A CULTURAL-HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE MARTIAL ARTS IN FAR EAST ASIA: AN INTRODUCTION TO CHINA AND JAPAN.*

Changing Codes

This essay is about the development of contemporary Asian "martial arts": wu shu (martial method or art) and gung fu (literally, skill achieved over time)[1] from China and the practices of budo from Japan. In order to understand the practices of contemporary Asian "martial arts", it is necessary to look at the cultures and their interaction over time. This is especially true with regard to the evolution of Japanese budo from an earlier form known as bujutsu, for example. That is to say, the evolution of "martial ways" from "martial techniques". This changed the very nature of bushido, which term refers to the code of ethics of Japan's professional soldiers (see Wilson, 1981, and Strandberg, 1984b). Bushido translates literally as "martial gentleman way", i.e., "the way of the warrior". This change from bujutsu to budo altered the code of ethics of Japan's professional soldiers from one of death-dealing to one of life, of personal growth and expression.

The words "martial arts" are surrounded by quotation marks owing to their inexactness in translating the Asian concepts for which they stand. The English word "martial" means warlike, relating to warfare.[2] The majority of American-born teachers in the 1950's and 1960's had trained in Asia during their time in the military. Often their classes, generally composed of military personnel only, were held on military bases, led by men with a military background and focus. Their training and subsequent teaching emphasized combat (jutsu). Often they had not been exposed to the higher aspects of the art, which emphasize non-aggression and humility (do). Still today, many American-born instructors blur the distinctions between the jutsu and the do. While this military approach is accurate for the older Japanese practices of bujutsu, it is inappropriate for the Chinese art and later Japanese form budo. For in a way that is seen as paradoxical -- and often confusing to westerners -- the character pronounced "wu" in Mandarin (Putonghua) and "bu" in

* N.B.: Parenthetical written Chinese and Japanese characters are not given in this paper, mainly because the text uses well-known terms, but also because JASHM lacks the printing facilities at this time for such reproduction. THE EDITORS.

Japanese has the meaning of stopping conflict (Strandberg, 1984a).

While we shall begin with defining wu, it is beyond our scope here to address more of the Asian terms which Westerners find confusing in the practice of the martial arts: terms and concepts such as "energy" (described by the terms ch'i and ki); spirit and mind; tan tien and hara as well as broader issues of cultural views of the body and medicine; Tao and Do, aspects of religion and religious terms used in secular practices. All these are the subjects of another essay by the author which is still in preparation.

At the outset it must be stated that my field of study in terms of physical training and ethnography is China, not Japan. My martial and alchemical experience is Chinese, having trained under Master (Sifu) Share K. Lew of Wong Lung Guan (Yellow Dragon Monastery), Guangdong, since the autumn of 1975.

Definitions

The written Chinese character wu has two parts. The core of the concept is found in radical 77, "to stop".[3] Next is an abbreviated form of the radical 62, "spear" (see Mathews, 1979:131, 503, 1074 and Wilson, 1981). So the meaning begins with, and emphasizes, the process of stopping, not the process of warfare. The practitioner stops the spear, stops conflict.

Yet when we look at the interpretation of wu, we see that its meaning has always had at least two aspects. The first involves the professional's protection of the community at large, as expressed in "The lancers who stop the hostile incursion, thus allowing the people to proceed with their peaceful occupation" (Wilder and Ingram, 1974:220).

The other aspect is personal. On the scale of one-to-one confrontation, it recognizes the potential violence, yet the violence is contained, stopped, through strength and training. It represents training in order not to have to fight; "... to stop the use of weapons and avoid war is truly military" (Mathews, 1979:131). This has always been the ethic of both the individual practitioner and the Chinese nation as a whole. This is reflected in Confucian ethics pertaining to warfare (Aho, 1981) and specifically with the distinction between wu (military) and wen (civil) in China (see Fairbank, 1974, and Rand, 1979). What is interesting is that given the enormous social changes in Japan, this ethic has come to be the basis for their training. A cultural variation allowing for sport competition must be taken into consideration, a variation which Lowry (1982) asserts is non-traditional and generally detrimental to the growth of the

practitioner.

Also the second (personal) aspect includes avoiding personal internal conflict. Of great importance is the cultivation of an inner sense of calmness and security. Being secure in one's own self creates a mood/feeling wherein it is easier for one to relate peacefully to other people and situations. It is in this respect that many older masters of budo are concerned about the current emphasis on competition. Through the non-competitive aspect we can see the goal of the art: being a better, more complete, more compassionate human being.

Reflecting this distinction between military combat and personal growth, people in America who train can be placed under two general categories. The first consists of those who are "professionals under arms", the military, police and security personnel. These are people who face at least potential violence in their daily occupation. They are analogous to the professionals of China and to Japan's bushi.[4]

The second category is that of people who train for personal reasons; for personal security, health, personal growth and expression, or recreation.[5] In this they are similar to the bulk of the practitioners of China, both historically and currently (for an overview see Payne, 1981).

A fundamental point to be taken into consideration is the difference in the social character of contemporary western military training and the Asian martial arts. One of the most basic aspects of western military training is to teach the recruit to lose his or her individuality and to function as an integrated member of a team. Survival in combat, as well as smooth functioning of the social unit, requires that each person know what is expected of him/her, and in return, what can be expected of others. The emphasis is on obeying the rules without personal considerations.

In contrast to this, training in the Asian martial arts, even within the setting of a large class, is seen to be a process of individual learning and growth. If the practitioner ever needs to use the training in 'the street', he or she is likely to be alone, not part of a modern military combat unit, which has the option of calling in an air strike. The core of the Asian art teaches the individual to know and develop his or her own abilities and to rely upon self alone. The art is a means of understanding and fulfilling personal ability. This emphasis on cultivation of each person's uniqueness, is one of the most drastic distinctions that can be made between modern western military and traditional Asian "martial" training. This difference in the focus of training, while often not addressed by

others writers, provides another reason for my reluctance to use the word "martial" when describing Asian practices (see also, Steele, 1981).

Some clarifying comments on methodology and focus are thus called for: our subject is restricted to the legitimate martial artist in the cultures examined. In Japan, that means the bushi. We will therefore not talk about ronin, peasants practicing illegally, pirates, ninjas, or yakusa. Similarly, in China, the focus is on the legitimate practitioner, the individual. Included are both professionals, such as caravan guards, and individuals who train to protect themselves and their families in times of lawlessness. We have excluded government soldiers, secret societies, revolutionaries, bandits, pirates and the clergy, recognizing that the above distinctions in many cases overlapped.[6] A difficult case is presented by the paochia defense units and the local militia. In most cases they seem to be 'citizen soldiers' rather than people who devoted their lives to martial training. For that reason they are seen here as part of a formal military rather than as part of a "martial arts" activity, as here defined. It is also beyond our scope in this essay to examine the social structures of the countries concerned; however, a brief overview of some relevant information is to be found in the notes.[7]

We must remind readers that the practices of historical Japan are not those of today. The older forms of bujutsu were primarily weapons-systems for the bushi, the professional soldiers of the samurai class. Today's arts of budo are largely, but not exclusively, weaponless. Similarly, in the People's Republic of China (PRC), the newer standardized forms of wu shu are often criticized as being more competition than combat-oriented.[8] Also, in both China and Japan, many arts and practices have been lost over the centuries.[9]

The Issues of Embodiment

The way a culture views the body and its martial training reflects a great deal about the culture's worldview, its sense of itself, and its "personality". It seems that the place to begin is with the issue of how the culture approaches and understands the body. Here we see issues pertaining both to secular and sacred areas of interest. Some topics overlap because categories are not defined in the same ways from one culture to another: notable among these are "art" and "expression", as well as "education" and "socialization". It is, for example, a fundamental issue whether or not martial practices are rightly considered as "art".

There is a body of anthropological literature concerning social aspects and symbolisms of the body. For example, Benthall and Polhemus (1975) discuss the body as a medium of expression; Blacking (1977) contains a varied collection of essays on the anthropology of the body, and Polhemus (1978) has edited an equally varied collection called The Body Reader. Conspicuously absent are studies of martial practices. A dominant figure who deals with some broader issues concerning the body is the late Michel Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986).

From the secular standpoint, one would wish to see more attention paid to a number of issues surrounding the vexed question of embodiment. For example, what are the culture's values and mores and how are they made physically manifest? What character traits, such as loyalty, bravery, aggression, are considered important and why? What practices, if any, are considered taboo? What are the features of kinship, social stratification, division of labor and issues of gender involved? What is the role of the body in the economic sphere? What of industry and technology? Political organization? Architecture and Symbolism?

Of the sacred, one recognizes issues that emerge which are as basic as the notion of definitions of "religion" and the "sacred" themselves. We may ask, what is any given culture's interaction with nature and are there forms of physical practice that encode these? What are the issues of consciousness, often discussed in anthropology under the rubrics of "trance" and "altered states of consciousness"? What is a given culture's understanding of magic, magical power and magic's physical basis? Are there equivalents to the Polynesian term mana, or Asian terms, such as ch'i, ki and prana? Or European terms, such as pneuma, ether, psi, bio-electricity and bio-magnetism?[10]

Some of these implied topics are starting to be addressed: notable are field reports of participant observers, specifically, Michael Davis's work on T'ai-chi Ch'uan (1988), Catherine Hodge McCoid's work on auto-ethnography inside a karate dojo (1988), Stephanie Morgan's work on self and identity in karate (1988), and Marie-Christine Yeu's studies of the teaching of T'ai-chi Ch'uan in Shanghai and San Francisco (1988). While these are very preliminary exercises, the questions indicate some of the larger cultural issues within which I and my colleagues have attempted to situate the data presented in our papers. We hope such writings serve as an impetus for others to take an interest in some of these problems as well.

In dealing with the anthropology of the body, one really has to begin with Marcel Mauss's classic work, The Techniques of the Body:

> I was well aware that walking or swimming, for example, and all sorts of things of the same type, are specific to determinate societies; that the Polynesians do not swim as we do, that my generation did not swim as the present generation does. But what social phenomena did these represent? (1973:70-71).

Having recognized the variation of cultural actions, Mauss took an even larger view of the instrumentality of the body. The point here is that understanding martial arts provides access to the study of the body as an instrument. Mauss saw that a culture trains people to move and to use their bodies in particular systematic ways:

> I made and went on making for several years, the fundamental mistake of thinking that there is technique only when there is an instrument. I had to go back to ancient notions, to the platonic position on technique for Plato spoke of a technique of music and in particular of a technique of the dance to extend these notions ... In this case all that need be said is quite simply that we are dealing with techniques of the body. The body is man's first and most natural instrument. Or more accurately, not to speak of instruments, man's first and most natural technical object, and at the same time technical means, is his body (Mauss, 1973:75).

A lack of attention to the physical body is a none too subtle remnant of Cartesian dualism, and fortunately for us, Mauss provides a way to deal with certain problems. He spends time outlining several systems of classification which fall under the general rubric of issues pertaining to cultural aspects of movement and to spatial understanding. And this brings us to the issue of training the body. By rigorous training the body itself is transformed, refined, by the repetition of bodily techniques. The body becomes a weapon, but with degrees of sophistication that will not be found in people who manifest chemically-induced out-of-control behavior. Mauss was the first to recognize the importance of a systematic study of bodily training and technique. He says:

> I believe precisely that at the bottom of all our mystical states are techniques of the body which we have not studied but which were perfectly studied by China and India even in very remote periods. This socio-psycho-biological study should be made. I think that there are necessarily biological means of entering into 'communion with God'. Although in the end breath technique, etc., is only a basic aspect in India and China, I believe this technique is more

> widespread. At any rate on this point we have the methods to understand a great many facts which we have not understood hitherto (Mauss, 1973:86-87).

The Chinese Art and Medicine

Taoism, as the oldest organized religion of China, saw as fundamental (1) harmony, based on physical experience of interaction with the rest of Nature, rather than abstract thought, (2) anatomy and physiology, recognizing the circulation of the ch'i as the basis for health, and (3) longevity and the quest for physical immortality, including alchemical cultivation of the energy systems of the body through exercise, diet and pharmacology as fundamental. These set the tone and the methodology of all aspects of Chinese medicine including the "martial art" (see Needham, 1970, 1962, 1976; Hu, 1975; Orellana, 1981a and b, and 1983; Berk, 1979; Shawn, 1929).

Certainly not all martial systems were alchemical.[11] Yet alchemy defined the body and set the direction of study and cultivation. Most systems of alchemy drew upon martial practices, to strengthen the body and prepare it for the cultivation of the internal energies. From this background came the "internal" or "soft" systems (schools). This reflected a Taoist view of the human body as an important interconnected aspect of a unified physical and metaphysical universe.

Contrasted with the internal schools were the "external" or "hard" schools. Under this heading are found secular and some Buddhist systems which either separated early from Taoism or developed independently. These were systems of survival that became the systems for the training of soldiers. It is here that Buddhism had the strongest influence, especially through the Shao Lin Temple.

Many practitioners, especially of southern systems such as Choy Li Fut or Wing Chun trace their lineage to Buddhist clerics who fled following the burnings of the Shao Lin monasteries. (Chang, 1978; Gast, 1984). Wing Chun is said to have been founded by a woman, Yim Wing Chun, who trained with a Buddhist nun, Ng Mui (Lee, 1972). Choy Li Fut is one of the most popular systems of southern China (and currently in Hong Kong). Choy and Li were both family styles, while "fut" is Cantonese for Buddha.

Where Taoism emphasized transformation of the body along principles harmonious to a long life, Buddhism, which was the spiritual aspect of all of the traditional Japanese arts, emphasized transcendence; the overcoming of the body and its limitations.[12] This is a rather subtle yet important distinction. Transcendence in this context was suited for combat

and martial aggression.

To understand this, we need to comprehend the connection between the gung fu and the practice of medicine. All of the personal, in contrast to the military, practices of the art in China placed relatively greater emphasis on preserving life. This reflected a continued adherence to the traditional axioms of Confucian morality and medical systems. Both were characterized by a preference for the preservation of life. The classical aphorism often paraphrased is this: "Avoid rather than hurt, hurt rather than maim, maim rather than kill".

In China, as part of the ethic of avoiding the injuring of another, those who had the ability to hurt were honour bound to have the ability to heal. This included not only those who trained under them, but also the population in general. Traditionally (and still today) one of the most basic criteria for determining the validity of a gung fu sifu (instructor) is his or her (sima) ability in the healing arts.

These attitudes are reflected in the way the practitioner was trained. Absolutely fundamental to authentic private gung fu training (Taoist, Buddhist and secular) was the use of herbal formulae, healing techniques such as acupuncture, tui na massage, and historically -- in at least some cases -- specific exercises and meditations to cultivate and nourish the internal energies, now generally subsumed under the heading of the practice of ch'i gung (qigong).[13] The goal is to keep the body strong and to heighten the senses. One of the hallmarks of a true gung fu man was, and is, a long life. Early death has always been seen as a manifestation of being out of harmony, either in terms of individual health or in relation to an opponent in combat.

In the Japanese medical system as a whole, there seems to be relatively more emphasis on acupuncture, and relatively less on pharmacology, since many of the herbs were not native to Japan. There seems to be almost no practice of supplemental exercise to cultivate and nourish the "energy systems" (Otsuka, 1976).

Past and present Japanese martial systems place much less emphasis on the medical aspects. Since the people who were training were soldiers, there was little or no emphasis on preserving life. While some were trained in first aid, it was not a fundamental feature of individual training. Supplemental herbal formulae and exercises for the development of the ch'i (ki) were generally not found. Even today, when asked about the development of ki, nearly all traditional Japanese sensi (instructors) respond by saying, "Wait, it will develop on its own". The major exception here is use of supplemental exercises for developing sensitivity and the generation of ki in Aikido.

Overall, the Japanese ethic reflects a fundamentally different view of the body and its relation to the rest of Nature when compared with the Chinese. In the Japanese art, the body is an instrument, a tool, a vehicle to be overcome. In the Chinese art, the body was a sacred part of nature to be nourished. However, in Japan, increased warfare, especially after the 15th century, resulted in fewer physicians; and the disruption of education helped to change attitudes toward surgery and battlefield medicine (Veith, 1985).

Originally, the Chinese-based ethic regarding the body forbade surgery since the body was inviolate. A mutilated body was seen as being disrespectful to the ancestors, although foot-binding did not count since women were not seen as part of the patrilineal lineage structure. We may well ask, is it not possible, along with surgery and medicine's increasing role as part of the military machine, that the body became secularized, and seen less as a part of Nature? Under the samuari, medicine changed from a practice of saving life for its own sake (because life was part of Nature) to a mechanical process of repairing soldiers to wage battle more effectively. Here we see the body as a "tool", a machine, not unlike Western medicine's view of the body. During the time of the Jesuit mission to Japan (circa 1543-1597), medicine was a major means of communication. Following the expulsion of the Portugese and Jesuits, all religions were separated from the practice of medicine (Veith, 1985:319). This reflected the earlier Shinto disdain for medical problems, wounds and uncleanliness. Thus, a completely secular view of medicine came to dominate.

European medicine in Japan became associated with the Dutch, who maintained a trading post in Nagasaki. Later, under the Meiji Restoration (1867), practices of Chinese traditional medicine were opposed; however, study of Chinese and Japanese herbs and drugs continued using the methods of natural scientific study (Otsuka, 1976:334). Does this possible secularization tie in with the Zen ethic of inseparableness of life and death? Also possibly tied in is the bushi's surrendering of his body to the daiymo.[14]

Interesting, too, is the Japanese concept of mu shin (no mind). Mu shin was tied to the goal of keeping the murderous rage of the bushi under control and was one of the foremost early reasons for the use of a pacifistic religion such as Buddhism to train soldiers. Within the brutality of warfare, Zen provided quiet sitting meditations, which helped to develop a sense of movement without thought.

Rather than just being an element of physical expertise or

technique, it is what anthropological literature seems to call an "altered state of consciousness" developed via meditation and non-attachment. Suzuki points out that

> ... this state of mind gives itself up unreservedly to an unknown "power" that comes to one from nowhere and yet seems strong enough to possess the whole field of consciousness and make it work for the unknown (1970:94).

The ability to focus on the issue at hand, to block out all distraction, both external and internal, allows the practitioner to move in a way that transcends mere physical technique. (Draeger and Smith, 1969; Ratti and Westbrook, 1973). While a similar state is recognized in gung fu, there is not the idealization of 'no mind' that is found in the Japanese arts. In Japan, mu shin is a dominant topic of concern and study, while in China it is not.

Training

In China, while training methods were certainly demanding, out and out brutality to the body which resulted in injuries was seen as counterproductive because it limited the student's training time while he or she recovered. Also, most of the practitioners were peasants, who needed to work for a living. Training injuries prevented earning money with which to pay the "doctor". The doctor, especially in a small village, was, as likely as not, a gung fu sifu. This view contrasted strongly with Japanese training methods, where Zen emphasized transcendence, giving the samurai a worldview that emphasized detachment from the world and austerity. Underlying the older bujutsu and the newer budo, there is an emphasis on pushing the body past its limits. That is to say that the body is a "vehicle" whose limitations must be overcome. On a functional level this ideology manifests itself as an emphasis on direct head-on combat, epitomized by the creed, "no retreat, no surrender". Suzuki says that

> The fighter is to be always single-minded with one object in view: to fight, looking neither backward nor sidewise. To go straight forward in order to crush the enemy is all that is necessary for him. He is therefore not to be encumbered in any possible way, be it physical, emotional, or intellectual ... A good fighter is generally an ascetic or stoic, which means he has an iron will. This, when needed, Zen can supply (1959:62).

The focus is fast and aggressive, seen through the importance placed in karate on the "one-punch-kill". This manifests itself in brutality, not just to the opponent, but in

the way the stylist trains his own body and mind, that Chinese stylists fail to understand. A classic example here is the difference in the training of the hands in karate and gung fu.[15]

Zen is important for the way it influenced the art, training, and the views of the body in Japan. Suzuki remarks that Zen sustained the bushi morally by teaching them never to look back after a decision had been made and philosophically by teaching them to treat life and death with indifference. Also, "... Zen discipline is simple, direct, self-reliant, self-denying; its ascetic tendency goes well with the fighting spirit" (Suzuki, 1970:62).

Zen emphasized single-minded dedication to the task at hand and transcendence of the world including transcendence of the body. The body was to be treated simply as a vehicle; a means to an end. This ideology made little differentiation between life and death, which resulted in a sense of purpose and a deep-seated regulation of life for its practitioners. The attitude of acceptance of death became a hallmark of the samurai,[16] and is to be seen still in the austere decor of the traditional Japanese dojo (training hall).[17]

It is important to mention here the relationship of Zen to other forms of Buddhism because Zen did not constitute the entire corpus. Other sects served other classes of society, such as Tendai for the royal family, and Jodo for commoners (Suzuki, 1970:63). Zen, with its emphasis on spontaneity, was particularly suited to the bushi, whose lives depended on quick, non-intellectual responses to combat. One particular feature of Zen, compared to other schools of Buddhism, is the lack of emphasis placed upon the notion of reincarnation. Zen is more focused on the here and now. What happens after death seems to be less important.

In contrast with Japanese aesthetic starkness, the Chinese use of decor includes characteristic features of an altar with statues or paintings of the style's founder, or perhaps a statue or painting of Kwan Ti, a god -- more akin to a patron saint-- of war and gung fu (Johnston, 1921). Often classes begin with the offering of incense. Also, typically, the Chinese class structure is different from the Japanese: classes are more informal, often suggesting open gymnasia. In some cases students might stop for tea brewed casually off to one side of the room (Smith, 1974). Generally, there are racks of traditional weapons (Werner, 1972), different types of punching bags, photographs, sometimes pieces of furniture or couches in the studio. It is not uncommon for family members to "hang out" and socialize while others train. It is clearly a more family oriented space, and many studios look like someone's living room.

Mechanics

In Japan both weapons (kendo, iai-do, and naginata-do) and empty hand systems (karatedo, judo and Aikido) are relatively more linear and technically not as complex as the Chinese arts, especially in kata (forms). The Japanese moves are executed back and forth in straight lines and do not use "circular entrapment", a particular technique of the Chinese. The Japanese styles are more like western fencing which takes place in a narrow rectangular area in contrast to boxing, for example, which moves much more freely and the opponents circle one another.

In China empty hand, weaponless forms were often patterned after the movements of animals. Clearly this is an extremely complex subject (which will be addressed in future work). In many cases entire systems were based on metaphorical connections with animals, such as, five animal Shao Lin, Eagle Claw, Tiger Claw, Praying Mantis, Monkey, Dragon, and the origin of T'ai-chi Ch'uan is based on the movements of the snake and crane. This was part of the cultural and linguistic importance of following the patterns of nature in order to learn and thus to develop spiritually.

In Japan the bujutsu arts were weapon-based, with less emphasis on forms. What forms there were, were not based on animal movements, but upon human physiological efficiency with regard to killing. In China killing was seen as a violation of Nature. In Japan Nature was not an issue. Killing was the sole purpose of bujutsu training. It is axiomatic in anthropology that differences of this kind are taken into consideration. In this case it is the individual's place in a culturally defined concept of Nature. It is to be hoped that by now readers are convinced of the value of understanding "martial" art forms. We believe that they encapsulate the forms of life of a culture and reveal primary modes of behavior regarding ideas of violence, aggression and combat in a unique and direct way.

In Japanese styles of training, the application of techniques and the identification of blocks and punches are self-evident. Karate and the grappling arts of sumo, jujutsu, and judo, use movements that Westerners can identify as powerful and based on factors understandable to Western physics, i.e., muscular strength, speed, torque and gravity.[18] Also, in karate we see an emphasis on breaking wood, bricks, etc., as a demonstration of power, technique and focus. The classic case is that of Mas Oyama killing a bull with one punch, epitomizing both the use of muscular power and aggression.

Technically it is important to note, however, that much of

karate functions with a "one count rhythm". That is, if one thinks of counting beats as with a metronome, the block of an incoming attack is done on the first beat, with a counter move (usually the other hand) punching on the next full beat. It has been said that this one count rhythm grows out of karate's background of the training of soldiers and the need for simplicity in effective technique.

Classically, the Chinese art is far more elusive because it is rhythmically far more complex. There is a fundamentally different way of moving that is more relaxed and (some would say) "flowery". There are more circular moves with few or no head-on confrontations, and with several specific moves hidden within more general movements, in the sense that there are variations possible with parts of the limb that are movement analogs to musical themes and variations. Sifu Lew has said that the Chinese art relies on angles and leverage rather than brute strength. In contrast to the "one punch kill" of karate are the Chinese techniques of (1) simultaneous blocking and counter-punching with the same hand, (2) multiple impact, which consists of beginning an attack with one or the other of the hands, and following through with the same elbow and/or shoulder, with the force of the entire body behind them, (3) "broken" rhythm, which for the practitioner comprises working on the beat and the half beat, rather than waiting for the next full beat, and (4) perhaps the most difficult technique to learn, which is variously referred to as "the snake body" or "the reeling silk" technique. The latter uses the joints and the upper body in a twisting corkscrew-like manner. Finally, there is the notion of using the internal energies for defense against incoming blows and for channeling the body into an attack, which is often referred to as "issuing power" (for more thorough discussion see Wong, 1977, and Hsu, 1983). Superficially, these features of the Chinese art often lead western observers to think that the Chinese styles have less power. The Chinese analogy is "A bamboo tree leaning with the wind, as opposed to an oak, which being more solid resists and is broken".

Tactics and Schooling

One of the most important distinctions between Taoist systems such as T'ai-chi Ch'uan and Pa kua (Ba Gua) as opposed to Buddhist or secular systems is that the former have absolutely no "attack". They never initiate combat, choosing rather to respond by avoiding or countering an aggressor's attack. This was an explicit Chinese ethic long before the creation of Japanese Aikido.

Evidence for this is to be found, I believe, in the classical style of warfare which existed in China. Rather than

engage in direct confrontation, the tactic was to allow the enemy to enter. From there, the defender preferred flanking and small hit and run tactics to wear down the opponent, and cut him off from his supply lines (Kierman, 1974, and Franke, 1974).

China has as bloody a history of warfare as any other country, which involved both internal fighting and constant threats from neighboring barbarians to the north and northwest. Yet, there has always been a cultural ideology based largely on the principles of Confucianism, which abhors violence in favor of harmony. Traditionally, while the military had been recognized as necessary, it had been scorned by the scholar-gentry. The classic view is summed up in the often paraphrased adage, "Good iron is not turned into nails; good men are not turned into soldiers". Within that historical context, the military was controlled by the bureaucracy and those who made their living by the martial arts were considered second class citizens and scorned.

The scholar-gentry's disdain for combat left the martial arts classified as a peasant occupation, except for those who passed military exams. Those who were unsuited to the rigors of important scholarly examinations had the option of these military exams. Candidates for these were tested primarily on physical skills, such as archery, horsemanship and weightlifting. The exams also included a written section dealing with the classic military texts such as Sun Tzu's The Art of War (Sun Tzu, 1971 ; Hu, 1981b and c; Powell, 1955). Admittedly less prestigious, the military exams remained an option, and the military licentiates were entitled to the respect given to officials in general. Still, the military was not trusted, and anyone whose career advanced too quickly or fortuitously was seen as a possible threat to bureaucratic order, and they were feared.

The historical situation in Japan was different, although the early history provides evidence of the presence of some of the same Confucian values. However, in Japan, the profession of arms was valued and admired, to the point that in the medieval era, militarism became (along with Zen and its valuation of aesthetics) one of the guiding principles of the culture. Under bushido, military virtue, including bravery and loyalty, became paramount.[19]

In practical terms, war in Japan was different from war in China. Along with the importance of bravery went self-aggrandized personal combat. It was the case that before (or in the place of) large scale combat, each side would send out a champion, who began by proclaiming his name, his accomplishments and his lineage. When a large scale battle did ensue, it was really best understood as a number of personal duels which

occurred all at once. These battles were of course always to the death, with the winner severing the head of the loser as a trophy. There were functionally no large scale coordinated tactics (see Brinkley, 1975; Hosey, 1981, and Benedict, 1974).

The formation of the samurai class provided several elements which are relevant here: one was the closing of the class to peasants, preventing upward social mobility. The second was the institutionalization of the mandate of service to the daiymo, eclipsing the earlier Confucian-based ethic of filial piety. The third, and perhaps most important, was that bujutsu became the exclusive province of the samurai. Especially following the disarming of the peasants in the sword and the gun hunt of 1588 (see Perrin, 1979 for documentation), the wearing of two swords by a samurai -- especially the exclusive katana -- became a central symbol of rank. As a badge of social status and as a weapon of individual combat, the katana ("the samurai sword") came to influence Japanese culture, if in no other way, through the development of the cult of the sword, which stemmed from the katana's position as a symbol of noble birth. Once disarmed, peasants were totally excluded from the legitimate practice of martial arts. This policy of social control was later practiced during periods of Japanese occupation of Okinawa and Korea.

Seppuku (Suicide)

The bushi saw the need to be prepared to meet death at any time. All of the literature emphasizes the importance of the bushi being willing to lay down his life in service. The popular view within the martial art is that the bushi saw themselves as already dead, having nothing to lose. I have not found that extreme a specific view represented in the literature (see Suzuki, 1970:61-85, for more thorough discussion).

Of major importance is the phenomenon of suicide (seppuku). This has been given coverage by Benedict (1974), Nitobe (1969), and Seward (1968). Suffice it to say here that with the replacement of the duties of filial piety, death in the service of the daimyo fulfilled all of the bushi's responsibilities. Suicide thus became

> ... an institution, legal and ceremonial. An invention of the middle ages, it was a process by which warriors could expiate their crimes, apologise for errors, escape from disgrace, redeem their friends, or prove their sincerity (Nitobe, 1969:116).

Suicide was in many cases seen as an obligation, as in the prevention of capture. In such cases, death was inevitable. Suicide allowed the bushi to retain his dignity and show disdain

for death. Women, as members of the samurai class, were under the same obligation and had to show the same disdain for death. For that matter, the bushi was ready, if necessary, to sacrifice his family. Bravery brought prestige to the practitioner. It was preferable to exile, to being outcast as a ronin,[20] or having one's swords taken.

Such codes and practices connected with life and death affected not only the bushi, but also the commoners. Codified under the Tokugawa and reflecting earlier de facto practices, the bushi had the legal authority to kill on the spot any commoner who failed to show the proper respect (Ratti and Westbrook, 1973:95-6). This represents a cultural acceptance of violence and a lack of respect for human life that we in the contemporary west can barely fathom.

On the other hand, martial artists in China held their lives dear. There were always heroes who sacrificed themselves for a greater cause, but by being heroes, they were the exception (Liu, 1967). Suicide among artists was practically unknown. In general, killing oneself insulted the ancestors and prevented one from fulfilling the obligations to both ancestors and descendents.

On the whole, the only people who committed suicide in China were comparatively young wives who through the act struck back at abusive mothers-in-law and intolerable domestic conditions. There are a few known cases of older women, who felt betrayed by a son's disloyalty (demonstrated by a son's siding with his wife against her) which resulted in fears concerning a lack of security in her physical welfare.[21]

It is important to understand that women were not really considered to be part of the patriarchal lineage. They were turned out by their natal kin at marriage and they were not really accepted into their husband's lineage. A woman's only means to security was through the birth of a son. Then, and only then, did a woman attain any measure of security and prestige. Given that mothers-in-law treated daughters-in-law as virtual slaves, in some cases, the only recourse for a life of hopeless desperation was suicide. The act also had the advantage of causing the mother-in-law to lose face and, as the source of the turmoil, of forcing her to deal with possible legal consequences.

There are also documented cases of women of the gentry killing themselves over questions of honour, and there existed the socially acceptable practice of a newly-made widow following her husband in death, somewhat like the practice of "suttee" in ancient India. Dying this way brought a woman's name much praise as a chaste widow, and it prevented difficult social and economic

consequences following her loss of material support.

Wolf's excellent article, 'Women and Suicide in China' (1975), discusses male suicide within Chinese society also. Her data does not specifically deal with the subset of males who practice the martial art, probably because they did not usually commit suicide. Overall, suicide in China was an ultimate act of desperation by the most disenfranchised sector of society.

Another aspect of Chinese social structure that was missing in Japan was the strong bond of familial obligations which extended beyond the deaths of individuals. The practices of filial piety and fung shui were informed by the belief that the ancestors could influence events on earth for the betterment (or to the detriment) of their descendents. Thus, they were owed reverence. Not only did the living have an obligation to honour the deceased, but the deceased had obligations to assist their descendents with good fortune (see Ahern, 1973, and Freedman, 1966). This is in strong contrast to the samurai, whose death ended his or her obligations.

While on the surface it might seem the professional soldiers of Japan and the young wives of China had little, if anything, in common, we must delve more deeply. Both sets of persons were without personal direction and control in their lives. The samurai lived only to serve the daimyo; young wives only to produce male heirs and thereby gain a position of personal security. For both groups suicide was usually a matter of honour.

But here the situations diverge: in China, women made a personal choice to commit suicide as the last possible protest and redress against grievances. In Japan, for men or women, it was usually the last act of obedience. For the individual samurai, it was the culmination of a life of training in the code of bushido. For the young Chinese wife it was the culmination of a lifetime of powerlessness and despair.

Rank Structures

In Japan, the art was open, a source of pride. This openness is reflected in the relatively large amount of material available on bushido, often a major topic heading (Ackroyd, 1985). Schools (ryu) for the training of young bushi were open to anyone of samurai rank. Ratti and Westbrook list 52 ryu each specializing in a particular type of training, archery, use of the lance, swimming in armour, etc. (1973:154-69), while Draeger and Smith list 34 (1969:83-84; also see Hosey, 1982). It is here, with the formalization of rank structures that we see the institution of kyu (student) and dan ("black belt") ranks which

continue today in the Japanese arts. Patterned after the military, this kind of ranking was copied by all groups, including artisans and the clergy (Ratti and Westbrook, 1973:34). This reflects a fairly rigid and long-lived system of social stratification in Japan. Nitobe (1969), when addressing the education of the samurai, chose to examine bushido primarily as an ethical system instead of focusing attention on social stratification. His discussion addressed topics such as justice, courage and benevolence, which is a unique and valuable approach to the subject because it reflected a change of thinking in Japan at the turn of the century. It was here that bushido became a predominantly moral code, rather than solely a physical approach to killing.

In contrast, the Chinese art was mostly secret (Draeger and Smith, 1969, and Chang, 1978). That is to say that it is unaccompanied by the formal, publicly recognized system which exists in Japan. While there are many books available which deal with the physical techniques of particular systems, there is very little writing available which deals with the place of the martial art within Chinese society. The reason for this is that the art was always taught within the family. Membership in a practitioner's group was based on natal or adoptive kinship relations (see Hu, 1982a, for titles and definitions of teachers). The formal system, of belt ranking that is prominent in Japan simply never existed in China. Rather, the hierarchy of graded practices, of accomplishments, etc., was patterned after the family structure (see Wong, 1977). This was also the case for the structures of secret societies. In some cases, especially in the south where single surname villages were the rule, there was often a teacher hired for the village by the family organization.[22]

Historically, especially in the north, there were knights errant. Liu refers to them as yu-hsia, which he translates as yu, meaning "wandering", and hsia, "to force or coerce". He defines them as men who wandered the countryside of northern China using force to right injustices. He dates the first appearance of these men during the Warring States Period (403-221 B.C.), citing Ssu-ma Ch'ien. He refers to them as individuals who chose to follow ideals of altruism, justice, individual freedom, personal loyalty, courage, truthfulness and mutual faith, honour and fame, generosity and contempt for wealth. He produces evidence that tends to support the conclusion that the knights came from all social classes. They were heroes of the people in unsettled times of limited governmental protection.

During Han times, the knights were seen as a threat to governmental authority and were suppressed. Some continued to function, however, and they seem to have been characterized by

chivalrous behavior. By the Sung period, the "knights" had disappeared from the scene, and their more modern counterparts--individual martial artists -- had become the second class citizens that the literature recognizes (Liu, 1967).

Yet we see that in popular fiction the swordsmen were one of the three most popular characters, filling a niche that in America is filled by cowboys and adventurers. It is largely from the swordsmen genre that contemporary gung fu movies from Hong Kong draw their material. These have helped perpetuate a romantic notion of the individual gung fu man that is not fully in keeping with the historical/cultural record (Malmud, 1985; Ruhlmann, 1964).

Hu reports four "legitimate" martial occupations. They were armed escorts, guards or body guards, traveling medicine men or showmen, and martial arts teachers (1981c:47, 1982a and b). Little is available in professional literature. What there is is mostly fiction, perhaps the classic case in point being Heroes of the Marsh (Shi and Luo, 1981).

The personal attributes of the Chinese artists in history seem to be the same as the ones in fiction; that is to say, they demonstrate honesty, bravery, exuberance and straightforwardness in a society of extreme social conventions and social manoeuvering. Yet, they were it seems, usually without firm loyalties and given to excessive drinking which often led to outbursts of inappropriate, uncontrolled violence. For the most part, they were strangers in a culture centered around the village, and where the sense of place was second only to family. They were strangers in a culture that feared and distrusted outsiders who were not held in check by established networks of reciprocal social obligations.

Even less well known, because of limited translations into English, is the realm of illegal activities. This is the underground world of gambling dens, brothels, extortion and violence, wherein these practitioners provided physical protection. This was a world of thieves, guilds and councils of criminal leaders beyond, and in some cases, overlapping the law (Gast, 1983). For a rare bibliographic view into this world, the reader is referred to Deng Ming-Dao's Seven Bamboo Tablets of the Cloudy Satchel (1987). See also the fictional character, Judge Dee, in the work of Robert Van Gulik (1976).

Two comparative points need to be made with Japan. The first is that, especially under the Tokugawa, we see class distinctions within the samurai. The wealthier and more influential began to emphasize literacy and administrative skills in order to better serve. The bulk of the bushi, while still

semi-nobles, lived a life not very different from the peasants.

The behavior of the latter was very similar to the Chinese artists who were given to drinking, brawling and carousing. There is one very notable exception: while the Chinese artists often practiced celibacy, bushi tended to be extremely lascivious. One aspect of the different view of the body and training seems to have been that bushi did not endorse the Taoist concept of sperm retention as important for health. Again we see very different cultural concepts of the body and how it is trained.

Weaponry

Starting with China we see that weapon-use was divided into two categories according to the people who used them: professionals and clerics, on the one hand, peasants, on the other. For clerics and professionals a vast array of traditional weapons was available. They are still seen and taught today in gung fu schools (Werner, 1972, and Draeger and Smith, 1969). Types of weapons included many which were attached to poles, such as single- and double-headed spears. A Kwando is a pole weapon resembling a curved sword attached to a pole, sometimes misguidedly referred to as a "battle axe". The weapon is frequently depicted in pictures and statues, being carried by Kwan Ti (see above, p.64), a figure who is generally identified as a "god of war". Tiger forks are a pole weapon with a three-pronged head, commonly identified as a "pitchfork" or curved "trident". Monks' spades are a pole weapon with a wide, flat double-edged blade. They were carried by Buddhist monks both for fighting and for burying bodies found along the road, hence its name. Three-section staves were made up of three medium length staves, loosely attached to allow the sections to swing independently. There were also straight double-edged swords, sabres, whip-chains, daggers and butterfly knives. These were used both for practical purposes and personal development. While individuals sometimes became attached to particular weapons--especially if the weapon is considered to be blessed or possessed of a mystical attribute of its own -- as a rule, weapons were seen as tools. There was little use of armour except for infrequent use of woven rattan shields.

The peasants did not have formal weapons on hand, with the possible exception of knives. Their "arsenal" consisted mostly of the tools or implements they had to hand, for example, meat cleavers and other kitchen and household utensils, poles, hoes, fans, long-stemmed smoking pipes, chopsticks and sitting benches which were similar in size and shape to modern saw horses. In this respect the situation was very similar to that in Okinawa. This rather utilitarian attitude towards the weapons and tools of

Chinese "martial" art made it very difficult for practitioners to understand the bushi's relationship to swords. The katana is generally considered to be the soul of the samurai (Nitobe, 1969; Suzuki, 1970; Ratti and Westbrook, 1973; Brinkley, 1975).[23] What is important here is the katana both as a work of art and as a weapon. Manufacture of swords shows a well-developed metallurgy. It was a clear manifestation of a relatively higher level of technology than in China. During the resumption of trade during the Ming period, Japanese swords were imported into China in relatively large numbers. Trade records from 1483 show that China imported 37,000 swords from Japan (Fairbank, et al., 1973:384). To my knowledge, no one seems to have any idea what happened to them, and they seem to be unaccounted for in gung fu lore.

What does it mean that the sword is the soul of the samurai? It appears in use to be a metaphor. Yet it is expressed in concrete terms, as though the bushi actually believed it as such. I have been unable to get past the cliche to determine if the bushi actually believed it literally or used it as a metaphor. For those smiths who forged the blades, the process of manufacture, of fasting, prayer and the demanding physical work next to the heat of the forge, the entire process had aspects of physical purification and alchemy.

What many Chinese stylists do not understand is how the bushi could see an object as their soul. Gung fu men can see how the blade could be an extension and an expression of the cutting edge of the spirit. Yet the sword is still an object external to the body, forged by a smith, rather than via the individual's own alchemical practices. Given the characteristics of Zen, this putting of "their center" into a tool stymies many Chinese stylists.

The armour of Japan was also more highly developed. Different from European armour, it allowed for more fluidity, and because it extended past the body, it tended to eliminate the need for a shield, allowing the wearer to use both hands for wielding weaponry. Visually, it gave the wearer a larger-than-life appearance. In keeping with this enlargement was the custom of painting fierce expressions on the helmets (for more detailed discussion, see Ratti and Westbrook, 1973:184-225, and Hakuseki, 1964).

Firearms

In China, where gunpowder was invented, firearms were scorned as being simply too brutal and too barbaric for personal use. There were, however, early examples of Chinese usage of cannon and missiles. The rejection of personal firearms came

back to haunt the Chinese when well-armed European powers, and later, the United States and Japan, were able to force the unequal treaties and occupation during the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries.

Guns were introduced to Japan in 1542 by the Portugese. By 1575 at the Battle of Nagashino the victor, Lord Oda, had 10,000 men armed with matchlocks out of a total army of 38,000. For roughly the next half century, firearms-training was necessary for all soldiers. "At least in absolute numbers, guns were almost certainly more common in Japan in the late sixteenth century than in any other country in the world" (Perrin, 1979:25).

In spite of this, firearms were thought to be simply too brutal and too egalitarian. Perrin lists five reasons for their abolition, the fifth of which is relevant here.

> Quite apart from all that, swords happen to be associated with elegant body movement. A sword is simply a more graceful weapon to use than a gun, in any time or country ... In the Japanese aesthetic theory there are some fairly precise rules about how a person of breeding should move his body ...
>
> A man using a sword, especially a two-handed katana, is naturally going to move his body in accordance with many of these rules. But a man firing an arquebus (a long gun operated by a matchlock firing mechanism) is not. He is going to break them (Perrin, 1979:42-43).

This precisely articulates the sort of cultural use of the body that Mauss addressed, and it further emphasizes how little attention has been paid to this subject to date.

The Japanese sword (and gun) hunt of 1588 effectively disarmed Japanese peasants. What is interesting is that following the disarmament there was never an official edict banning firearms. The Tokugawa Shogunate simply bought the entire output of the gunsmiths and locked them away as well as requiring all gunsmiths to reside at Nagahama. As the market dried up, most of them went back to forging swords.

The last use of firearms in that era was the 1637 Christian Shimabara Rebellion. There were no major battles with firearms after 1637. This is the only case I know of where a culture has eliminated an entire type of advanced weapons and the means of making them. Yet the Meiji Restoration (1867), with its banning of bujutsu, and the wearing of the swords created a void which firearms were able to fill. When re-introduced following the

opening of Japan by Commodore Perry (1853), they were accepted as part of the modernization and newer egalitarianism.

Where the Chinese people retreated into revitalistic religious movements such as the Taiping (1851-66) and Boxers (1899-1900), the Japanese embarked on a course of military modernization, which allowed them to defeat Czarist Russia, occupy Korea and China, and almost defeat the United States. When the katana was banned in public, and the traditional weapons outmoded, there needed to be a newer expression of the Japanese martial spirit.

On one level this took the form of a renewed militarism and a new egalitarianism. This tied in with the new emphasis on firearms in the military following the reforms of 1873. Gone were the days when a bushi needed a lifetime of training. Now, former commoners were able to become competent fighting men. It is interesting to note that in order to encourage participation (and militarism) the government encouraged soldiers to see themselves as part of the history of the noble bushi (Ratti and Westbrook, 1973).

On an individual level, this took the form of budo's emphasis on personal development within the precepts of Zen, and perhaps more important, indicated a renewed interest in Confucian principles of harmony, and Zen principles of aesthetics. Where the arts had been a matter of life and death, they became a means of artistic expression, personal growth, and fulfillment. Lowry (1982) makes the point that the emphasis on sport competition was not part of the original budo. He says that many of the older masters of the do arts fear that competition will erase the truer goals of personal and spiritual development.

What I find interesting, although not generally recognized, is that the Japanese arts developed into the same categories as the traditional Chinese; that is to say, into groups of military personnel and groups of individuals who used "martial" training for personal goals. I believe that this process is exemplified by the evolution of judo from jujutsu by Kano at the end of the 19th century, which continued with the introduction of karatedo from Okinawa in the 1920's. Funakosi changed the written character for kara from a character meaning "China" to a homonymous character meaning "empty", resulting in a translation change from "Chinese hand" to "empty hand". Some have said it was influenced by political considerations of nationalism. Funakoshi, however, gives two reasons: the first is lack of weaponry, thus the appropriateness of the word 'empty'. The second is contained in a quotation, "Further, students of Karate-do aim not only toward perfecting their chosen art but also toward emptying heart and mind of all earthly desire and vanity"

(Funakoshi, 1975:35). Within this context the importance of proper action and behavior, such as humility, courtesy and deference, can be seen. Yet training was always undertaken with a total and deadly seriousness, with an opponent always in mind. If a fight ensued, it was meant to be ended quickly -- again, the emphasis on the one-punch-kill. "Should you in combat strike a karate blow, you must have no doubt whatsoever that that one blow decides everything" (Funakoshi, 1975:105).

The emphasis on the development of the person in Japan continued with the development of Aikido by Uyeshiba. The importance of moral principles was expanded to include non-aggression, non-attack, avoidance of force, recognition of the opponent as an extension of self and a kind of "merging" with one's opponent. All these are to be found in the training of the traditional Taoist arts, especially T'ai-chi Ch'uan and Ba gua. It is interesting to note, however, that the historical record gives no credit to a Chinese influence for this development, rather seeing the development as an evolution from jujitsu.

Conclusion

Even though a lot of Japanese culture came from China via Korea, there are significant Japanese variations. Perhaps the most notable was the formalization of a noble class based not only on birth, but on military prowess, which was bound by a code of bushido. This code was based upon loyalty and service, and it emphasized the arts of war, in clear contrast to Chinese culture, which had a non-hereditary class of administrators and scholars who emphasized the Confucian principles of social harmony and advocated placing civil servants over the military. The Chinese, at the outset, stressed avoidance of conflict and high moral standards with regard to their "martial" arts training.

In Japan, the approved martial arts were the exclusive province of the samurai. In China, the martial arts were the province of the peasants, who were definitely second-class citizens, and those who became professional soldiers were both scorned and feared.

The two cultures view life and death in very different ways. The Chinese concept of filial piety required the living to honour the dead and the dead to use their celestial influence for the benefit of the living, a concept that was absent in Japan. In China, the idea was to avoid killing, and death was only a regrettable last resort. In contrast, samurai men and women were trained throughout their entire lives to a familiarity with death, both the opponent's and their own.

There were differing views of the body and how it was to be

trained: the mechanics of movement and the sense of power; different techniques of training the hands; brutality in training; the presence or lack of supplemental exercises for the development of internal energies; and the use or lack of herbal formulae and the integration or lack of medical practices, such as acupuncture and massage.

In Japan, the martial arts went from bujutsu (martial techniques) to budo (martial ways). With the concept of do, there is more emphasis placed on aesthetics and practices designed to cultivate the nobler aspects of an individual, and a fundamental change has taken place with regard to the value of life and death, which I believe reflects the older Chinese ethic.

The classical Chinese distinction between the practice of the art for professional and personal reasons, which was eclipsed in Japan during the era of bujutsu, has resurfaced in budo forms and modern eclectic systems of training. In recent years, many professionals have come to prefer the latter, which generally focus on effective fighting and exclude philosophy, culture and forms practice. Those who train purely for personal reasons, however, seem to prefer the traditional modes of training, which emphasize self-cultivation, discipline, respect, etiquette -- all aspects of philosophy and culture.

While there is much debate concerning the value of the various types of systems, it would seem that all have some value in relation to the needs of a wide variety of students. It seems somewhat paradoxical that the Japanese systems (traditionally contrasted with the Chinese) are now all lumped together under a general heading. Having been superseded as systems of choice by professionals, the Japanese arts are now primarily practiced for personal development, which means that the ethic of life and death in the Japanese arts is now aligned with ancient Chinese views. Is it a case of the bamboo yielding until the passing of the storm?

Dimitri Kostynick

NOTES

I wish to thank the following people for their aid and criticisms during the writing of this paper: Michael Davis, Ronald Holt and Donald Southerton. While acknowledging their insights, any failings must rest with me.

1. Since most of my experience in the Chinese arts has been of southern systems, I have retained Cantonese transliterations, rather than the relatively more familiar Mandarin transliteration of, e.g., kung fu.

In the 1970's during the "gung fu craze" in the United States, it was widely reported that the term gung fu, directly translating as achievement or skill over time, was not used for the martial art in China. However, that seems not to be the case. Sifu Lew reports using the term when he lived in China. Also Ted Shawn in his Gods Who Dance (1929), which tells of his experiences in China long before the kung fu controversy, reports the term used from antiquity:

> We have a definite date of 2698 B.C. when a cult of gymnastic dancing was formed and given the name Cong-fu. The purpose of Cong-fu was the healing of diseases. It was accepted throughout the entire Chinese empire. Priest-physicians taught and applied its principles. Today after more than 4,500 years of continuous practice, Cong-fu is still accepted (Shawn, 1929:46).

There are also references to an 18th century text, Notice Du Cong-Fou Des Bonzes Tao-See (A Report on the Kung-Fu of the Taoist Monks), by Father Amoit, a Jesuit. Shawn (1929) reports his first initial as "M". Staples (1981) reports his first name to be Pere, Hsu (1983) reports it as Jean J.M., while Hu (1975) reports it as Jean Joseph Marie. Shawn quotes from the text without giving its name. Staples identifies it and reports it to be at Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris.

Regrettably, however, questions must be raised concerning Staples's scholarship. He is a fairly well-known author who deals with Asian martial arts and Hu's piece lists him as the translator, while the Staples article carries the by-line, "Adaptation by Michael P. Staples". Unfortunately, it does not state from where the adaptation was made. A side-by-side reading of Hu and Staples shows that Staples reprints only those sections already translated by Hu. Further, the only apparent differences in the texts are that Staples makes a few explanatory notes for a modern audience and leaves out some of what is in Hu. While it appears that whole sections have been taken verbatim from Hu, Staples does not credit Hu, whose published text appeared five years earlier. We leave it to the reader to compare the two texts and draw his/her own conclusions, but for the purposes of this essay, references have been drawn only from Shawn and

Hu.

In contrast to the questionable nature of Staples's work, where the translations of Shawn and Hu overlap, they are significantly different to show -- to this author's satisfaction -- independent translations (Shawn, 1929:47, and Hu, 1975:88).

It is interesting that the "Cong-Fou" described by Amoit (translated by Hu) describes what we would now call ch'i gung (see below). The descriptions are for exercises (standing, sitting, and lying) with references to breathing patterns, not fighting techniques. Further, in a section not printed by Staples, Hu translates a list referring to specific exercises and the physical conditions and illness for which they are specific. Shawn quotes Father Amoit, from what appears to be a section following one that both he and Hu translate differently, and Hu leaves out, we assume, partly since he was writing for a popular press magazine.

> The patrons and priests of the Cong Fou dance seem to have had in mind always the higher ends of existence, the good of the soul. They believed that through this ~~system of dancing the soul could best be ministered~~ to through the body, and thus the Chinese regarded the Cong Fou as a true exercise of religion which, by curing the body of its deformities, liberates the soul from the servitude of the senses and gives it power to accomplish its wishes on earth and of freely elevating itself to the perfection and perpetuity of its spiritual end under the Tao, the realm of the great creative power (Shawn, 1929:47).

Shawn then goes on to give a brief account of an exhibition "... of what is termed 'boxing'". It was given by "Mr. Liu", whom Shawn describes as, "a professor of Cong Fou".

> Mr. Liu explained that although the word which foreigners used was "boxing", to his mind the system of movement could better be described as dancing, especially as in the training periods it was a solo performance and not done with an opponent. During his first three divisions he included physical feats of the most extraordinary acrobatic difficulty, but done with such superlative ease that they seemed to be like beads on a string of continuous flowing, unbroken movement. He did double somersaults in the air, landing on the back of his neck and continuing on up into a standing position. He jumped in mid-air in that position, rebounding with an upward spiral turn. His middle

movement was much in the style of what we call plastiques. There was manifested at all times a continuous flow of movement through the body, combined with perfect balance in the most extraordinary and difficult postures.

For his fourth movement, the imitative type, he chose to imitate a monkey! We watched it, entranced by the agility, the verisimilitude and delicious artistic humor of this monkey dance. The whole performance was presented without musical accompaniment but with perfectly satisfying effect. (Shawn, 1929:47-48).

2. The etymology of the English word "martial" is listed as coming from the Latin martial(is): of or belonging to Mars (the God of War). The definitions are: "1. Inclined or disposed to war; warlike; brave. 2. pertaining to or connected with the army and navy. 3. pertaining to or appropriate for war: martial music. 4. characteristic of or benefitting a warrior: a martial stride." (Dictionary, 1973:880).

3. The word "radical" is commonly used to refer to the 214 roots of Chinese written characters. The numbers used here refer to this list.

4. Bushi is used here to denote the practitioners of the military arts. The word samurai means one who serves, and includes the entire class of the minor nobility in Japan's history after the class was formalized and its ranks closed (see Note 7 below). In that context, it can apply to the later scholars and administrators, as well as women. Note the similarity between samurai and old English "cniht" (knight), meaning guards, attendant, one who serves (Nitobe, 1969:6).

5. The first mentioned American group train primarily with modern weapons, firearms and batons. Training in the Asian arts is an adjunct. For the most part there is a preference for eclectic systems combining fighting techniques from various traditional schools. Some practioners are of the opinion that the practice of traditional forms is of little practical value, and that it takes too long to train. The generally recognized benefits are development of eye-hand coordination, mental focus and concentration, breath control, muscular control and stability.

Most of the people who train in America are non-professionals. Some train for self-defense and confidence. This is especially true in urban areas. Most of the arts

under this heading are external. Many others who train do so more for health, personal growth, stress reduction and meditative purposes, or recreation. These practitioners train in both external and internal arts. For the most part, these are the people who are not going to actually "use it".

Also, most of those who train today are not as dedicated as those who trained 15 or 20 years ago. While overall enrollments are up, so are drop-out rates. Many people train for a few months or a year, drop out and do something else, racquetball, aerobics, etc. A reflection of this fact is that most of the people training in karate do not train the hands, or push themselves as hard as the way in which it was done before.

In recent years, T'ai-chi Ch'uan has gained enormous popularity. Due to the millions of people in the PRC (People's Republic of China) who train it for health, it is clearly the most practiced martial art in the world. Most of the people in the United States who train also do so for reasons of health, but also for "new age" meditative purposes. While T'ai-chi Ch'uan started out as, and in fact, can be an excellent fighting system, it is usually not taught or practiced as such. Most of the people who train do not consider themselves martial artists; and are not seen by such by the larger martial community. Also interesting, but beyond our scope here, is research into attitudes toward aggression of Americans who train (see Rothpearl, 1980).

6. On government soldiers, see Kierman and Fairbank, 1974; Fried, 1952; Franz, 1946a and b; Parker, 1887; Powell, 1955. On secret societies and revolutionaries, see Chesneaux, 1972, and Perry, 1980. On bandits and pirates, see Hucker, 1974, and Murray, 1987.

7. For an overview of the subject, the reader is referred to Fairbank, Reischauer and Craig (1973), hereafter referred to as Fairbank, et al. For specific background on Japan, see Sansom (1943) and Benedict (1946).

   The classical samurai of the movies tends to be of the latter Tokugawa period, a time of relative peace, and the closing era of the bushi. The bushi of popular fiction can be seen to be analogous to the American cowboy, whose fictional representation is generally based on the last few decades of his era (McGuane, 1984). Still, we see that Japan has always had a clan structure, which was the basis of the rule of the emperor, which grew out of the older uji system.

Following the Fujiwara period (circa 857-1160), we see a breakdown of the central government and the rise of the feudal lords, the daimyo. They were served by an hereditary military class of armoured equestrian knights similar to, but not exactly the same as, those in Europe (see James, 1983; also, for a comparison of Japanese and European feudalism, see Fairbank, et al., 1973:359-60). The military technology required personal wealth to equip the mounted warriors. Often the infantry was composed of peasants. What resulted was a period of interclan fighting. In the 9th century, provincial leaders were given the right to maintain standing armies and eventually given military titles. Between the 9th and 12th centuries, the military groups (which were mostly familial) became more important and became the bushi.

> As this provincial warrior class moved to the center of the historical stage during the 12th century, it led Japan into a type of social and political organization more like that of feudal Europe than the Chinese centralized bureaucratic state. Military power absorbed into it political and economic authority, and all three became defined primarily in terms of rights to land, while personal lord-and-vassal relationships, often expressed in familial terms, became central to political integration (Fairbank, et al., 1973:359).

In 1185 the interclan fighting led to the victory of the Minamoto led by Yoritomo, who set himself up as the Shogun. The Shogun (from the older Seii-Tai-Shogun, "Barbarian-Quelling-Generalissimo", an older title given to military leaders who were successful against the indigenous Ainu population) was a military dictator who ruled over the de facto government (the bakufu, "tent government") while the Emperor (and often retired Emperors) had a ceremonial position. This remained the case until the end of the Shogunate with the Meiji Restoration (1867) when the Emperor regained control of the government.

During these years, peasants (ji-samurai) often served as infantry and occasionally rose up through the ranks. This ended when Hideyoshi seized power (1584). Himself a peasant by birth, he closed the ranks of the bushi along hereditary lines, creating the samurai class we know of today. From that point until the Meiji Restoration, there was no social mobility in Japan. As a class the samurai were forbidden to engage in mercantile activities or farming. They were cultivated exclusively as professional soldiers, supported by the peasants.

One of the characteristics of the samurai class was that women were not seen as weak and in need of protection, as they were in Europe. They were full members of the samurai, capable of inheriting property, and they had placed upon them the same expectations of loyalty, and bravery, should they find themselves in the combat (for which they were trained). The primary weapon they used was the naginata, a curved blade attached to a pole, which was earlier a primary weapon for soldiers which survives today in a do form as a vehicle for training martial spirit and grace. Today, it is almost exclusively a woman's weapon.

In additon, Hideyoshi, in 1588, disarmed the peasant population, and while this is generally referred to as "the sword hunt" as pointed out by Perrin, it also involved removal of guns. It was done under the ruse of needing iron for the construction of a giant Buddha, twice the size of the Statue of Liberty, and the accompanying temple. Farmers, ji-samurai, and monks were disarmed (Perrin, 1979:27).

In 1603, Ieyasu became the first Shogun of the House of Tokugawa. The Shogunate remained in his line until the Restoration. This was the period in which the code of bushido was enlarged to include broader concepts of service. Rather than simply being ready to lay down their lives in combat, they now were exhorted to embrace Confucian ideals and serve as administrators, magistrates and in other public functions. This was a time of peace, when their fighting skills were in less demand. This is also the era when the code of bushido picked up the romantic flavor popularly associated with it today. This goal of administrative service functioned to divide the samurai class into administrators (forming a de facto subset of literati) and the bushi (who remained men at arms, and became in some cases a de facto "lower class" of samurai, often little more than peasants). Perhaps the most important point is the way the social hierarchies led not just to an hereditary class of nobility, but to the form it took garbed in armour on horseback.

Also important is the size of the samurai class. Perrin states the size was between 7 and 10 percent of the population.

> When they were finally counted, in the late nineteenth century, at the very end of the feudal period in Japan, there turned out to be 1,282,000 members of high samurai families (allowed to ride horses), and 492,000

members of low samurai families (entitled to wear two swords, but no horseback riding). Since the non-samurai population remained quite stable during the entire period from the first census to about 1870, it seems reasonable to assume that the samurai population did too. One would thus number the warrior class that winter of 1597 at nearly two million people -- just under 8 percent of the population.

In England, by contrast, the warrior class in 1597 numbered about 30,000 people. England had sixty lords, five hundred knights, and some 5,800 squires and gentlemen. Together with their families, they made up six-tenths of a percent of the population. In no European country did the warrior class much exceed one percent (Perrin, 1979:33-35).

For an overview of China, the reader is referred back to Fairbank, et al (1973) and to Meskill (1973). By contrast, however, Chinese dynasties rose and fell. Their fortunes were seen as a manifestation of their ability to mediate between the needs of Heaven and Earth, often reflected in their virtue. There was no divine right of kings, as in Europe, or of an unbroken Imperial succession, as in Japan.

There was no hereditary noble class in China. The country was run by a "class" of scholars who had gained their positions by the passing of standardized examinations covering traditional literature and Confucian ethics. In practice, any male who had the talent and the financial support to study could advance as far as he was capable. This potential for upward social mobility was a basic feature of Chinese society, even when the Dragon Throne was held by foreigners (during the Mongol Yuan Dynasty, 1271-1368, and the later Manchu Ching Dynasty, 1644-1911, for example). Much, if not most, of the early sinological research focused on the literate "scholar-gentry" with little attention paid to the peasants. ("Peasant" is used here in a neutral anthropological, non-judgmental sense of a farming economy, with minimum industry.)

The basic unit of society was the family, centered in the village. (The "village study" has long been a hallmark of the anthropological study of China. We are unable here to cover the scope of the literature, yet by example, the reader is referred to Fei, 1983.) Unlike the situation in Japan, peasants in China were allowed to own land, which was seen as the only culturally acceptable form of wealth in a context where mercantile activity carried little prestige. In cases where people rented land, it was usually from a

local person, sometimes a wealthy member of the gentry, but as often as not, another peasant who was a little better off.

Socially, the dominant feature of Chinese culture was the family. Descent was reckoned through the male line. The father was the absolute ruler, and the one in whom the wealth of the family was entrusted. Upon his death, wealth was distributed more or less evenly among his sons. The European (Aboriginal and some African) concepts of primogeniture was unknown.

Filial piety was practiced within families. This is the practice often referred to in the west as "ancestor worship". The Chinese evidently felt that the living had an obligation to remember and respect deceased (males). At the same time, it was believed that the deceased would reciprocate by influencing cosmic events for the betterment or ill of the descendents, depending upon how they were treated by the living. This was a major way in which religion was integrated into daily life.

There was no separate military class in China. There were career soldiers, and there was a separate examining procedure for them. Yet, given the Confucian ethic of civil over military, they were seen as a necessary evil--especially for dealing with barbarous neighbors -- that one should not encourage. Rank and file soldiers were universally scorned and feared. Often this was a result of many of them preying on the population since they were not well paid or fed -- if at all. In many cases, the distinctions between soldiers and bandits was hardly perceivable.

8. One of the classic complaints of karate stylists when they compete in forms of competition in open tournaments is that the Chinese stylists always win, even if their technical maturity is inferior because their forms are 'flashier' and visually more impressive. This has been the case with the newer revised wu shu from the PRC. For this reason in the last few years, almost all tournaments now divide the forms of competition on the basis of national origin of the system.

9. Contrary to common assumptions during the early days of karate in the United States, the art did not enter China from India with the Bodhiharma. The history of the art in China has been well documented in recent years, for example, Hu, 1980a and b and 1981a; Wong and Brown, 1983; Holcombe, 1988 and Shawn, 1929.

10. I recognize that I have raised more questions than I have answered, but it is my hope to provoke discussion and stimulate intrest in further research.

11. "Alchemy" is to be understood here as referring to an actual transformation of the substance of the body from a "base state" to a more refined form integrating spiritual and physical. The European perception of alchemy as the production of gold was both a metaphor and a secondary practice, which came from this Eastern concern with a transformation of the body, and so was originally the same as the Chinese practice. See Needham, 1981, for a discussion of the blending of Hellenistic and Taoist concepts and practices in Arabian alchemy, which gave rise to European alchemy.

12. There seems to be little direct influence of Shinto on the historical practices and attitudes of the bushi. This seems to be based on both the Nature worship aspect of Shinto and its distaste for medical matters, especially wounds and uncleanliness. Interestingly, Aikido often speaks of a Shinto background and belief of its founder, M. Ueshiba. There are accounts of Ueshiba traveling in China and being influenced by Chinese martial arts. What is noteworthy is that of the current Japanese arts, Aikido really stands alone. While all of the do arts speak of personal growth and a defensive attitude, only Aikido, as practiced by Ueshiba, does not contain techniques of attack. Its techniques depend upon initiation of movement by the other person. This in itself may show the influence of traditional Taoist systems, such as T'ai-chi Ch'uan or Ba Gua.

13. In recent years, ch'i gung (gigong), meaning cultivation of the ch'i, has generally replaced the older term nui gung, meaning internal cultivation in a more comprehensive sense. Currently it is the subject of study in the PRC. Most of those results have not yet been published in English. This will be the subject of future work.

14. This topic points toward the work of Foucault, 1980, 1985 and 1986, which is provocative but inconclusive, and will need more research to substantiate the implied claims.

15. Traditionally, practitioners of karate trained by striking the makawara (a wooden target wrapped in either cotton or rope). The hands were pounded relentlessly against hard surfaces to develop larger, anatomically deformed bones and masses of callous around the knuckles. This practice

results in the stereotypical "karate hand" clearly visible to an observer, and in some quarters still today, a source of pride among practitioners.

Hand training was a major part of the training of American military personnel during the 1950's and 1960's. Since the students were there for only a limited tour of duty, there was perhaps more emphasis on the makawara than is found among indigenous practitioners.

A somewhat more subtle aspect of training was to teach the student how to tense the entire body upon impact, and instantly relax. This latter aspect was often missing from the training of American military personnel. This, along with the emphasis on military aspects, was largely responsible for the presentation of a limited view of the art to the American people, and the resulting misconceptions about what are usually referred to as the "higher goals" of personal development found in karatedo.

In comparison with the hand training in karate were the Chinese practices generally called "iron palm". Special herbal formulae were used topically on the skin before and after striking various objects. Also, the strikes themselves tended to be more relaxed, with a whipping motion, and often thrusting the hands into containers of various substances, such as sand, beans, or metal filings. The emphasis was more toward developing thrusting and grasping techniques than the classic closed fist of karate.

Also, as a general part of training, internally consumed medicinal teas were used to strengthen the internal organs and the circulation of energies. This resulted in strengthening the bones and the skin, without visible change to the hands. This was also in keeping with the Chinese ethic of secrecy.

16. From the 17th century Primer of Bushido, by Daidoji Yusan, quoted by Suzuki and Draeger and Smith.

> The idea most vital and essential to the (bushi Draeger and Smith, samurai Suzuki) is that of death, which he ought to have before his mind day and night, night and day, from the dawn of the first day of the year till the last minute of the last day of it. When this notion takes firm hold of you, you are able to discharge your duties to their fullest extent; you are loyal to your master, filial to your parents, and naturally can avoid all kinds of disasters. Not only is your life itself thereby prolonged, but your

personal dignity is enhanced. Think what a frail thing life is, especially that of a (warrior Draeger and Smith; samurai Suzuki). This being so, you will come to consider every day of your life your last and dedicate it to the fulfillment of your obligations. Never let the thought of a long life seize upon you, for then you are apt to indulge in all kinds of dissipation and end your days in dire disgrace. (Draeger and Smith end there.) This is the reason why Masahige is said to have told his son Masatsura to keep the idea of death all the time in his mind (Suzuki, ibid:72; Draeger and Smith, ibid:86-87).

17. The aesthetics of such an attitude toward life and death can be seen today in the austerity and simplicity of the decor of the dojo. Japanese dojo are traditionally empty, with the possible exception of portraits of the founder, mirrors, and a few sayings on the walls. Here again, non-attachment to the world is emphasized. Hassell (1982), looking at the simplicity of Zen reflected in the design of the traditional gi (training uniform), projects the same notion.

18. Yes, judo is supposed to be based on leverage. Yet in application there is a great deal of upper body strength utilized by most judoka, perhaps improperly.

19. The traditional weapons of this period were the bow and the lance (pike). The development of the sword, katana, came later. See Ratti and Westbrook, 1973 and Brinkley, 1975. For background on archery and comparison to Brinkley, see Kroeber, 1927, and DuBois-Reymond, 1912.

20. The definition of ronin is "wave man". The meaning here is that without a lord, the bushi was without direction. Hence the analogy to one being thrown about by the waves of the sea. During the period prior to the Tokugawa, a ronin was the most feared outcast. For without the service of a lord to restrain his actions, he was capable of enormous violence to the population. He was often hunted and was considered a predator. This changed during the Tokugawa period. Then, under some circumstances, he had value. There were: (1) disavowing himself for the purpose of revenge and (2) learning western ways without causing shame to his daimyo. Also, the general peace and the breaking up of the feudal estates left many other people unemployed, which helped reduce the stigma. In many cases ronin wandered among the peasants, often teaching their martial skills in an "underground". In this way they helped pave the way for the Restoration.

The samurai from this period are most often portrayed in the popular media, but often, distinction between samurai and ronin is blurred. The images are frequently those of someone dressed in everyday garb, rather than full armour. It is interesting to note, too, that the film The Seven Samurai (the best known "samurai" film in the United States) is not about samurai. The heroes, the bushi that the villagers recruit are masterless samurai, which means that they were ronin.

21. For further information the reader is referred to Margery Wolf's excellent article, 'Women and Suicide in China' (1975), which informs this discussion.

22. Daniel Kulp's classic Country Life in South China (1972) mentions a boxing club as one of the village associations. He mentions raising money, hiring an itinerant boxing teacher and classes held in the evening. Writing in 1925, he mentions two reasons for the interest: (1) personal protection, and (2) recreation. However, at the time of his research, Phoenix Village did not have an association, due largely to "disparate attitudes among the familist (sic) groups" (1972:208). Phoenix Village was one of the villages that was not composed of only one surname.

23. Archeological evidence shows the sword was imported from China during or prior to the Chin Dynasty. Later during the Han period we see locally manufactured swords of Chinese design (Sansom, 1943:16-18).

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