponent is thrown to the ground. The wrestling and falling methods of the flower boxing can supplement those of the Chinese style of wrestling and can also complement the skills of Chinese hand pushing.

## **29. *Lanshou Men* (Blocking-hand Boxing)**

*Lanshou Men* or the blocking-hand boxing is said to be popular in the areas along both sides of the Yangtze River. At the turn of the Ming and Qing dynasties, Zheng Tianxing of Henan Province went to Tianjin where he stayed at Dawang Temple in Dazhigu. Every day he practised his martial arts in the morning and before long word spread about his skills and young men begged him to take them as his disciples. Better known disciples of *Lanshou Men* included Li Jingang, Yu Dequan and Wang Haishan. When this style of boxing was passed down to the sixth generation of disciples, Liu Changhai and Chen Lianfang further developed the art by adding the cannon boxing to the original *Cao Quan* (exercise boxing), *Lanshou Quan* and *Fanzi Quan*. In forming their style of *Pao Quan* (cannon boxing), they relied on power to beat and to stimulate speed. The four styles of boxing are considered to be the original routines of the blocking-hand boxing. Liu Naifu of the seventh generation of disciples refined the four styles of boxing into a practical combating routine of 36 techniques. He simplified the blocking-hand boxing, making it more practical. It was very popular in Tianjin during the period of the Republic (1911-1949) and was passed on to Sichuan and

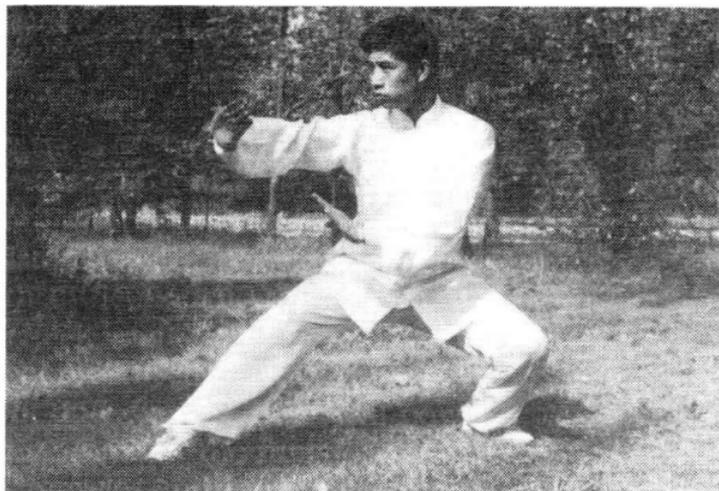


Fig. 30: The blocking-hand boxing.

Shanghai in the 1930's (Fig. 30).

The *Lanshou Men* is characterized by its simplicity and practicability. Its hand tricks stress pushing, turning, shaking and drawing while its feet plays focus on hitting the abdomen and groin of the opponent. It focuses on blocking the hands of the opponent and benefiting from the forces of the opponent while using power to beat speed and to stimulate speed.

### **30. *Ziran Men* (Nature Boxing)**

*Ziran Men* (nature boxing) was created by Dwarf Xu of Sichuan Province in the late years of the Qing Dynasty. Xu's style of boxing was standardized by Du Xinwu of Cili County of Hunan Province. Du followed Xu for eight years to learn the nature boxing and came

to understand the essence and secrets of the martial arts.

Nature boxers do not pursue tricks nor do they emphasize mastery of unique skills. Instead, they pay attention to tempering the mind, spirit and air flows inside the body and to the good application of eyesight, fist plays, footwork and movements of the body. They can fight their opponents with whichever part of their body they see fit and they can even launch attacks in situations which others would think impossible.

They believe that to practise combative basics is to practise breathing and vice versa. The mind guides the flow of air inside their bodies and when the mind reaches a certain point so does the air flow, and when the mind stops so do the movements. All movements follow the natural feeling and thinking. When nature boxers play lightly they are also steady and when they play heavily they are not clumsy. The hands are played along a straight line and fist plays are so fast that others cannot see them during a bout. There is hardness in the suppleness and vice versa.

Nature boxing is now practised in Fujian and Hunan provinces of China.

### **31. *Changjia Quan* (Chang-family Boxing)**

*Changjia Quan* or the Chang-family boxing was created by Chang Naizhou (1724-1783) during the Qing Dynasty. Chang Naizhou was a scholar but when he was not reading, he practised fist and cudgel plays. He traveled far and wide to learn from Wushu masters. He practised hard year in and year out but did not stick

only to the style he had learned but absorbed the strengths of other style of boxing to create his own style. He thus succeeded and developed the *Zi* boxing, monkey boxing, *Taiji* boxing and drunkard boxing. Chang's basis was ancient Chinese philosophy and ideas of spiritual guide, give-and-take, the positive and negative, and the network of blood and air passages throughout the human body which enabled him to theorize his own boxing style.

The Chang-family boxing requires the use of mentality to facilitate air flows and the use of air flows to create the form of the body. It demands building up energy for concentration which helps gather inner air flows. In combat, a Chang-style boxer stresses the combination of substantialness and emptiness; in exercising, he lets his arms be supple and agile and refrains from using clumsy force; in wrestling, he tries to put one of his front foot behind the opponent; in practising, he should do the routines naturally. The tactics are not to move if the opponent does not move; if the opponent attempts to move he tries to preempt him. The Chang-style boxers try to move first to gain the dominant position and if they happen to move second, they try to make their blows reach the opponent first. While outwardly they look calm, they are intense inside. They wait at their ease for their exhausted opponents. Once they are on the move their actions are well connected.

The Chang-family boxing stresses both the combination and separation of the hard and supple, the substantial and empty and the positive and negative. The movements of the head should be as fast as dragonflies skimming the water; the actions of their fists should be as powerful and sudden as a goat charging with its

horns; their waists should be like chickens and ducks tucking their tails, their footwork should be as fleeting as swallows flying to and fro in the woods. Though Chang-style boxers adopt the might stances of the Arhats, their movements are as deft as those of monkeys and apes. Their plays change within strictly arranged routines, combining the mental and physical.

### **32. *Mian Quan* (Continuous Boxing)**

*Mian Quan* or the continuous boxing is a northern style of fist play, which is popular in central Hebei Province. There is no record of the origin of this style of boxing. Luo Chengli, a native of Daqi Village in Boye County of Hebei, was good at six-combination spearplay and continuous boxing and was well known for these during the 1930's. When China sent a Wushu team to demonstrate its martial arts at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, the continuous boxing was one of the important events, captivating viewers in Berlin.

It is called continuous boxing because its fist play is continuous and prolonged by soft and supple movements and actions (Fig. 31).

The main feature of continuous boxing is to gain supremacy by attacking only after the opponent has attacked. It centers on the opponent and the movements change if the opponent changes. It bases its movements mainly on defence and launch attacks only after defensive moves. Suppleness turns to hardness once the boxer gains control of the combat and they fight in accordance with the development of the combat. By putting out their hands to meet the opponent they benefit from



Fig. 31: The continuous boxing.

his forces, forcing the opponent to change from attack to defence and use surprise tricks to beat the opponent before the latter has time to prepare for a new bout. When combating, charging and hardness are used more in attacks whereas retreat and suppleness are used more in defence. The continuous boxers prefer to defend before attacking and they always try to gain the dominant position by using supple and soft forces. They become hard once they are dominant. This is how hardness and suppleness are combined in the continuous boxing.

Movements in the continuous boxing are spread but steady and the basic actions of the body, hands and feet are similar to those of the long-style boxing. The difference lies in the fact that continuous boxers keep their heads upright; their necks straight; their shoulders lower and their chest, waist, hip, back and abdomen relaxed.

Their movements are fully extended but steady, supple and continuous.

Continuous boxing is popular among people thanks to its variety of movements and routines, its special methods of attack and defence, its extended and comfortable actions and its practicability.

### **33. *Duan Quan* (Short-range Boxing)**

*Duan Quan* or the short-range boxing is also called the "short-style fight," which is an age-old style of fist play. *Mianzhang* style of short fighting and *Mianzhang* boxing were recorded in Tang Shunzhi's *On Martial Arts*, Qi Jiguang's *A New Essay on Wushu Arts* and He Liangchen's *Chronicles of Chen*, all of which are more than 400 years old.

*Duan Quan* is called "short-range boxing," merely in comparison with *Chang Quan* or the long-range boxing. The two styles differ a great deal in combating skills, generation of power, movements and routines.

The major features of the short-style boxing are: its short and compact routines which usually consist of three to five steps and a dozen moves, its use of low stances and small but quick movements. The arms and legs of the short-style boxers are bent slightly and they use simple and sudden moves and the actions are executed smartly. Movements are well connected and fist plays follow in quick succession often with sudden changes. The boxers seldom jump or leap, nor do they use fixed or mid-air actions, rather, they rove around to shun the attack from the opponent. The short-style boxing, therefore, is strongly combat-orientated.

By practising the short-style boxing, one cannot only improve his physique, but also sharpen his eyesight and response and master the skills of close-range combats. The short-style boxing is very popular and is practised in Baoding and Gaoyang of Hebei Province as well as some other places.

## ***Chapter Four***

### **Weapons**

The weapons used by Wushu masters originate mainly from ancient military weapons. The Eighteen-Arms, the term used to describe Wushu weaponry includes the sabre, spear, sword, halbert, axe, battle axe, hook, fork, whip, mace, hammer, talon, trident-halberd, cudgel, long-handled spear, short cudgel, stick and meteor hammer. Some weapons are used to fight at a distance, while others at close range. Some are overt whereas others are covert. Some are hard while others are soft. Their functions are wide ranging—they beat, kill, hit, shoot and block with cutting blades, hooks, points or pricks.

The assortment of Wushu weapons has added to the colorful programs of martial arts, and proficiency in Wushu involves being skilled in the techniques and usage of the Eighteen-Arms. A brief introduction to the weapons and their individual characteristics follows.

#### **1. Four Major Weapons**

The four major weapons—sabre, spear, sword and cudgel—have been widely used by Wushu masters since ancient times in different styles of martial arts. They are

also the main weapons used in current Wushu competitions.

### **(1) Sword**

The sword is called the "gentleman of all weapons."

It is the most widely used of all weapons and its influence goes beyond the field of Wushu. Every school of Wushu uses the sword as the basic weapon for rigorous training.

Sword play in China was first seen in sacrificial offerings to gods or ancestors. In the Spring and Autumn Period and during the Warring States 2,000 years ago, sword play became a common practice in society. After years of refinement, it is now one of the major competitive events in Wushu competition today.

Sword play is brisk, agile, elegant, easy, graceful and natural in action. The movements are flexible, as well as variable. Attention is paid to both motion and stillness. Hardness and suppleness supplement each other. So sword play is likened to the "flying phoenix." (Fig. 1).

There are many techniques in sword play. The main techniques include hitting, piercing, pointing, lifting, jumping and leaping, hanging, chopping, floating, poking, sweeping, wrestling, blocking and wiping. These actions, combined with body movements and footsteps, form various routines of sword play.

There are varied styles of sword play routines, handed down from ancient times. The popular ones include *Taiji*, *Wudang*, *Bodhi-dharma*, *Longxing*, *Sancai*, *Qingping*, *Baxian* (Eight-Immortals), *Mantis*, *Lianhuan*, *Drunkard* and *Xingyi*. The Chinese Physical Culture and Sports Commission has also worked out new routines for competition and physical exercises.



Fig. 1: Sword play

It is said that the Chinese sword play, although a simple form of play with hand weapons, has deep ideological connotations. From emperors, high-ranking military officers and ministers to common people, experts and scholars, the wearing of swords shows them to be a refined person signifying they are cultured and familiar with the arts. The skill and theory of sword play was perfected and eventually formed the distinctive “Sword Culture” in China.

## **(2) Sabre**

Sabre is called the marshal of all weapons.

It is one of the most used weapons in Chinese Wushu. According to the shape and size, it is divided into short-hilted sabre, twin short-hilted sabre, sabre, nine-ring sabre (named as nine rings on the handle), broad sword, long-bladed short-hilted sabre and others.



Fig. 2. Sabre play

Sabre play is vigorous and quick in defence and offence so it is likened to the "fierce tiger." The main techniques of sabre play include chopping, hacking, cutting, pricking, lifting, poking, winding, blocking, pushing, and knocking. When you have sabre practice, the cooperation between the sabre and the hands is very important and both hands must closely coordinate with each other, so as to maintain balance. Sabre play calls for rigorous training and constant practice. The sabre and the body must also be consistent. "Make sure that sabre is always around your body, and your hands, feet, shoulders, and arms turn together with the sabre." (Fig. 2).

The main routines of sabre play include *Panlong* (coil dragon), *Bagua* (eight-diagrams), *Qinglong* (green dragon), *Miao Sabre*, *Nine-Ring Sabre*, *Liuhe* (six-combination), *Shaolin Twin sabres*, *Taiji*, *Yexing* (night-

travel), *Meihua* (plum blossom), Drunkard sabre and Monkey sabre. In addition, the combination of sabre with other weapons forms many more routines. For example, the play with sabre in one hand and staff in another is called "sabre play with staff," a favorite exercise for Wushu enthusiasts.

Sabre play demonstrates hardness and powerfulness, but not always. In defence and dodging actions, suppleness is needed.

### **(3) Spear**

The spear is called the king of all weapons.

It is one of the major long-shaft Wushu weapons. There are different types of spear, such as carefully-designed and delicately-made "flowery spear," thick and bold spear, zigzag spear with a sharp point and blade, double-head spear with blades on both sides. The spear was the major military weapon in ancient times and compact technique was developed.

The main characteristics of spear play are flexibility in body movements, lightness and agility in footwork, quickness and steadiness in turns and somersaults. The movements are clear and the tricks are practical. Spear play is likened to the "flying dragon." Spear play is very difficult, but it has a great effect on strengthening the physique (Fig. 3).

The basic techniques of spear play include pricking, thrusting, circling, blocking, pointing, poking, holding and wringing. When you practise, you are advised to hold the spear firmly and flexibly, advance and retreat freely and smoothly, pricking the opponent quickly and directly, with the force on the point of the spear. This is one of the important basic skills in spear play. When

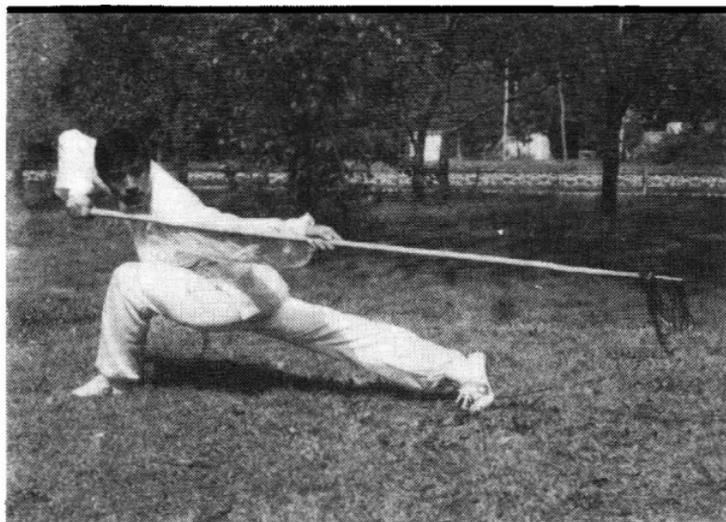


Fig. 3: Spear play.

you hold the spear, it must be close to your waist for support so that you can exert your force easily. In all routines of spear play, the point of the spear moves in a circle, which is regarded as the fundamental of all styles of spear play and requires hard practice.

The main routines include *Bagua* (eight-diagram), *Liuhe* (six-combination), Double-Head, *Yueya* (crescent), *Meihua* (plum blossom), *Shewei* (snake-tail), Yang-family, Siping and Big Spear play as well.

#### **(4) Cudgel**

The cudgel is called the “father of all weapons” meaning all other weapons were developed from it.

As the cudgel is easy to make and use, and is practical, it has become a very popular weapon.

Cudgel play lays stress on a sweeping action so the saying goes “with a cudgel you sweep all around.” Some

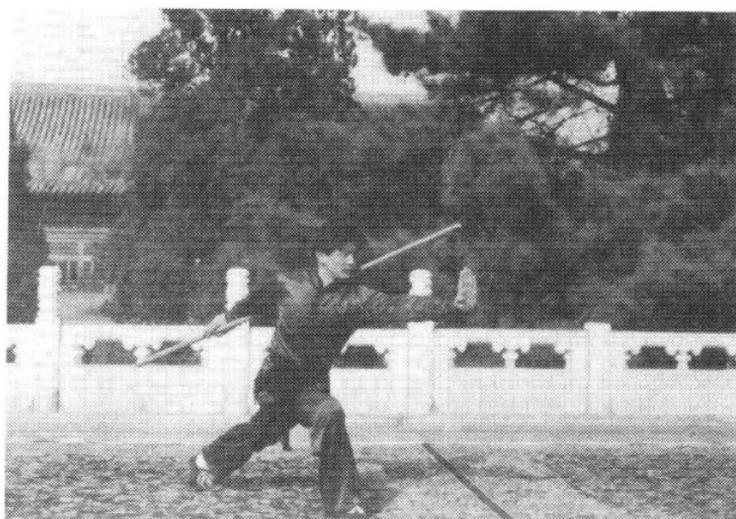


Fig. 4: Cudgel play.



Fig. 5: Monkey cudgel.

tricks employed for other weapons (such as spear and sabre) can also be used in cudgel play. There are many methods of playing the cudgel. Among the most commonly used are chopping, swinging, jabbing, hanging, jumping, leaping, smashing, pointing, blocking, sheltering, holding, piercing, floating, carrying, poking, and lifting. The different schools of cudgel play have different emphasis (Figs. 4 and 5).

Cudgel is played as quickly as heavy rainfall and cudgel play combines offence with defence, always changing the ways of play.

The main routines include *Qimei*, *Shaolin*, *Panlong* (coiled dragon), *Jiuzhou* (nine-continent), *Liuhe* (six-combination), *Tianqi*, Bodhi-dharma, Monkey and Drunkard.

Cudgels are mostly made of wood but some are made of metal. In addition to long cudgels, there are two-section cudgel and three-section cudgel.

## 2. Rare Weapons

These are the weapons which are not so commonly used as the four mentioned above. Of these some might have been widely used in Wushu in certain periods of history, some interim weapons in the development of Wushu, or used in a certain area, and others used by certain schools, but nowadays rarely used. Some examples of such weapons are:

### (1) Dagger-Axe

The dagger-axe, a weapon used by soldiers on the chariot in ancient times evolved from the sickle, and



Fig. 6. Dagger-axe.

was one of the weapons carried by the people. With a long shaft, the dagger-axe is a flat-headed weapon with a blade on the lower side. It can be used for sweeping attacks and also for pulling-down killing (Fig. 6).

Bronze dagger-axes were used in the Yin Dynasty (1400-1100 B.C.) as an attacking weapon. In the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (770-221 B.C.), dagger-axes were still in wide use. The main weapon used by soldiers in the Qin Dynasty was also the dagger-axe but it was gradually replaced by spear in the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D.220)

The dagger-axe underwent improvement and development during the Yin and Qin dynasties. Not only the point of the dagger-axe was used for hitting, but also the blades on both sides of the head. The connection part between the head and the shaft was lengthened, making the dagger-axe even stronger.

Different forms of fighting used different dagger-axe which are classified into three types of long, short and medium shafts. The long-shaft dagger-axe measured about 314 cm, the medium-shaft 139.4 cm and the short-shaft about 91 cm. The dagger-axe was used by soldiers on chariots while the short-shaft one was used by foot soldiers.

As the dagger-axe was abandoned in military fighting very early no routines have been handed down to the present day. The main techniques of play included hook cutting, pecking and hitch-poking.

## **(2) Halberd**

The halberd, a weapon based on the spear, was developed by combining the merits of the spear and dagger-axe in the Yin and Shang period (1600-1100 B.C.). It can be used to hook-cut, peck and pierce the opponent making it a more powerful weapon than the dagger-axe and spear. The halberd, made of bronze, was used widely in the Western Zhou Dynasty (1100-771 B.C.) in China. At the end of the Warring States (475-221 B.C.) iron-made halberd appeared.

During the Qin and Han dynasties (221 B.C.-A.D. 224), the halberd was still an important weapon used in fighting by soldiers on horse back or on foot. It gradually disappeared from the battle fields in the Western and Eastern Jin and Northern and Southern Dynasties (265-581), but routines of halberd play were formed in the course of halberd demonstrations by people. During the Sui and Tang dynasties, the halberd was not in use in fighting, and was used only in demonstrations, exercise and guard of honor ceremonies.

There are many kinds of halberd including the

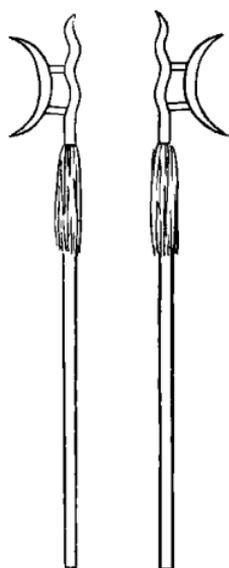


Fig. 7: Halberds.

long-shaft single halberd and short-shaft twin halberds. The long-shaft halberd had two symmetrical crescents on the head, and was called the square-headed halberd. The halberd with only one crescent on one side of the head was called the green dragon halberd which was mentioned in the "General Book of Wushu." In ancient times the halberd was decorated with colorful silk ribbons and coins. There was also single or double crescents at the head of the short-shaft halberds. The different types of halberd were used for different routines—the main movements include cutting, thrusting, probing, slicing, pressing, carrying, hooking, blocking, drilling and hitching (Fig. 7).

### (3) Stick

The stick was evolved from a special dual-purpose weapon of hooked knife which appeared in the Qin and

Han dynasties. With hooks on both sides, the hooked knife had a short sharp head in the middle and a handle at the back. When you push the hooked knife forward, it can resist the attack from the enemy and if you hook, you can thrust. Although the stick was not listed among the ancient weapons, it is one of the weapons used in Wushu. The stick is made of wood, about 0.7 to 1.3 meters long. The long stick is a single stick, about 1.3 meters long. The stick with a short cross handle on one side is called the horn stick. When practising, you can hold the short handle in one hand and the long handle in another, or hold the long handle with both hands, the short handle with one hand.

The twin sticks are shorter and when you practise, each hand holds one stick by the short handle. The various shapes of the crooked cudgel include: a "T" shaped stick, a "卜" shaped stick—duckbill stick, the Ligong stick, the stick with a sickle-shaped handle and horn stick.

While the sticks are made in different shapes, the playing methods are almost the same during fighting and hitting directions change from time to time. For the single stick, the movements include chopping, pounding, rolling, jumping and leaping, supporting, pouncing, patting, holding, hooking, hanging, lifting and cutting. The movements for twin sticks include hugging, covering, turning and beating.

In addition to solo practice routines, paired practices include sabre and stick versus spear and twin sticks versus spear (Fig. 8).

#### **(4) Jointed Iron Staff**

There are single and twin jointed iron staffs, soft and

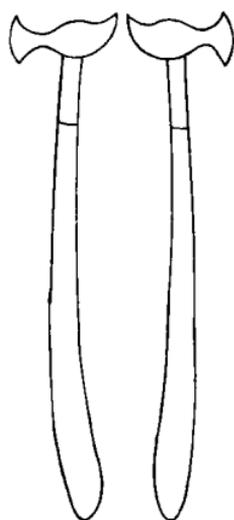


Fig. 8: Sticks.

hard. The nine-joint staff is one of soft weapons in Wushu. This staff consists of a dart head, a handle, and iron joints connected by rings. The length of the staff is usually below the head of the user.

In the book of *Weapon History in China* it says that "The iron staff has many joints and originated in the Jin Dynasty (265-420)." The soft staff was a powerful hidden weapon, which "can inflict serious wounds and which you can hardly resist in the ancient battlefields." Once the staff is unleashed, it could hit, flog, hook and bind the opponent and staff masters could even beat those who used sword and sabre. There are seven-joint, nine-joint and 13-joint staffs. The staff is very easy to carry with and could be held in the hand or put around the waist.

The movements of the nine-joint staff play in Wushu include tying, swinging, sweeping, hanging,

throwing and dancing with flower patterns. Tying means to tip up the hands, elbows, shoulders, neck, waist and legs of the opponent by various forms. Swinging means to wave the staff so that it moves fast in a vertical circle. Sweeping means to wave the staff so that it moves fast in a flat circle. Hanging means to add force to a certain section of the fast-moving staff or to change the direction of its movement. Throwing means to throw the fast-moving staff into the air. Staff-dancing includes single and double hand plays. In single hand play the staff is to move in vertical circles in front of or behind the body. In double hand plays, the staff moves in vertical circles on both sides of the body.

From the above descriptions we can see that the nine-joint staff moves mainly in circles by relying on the waving of the arms and the turning of the body to exert force to a certain part of it to increase its movement and change the center and direction of the circle.

The soft staffs include single staff and double staffs. They can be used together with the sabre. In paired practice the nine-section staff is used against the spear.

The hard staff is a short weapon. There are two types—one is the joint steel staff which looks like a bamboo stick, and the other is the 13-joint steel staff. This meter-long staff has 13 joints, not including the handle which is about 44 mm in diameter. There are 13 or 14 square knots on the body of the staff. The head of the staff is thinner with a blunt tip and the handle, made of wood or iron, is at the bottom. The main uses include stroking, beating, digging, hanging, poking, cutting, sealing, shutting, fending, blocking, wrestling, dropping, pointing, coiling and sweeping (Fig. 9).

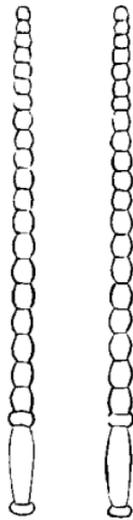


Fig. 9: Whips.

### (5) Mace

The mace, known as *Jian*, is one of the short weapons and originated in the Jin and Tang dynasties. In the Ming and Qing dynasties, many people used to carry the mace. Made of iron, it looks like the hard whip, but with no joints and no tip at the head. The cross section of the mace is a diamond formation with a groove on it so it was also called the concave mace. The size and length of maces differ in accordance with the height of the users, usually between 65 to 80 cm in length. There are single and twin maces; the latter were more used. The playing methods include grinding in the air, sweeping below, cutting in the middle, chopping, lifting on the two sides, and pressing. The movements include three in horizontal and four in vertical directions, jumping and leaping, pounding, rolling, poking, cutting, fending and hanging. Mace play requires fierce and quick ac-



Fig 10: Maces.

tions. In paired practice twin maces are used against the spear. (Fig. 10).

### **(6) Hammer**

There are various kinds of hammers such as the long-handled single hammer, short-handled twin hammer and chain hammer.

The hammer with handle was first seen and became the widely used weapon during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods.

Because it is shaped like a melon, it is also called the standing melon or lying melon. There are also square and octagonal shaped hammers. In ancient times, holders of the hammer were called the Golden Melon warriors.

Short-handled twin hammers are very heavy and need greater strength in practice. Its techniques include

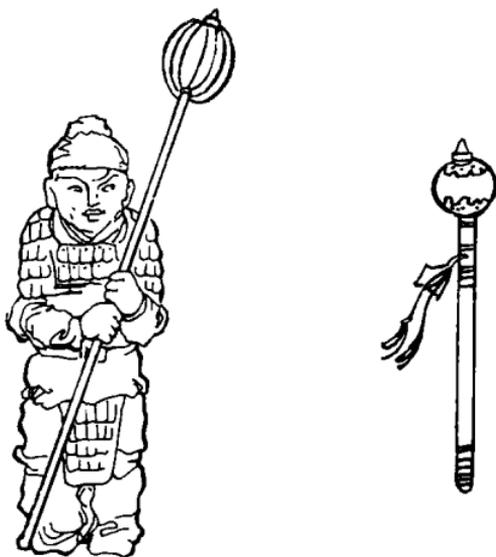


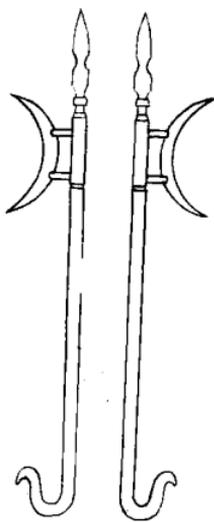
Fig. 11: Hammer and a Golden Hammer Warriors  
—pottery figurine of Ming Dynasty.

rinsing, dragging, hanging, pounding, pestling, punching, floating and covering. Of these, rinsing and dragging are the main movements of hammer play.

Chain hammer, also called meteor hammer, is an iron hammer tied with a rope in recent years. Its use is similar to that of the rope-dart (Fig. 11).

### **(7) Hook**

The hook is an ancient weapon that was evolved from the dagger-axe. During the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, the dagger-axe, hook and halbert were used at the same time. According to a bronze hook unearthed from a tomb of the Wei State, the hook looks like a halbert. The difference is that the halbert has a sharp blade on the head while the hook has a small hook on its head (Figs. 12 and 13).



Figs. 12 and 13: Hooks.



Fig. 14: Axe.

The *General Outlines of Wushu* shows there were varied shapes of hooks in the Song Dynasty including the claw cudgel, the fire hook with the double-hooked knife as its blade, and the fire fork, with an iron trident head.

The long hook is held by two hands while the short hook was held by one hand. When the short hook is played, the Wushu practitioner has a hook in each hand or a hook in one hand and other weapon in another. There is also the flying-hook with a long four-blade head linked by an iron chain.

The hooks used in Wushu include single hook, twin

hooks, antler-shaped hook, long-handled hook, and tiger head-shaped hooks in Wushu play. Of them, the twin hooks are the most used and belong to multi-blade weapons. The techniques of the hook play include hooking, drawing, hugging, carrying, holding, pressing, piercing, shaping, hanging, pulling, lifting and locking. It is said the twin hooks were used first by Dou Erdun of Xianxian County in Hebei Province in the reign of Emperor Daoguang of the Qing Dynasty.

The hook play routines include Cha-style, traveling, 12-speed, plum blossom and tiger-head, snow flake and curtain raising. Paired practice routines include tiger head hook versus spear. The styles of play differ from school to school.

### **(8) Axe and Battle Axe**

The axe is one of the earliest production tools. In the Stone Age, primitive man fixed edged stone on a wooden handle for cutting. In the Shang Dynasty, there were battle axes used for the guarding of the Gods or as implements of punishment.

The axe and battle axe belong to the same family, the difference being that the cutting edge of the axe is narrower than that of the battle axe. The cutting part of the battle axe is broad and arc-shaped and looks like a crescent. In the Qin and Han dynasties, the axe was the main weapon. The axe mentioned in the *General Outlines of Wushu* has a one sided-edge with a long handle. Its names include mountain cutting, still swallow and invincible. There was also the Emei axe with a head of about 30 cm long and an edge about 15 cm wide, and a one-meter-long handle, and the phoenix-head axe has a head of about 28 cm long and a handle of 80 cm.

The short handled axe belongs to the twin weapons. Because it looks like a slab, it was named the double-slab axe. Playing the double-slab axe requires boldness and bravery. The playing techniques, similar to those of the long-handled spear, include chopping, cutting, hugging, wiping, floating and slicing. In addition, it could be used for hooking and hanging as there is a hook on the back and pricks on the end. The single play routines include swinging chopping while turning the body and leaping, straight swinging on foot, wiping on horse. The routines of the long-handled axe, twin axes and mandarin-duck battle axes with one in each hand are still maintained in today's Wushu. (Fig. 14).

### **(9) Trident-Halberd**

The trident-halberd originated during the Ming Dynasty. It has a 0.5-meter-long sharp steel head with a crescent crosspiece, fixed on a 2.5-meter long shaft. At the end of the shaft is an iron taper (Fig. 15).

The trident-halberd was used for hitting, thrusting and blocking. As it is long and heavy the users must be tall and strong. Similar kinds of trident-halberd include phoenix-wing, swallow-wing, dragon-beard, ox-head and gilded halberd. The playing techniques include throwing, patting, holding, hiding, pushing, turning, supporting and blocking. The basic stances include thrusting and twisting, straight attacking, dragon-riding, jumping over and hiding below. In trident-halberd play there are no dancing movements and turning is the main action. For holding the weapon, one hand is in the front and another below and the two hands could change positions. The routines include swallow-wing play.

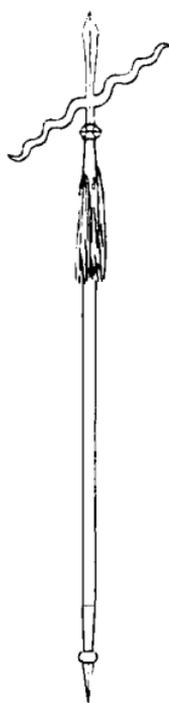


Fig. 15: Trident-halberd.

### **(10) Fork**

The fork is one of the long-handled Chinese Wushu weapons. With two prongs on the head it is called the horn fork, while the one with three prongs is called the trident or three-pronged fork. The handle is 2.3-2.7 meters long and weighs about 2.5 kilograms. Of the three-pronged fork, the central part protrudes 10 cm. At the end of the handle, there is a melon-shaped hammer. In the remote ancient times, the fork was used for fishing. The primitive fish-catching fork unearthed in the ruins of Banpo Village near Xi'an in Shaanxi Prov-

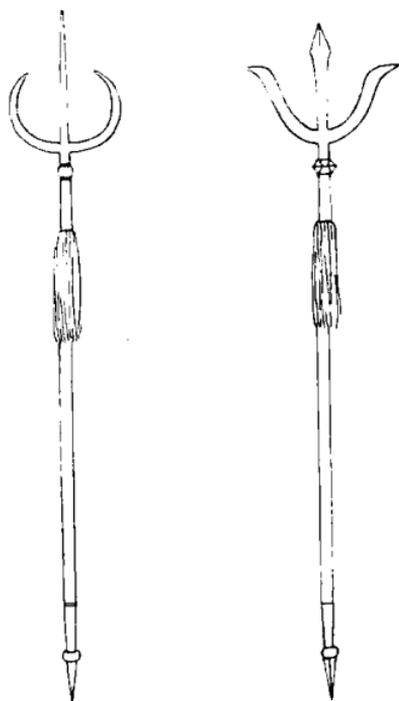


Fig. 16: Forks.

ince has a joint at the end of the handle for fixing a rope. When the fork is thrown out, the fork can be taken back by pulling the rope. The hitting techniques of the fork include blocking, covering, poking, turning, rolling, beating, smashing, drawing, digging and patting. The routines of fork play include the Flying-Tiger and *Tai-bao* (Fig. 16).

### (11) Lance

The lance is an ancient weapon which was used by soldiers on horse back. It is heavy in weight and therefore used by strong persons. The handle of the lance is

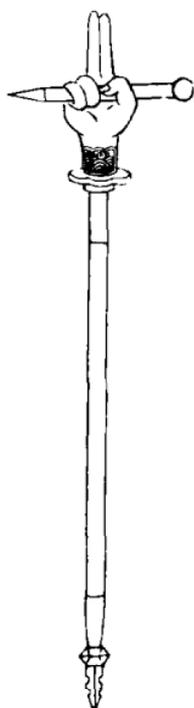


Fig. 17: Lance.

about two meters long and made of hard wood; a melon-shaped hammer with six to eight rows of iron nails is fixed at the end of the handle, and under the handle is a diamond-shaped iron auger. This is therefore called the wolf fang lance. There are also finger-shaped lance, palm-shaped lance, double lance and broad lance. The hitting techniques are the same as those of the broad sword and include chopping, covering, cutting, pulling, lifting, thrusting, floating, carrying and poking. The modern Wushu practice routines include the single lance (Fig. 17).

## (12) Talon (Claw)

The talon was a widely used weapon. It is divided into two kinds—long talon and soft talon. The handle of long talon, called the golden dragon talon, is about two meters long with a hand-shaped claw at the end. The middle finger of the claw is straight and the four other fingers are crooked. In the Ming Dynasty, there were bronze fist-talon and iron-brush talon. The iron-brush talon is shaped so that the middle finger and forefinger are straightforward while the thumb, ring finger and little finger stay on the iron brush. It uses the tips of the nails or the iron brush to hit acupuncture points or crucial points on the enemy's body. In addition to hitting these points, the movements also include grasping, pulling and thrusting.

The soft talon, called the double flying talons, is a hidden weapon. It is made of iron in the shape of an

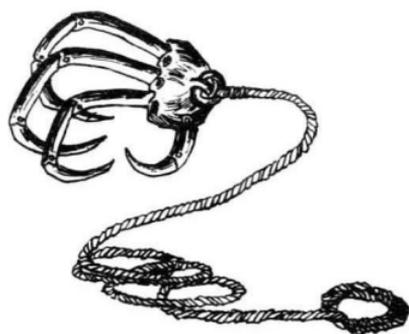


Fig. 18: Talon.

eagle claw. Tied with a long cord, it can be used to attack people and horses (Fig. 18).

### (13) Rake

The rake was evolved from ancient farm tools. It is about two and a half meters long and 2.5 kilograms in weight and with sharp iron cramps it is powerful in attacking. During the Ming Dynasty, the rice rake and the trident rake were used in military fighting. Because the rake could be used for attacking and defending and had the merits of spear and shield, it gradually became a powerful military weapon. The playing techniques

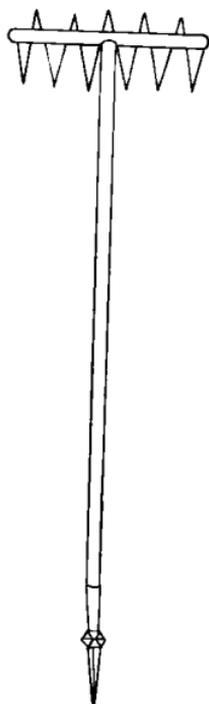


Fig. 19: Rake.

include pushing and pulling, charging from one's side, hitting with its back and pressing. The defence movements include duet combat, knocking, and pulling from one's side. The types of rakes used in Wushu practice include nine-cramp rake and lotus-flower rake. As for paired practice, the rake is used against the spear or sabre (Fig. 19).

#### **(14) Ring**

The ring is another Chinese Wushu weapon. It is circular in shape, about 30 cm in diameter, and made of metal with sharp blades around the outer rim. Each hand could hold one ring and use them as twin weapons. In ancient times the ring was a hidden weapon. Like a bracelet, it has different shapes including round and oblate ones with saw-teeth around the outside rim. In practice you throw it and make it turn and turn around to hurt the opponent.

In modern Wushu practices, the ring has no sharp edge nor teeth, but it is tied with a color silk ribbon. Each hand holds one ring to turn, tumble, jump and leap and set up beautiful patterns. It is suitable for boys and girls to practise, and the movements include turning, hitting, throwing, carrying, blocking and pressing.



Fig. 20: Ring.

The routines at the national Wushu competition in recent years included double rings, *Qiankun* (heaven and earth) ring and wind-and-fire wheel. The routines such as double rings versus cudgel (Fig. 20).

### (15) Meteor Hammer

Meteor hammer, known as flying hammer, is one of the soft weapons. Long ago, when hunting, man used vine rope to tie stone balls and throw them so as to bind the legs of wild animals. There are two kinds of meteor hammer—single ones and double ones. The rope for the single hammer is about five meters long with one end tied to a hand and another to a duck-egg bronze hammer, shaped like a melon. The rope for the twin weights is about 1.7 meters in length and there is a small bronze hammer on each end. When in action, the hammer in the front hand is used for attack and the other for protection.

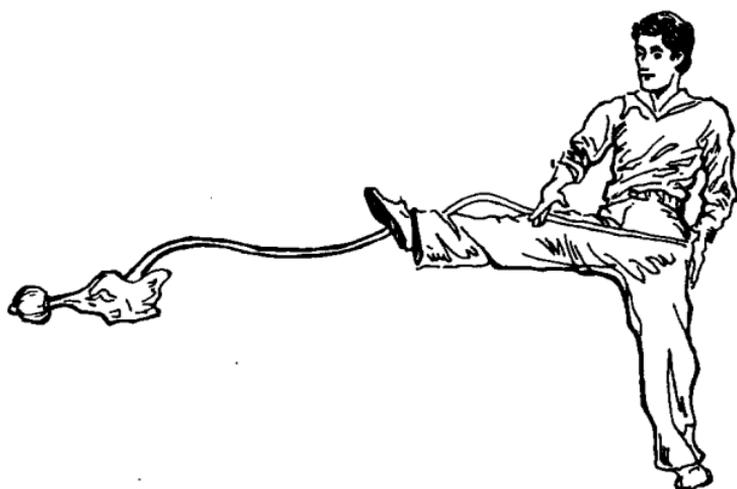


Fig. 21; Meteor hammer.

In practice, you may put the rope around your neck, back, shoulder, elbow, wrist, thigh, shank, foot or waist. After the hammer is released, it moves as fast as a meteor. The routines include a loafer kicking a ball and a fairy maiden spinning. If you change the hammer to a dart, it is a rope-dart. The playing tricks include winding, throwing, and swinging (Fig. 21).

## (16) Hidden Weapons

In practice, the Chinese traditional weapons have antipersonnel power only in close combat or within the distance of about three meters. If you stand more than three meters away, it is hard to get close enough to your opponent to gain victory. So in ancient times, people created various kinds of hidden weapons to overcome this problem. These hidden weapons included rope-dart, dart, flying sabre, flying fork, flying pike, flying sword, thrown arrow, arrow hidden in sleeve, flying broken stones, iron toad, coin-shaped dart, wolf-fanged-hammer, Thunder God drill, *nuyi* bead, plum blossom needle, lasso, crossbow arrow, *longxu* hook, fleam, Emei pricks, acupoint-hitting needle, iron fleabane, swallow dart, sleeve gun and thread crossbow arrow. You could use hidden weapons to force the enemy to retreat and turn defeat into victory, when you were in a disadvantaged position or hopelessly outnumbered.

The hidden weapons are for throwing so they are easy to carry, hide, throw and hit the enemy at a long distance. Usually these weapons are of two types—short and small ones and soft and rope ones.

The short, small ones include the dart, Arhat coin, sleeve arrow, broken stones, throwing arrow, flying sword, flying sabre, dart sabre, sleeve ring, flying needle,

flying pricks, *ruyi* ball, iron-birds, iron brush, weight hidden in palm, Emei pricks, acupoint-hitting needle.

The soft ones include rope-talon, rope-ring, rope-dart, *longxu* hook, fleam, flying hammer, iron fleabane, wolf-fang hammer, and rope-hammer.

Short and hidden weapons are easy to use but required accuracy and superb techniques.

Traditionally, the use of hidden weapons in combat was regarded with some contempt, and due to the emergence of firearms their use ceased. However, for interest's sake we have selected some typical weapons which we will discuss in the following pages.

### **Iron-Brush**

The iron-brush, created by *Bagua* (eight-diagram) boxing master, Dong Haichuan, on the basis of the movements and techniques of his style, is a hidden weapon used in his school. It is shaped like a Chinese writing brush, with a pointed taper head and a connected iron or steel handle. It is used to hit the acupoints of your opponent. When people wore long gowns or mandarin jackets the iron-brush could be hidden in the sleeves. Once it is used, it comes out unexpectedly, making it very difficult for the opponent to guard against.

The basic techniques involved in using the iron brush are wrist turning, and combining the movements of the iron brush with those of the body. You could hit opponent square and upright, or from an angle. You could throw it according to circumstances and the throwing techniques are changeable.

### ***Longxu* (Dragon-Beard) Hook**

The *Longxu* hook is a hidden weapon that originated in the Song Dynasty.

It was developed from the long-handle hook and short-handle tiger-head hook, with sharp blades on both sides.

The hook, made of steel, is about 33 cm long with an iron-ring fixed in the center of a semi-circular body for fixing a rope. On the front part of the semicircle are two parallel zigzagged spearheads, about 20 cm apart, which are bent outwardly into hooks. The ends of the hooks are about six centimeters long, with very sharp points, and saw teeth. The body of the *Longxu* hook is flat with the spear blade being 2 cm broad. The flat, semicircle, without edges and pricks, could be used as a handle. The rope, tying the hook on the one end, is about 10 meters long and has a noose at the other end for the wrist.

The main parts of *Longxu* hook for catching are the two zigzagged hooks. When the enemy is not caught with the hooks but hit by the saw teeth, it could wound him. Because of the saw-tooth hooks, good skills are needed when you throw or catch it otherwise you would hit yourself.

### **Throwing Arrow**

The throwing arrow is called hand-throwing arrow in the northern part of China. There are three forms of play, so there are also three kinds of throwing arrows. One is the pure iron arrow, as thick as a small finger and about 30 cm long, with a triangular head just like an arrow shot from a bow. The arrow shaft is thinner immediately after the head than the other end so as to balance the weight when throwing. The weight of the arrow is about 325 grams. The iron arrow is used by beginners for practice.

The second kind of throwing arrow is made of iron

and bamboo. The arrow head is made of iron and the shaft is made of bamboo with a feather-shaped end. Because the shaft is lighter, when you throw it, it drifts easily. The feather-shaped end will keep it balanced and straight. It is about 27 cm long and about 100 grams in weight. The bamboo for the shaft must be hard and straight without knots and twists. This kind of arrow is useful for further practice.

The third kind of arrow is made totally of bamboo without an arrow head and feather. Just cut the bamboo so it has a tip on the head and thickens out below the tip, like a chopstick but with a pointed head. This kind of arrow is easy to make and convenient to use. When you master the use of this arrow, chopsticks, or tree twigs can be used instead and the effect is the same. Other hidden weapons must be carried with, whereas replacements for this kind of arrow are found everywhere.

### **Coin**

The coin, based on China's copper coin, could be used for hitting people. Among various kinds of hidden weapons, coin throwing is the most convenient one

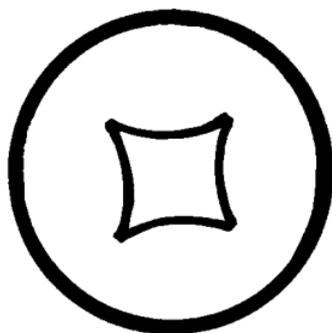


Fig. 22: Coin.

(Fig. 22).

Coins are divided into two kinds—one with edges and another without edges. The edge of the coin can be filed to make the blade sharp. In addition to using it as a hidden weapon, it can be used to cut through pockets in clothing. This means persons carrying such coins are easily noticed by policemen. The coin without an edge depends on wrist power to hit the opponent hard. Copper or silver coins were used as money in ancient times, so when carried they did not draw others' attention. When using them as weapons, you just easily picked them out and threw them at the opponent.

### **Tube-Arrow**

The arrow in the tube is not released by hand, but by mechanical power. This kind of weapon could be divided into single tube, three-star tube, plum blossom and *Qisha* tubes. The tube arrow discussed in the following is the single tube (Fig. 23).

Only one arrow could be released by the single tube hidden in the sleeve. The tube is made of iron or steel, about 26-27 cm in length and 27 mm in diameter. There is a lid on one side of the tube with a small hole in the



Fig. 23: Tube-arrow.

middle for inserting arrows. Near the lid on the body of the tube is a moving fastener for controlling the shooting of arrows. When you put an arrow in the tube and turn off the fastener, the arrow is controlled, whereas when you turn on the fastener the arrow is released immediately. There is a steel spring in the tube which is about the same length as the tube but smaller in diameter. The spring is connected with a round iron plate at the top end and a lid at the bottom end bigger than the tube. The lid is fastened to the tube by screws.

The arrow shaft, the size of a chopstick and about 20 cm long, is made of bamboo.

To use, the arrow is put into the tube by pressing the spring and fastening the arrow with the fastener. As soon as the fastener is turned the arrow is pressed out by the spring. The shooting distance of the arrow depends on the strength of the elastic force of the spring.

The tube is hidden up the sleeve with a belt with one end of the tube near the wrist. In practice, just draw the hand into the sleeve to hold the tube, with middle and fore fingers straightforward and thumb turning the fastener, the arrow should fly out of the tube along the direction pointed by your middle and forefingers.

### **Emei Prick**

The Emei prick is not listed in the military books but it is said to have been used in fighting in water in ancient times. As a Wushu event it was first recorded in a book about Wushu in the Qing Dynasty. It said that "in 1911, shadow boxing masters Dai Miantang, Li Qinbo and Li Chunru gave demonstrations of the prick."

The Emei prick in Wushu is about 30 cm long and is a spindle with two tapered ends smaller than in the middle. Each end of the prick is a rhombus flat with a

point, and a ring in the middle of the shaft. In demonstration, you put the rings on the middle fingers of your hands. The main techniques include thrusting, piercing, throwing and poking, well coordinated with the footwork, including the jumping and leaping stances (Fig. 24).

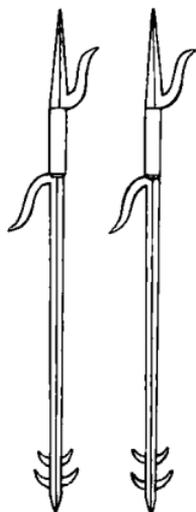


Fig 24: Emei pricks.

## ***Chapter Five***

# **Martial Ethics and Etiquette**

### **1. Martial Ethics**

Chinese Wushu embodies a profound philosophy and a sense of human life and social values (some people therefore call it “philosophic boxing”). It emphasizes traditions, experience and rational knowledge, all of which are clearly reflected in the martial ethics of Wushu. That’s why it can display the oriental civilization via combat skills and become an inexhaustible treasury of the human body culture.

As a form of social ideology, morality differs in different historical periods. It is the summation of the code of conduct of a given society for the adjustment of the relationships between man and man and between man and the society.

Generally speaking, it evaluates man’s behavior and adjusts each other’s relations with such conceptions as the good and the evil, justice and injustice, fairness and partiality, and honesty and dishonesty.

Wushu is a system of skills and theories the Chinese people have developed through their struggle with nature and in the course of their social life, for combat and to promote health and improve one’s temperament.

Combat in the usual sense means violence,

bloodshed and death. For this very reason, few of the various combative techniques and skills in the world are combined with morals.

On the contrary, Wushu has been influenced ever since its birth by moral principles and has developed a complete code of moral behavior.

Martial ethics, formed in such a Chinese cultural environment, has become a distinct feature of Wushu and is an essential part of the study and understanding of Chinese martial arts.

The main points of the martial ethics are:

### **Respect for Human Life**

In ancient China, human beings were regarded as the most valuable treasure of nature. Man is called one of the "four greats," together with the heaven, earth and truth, or law of natural activities. Who respects human life loves life better and who knows human life better knows Wushu better. It was for protecting and maintaining human life that Wushu took birth.

### **Emphasis on Moral Principles**

Moral principles provide the basis for maintaining a stable relationship between man and man, and between man and society. Those who want to learn Wushu shall respect these principles and never do anything harmful to these Chinese cultural traditions.

### **Emphasis on Moral Conduct and Manners**

While learning martial skills, one should also cultivate the fine qualities. A sense of justice, diligence, persistence, honesty and hard work are also encouraged.

### **Respect for the Teacher and Care for Each Other**

In learning Wushu, one should try hard to master everything that is taught. Both teacher and student

should take care of each other and treasure the friendship between them.

### **Modesty and Eagerness**

Those who learn martial arts should keep improving their skills and refrain from being arrogant and imperious, and flaunting their martial skills while belittling others.

Everyone should learn from each other to improve and be united and cooperative with each other.

### **Freedom from Personal Grudges**

In learning Wushu, one aims at self-defence, and improving one's physical conditions. One should not contend with anyone on account of a personal grudge or bully the weak. No martial skill should be overused or be resorted to for deliberate provocation.

No bullying of the innocent is allowed and it is encouraged to take up the cudgels to uphold justice and truth.

### **Persistence and Perseverance**

The practice of martial arts is a hard task which takes time and requires arduous efforts. Steadiness and persistence are required. One should learn and try to fully understand the essentials and inner meaning of each routine. The very cream and true essence of Wushu can be learned only through thought and actual body movements.

Various Wushu schools in Chinese history had their own detailed code for martial ethics. The Shaolin school, for example, established the ten commandments for its followers. The Wudang school also regulated "five notes" in recruiting followers and teaching martial arts: Martial arts are taught not to people with bad qualities, not to evil-minded people, not to bellicose people, not

to drunkards, and not to those who flaunt their martial arts.

## **2. Etiquette**

Chinese Wushu masters insist that a student should learn to know the etiquette before learning martial arts. There are various rules for manners and behaviors before or after the exercises. They embody the modesty and manners of the performers, mark a good start of a practice routine to be executed, demonstrate the aims of the different schools of boxing, and give an outline of its soul and spirit.

It is the long tradition of Chinese Wushu to have correct guiding thoughts and noble morality, stress civilization and manners, and learn hard to improve one's skills and cultivate moral character.

Etiquette means a salute or greeting before a martial arts routine. Their forms vary in different schools but they have one thing in common—unity and modesty.

A Wushu performer greets the audience or opponent before commencing actual routines, which harmonizes the atmosphere, as in the case of an announcer or a singer before his announcement or performance.

Here are some key points of the Wushu performers greetings:

Bowing, as generally used by ancient Chinese martial artists of all schools. It's serious, solemn, but simple, and it can be taken by performers with or without a weapon in hand.

The performer stands upright, looks at those he salutes, bends over and bows his head as an expression



Fig. 1: Palms joining.

of respect. The performer resumes the standing position after the salute.

Palms joining is a basic greeting form mainly taken by Buddhists, and Buddhist followers, but is also popular among Wushu performers due to the influence of the Shaolin school.

The performer puts his palms together vertically in front of his breast, bows his head a little, closes his eyes, bends over in a standing position or crosses his knees while sitting, as an expression of sincerity (Fig. 1).

Among the greeting forms are Hand-raising, Palm-ing and *Lianhua* greetings.

For standardizing Wushu greetings, the Chinese Wushu Association has set the fist-holding greeting as the official greeting form for both Wushu masters and pupils in competitions, training and performance.

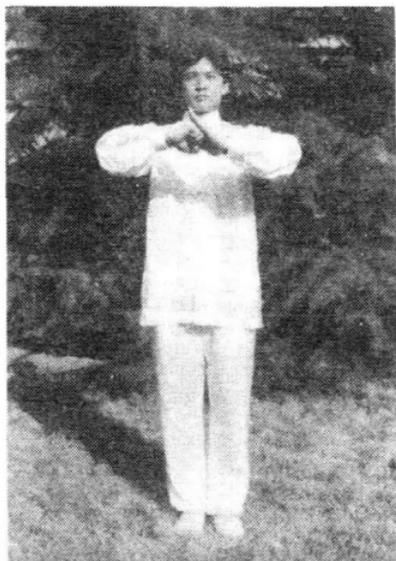


Fig. 2: A fist holding greeting.

A fist holding greeting is executed as follows:

Make a fist with the right hand, put it against the center of the left palm with the left thumb bent and the four other fingers of the left hand stretched, push the two hands forward with the palms facing those greeted, arms in an embracing position and shoulders dropped down. The greeting should be done with ease and confidence (Fig. 2).

The bent left thumb indicates that the performer is not arrogant or high-handed; the left hand's four fingers coming together means an integrity of moral, intellectual, physical and aesthetic education, a must for a Wushu performer to be noble-minded. The right fist indicates valour and vigor; the fist is stopped by the left palm which means being brave but not wishing to make trouble or breaking the rules. Learning Wushu does not

necessarily mean fighting or violence.

In executing a fist-holding greeting, one should pay special attention to its inner meaning.

## ***Chapter Six***

### **Competitions**

Wushu competitions have a long established history in China. In ancient China, people often set up a challenge arena or platform for the title holder to take a challenge from others. Such contests were usually part of celebrations at local festivals, and an important means for Wushu performers to exchange skills and experience.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Wushu was listed as an official competitive sport. The sport's annual national competitions include the national Wushu championships, the national Wushu tournament, the junior national Wushu championships, the national tournament for competitive events and national *Taiji Quan* (shadow-boxing) and *Taiji Jian* (swordplay) competitions.

With Wushu being introduced in more and more countries and regions in the world, several international Wushu competitions have been held in China in recent years. The Chinese city of Xi'an played host to the Inaugural International Wushu Invitational Tournament in 1985, which drew competitors from the United States, France, Japan, Morocco, Canada, the Philippines, Singapore, Britain, China, Hong Kong and Macao, as well as observers from Belgium and other countries.

The Second International Wushu Invitational Tournament was staged in 1986 in north China's Tianjin,

with 145 competitors from 20 countries and regions participating.

The Inaugural International Wushu Festival was staged in 1988, with the opening ceremony in Hangzhou, east China, and the closing ceremony in south China's Shenzhen. Hundreds of competitors from dozens of countries and regions took part in the Third International Wushu Invitational Tournament in Hangzhou and the International Wushu Festival Challenge in Shenzhen.

The First Asian Wushu Championship was held in September, 1987 in Japan, and the second was staged in December, 1989 in Hong Kong. Competitors from China, Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong dominated the championships (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1: Foreign winner at Asian Wushu Championship.

In order to promote Wushu and guarantee successful staging of competitions, China's State Physical Culture and Sports Commission formulated China's first official Rules for Wushu Competitions. These combined the competitive principles of modern sports with traditional skills and theories of Chinese Wushu.

The current rules were worked out through modifications and improvements in the process of practice.

## **Rules for Wushu Competitions**

### **Chapter I: Officials and Their Duties**

#### **Article 1 Officials**

1. One chief referee and one to three assistant chief referees
2. Each panel consists of one referee (head judge) and five to seven judges (including a scorer and a time keeper)
3. One head recorder and two to three recorders
4. One head registrar and two to three registrars
5. One to two announcers

#### **Article 2 Duties**

Directed by the leading body of the championships, the referees and judges shall do their work conscientiously, impartially and accurately. Their duties are as follows:

1. The chief referee shall:
  - 1) Be responsible for competition matters, give guidance to all panels to ensure that the rules be fully implemented and that the judges study and familiarize themselves with the rules and judging methods, and check all preparations before com-

petition starts;

- 2) Explain and solve problems which are unclear or not stated in the rules, but they have no right to modify the rules;
  - 3) Solve problems at his discretion, whenever improper conduct by contestants or serious mistakes by judges occur during competitions;
  - 4) Replace judges as he deems necessary, in the course of the championships;
  - 5) Examine and announce results of competitions and make a report on the judges' work.
2. The assistant chief referees shall:  
Assist the chief referee in his work, or in his absence, (one of them) act as the chief referee.
3. The referee shall:
- 1) Organize the technical study for his panel and make sure that there are no problems in work.
  - 2) Give permission for the re-performance of contestants and make deductions for time violations, or fouls in the commencing move, and/or finishing move, and announced the final scores of contestants;
  - 3) Suggest the chief referee take proper measures when judges are found to have made serious mistakes.
4. The judges shall:
- 1) Carry out the decisions made for the championships and take part in the technical study, and make necessary preparations for competitions;
  - 2) Apply the rules correctly, give scores independently and make detailed notes.
5. The head recorder shall:
- 1) Arrange all the work at the recording office, ex-

amine the namelist of participants and work out the competition program according to requirement of the championships;

- 2) Prepare the recording forms for the competition, examine and verify the results, calculate scores to decide placings.

6. The recorders shall:

Undertake the task assigned by the head recorder.

7. The scorer and time keeper shall:

- 1) Count accurately the competition time of contestants and inform the referee of any time violations;
- 2) Take scores in his own group and calculate the final scores.

8. The head registrar shall:

Take charge of the work at the registration office and contact the chief referees whenever any changes take place.

9. The registrars shall:

- 1) Call the contestants together to make preparations for entering into the competition area according to the order of competition and ask one of the contestants to lead the team, and give the namelist to the referee;
- 2) Check the costumes and apparatus of the contestants.

10. The announcers shall:

Announce to the public, during competitions, the results, regulations, rules, characteristics of each competition event and demonstration event, as well as printed materials on Wushu approved by the leading organ of the Championships.

## **Chapter II: General Rules**

Article 1 Competition format: shall be decided by the competition regulations and shall have:

- 1) Individual event
- 2) Individual all-round event
- 3) Team event

Article 2 Competition events

- 1) *Chang Quan* (long-range boxing)
- 2) *Nan Quan* (southern style boxing)
- 3) *Taiji Quan*
- 4) Broadsword play
- 5) Swordplay
- 6) Spearplay
- 7) Cudgelplay

Article 3 Demonstration events

Any single boxing or apparatus event and any sparring or team event except those already arranged in competition

Article 4 Placings

1. Individual event: The person with the highest score in an event shall be placed first; the person with the second highest score shall be placed second; and so on and so forth.
2. Individual all-round event: The placing shall be decided according to the total points won in the three events (boxing, short apparatus and long apparatus). The person with the highest score shall rank first; the person with the second highest score shall rank second; and so on and so forth.
3. Tie: In case two more contestants or teams have the same scores and if otherwise not stated in the regulations, the following methods shall be adopted:
  - 1) If contestants have the same scores in one of the

individual events, the one with the highest total score in other individual events shall be placed first; and if the tie still remains, they shall be awarded the same place in the event.

- 2) If contestants have the same scores in the individual all-round event, the one who holds more titles in individual events shall be placed first; and if the tie still remains, the second best performances of the contestants tying shall decide the tie; then, if necessary, the third best and so on.
- 3) If teams have the same points, the one who has more champions shall be placed first; and if the tie still remains, the one who has more runners-up shall be counted and so on and so forth.

Article 5 Costumes, entrance, exit, commencing move, finishing move, routine, timekeeping, music, protocol

1. All judges shall wear the same uniforms and emblems
2. Throughout the competition, the contestants shall wear sports uniforms and being barebacked is not permitted.
3. Upon hearing his/her name called, the contestant shall come to greet the head judge with "fist-holding" salute at the designated position, then march into the arena. After the referee nods approval, the contestant shall walk to the starting position and start his/her performance. Once any part of the contestant's body begins to move, the performance is considered to have started and the time starts to count. After the performance, the contestant shall wait for the results at a place outside the competition area. When the final score is given by the referee the contestant shall stand at attention at the designated position to salute the referee with his eyes.

4. **Fist-holding salute.** Stand at attention, press the left palm against the right fist at the chest level about 20-30 cm away from the chest.
5. When the finishing move is done, the contestant shall keep feet close together (watch is stopped), and then turn to the referee. The contestant shall not be permitted to turn to the referee while doing the finishing move.
6. The commencing move and the finishing move shall be done at the same side of the arena and towards the same direction. In case of different commencing or finishing move, the contestant shall inform referee in advance.
7. The stopwatches of the panel are dominant in time keeping and two watches shall be used in each panel. The time in one of the watches that has reached the required time shall be counted as the competition time. Deductions in scoring shall be made when the actual time is inadequate and the time in the stopwatch that is closer to the required time shall be counted as the competition time.
8. Music is not allowed in any competition or demonstration events with the exception of team events.

### **Chapter III: Scoring**

**Article 1** Scoring for competition and demonstration events.

In all events, the perfect score shall be 10 points. The specific criteria of evaluation and deduction are as follows:

1. The scoring criteria for *Chang Quan* (long-range boxing), sword, broadsword, spear and cudgel
  - 1) The quality of movements accounts for six points.

One-tenth of a point shall be deducted whenever a slight inconformity with the technical specifications occurs in any hand form, stance, hand technique, footwork, leg technique, jumping, balance and apparatus technique. An apparent inconformity shall cost 0.2 point, and a serious one 0.3 point. The number of the appearances of sword-finger is counted only in fixed postures (drunkard swordplay also needs sword-finger). Deduction of points is made only once in a total, but it shall not be more than 0.3 point. If several errors occur in a single movement, the deduction shall not be more than 0.3 point.

If the contestant lets the sharp edge of the sword or broadsword touch the hand, arm, body or leg when holding and waving the apparatus, he or she shall be penalized as if committing an inconformity with the specifications. If the contestant mixes the use of sword with that of the broadsword, he or she shall be penalized for the unclear use of apparatus.

- 2) Power and coordination account for two points. Full points (two points) are given to the contestant who performs with full power smoothly and accurately and with clear-cut, coordinated hand, eye and body movements (apparatus and body should also be coordinated).

For a slight inconformity with the specifications, 0.1-0.5 point shall be deducted; for an apparent inconformity, 0.6-1.0 point, and for a serious one, 1.1-2.0 points.

- 3) Spirit, rhythm, style, content, structure and choreography account for two points. Full points

(two points) are given to the contestant who performs in high spirits, in good rhythm, with distinctive style, and rich content, well-knit and varied structure, and well-balanced choreography.

One-tenth to five-tenths of a point shall be deducted for a slight inconformity with the requirements, 0.6-1.0 point for an apparent one and 1.1-2.0 points for a serious one.

## 2. The scoring criteria to *Taiji Quan*

- 1) The quality of movements account for six points. One-tenth of a point shall be deducted when a slight inconformity with the technical specifications occurs in any hand form, hand technique, footwork, or leg technique.

Two-tenths of a point shall be deducted for an apparent inconformity, and 0.3 point for a serious one. The deduction should not be more than 0.3 point if several errors occur in a single movement.

- 2) Power and coordination account for two points. Full points (two points) are given to the contestant who applies power smoothly, steadily, accurately and continuously, and performs up to the requirements for hand forms, eyework, body movements and footwork.

One-tenth to five-tenths of a point shall be deducted for a slight inconformity with the technical requirements, 0.6-1.0 point for an apparent one, and 1.0-2.0 points for a serious one.

- 3) Spirit, pace, style, content, structure, and choreography account for two points. Full points (two points) are given to the contestant who performs

in high spirits with the mind fully concentrated, natural facial expression, proper pace, rich content, well-knit structure and well-balanced choreography.

One-tenth to five-tenths of a point shall be deducted for a slight inconformity with the technical requirements, 0.6-1.0 point for an apparent one, and 1.1-2.0 points for a serious one.

3. Scoring criteria for *Nan Quan* (southern style boxing)

1) The quality of movement accounts for six points.

One-tenth of a point shall be deducted when a slight inconformity with the technical specifications occurs in hand form, stance, hand technique, footwork, leg technique, jumping, or balance. Two-tenths of a point shall be deducted for an apparent inconformity, and 0.3 point for a serious one. The deduction should not be more than 0.3 point if several fouls occur in a single movement.

2) Power and coordination account for two points. Full points (two points) are given to the contestant who performs with full power smoothly and accurately and with clear-cut, well-coordinated hand, eye and body movements.

One-tenth to five-tenths of a point shall be deducted for a slight inconformity to the requirements, 0.6-1.0 point for an apparent one and 1.1-2.0 points for a serious one.

3) Spirit, rhythm, style, content, structure, and choreography account for two points.

Full points are given to the contestant who performs in high spirits, with good rhythm, dis-

tinctive style, rich content, well-knit and varied structure and well balanced choreography.

One-tenth to five-tenths of a point are deducted for a slight inconformity to the requirements, 0.6-1.0 point for an apparent one and 1.1-2.0 points for a serious one.

4. Scoring criteria for other individual events
  - 1) Correctness and clearness account for four points.
  - 2) Smoothness and coordination account for three points.
  - 3) Distinctiveness and rich content account for two points.
  - 4) Concentration and rhythm account for one point.
5. Scoring criteria for set sparring
  - 1) Accuracy and reasonable offence and defence account for four points.
  - 2) Proficiency and good cooperation account for three points.
  - 3) Rich content and well-knit structure account for two points.
  - 4) Lifelike combat and distinctiveness account for one point.
6. Scoring criteria for team events
  - 1) Quality: correct, clear-cut and skillful movements, mind concentration and proficiency account for four points.
  - 2) Content: rich content, distinctive Wushu characteristics with basic technique concerned account for three points.
  - 3) Cooperation: Trimness and harmony account for two points.
  - 4) Structure and choreography: proper structure and harmonious choreography with intended design

account for one point.

**7. Deduction criteria for other errors**

- 1) **Unfinished routine:** No score shall be given to the contestant who does not finish his routine or leaves the arena half way through.
- 2) **Forgetting:** 0.1-0.3 point shall be deducted for forgetfulness according to its degree during competition.
- 3) **Movement affected by apparatus and costumes:** One-tenth to two-tenths of a point shall be deducted whenever:
  - a) any part of the body is entangled by the broadsword fringe or the tassels of the sword, or by any soft apparatus which affects the movements;
  - b) tassels, decorations or costumes fall to the floor;
  - c) costumes are unbuttoned;
  - d) the apparatus touches the ground or the body as a result of carelessness;
  - e) the handle of the apparatus breaks apart.
- 4) **Apparatus deformed, broken or falls down:**

One-tenth to three-tenths of a point shall be deducted if, during the competition, the apparatus is deformed; 0.4 point shall be deducted whenever the apparatus is broken; 0.4 point shall be deducted whenever the apparatus falls down; and 0.3 point shall be deducted if the top of an apparatus is broken but still holds on. In the latter case, to avoid injury, the referee may stop the contestant and let him continue his performance only after the broken part has been taken away.
- 5) **Outside the arena:** One-tenth to two-tenths of a

point shall be deducted if any part of the body touches the ground outside the arena and 0.2 point shall be deducted if the entire body is outside.

- 6) **Losing balance:** One-tenth to two-tenths of a point shall be deducted if an extra supporting movement is added, and 0.3 point shall be deducted if consecutive extra supporting movements occur in one technique. For a fall, 0.3 point shall be deducted. (The above-mentioned six deductions are made by judges.)
- 7) **Commencing and closing movements:** One-tenth of a point shall be deducted for any inconformity with the technical specifications in commencing and closing movements. One-tenth to three-tenths of a point shall be deducted for stalling for time in the commencing or closing movement.
- 8) **Re-performing:**
  - a) When permitted by the referee, the contestant can re-perform without suffering a penalty if he has been interrupted by uncontrollable circumstances;
  - b) The contestant who stops performing due to forgetfulness, faults or broken apparatus may be permitted to re-perform, but one point shall be deducted;
  - c) When a contestant is unable to go on performing because of injuries during competition, the referee has the right to stop him. If he recovers after simple treatment, he may be allowed to do his performance as the last starter in his group. If he is the last one in his group, he may be allowed to compete as the

first starter in the same event the next day. In this case, one point shall be deducted. The contestant who is unable to re-perform at the required time shall be treated as a withdrawer.

- 9) Short of or over required time: One-tenth of a point shall be deducted for a performance that is 0.1-2.0 seconds short or over the required time, and 0.2 point for a performance that is 2.1-4.0 seconds short of the required time, and so forth. In case of *Taiji Quan*, one-tenth of a point shall be deducted for a performance that is 5 seconds short of or over the required time, and so forth. (The above-mentioned three deductions are made by the referee.)

#### Article 2 Scoring Methods

1. Scores: The scores for contestants are the points given by judges according to their actual performances and after the deductions made according to the criteria for the events concerned.
2. Actual scores: The actual scores of contestants are the average points taken from the three middle ones out of the five scores given by the five judges, with the highest and lowest scores left out.
3. Final scores: The final scores are the points given by the referee after making deductions according to items 7) to 9) of "The deduction criteria for other errors."

#### Article 3 Other provisions

1. The time limit for *Taiji Quan* routine shall be five to six minutes while the time limit for all other competition events shall not be less than one minute twenty seconds.  
(no time limit for a demonstration event)

2. **Arena:** Competition shall take place on a 14 m × 8 m carpet marked with lines of 5 cm in width. The center of the two long sidelines shall be marked as the central line.
3. **Forfeiture:** If a contestant fails to compete or perform at the scheduled time, he or she shall be disqualified.