

Liu Fengchun Baguazhang

By Zhang Yongchun

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Liu Fengchun

Liu Fengchun, aka Maozhai, was born in 1853, in Luo Jia Ying village, Zhu County, Hebei.

In his youth, Liu followed his father in farming. The family was very poor. When he was 9 years old, he studied martial arts in his village. Around 1872, he went to Beijing looking to earn a living. At first he took a polishing job in a workshop making jewelry (cui hua). Then later, he started his own jewelry manufacturing and selling business. People everywhere called him “Cui Hua Liu”.

After his business was established he started practicing Baguazhang with Cheng Tinghua. After as a result of Cheng’s recommendation, he was accepted as a student of Dong Haichuan. The annals state: “Liu Fengchun entered Dong’s school late. He was very young. He only received Dong’s teachings superficially, but he received Cheng Tinghua’s teachings strongly. Liu also trained unceasingly. By the end he was one of the best of his generation.”

In the winter of 1882, after Dong Haichuan had died, Liu Fengchun also asked Liu Jilan to teach him Xingyi Quan. In his middle years he was well known in the Beijing martial arts community. He had the title of “Moves like a Cat” (sai mao xing). From 1912 to 1916 he taught at Mr. Xu Yusheng’s (1878-1945) Beijing Athletic Research Institute, located in today’s Xi Dan Xi Bei Xie Jie #12.

In 1922, Liu died in Zhuo County, Matou Township, Beixiguo Village. He was 67 years old.

During his lifetime, he taught to practice very few palm forms, so that the skills become very deep. Because of his view, today people would call him a “Daoist.” After he died, Mr. Li Ziming remembered him by saying, “Cui Hua Liu, his two arms were like lightning. His strikes came like bullets.” Mr. Wang Xiangzhai, in a speech in 1940, said, “Liu Fengchun and I were good friends, his skill was very deep.... He never practiced the 64 palms or 72 legs. None could match him.”

Throughout his life, Mr. Liu had many students and disciples. The more famous ones are: Zhou Luquan, Xu Yusheng, Li Jianhua, Zhang Guangju, and Fu Jianqiu.

Liu Wenhua

Liu Wenhua (1892-1972), also called Ziying, was Liu Fengchun's son. He continued his father's art and retired to his village. His temperament was warm and his skills were exquisite. Like his father he taught his skills to many. Later he studied Daoism earnestly. He taught with tireless zeal. Some of his students were Shi Jianhua, Liu Shude, and Li Shumin.



Shi Jianhua

Shi Jianhua was born in 1933, in what is today called Hebei Province, Zhou Prefecture, Tongyang rural area, Tongyang village. At 8 years old he followed his maternal uncle Ding Jun (called Zixiu) and studied Chang Quan. At 19 when he was teaching in the Northwest Guo Village Elementary School, he followed Liu Wenhua and studied his art for 21 years. He got all of Liu's true teachings.



Mr. Shi is good at singing opera. He currently holds the office of Zhou Prefecture Chinese Peoples Political Consultative Conference committee member, Zhou Prefecture Martial Arts Association Vice-chairman and concurrently Secretary-General, and is a first rank national level wushu judge. On December 1, 1993, in order to promote Liu Fengchun Baguazhang, he attended the first session of the International Baguazhang Joint Friendship Association in the capitol.

In 1994 on the eve of the Spring Festival, I went to visit Mr. Shi to get some historical material on Liu Fengchun Baguazhang. I drove to Zhou Prefecture to visit Shi Lao and his family. When I arrived, I was entertained by the whole family. By nighttime we sat down under a lamp. We had a long talk throughout the night. Just before dawn, Mr. Shi started to explain things using his body and demonstrated the palm talent. He and his son did paired techniques and sanshou in the courtyard. His hand method was exquisite. The techniques were simple and unsophisticated. It was quite unforgettable.

At the present time Mr. Shi and whole family represent not only three generations doing martial arts, but have spread the teaching to the surrounding areas. The other day, I received a letter from Mr. Shi. He exhorted me to be diligent in my writing. He hopes that this initial monograph of Liu Fengchun Baguazhang soon be published and cause Liu Style Baguazhang to gain even more extensive propagation among the people.