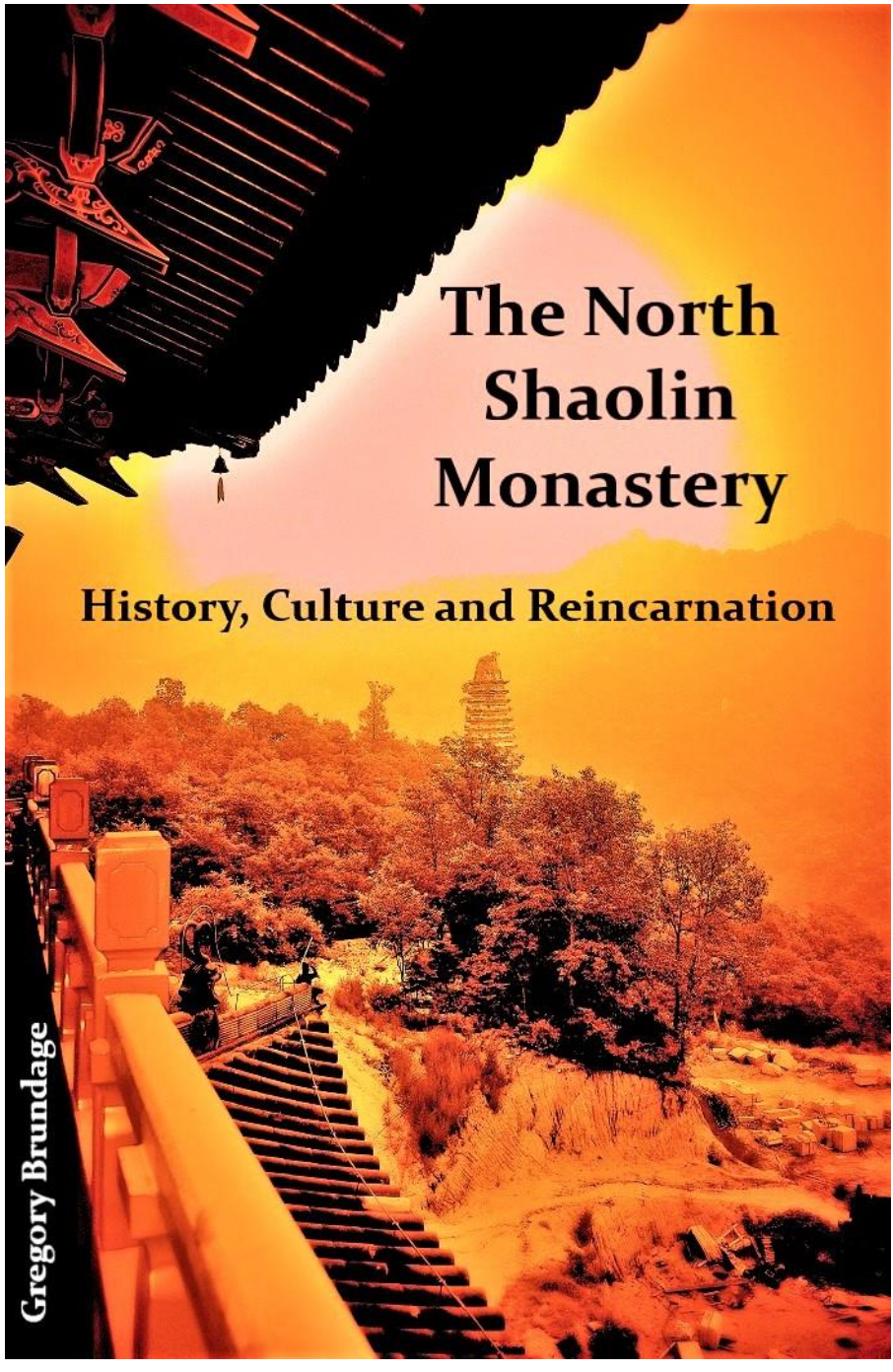
The North Shaolin Monastery
History, Culture and Reincarnation
Gregory Brundage

Ti: North Shaolin Monastery – History, Culture and Reincarnation

北少林寺-历史文化与轮回

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Opinions expressed in this book are those of the author only and not representative of the Shaolin Monastery, its affiliates or representatives.

Note 1: This book was originally published under one of the author's *nom de plume*, Shi Long (石龙).

Note 2: There is some (but not much) overlap between this book and my *Rebuilding the North Shaolin Monastery* book.

This work *North Shaolin Monastery – History, Culture and Reincarnation* was prepared as a separate entity, goes much deeper into the histories and cultures of Chan (Zen Buddhism), and the establishment of Shaolin as a martial art center, critically reviews at least one other contemporary book about Shaolin, and is more academically based with fewer photos and more references.

Note 3: All photos in this book are by the author unless otherwise indicated in the caption.

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Preface to this Second Edition

The world has changed considerably since I first wrote and published this book in 2013. Most of those changes have been unfortunate. The world now is much more divided along all conceivable dimensions and for all practical purposes WWIII has already started. Thus, the need for this book has never been greater. It is the opinion of this writer there is a 99% overlap between all people, tribes, philosophies and religions. Focusing too much on differences has led to concealment of our vast human commonalities. Historically and today Buddhism has played a valuable role in helping elevate people above the superficial material dichotomies that imprison most of our minds most of the time, and the Shaolin Temple is fundamentally based on Buddhist philosophy.

The North Shaolin Monastery has its own unique history yet reflects the headquarter Songshan Shaolin's Buddhist philosophies of peace and thus attracted my attention at a young age.

I hope readers are inspired as I have been by the unifying principles contained herein and will share with all the centered, reality-based enlightenments that can awaken anyone who yearns for truth, justice and peace with dignity and self-determination.

Enlightenment/awakening/unity with God, or whatever you like to call it is forever with us if we can only transcend the ego-driven desires of the mundane world and realize the wordless truths that reside in all.

July 12, 2020

Introduction

> "According to historical records, the venerable master Fuyu (1201-1275) in the Yuan Dynasty took charge to build five sub-temples of Shaolin Temple in Helin (then the capital of the Yuan Dynasty), Jizhou (modern Jixian County in Tianjin), Taiyuan (capital of Shanxi province), Chang'an (modern Xi'an), and Luoyang (in Henan Province) respectively. The North Shaolin Temple in Jixian County is the only sub-temple extant titled with 'Shaolin.'"
>
> Official Shaolin Temple Site (2013)

The scant remains of the North Shàolín Temple are located on the southeastern face of Pan Mountain (Panshan) in Ji County (Jixian), officially part of Tianjin City but actually a hundred kilometers north, and about 60 kilometers east of Beijing. Originally built sometime in the Wei or Jin Dynasties (220-420 AD), it is the oldest Buddhist temple in Tianjin and the earliest Buddhist temple that can be found in the annals of Jixian, though it didn't join the Shaolin family till nearly a thousand years later.

The story of the North Shàolín Temple, its founding, growth, destruction and rebirth is in a way a microcosm of Chinese history, and perhaps an allegorical model of many individuals and nations that flower, struggle against irresistible forces, are vanquished in some ways, and yet somehow survive to flower again – even grander than before in a new and better age. Though the buildings were burned and the remains looted, the spirit of North Shàolín has continued to burn brightly in the hearts and minds of those who remember.

What strong metals are not tested in fire, beaten and shaped into something stronger, harder and simultaneously more flexible and durable than before?

What diamond did not begin with the death of organic matter, and then withstand infinite pressures over eons of time ultimately crystalizing into a perfect electronic structure?

This story of birth, death and rebirth is a constant in nature, and Buddhist philosophy only a pale reflection of the wheel of Karma within which all must endure until some form of transcendent enlightenment sets us free.

Certainly, each of the illustrious and honorable Shàolín Temples is special in in its' own way. The headquarter Songshan Shaolin is much further inland than North and South Shaolin monasteries that were the front-line defense organizations against foreign pirates and other invaders.

This story is long and relatively complex. There are many sources of history of the North Shàolín that sometimes contradict, merge and later contradict again. So much of the history was lost when the parent Shàolín Temple on Song Mountain was burned in 1928 during the Warlord Era , and then again when the North Shàolín Monastery (and everything else on Panshan) was burned by the Japanese in 1942. So much was lost, yet what is astonishing is that so much survived.

In this book I try to look at each aspect of the creation, growth, abandonment, destruction, and rebirth of the North Shàolín Temple from different perspectives to give the reader a broad viewpoint of the converging histories involved.

In this book however I primarily examine some of the constituent arts and sciences that were and are woven through the history and culture of the Shàolín, like Traditional Chinese Medicine, Tea Ceremony, and even evolutionary trends resulting in the need for martial arts in history and today.

There are many temples large and small and monks don't necessarily live in every temple, however they do live in monasteries by definition. In Chinese the word "*si*" is used for both, but in English the meanings are sometimes a bit different. The name "Shaolin Temple" is used by that monastery, so that is the "technically" correct name according to the rules of English, though the word "monastery" is more correct in other ways, inclusive of the fact that monks live there. In this book the words "temple" and "monastery" are used somewhat interchangeably to refer to the Songshan and North Shàolín Monasteries.

The golden threads that tie all facets of this book together are found in the peaceful philosophies of Buddhism which forms the backbone of the Shàolín's noble history and tradition. This story concludes with some optimistic hopes for the future of the Shàolín, whose branches and flowers can keep growing into ever more beautiful and useful directions for the world.

In writing this book I tried to keep it simple and not get too bogged down in details but at least mention most of the important salient details within each subject area. My image was skimming over the peaks of waves and ripples on an ocean, without too much deep sea diving. The seas and oceans of Chinese and Buddhist histories, philosophies, arts and sciences are just too many and too deep for that.

I also tried to include enough Chinese language, both characters and Pinyin (semi-Romanized phonetic spellings) to help readers who might want to learn something about Chinese language and/or research any topic further. Unlike most writers of books about Chinese anything, I think putting the tone marks on Pinyin words is important. Learning spoken Chinese is hard enough without being misled by books that make it appear as if all Chinese words are flat, which they are not. Tones give Chinese spoken language a fascinating topography without which Chinese people simply couldn't communicate. Tones are essential so I included at least some of them in this text, e.g. Shàolín (except in most quotes). At first it may seem a little strange to non-Chinese speakers, but pretty soon adding "tone" to a word becomes familiar and comfortable. It's also nice for foreigners to be able to pronounce at least some Chinese words more or less correctly.

I, and many non-Chinese are amazed and awed by the complexity, richness and beauty of Chinese language, with each character and compound word telling stories; stories that usually go back millennia. "Just skipping them," seems to rob a book such as this of an important flavor and part of its beauty, like eradicating the colored stain-glass windows from a sublime architecture.

To call this book "incomplete" would be an understatement. Every chapter, paragraph and word is insufficient. The subject areas are simply too vast and so this book is more like a sketch or outline than an in-depth study.

I apologize to all academic types who will criticize this book for using so many “second sources” of information, however learning all the ancient written versions of Chinese language from all over China necessary to translate the historically relevant materials and then to read the thousands of books necessary to adequately research the large number of topics covered in this book would take a hundred lifetimes. China is just too old, big and diverse for any one person to possible master all the disciplines covered herein.

In spite of so many shortcomings and limitations, it is hoped that this book will help inculcate a broader understanding and appreciation of the Shàolín Temples, their histories, cultures, arts and sciences.

Chapter 1- Chán (Zen) Buddhism and the Shàolín Monasteries

禅佛教

Chán Fójiào – Zen Buddhism

Without Chán (Zen) Buddhism there would have been no Shàolín Kung Fu. Chán provided the peaceful center, necessary mental discipline and emotional grounding essential to the creation of an environment where the most explosively powerful martial artists could come together and forge something more powerful than the world had ever seen before. Chán is the foundation upon which the Shàolín Monasteries and legacies they earned were built, and so this chapter on Chán Buddhism and the Shàolín is presented first in this book.

It is also true that the destinies of the parent Songshan Shàolín Monastery and North Shàolín Monastery were different yet simultaneously intertwined. Sometimes they paralleled each other, sometimes they diverged, but they were always closely connected.

Buddhism may be the fastest growing religion in the west at this time in terms of new converts and in terms of "friends of Buddhism" according to some sources (Asian Tribune, 2007, Kulananda, 1997), though only representing 6% to 7% of the world's population.

On September 30, 2013 Reuters published an article titled:

> *Xi Jinping hopes traditional faiths can fill moral void in China*.
>
> "*Xi, who grew up in Mao's puritan China, is troubled by what he sees as the country's moral decline and obsession with money, said three independent sources with ties to the leadership.*

> *"He hopes China's 'traditional cultures' or faiths - Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism - will help fill a void that has allowed corruption to flourish, the sources said.*
>
> https://www.reuters.com

That seems like a reasonable hope, given that religions are by nature more socialist than capitalist with all of them promoting a profound social consciousness while strongly discouraging ego-driven greed and selfishness.

In China the government recognizes five religions: Buddhism, Catholicism, Daoism, Islam, and Protestantism. Of these Buddhism is the most popular. Pew Research Center (the world's most respected public opinion research organization), estimates there are some 245 million Buddhists in China, around 18% of the total national population.

Chán Buddhism (called "Zen" in Japan and the west) originated in China and is totally unique, especially as it applies to martial arts.

The following is a quote by Shàolín Temple Abbot Shi Yong Xin posted on the official Shàolín website:

> "That a Kungfu practitioner must be at the same time a Chán practitioner is exactly what differs Shaolin gong-fu from gong-fu of any other Wushu (martial art) school in China. What is the kernel of the tenets of the Buddhist Chan Order? The kernel includes the following points: A practitioner needs:
>
> 1. to stay consistently calm in emotion,
>
> 2. to always keep his mind concentrated on his goal,
>
> 3. to make a point of incessantly purging his mind of unwholesome thoughts, &
>
> 4. to leave himself relaxed mentally and physically at all times.

> "In other words, he must keep his mind isolated from any possible worldly worries, vexations, or concerns, so that his mind is free of all possible disturbances and can work methodically to bring him from one minor awakening to another before he attains his ultimate enlightenment. Master Shenxiu (神秀) left us his *Gatha* (verse) which reads:
>
> > "Devoid of defilements my body is pure as a bodhi-druma. Free of delusions my mind is lucid as a cleaned mirror.
>
> "But Hui Neng, the Sixth Patriarch of the Chan Order, left us the following two lines of his Gatha, which read:
>
> > 'A bodhi-druma is in itself an illusion. Even more phantasmal are a cleaned mirror and its lucidity!'"
>
> Shaolin Temple Official Site

Though Chán Buddhism has a well-established system of learning, the system of *unlearning* is just as critical. There is fixed dogma, and there is not. Why? Enlightenment is a wordless experience. Attachment to dichotomous abstractions tend to distract from the wholeness of true awakening.

Buddhism is based on the teachings of Gautama Buddha, also known as Siddhartha Gautama who lived from about 563 BC to 483 BC. He taught a middle path between the pleasures of the material world and more extreme asceticism sometimes used in search of enlightenment. Buddha means "the enlightened one," or "the awakened one."

Indian and Chinese Buddhism

> "In Mahayana Perfection of Wisdom (Prajna-paramita) texts we find a far more powerful and all-encompassing attack on knowledge as such. Chán exegetes, as heirs to Perfection of Wisdom and Madhyamika dialectic, pushed the notion of skillful means to its logical conclusion, becoming deeply skeptical of any and all constructs. There were radical contextualists, who were, at times, willing to

> cast doubt on anything and everything, famously including the Buddha himself. Many well-known sayings (later to appear as *Gōng'àn*) come to mind: 'If you meet the Buddha, kill the Buddha; if you meet the patriarch, kill the patriarch' (*fengfo shafo, fengzu shazu*). And, 'A monk asked Yunmen, What is Buddha?' Yunmen replied, 'A dry shit-stick.'"
>
> *How to Think with Chan Gong'an* by Robert H. Sharf, in Part 3 Chapter 7 (p. 215) in *Thinking with Cases - Specialist Knowledge in Chinese Cultural History*, Edited by Charlotte Furth, Judith T. Zeitlin, and Ping-chen Hsiung, 2007 University of Hawaii Press
>
> Can be downloaded from:
>
> https://www.academia.edu/27245974/How_to_Think_with_Chan_Gongan

Differences between Indian and Chinese Buddhism may also have something to do with national character as Yamada Mumon suggests in the Forward to the book "*The Record of Linji*."

> "Indian Buddhism is distinctly contemplative, quietist, and inclined to speculative thought. By contrast, Chinese Buddhism is practical and down-to-earth, active, and in a sense transcendental at the same time. This difference reflects, I believe, the national characters of the two peoples. Chán (Zen), the name given to the Buddhism the first Zen patriarch Bodhidharma brought with him to China when he came from India, proved well suited to the Chinese mentality, and achieved a remarkable growth and development in its new environment. An Indian would no doubt find incredible the Chinese Zen master Baizhang's famous saying, 'A day of no work is a day of no eating.'"
>
> R. F. Sasaki, 2009. *The Record of Linji*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu

The history of Buddhism in China is a bit complex and the short outline history that follows is only a thumbnail sketch of some major trends, theories and events.

Brief History of religion in ancient China

Han & Xin Dynasties (206 BC – 220 AD)

In 60 or 61 AD Emperor Ming-Ti of Han sent an imperial embassy to India inquiring about Buddhism as the result of a dream wherein the Emperor saw an unknown Indian deity, which he later discovered was a gold statue of a Buddha. The envoys returned in the year 67 accompanied by two Indian monks Kasyapa Matatanga and Dharmananda, and shortly thereafter the practice of Buddhism was granted imperial sanction. Under the patronage of Emperor Ming-Ti "White Horse Temple," the first Buddhist Temple in China was built in the Eastern Han capital Luoyang in 68AD.

For the next three hundred years however, Buddhism was only represented by foreign monks as Chinese were not permitted to enter monasteries until 355 AD.

Northern Wei (386-534), Jin (265 - 420) & Liang Dynasties (502-556)

From the fourth to the sixth centuries Buddhism enjoyed the support of many emperors, in the North during the Wei Dynasty and in the South during the dynasty of the Liang.

Bodhidharma

Bodhidharma was the Indian patriarch that originated Chán Buddhism in China. Chán is uniquely Chinese. In the *Record of the Buddhist Monasteries of Luoyang*, Bodhidharma is described as a Persian Central Asian (Broughton, 1999, P. 54 & 138).

> Standard versions of the traditional story place Bodhidharma's arrive in the Lo-yang area in 527. A guide to Lo-yang's magnificent Buddhist heritage entitled *Record of the Buddhist Monasteries of Lo-yang* (*Lo-yang Chia-lan Chi*) a reliable non-Buddhist source, mentions a Bodhidharma in Lo-yang at about this time. There is one difference

from the traditional story. The guide's Bodhidharma is an Iranian, not an Indian. There is, however, nothing implausible about an early sixth-century Iranian Buddhist master who made his way to North China via the fabled Silk Road. This scenario, is in fact, more likely than a South Indian master who made his way by the sea route. (p. 53/54)

"See W.F. Jenner, Memories of Lo-yang: Yang Hsuan-Chih and the lost capital (493-534)(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981) 151 and 171-72; and Yi-t'un Wang, *A Record of Buddhist Monasteries in Lo-yang*; by Yang Hsuan-chih (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 13, 2-021, and 57. The intriguing line, of course is *po-szu kuo hu-jen* ("a Persian Central Asian"). P. 138

Jeffrey Broughton, trans. 1999, "*Two Entrances," in The Bodhidharma Anthology - The Earliest Records of Zen*

However, his disciple Tanlin identified his master as a South Indian Tamil (Broughton, 1999, p. 8). Given that Bodhidharma is described physically as "The Blue-Eyed Barbarian" 藍眼睛的野人 (*lán yǎnjīngde yěrén*) in Chinese texts (*A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* by William Edward Soothill and Lewis Hodous 1995), it seems possible that he was from the Central Asian region rather than south India.

"碧眼胡 The blue-eyed barbarian, Bodhidharma"

http://mahajana.net/texts/soothill-hodous.html

Many (Central Asian) Kashmiris have reddish hair and blue eyes, which they attribute to being descendants of Alexander the Great's army which marched through that area (330-323 BC) with some staying and intermarrying with locals. Tamils being from the south of India are virtually all dark skinned with brown eyes and black hair. In all fairness to the Tamils however, it is possible that Bodhidharma was from south India, but because brown eyes are a dominant genetic trait, both of Bodhidharma's parents would have to have had foreign ancestors for him to have blue eyes.

From a Chan perspective Bodhidharma's genetic/ethnic background is utterly irrelevant, however historians love to quibble over such nagging details.

From a scientific perspective however, such details can represent the seed of some new awakening.

For example, see: *Zen Buddhism and Persian Culture - An investigation on the Influence of Simorghiansian Culture on Zen Buddhism*. Simorghian culture (inculcating deities including Mithra, Anahita, Bhaga, Farrox, etc.) predates Zoroastrianism and profoundly influenced Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism at different points in history.

> The major transmitters of Buddhism to China were the Iranian peoples of Parthia, Bactria, and Transoxiana, whose convenient position between east and west enabled them to serve as middlemen along the Silk Road. The latter group in particular, known as the Sogdians, established communities along the trade routes from Iran and India all the way into China. Actually, many important features of Mahāyāna Buddhism display Iranian influences, such as the soteriological (salvation) function of Maitreya 弥勒 (the one who helps people toward salvation) and the Buddha-nature 仏性 (Manichaean particle of Light). Central deities also had Iranian origins (Table 1. 2). (P. 6)
>
> By Masato Tojo, Ph.D.
>
> http://www.shamogoloparvaneh.com/Zen_Buddhism_and_Persian_Culture_V1.pdf

In any case Daoxuan's version of the *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* says that Bodhidharma arrived in the South Chinese Kingdom of Song, making his arrival sometime before 479 ACE, as that kingdom fell to Southern Qi in that year.

According to another historical record, the *Anthology of the Patriarchal Hall* (祖堂集 *Zǔtángjí* - 952 AD) Bodhidharma arrived in China in 527 during the Liang Dynasty. So, it's fairly safe to say Bodhidharma arrived in China sometime around 479 - 527 ACE.

After arrival in China he visited the Liang Court (now Nanjing) but left after his cryptic teachings offended Liang Emperor Wu (Emperor Xiāo Yǎn 蕭衍 of Liáng 梁) a sincere patron of Buddhism.

> "The emperor asked Bodhidharma, 'How much karmic merit have I earned for ordaining Buddhist monks, building monasteries, having sutras copied, and commissioning Buddha images?' Bodhidharma answered, 'None. Good deeds done with worldly intent bring good karma, but no merit.' The emperor then asked Bodhidharma, 'So what is the highest meaning of noble truth?' Bodhidharma answered, 'There is no noble truth, there is only void.' The emperor then asked Bodhidharma, 'Then, who is standing before me?' Bodhidharma answered, 'I know not, Your Majesty.'
>
> "From then on, the emperor refused to listen to whatever Bodhidharma had to say. Although Bodhidharma came from India to China to become the first Buddhist patriarch of China, the emperor refused to recognize him. Bodhidharma knew that he would face difficulty in the near future, but had the emperor been able to leave the throne and yield it to someone else, he could have avoided his fate of starving to death.
>
> "According to the teaching, Emperor Wu's past life was as a *Bǐqiū* (one of the first disciples of the Buddha). While he meditated in the mountains, a monkey would always steal and eat the things he planted for food, as well as the fruit in the trees. One day, he was able to trap the monkey in a cave and blocked the entrance of the cave with rocks, hoping to teach the monkey a lesson. However, after two days, the *Bǐqiū* found that the monkey had died of starvation.

“Supposedly, that monkey was reincarnated into *Hou Jing* of the Northern Wei Dynasty, who led his soldiers to attack Nanjing. After Nanjing was taken, the emperor was held in captivity in the palace and was not provided with any food, and was left to starve to death. Though Bodhidharma wanted to save him and brought forth a compassionate mind toward him, the emperor failed to recognize him, so there was nothing Bodhidharma could do. Thus, Bodhidharma had no choice but to leave Emperor Wu to die and went into meditation in a cave for nine years.

“This encounter would later form the basis of the first kōan of the collection ‘The Blue Cliff Record.’ However, that version of the story is somewhat different. In the Blue Cliff's telling of the story, there is no claim that Emperor Wu did not listen to Bodhidharma after the Emperor was unable to grasp the meaning. Instead, Bodhidharma left the presence of the Emperor once Bodhidharma saw that the Emperor was unable to understand. Then Bodhidharma went across the river to the kingdom of Wei.

“After Bodhidharma left, the Emperor asked the official in charge of the Imperial Annals about the encounter. The Official of the Annals then asked the Emperor if he still denied knowing who Bodhidharma was. When the Emperor said he didn't know, the Official said, ‘This was the Great-being Guanyin (i.e., the *Mahasattva Avalokiteśvara*) transmitting the imprint of the Buddha's Heart-Mind.’

> "The Emperor regretted his having let Bodhidharma leave and was going to dispatch a messenger to go and beg Bodhidharma to return. The Official then said, 'Your Highness, do not say to send out a messenger to go fetch him. The people of the entire nation could go, and he still would not return.'"
>
> Translation from bodhidharma.eu, adapted from the *Anthology of the Patriarchal Hall*

There is some controversy regarding Bodhidharma and his visit to Shàolín. Legend has it that after his visit to the Liang Court Bodhidharma crossed the Yangtze River on his way to the Kingdom of Wei, location of the Songshan Shàolín Monastery where he sat facing a wall for nine years in a cave in silence and that he experienced his enlightenment during this time.

For example, Wang Guangxi, who was standing director of the Modern Chinese Literature Research Institute and Deputy Dean of Wushu Culture Research Center, Physical Education Institute, Shengzhou University wrote that: "Bodhidharma (?-563) once visited the Shàolín Temple but didn't live there for a long time…" (Wang, 2008, P. 14)

However, the *Jingde-era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp* (景德傳燈錄 *Jingde chuandeng lu* - dates vary between 1004-1011) records the following:

> "The Second Patriarch of Chinese Chán is Huike 慧可 (487–593). After studying Taoism in his youth he turned to Buddhism, ordaining under Chán Master Baojing (寶靜禪師). Later he spent eight years in meditation, leading to a vision at about the age of forty that guided him to Bodhidharma… Huike went to Shaolin temple and called upon Bodhidharma at the cave where he was meditating. Receiving no acknowledgment from the master, Huike waited outside for the entire night. It was winter, and by dawn the snow had reached his knees. Finally, Bodhidharma asked, "You have stood long in the snow. What do you seek?" Huike replied, "I request only that the master, in his

> mercy, open the Gate of Sweet Dew and liberate all beings." Bodhidharma said, "The supreme, marvelous Way of all Buddhas can be attained only through ages of effort practicing what is difficult to practice, enduring what is difficult to endure. Why should you, with your shallow heart and arrogant mind, ask for the true vehicle and suffer such hardships in vain?" Huike cut off his left arm and presented it to the master as a sign of his detachment and desire to study the Way. With this, Bodhidharma accepted him as a disciple.
>
> "One day he said to Bodhidharma, 'My mind is not yet at rest. Master, I implore you, please put my mind to rest.' The master replied, 'Bring your mind here and I will put it to rest for you.' Huike said, 'I have searched for my mind, but am unable to find it.' 'There,' said the master, 'I have put your mind to rest for you.' *After about five years* Huike received dharma transmission from Bodhidharma, then became a wandering teacher." (Italics added by author)
>
> Sasaki, R.F. (2009 b) P. 264, 265

This text clearly states "after about five years…" which suggests that Bodhidharma's stay at Shàolín was more than for a "short time," giving some credence to the legends regarding the length of his stay at Shàolín.

Six short treatises called *Xiaoshi liumen* are attributed to Bodhidharma while he was at Shàolín Temple "although there is no evidence that he was the actual author." (Sasaki, P. 419)

> "*Xiaoshi liumen*" (小室六門) or "Bodhidharma's six gates." "*Shaoshi*" (少室) is an alternate name for Bodhidharma from the fact that Shaolin si 少林寺, is his temple, and was located on the peak *Shaoshi* (少室) of Mount Song (嵩). The six treatises that comprise the *Xiaoshi liumen* are: 1) *Xin jing song* (心經頌) Verse on the mind sutra; 2) *Po xiang lun* (破相論) Treatise on the cessation of thoughts; 3) *Er zhongru* (二種入) The two entrances; 4) *Anxin famen* (安心法門) Dharma gate for pacifying the mind; 5) *Wuxing lun* (悟性論) Treatise on awakening to the nature of mind; and 6) *Xuemai lun* (血脈論) Treatise on the transmission. The individual texts date to the Tang; texts for the *Anxin famen* and the *Er zhongru* have been found at *Dunhuang*. The *Xiaoshi liumen* itself appears to date to the Song.
>
> Sasaki, R.F. (2009 b) *The Record of Linji*, P. 419-420

The enlightenment of Bodhidharma, so the legend goes, laid the foundation for Chán Buddhism - the last major branch of Buddhism to evolve. Though the roots of Buddhism lie in India, Chán is uniquely Chinese, and is considered by many to be the most direct path to enlightenment.

Bodhidharma's vision of the path to enlightenment was radically different from the status quo of that time. He rejected most of the standard *Vinaya* (Buddhist rule) system of the time focusing instead on an intuitive grasp of the Buddha mind through meditation ("wall-gazing" 觀 *bìguān*).

In the *Two Entrances and Four Acts*, traditionally attributed to Bodhidharma, the term "wall-gazing" appears as such:

> "Those who turn from delusion back to reality, who meditate on walls, the absence of self and other, the oneness of mortal and sage, and who remain unmoved even by scriptures are in complete and unspoken agreement with reason."
>
> Red Pine, Ed. (1989)

Both Tanlin and Daoxuan (writers of the *Biographies of Eminent Monks*) associate wall-gazing with "quieting the mind," or *ān xīn* (安心) in Chinese which literally means "Peaceful heart."

Bodhidharma was unique amongst Buddhist monks in that he emphasized a mind/body unity and personal enlightenment rather than heaven. Some scholars suggest he was influenced by Daoism (Taoism) which emphasizes naturalness, simplicity, patience, non-action, receptiveness and spontaneity, generally speaking those themes found the in *Daodejing* (Tao Te Ching):

> "Simplicity, patience, compassion
> These three are your greatest treasures
> Simple in actions and thoughts,
>
> you return to the source of being.
> Patient with both friends and enemies
> You accord with the way things are
> Compassionate toward yourself
> You reconcile all beings in the world."

The above quote does sound strikingly like "Peaceful heart."

Within Chinese Chán there are five schools. The lines: "One flower opens five petals, the fruit naturally ripen," attributed to Bodhidharma is said to foretell the branching off of the five Chán schools that later evolved in China: *Yunmen*, *Guiyang*, *Linji*, *Fayan*, and *Caodong*, each of which derives its' name from its founder.

The North Shàolín Monastery, originally called "*Faxing Si*" was built sometime in the Wei Jin Dynasty. It is the oldest temple in the very large mostly rural Jixian area but did not join the Shàolín Family until the Yuan Dynasty nearly a thousand years later.

The Songshan Shàolín Monastery was established in 495 also during the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534). Emperor Xiaowen was a believer of Buddhism and he built the temple in the Songshan Mountain range to honor and house Indian Dhyana Master Bátuó (Buddhabhadra - 跋陀) the first abbot of Shàolín Monastery. He had traveled to China in 464 ACE to preach Hinayana Buddhism. In 520 AD Batuo's disciple venerable master Sengchou was appointed Abbot of Shàolín Temple.

Not long after Emperor Wu of Liang (464–549) an ardent Buddhist assembled and catalogued a collection of 5,400 books. (Translations of Sanskrit books into Chinese gradually made up the Chinese Tripitaka S*ānzàng*, which was concluded in the tenth century and first printed in 972.)

In 577 Emperor Zhouwu issued an imperial decree to abolish Buddhism and the Shàolín Temple was destroyed (for the first, but not the last time). In spite of some emperor's anti-Buddhist tendencies Buddhism continued to grow in China.

In 580 Emperor Zhoujing proclaimed an imperial decree to rejuvenate Buddhism and Daoism and Shàolín Monastery was rebuilt and renamed Zhihu Temple, until the next year when it regained its original name: "Shàolín."

Buddhist scriptures traveled into China via many different routes at different times. For a fascinating review of three different Chinese pilgrims' travels to India during the first millennium, see *The Travel Records of Chinese Pilgrims: Faxian, Xuanzang, and Yijing* by Tansen Sen (2006).

The status of Buddhism throughout its' history in China varied greatly according to different emperor's predilections toward different philosophies and in the case of the Shàolín, military needs of the different emperors, some of whom were devout Buddhists and others who sometimes brutally suppressed it. Buddhists and Taoists were often the targets of persecutions by primarily Confucian Emperors. Buddhism was a "foreign religion" and Taoists were often looked down upon by Emperors because Taoist philosophy showed somewhere between little and no respect for the established powers. It was an axiom for Daoists that "a prince is in no way different from a brigand," and that any individual that is in communion with the Tao is a noble; ideas not especially appreciated by the nobility of the

time.

According to the *Wèishū* (魏书) the *History of the Northern Wei Dynasty*,[1] the origin of Chinese Buddhist "warrior monks" can be traced to the Wei Dynasty, when the Northern Wei Dynasty Emperor Shi Zu (Cao Pi) found weapons (bow, arrows, spears, shields) in a Buddhist temple and furious, ordered the destruction of their statue of a Buddha.

Tang Dynasty (618-907)

The Tang Dynasty is considered by many to have been the golden age in China for philosophy, arts, sciences and cultural development.

However, under Emperor Gaozu, who reigned 618 to 626 and the founder of the Tang Dynasty (618-906) a treatise was written against Buddhism stating that monks and nuns were doing harm by neglecting their duties to their families and the state.

Subsequently Buddhism and Daoism were prohibited. (Daoism was included in this because they had started a monastic tradition emulating Buddhism monasteries.)

In 618 the Shàolín Temple was ransacked and burned. Only the Pagodas remained intact. In 622 the Shàolín was abandoned. Two years later in July of 624 the Shàolín was restored on the original site as the result of the monk's appeal to the court.

Despite the rough beginning, during the Tang Dynasty Buddhism virtually became China's national religion.

Prince Li Shimin and Wang Shichong

Emperor Gaozu son, later to become Emperor Li Shimin (also known as Emperor Taizong), was a much more tolerant individual than his father in most respects. Li Shimin commanded troops from the age of 18 and was an expert with bow, sword and lance. He defeated a numerically superior army supported by Dou Jiande (573-621) at Luoyang in the Battle of Julao on May 28, 621 ACE. Also in 621 he enlisted the assistance of the Shàolín Monastery in a campaign against a contender for the throne of the dying Sui

[1] *History of Wei of the Northern Dynasties*, tenth of the 24 dynastic histories 二十四史, compiled by Wei Shou 魏收 in 554 during Northern Qi Dynasty 北齊｜北齐, 114 scrolls

Dynasty, Wang Shichong. The battle took place around Luoyang where he would in later years Li Shimin would build his capital. Following the defeat of Wang Shichong:

> "The Tang court handsomely rewarded the Shaolin monks, one of whom was appointed General-in-chief (*Da jiangjun*) in Li's army. The inscriptions include a letter of thanks that Li Shimin addressed to the Shaolin monks, as well as several official documents, in which the Tang government bestows land and other privileges upon the monastery in recognition of its military support."
>
> Meir Shahar, *The Shaolin Monastery: History, Religion, and the Chinese Martial Arts,* University of Hawaii Press, 2008 P. 363

In the Appendix, Shàolín historian Dr. Shahar goes on to write:

> "The stele (engraved stone memorial etched with the letter) is still extant at the monastery and includes a detailed history of the Shaolin Monastery, which was authored by the Minister of Personnel Pei Cui. Pei alludes not only to the military assistance Shaolin monks rendered to (Prince) Li Shimin, but also to another incident in which they resorted to arms: during the last years of the Sui Dynasty (around 610) they warded off an attack by bandits. Pei's inscription, which is usually referred to as the "*Shaolinsi bei*," is transcribed in numerous sources." (*Ibid*, P. 408)

Dr. Shahar makes the point that there is no direct evidence of martial training at the Shàolín Temple at this point in history. "Though the names of 13 of the monks were recognized by Li Shimin for their meritorious service," he wrote, "they could have been trained outside the Temple." (This assertion will be addressed in Chapter 2 – *The Shàolín Temples*.)

Dr. Shahar continues that this is a clear-cut example of "Buddhist monks operating in the service of a prince and indirectly an emperor, as part of an army on behalf of the state." The distinction between different kinds of "monks" is discussed later in this chapter in the section titled: "*Roads to becoming a monk*."

Buddhist condemnation of war and violence

One can only ponder upon the decision making process that went on in the Shàolín Monastery regarding whether or not they in any form (e.g. sponsorship of lay disciples) should engage in warfare on behalf of the state, though clearly a precedent had been set around the year 610 when the Shàolín Monastery first supported a military effort against bandits. Protecting the innocent can be a complex business.

Buddhism is an ancient religion which has been forced to confront many issues of the material world however much they may have wished to avoid them.

For example, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* (2003) lists the term: *Yi sha duo sheng* (一殺多生) which means: "To kill one that many may live." (In a recent interview with the head monk of North Shàolín Monastery, Shi Yan Pei, he shuddered, and said: "No!" when read the phrase: "*Yi sha duo seng*.")

None-the-less, within the corpus of Buddhist culture and philosophy one can find such justifications. There is also "The right of great Bodhisattvas, knowing everyone's karma, to kill without sinning," e.g. "…in order to prevent a person from committing sin involving unintermitted suffering, or to aid him in reaching one of the higher reincarnations." (*Fangbian shaseng* 方便殺生)."

Soothill, W.E. & Hodous, L. (2003) *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*

There are also many Buddhist doctrines which acknowledge the need for a ruler to have a strong army to protect the people.

> "In the '*Chakkavatti- Sihanada Sutra*' (*The Lion's Roar on the Turning of Wheel*) of the long discourses of the Buddha, Buddha justified the requirement of the king having an army to provide guard, protection and security for different classes of people in the kingdom from internal and external threats.
>
> "Soldiering was accepted by the Buddha as a noble profession. The soldier was known as "Rajabhata." However, Buddha did not permit Rajabata to become monks whilst in service as a soldier. Buddha instituted a law (Vinaya) for the monks to the effect that, 'No soldier could become a monk whilst in military service.' Further in terms of the Vinaya (the code of conduct for monks) monks were permitted to visit the battle field but they were ordered to return before the sunset. Permission was also given to visit injured relatives in the battlefield."
>
> Major General Ananda Weerasekera (2013) *Buddhism & The Soldier*

There are usually many avenues to modify dangerous people's behavior short of killing them, e.g. education, persuasion, negotiation, humoring, bribing, physical restraint of one kind or another, (e.g. supermax prisons) etc. However, history has repeatedly shown that certain individuals and groups are completely immune to such efforts in which case moral decisions must be made by those who have the legal and moral authority, and power to do so.

"*Ahimsa*" is a Sanskrit word cherished by the Buddha and other lovers of peace that means "do not harm or injure."

"The Buddha said
All tremble at violence. All fear death.
Comparing oneself with others
one should neither kill nor cause others to kill."

From the: *Dammapada*, Chapter 10, Verse 129

"Victory gives rise to hate,
those defeated lie in pain,
happily rest the peaceful
surrendering victory-defeat."

From the: *Dammapada*, Chapter 15, Verse 201

In his Master's Thesis titled "*The Buddha and the Four-Limbed Army: The Military in the Pali Canon*" Matthew Kosuta Ph.D. found that the *Pali Cannon* treats the military in a variety of different ways, which he arranged in six main categories:

1. Scenery, Symbol and Security. This category contains doctrinally neutral references in which the military appears as part of the background or scenery of the passage. It may appear as a symbol of the power and prestige of a king or as security for him or the state.
2. Category of Mundane (*Lokiya*) vs. Transcendental (*Lokuttara*). Military action is not conducive to following the Path; it should be recognized as such and renounced. The Buddha himself in his last life and in previous lives renounced the apex of Kshatriya life, that of a king. The skills and actions of a warrior are said to lead to a rebirth in a purgatory or hell. But, the military does not find itself singled out and condemned more harshly than any other mundane profession, action or skill. In fact, even when being condemned as ultimately unproductive, the *Pali Canon* often corroborates the high social status of the military within the mundane.
3. Teachings from the *Viniyapitaka* (*the Book of Discipline*) makes up the third category: Monastic Discipline and the Military. Some important rules include: a monk may visit an army that has marched

out of its garrison only if he has sufficient reason and if his stay does not last longer than three days; monks are forbidden from viewing a mock combat, army deployment, or an army review. One of the crucial references in this study concerns the regulation banning soldiers in the king's service from joining the *Sangha* (the monastic community). This passage suggests that the Buddha made a political decision in recognition of Buddhism's need for protection from physical dangers and monks (fully ordained *"Bǐqiū"* at least) should not be part of that protection system.

4. Then there is a category treating the utopic rule of the *Cakkavattin* (a Wheel Turning King). Here, the military plays a strange role where the *Cakkavattin* maintains a complete four-limbed army and his sons are described as "foe crushers," yet neither (actually) performs a military function and appear only as a necessary symbol of kingship.
5. The next category Professor Kosuta called "*The Metaphor: Nirvanic Action is War*." Here the military plays an important role serving as a metaphor. A monk is frequently told that he must be like a "warrior or elephant skilled in battle."
6. The final category is titled *The Bodhisattva in Battle*. Here we find militarily involved Jataka or past life stories of the Buddha. In them the Bodhisattva and future Arahants participate in military conflicts. Several of these Jataka present the battlefield as an excellent place to perfect energy (*viriya*). Several stories raise questions as to the karmic fruits reaped by the Bodhisattva because of his military actions. As we have seen these karmic fruits should be negative, but the Canon remains silent on the matter. From the Jataka we learn that being a soldier in no way negates one's ultimate ability to attain nirvana and, in fact, being a soldier might be an aid since as seen in the category *Nirvanic Action is War*, a

> superior soldier has the necessary qualities for a monk to succeed.
>
> Adapted from: Kosuta, Matthew Ph.D., *The Buddha and the Four-Limbed Army: The Military in the Pali Canon*

Thus, the Shàolín Monastery was not the only or first Buddhist organization in the world that had to address these moral questions.

Western theology on engagement in war and self defence

Some western theologian's rational for a "moral engagement" in war, defense of others and self-defense may shed some light on the Shàolín Monasteries' participation in various levels of military affairs.

> "'May a Christian become a soldier and fight in a just war?' According to Saint Augustine, he doubtlessly may do so if he is led by patience and benevolence. The military service shall only be open to moral and pious men, for they will not only bring about just peace through minimal use of violence, but they are also less susceptible to hatred and revenge when fighting the enemy."
>
> Justenhoven, H.G. & Barbieri, W.A. (2012) P. 63

> "Killing in times of war can be legitimized in two ways: (a) by the legality of the war itself, what is a matter of natural-law-arguments, and (b) by the goodness of the soldier's concrete behavior, which is a matter of virtue…. Its main principle is that the enemy will not be regarded with hatred." (*ibid*, P. 167-168)

> "Augustine and Aquinas also strongly distinguish the private good defended in self-defense from the common good defended in war. A private person rightly kills only to defend his own life while a public official kills to defend not himself but others. So, a private person is defending merely a private and personal good, while the public official is defending the common good: this is why, they argue, we permit public officials, but not private persons, to intentionally kill wrongdoers. If private killing in self-defense were indeed limited to merely defending one's own self, then the analogy to war seems remote; but the right of killing in self-defense is not so limited. *By both morality and law, a private person may use force to repel force directed, not merely at himself, but against innocent third parties. A private person has a natural right, recognized by all modern legal systems to use force to defend innocent strangers from direct attack."*
>
> Justenhoven, H.G. & Barbieri, W.A. (2012) P. 179-180. Italics added by author.

Taken a step further, one might argue that someone who has the power and means to protect innocent people from murderous actions, but fails to take action to protect those innocent parties against aggressive attacks is in fact engaging in a form of passive aggression against the innocent victims by allowing the aggressors to kill (or rape and rob) them (of movable property and hereditary lands). This implies a moral responsibility conferred upon those, Buddhist or otherwise, who have the power and the means to protect innocents from deadly violence.

The Abbot's decision

This sort of reasoning may have factored into the decision-making process of Shàolín Abbots to engage in martial affairs outside the Monastery, albeit through secondary means, specifically lay disciples. Choosing to ignore large gangs of bandits, pirates and warlords would have been an abrogation of Shàolín Abbots' and monks' sworn duty to protect life as Buddhists.

This kind of conclusion differs from that of Dr. Shahar who wrote:

> "Their generous patronage of the monastery resulted from the Shaolin's support of the dynasty's founder rather than from religious piety. The monks' disregard for the Buddhist prohibition of violence was therefore the very source of their monastery's prosperity."
>
> Shahar, Meir (2008) P. 51 & 52

Shàolín's participation in military affairs may have been an extension of religious piety rather than an abrogation of it, following the reasoning of Saints Augustine and Aquinas as outlined by Justenhoven & Barbieri (2012), thereby nullifying the assertion that the Shàolín "monks" were: "disregarding Buddhist prohibitions" to win the favor of emperors given that *protecting life is the first duty of Buddhists*. Thus, protection from imperial persecutions and prosperity may well have simply been just rewards for just actions as assuredly their rewards were neither asked for nor sought after.

Table 1: First five Abbots of the Songshan Shàolín Temple

1	Northern Wei	Ba-Tuo	跋陀	495-520
2		Seng-Chou	僧稠	520-560
3		Zi-Yun	资云	Dates unclear
4	Tang	Zhi-Cao	志操	-621-
5		Yi-jiang	义奖	-704-

Source: Official site of the Shaolin Temple: http://www.shaolin.org.cn

One can see from the above table above that it was probably Abbot Zhi-Cao in 621 who made the decision to support Prince Li Shimin. Had he known what would happen only five years later he might not have made that decision as he did. Had he known what would happen over the next thousand years, he may well have made that decision just as he did.

The Prince becomes an Emperor: Taizong

On July 2nd, 626 Li Shimin murdered his two brothers, Li Yuanji and Crown Prince Li Jiancheng. His father abdicated later that year (some historians suggest under threat of force) and Prince Li Shimin, also called by his temple name, "Taizong" became emperor.

Though these events may lead one to consider Li Shimin to be a rather terrible person, in fact he is considered by most historians to be one of, if not the greatest emperor in Chinese history. The Tang Dynasty entered into a golden age of sorts with rapid advancements in arts and sciences, and previously unknown levels of economic prosperity that lasted for more than a century after his reign. During the Tang Dynasty China was the largest and strongest nation in the world, covering present day China, Vietnam and much of Central Asia.

Subsequent Tang Dynasty Emperors and an Empress

His reign lasted 23 years and he was succeeded by his one of his sons, Emperor Gaozong of Tang (reigned 649-683).

Sometime between 670 and 674 Emperor Gaozong visited Shàolín Temple, inscribed the *Golden Prajna Stele* ("Stele" is a large engraved stone) and granted pictures and other objects to the Temple.

Sometime in 682 or 683 Emperor Gaozong bestowed the character *Fei* (fly) upon the Shàolín Temple, which was inscribed onto the wall of the Temple. On September 25, 683 Empress Wu granted gold, silk and other goods upon the Shàolín Temple and erected a stele for her mother.

Later on, Emperor Gaozong left most of the business of ruling an empire to his wife, Empress Wu who officially reigned 690-705, though her reign really started many years earlier due to several strokes suffered by the emperor who passed away in 684.

Shortly thereafter Empress Wu, best known as "Wu Zetian" came to the Shàolín to pray blessings for him. Wu Zetian had previously been a concubine of her father-in-law Li Shimin and was the only true Empress in Chinese history. She is generally considered to have been quite excellent in many respects.

She greatly expanded the boundaries of the Chinese empire, updated census figures to ensure fair land allocations, and helped satisfy the lower classes through various forms of relief.

Empress Wu Zetian promoted Buddhism over Confucianism and Daoism as the state religion in China countering Confucian beliefs against female rule with her own iron, and silken hand. She sponsored many scholarly exchanges and the construction of many Buddhist pilgrimage sites. She was the mother of three sons who briefly served as emperor after her, however her grandson Emperor Xuán Zong of Tang also commonly known as Emperor Ming of Tang and Hsuan-tsung of Tang (唐玄宗 712–756) was to become the longest reigning emperor of China, holding power for some 43 years.

In 704 Master Yijing returned from the West and restored the Ordination Platform at Shàolín Monastery.

Under Tang dynasty Emperor Xuán Zong (712-756) a persecution of the Buddhists began on the basis of a memorial written by Yao Ch'ung, a Confucian.

In the year 714 AD, 12,000 monks were forced to return to their families. The persecution was aimed at curbing what was seen as an excessive growth of monastic communities. (Eder, M. 1973) Although his reign was considered one of cultural brilliance, he also introduced new political elements including the notorious eunuchs that repeatedly usurped power and authority in the Chinese imperial court for the next thousand years. Emperor Xuán Zong's strong preference for the rigidly patriarchal strictures of Confucian philosophy starkly demonstrates the dynamic tension (conflict) between Buddhism and Confucian administrative policies in China.

The Shàolín Temple however again had some residual protection from this suppression by virtue of its services to the former emperor –laying as it were the foundation for the Tang Dynasty. In November 723 Emperor Xuán Zong inscribed two tablets and dispatched Master Yuxing to send them to Shàolín Monastery.

But, in another radical shift, in 845 Emperor Wuzong issued a decree to destroy Shàolín Temple and ordered the monks to resume secular life.

Fortunately, the next year, Emperor Xuān Zong of Tang (唐宣宗 reigned 846-85) (not to be confused with his ancestor, Xuán Zong) reversed the anti-Buddhist policies of his predecessor and encouraged the reconstruction of destroyed temples. Part of his rational for this was his strong belief in *Feng-shui* (wind and water system) with which Buddhism was closely affiliated at that time.

According to Chinese Buddhist historian Eder,

> "From the Tang time on the Buddhist clergy was placed under strict state supervision.
>
> "Altogether 5,358 monasteries and convents were allowed to exist, 3,235 for monks and 2,123 for nuns, besides 1,687 Taoist monasteries, 776 for the male and 988 for the female sex. The number of Buddhist monks was restricted to 75,521, and that of nuns to 50,576.

> "In addition, ordination certificates were instituted, without which one was not considered a member of the monkhood and could not live in a convent or near a religious institution. The law by which the Tang dynasty curtailed monasticism was taken over by succeeding dynasties and actually resulted in curbing the activities of the monks and preventing them from attaining in China an influence comparable to that in other Asiatic countries."
>
> Eder, M. (1973) P. 169

Alternating waves of support for and persecution of Buddhists continued in subsequent dynasties.

Between 954 and 959 the Shàolín Monastery was abandoned again.

Northern and Southern Song Dynasties (960 - 1127 & 1127 – 1279)

The Song Dynasty was much the same as the Tang with one emperor supporting Buddhism and the next persecuting it, however the cycle became more extreme. For example, in 1019 Emperor Zhenzong (眞宗 - 3rd Song Dynasty Emperor 997 – 1022) canceled all restrictions for entering monastic life.

His successor Emperor Zhào Zhēn (reign 1022 – 1063) tried to completely eradicate Buddhism. Historically however, practically everywhere in the world persecuting religion only makes them grow stronger.

Thus, it should be no great surprise that it was during the Song Dynasty that Chán Buddhism in particular reached its peak in China exercising a profound influence on Chinese life. As can be read in Chapter 4 – The Origin of Chinese Zen Buddhist Tea Ceremony – Chan Chadao: "One can discern the harmony between (and co-evolution of) *Chán* and *Chádào* and the natural pattern of both growing from the south to the north and from inside the monasteries to all the towns, villages and remote areas in China." This process was well underway in the Song Dynasty.

In 1087 Master Bao'en started teaching at Shàolín Monastery. About the same time Chán tradition was established, replacing the Vinaya tradition.

Guardian deities and moral justification for martial endeavour

The Song Dynasties (North and South) were also a time when some degree of moral justification for martial (war) arts via the veneration of the supernatural guardian deity *Naluoyan* at the Shàolín emerged.

Dr. Shahar goes on to mention that in the 16th century *Naluoyan's* identity "merged" with that of another Buddhist deity, *Jinnaluo,* if for no other reason than the similarities in their Chinese names. Though *Jinnaluo* was also a foreign deity, he was adopted by the Shàolín and armed with a staff ennobled with divine prestige colored with "a Buddhist aura as befitting a monastery." This then laid a foundation for the "supernatural provenance of the Shàolín martial arts," (*ibid*).

Dramatic growth at the dawning of the Yuan Dynasty

In 1220 Abbot Zhilong set up the Shàolín Pharmacy. In 1242 Master Wan Song of the *Caodong sect* sent his disciple Fuyu to preside over Shàolín Monastery.

In 1245 Fuyu held an ordination assembly at Shàolín Temple under the order of Mongolian ruler Kublai Khan (reigned 1260 - 1294) of the Yuan Dynasty. In 1258 Kublai Khan hosted a debate in Karakorum on Buddhism and Daoism. As the representative of Buddhism Fuyu argued on behalf of Buddhism and soundly defeated the Daoist representative.

Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368)

The Mongolian Yuan Dynasty emperors were generally quite tolerant towards religion within their realm; however, Kublai Khan didn't care much for Confucianism and in 1281 demoted Confucius from a "saint" (*Shèngshén*) to a sage (*Shèngxián*). He also ordered Taoist literature to be burned. During Kublai's time there were in China 42,318 monasteries with 213,148 monks. (Eder, M. 1973)

The Mongolian emperors favored Buddhism and Taoism. Buddhist advisors, teachers, and administrators brought a sense of civilization to the Mongolian court influencing each of the succeeding Khans.

In the decades leading up to the official founding of the Yuan Dynasty Abbot Fuyu had been given jurisdiction over five other monasteries (in addition to Shàolín; dates vary as to exactly when this happened, though sometime between 1245 and 1260 seems mostly likely). One of those temples called *Faxing Si*, located on Panshan, in Ji County (Jixian, northeast China) was in 1315 to become the North Shàolín Temple. The other four temples were in Helin (then capital of the Yuan Dynasty), Taiyuan, Chang'an (modern Xi'an) and Loyang (in Henan Province).

To really understand the founding of the North Shaolin Monastery one must understand Shaolin's philosophy and ethos, the grandsons of Genghis Khan especially Kublai Khan and perhaps more importantly, his mother – a most amazing woman: Sorghaghtani Beki (1204–1252), daughter-in-law of Temujin (later known as Genghis Khan) and wife of Tolui. She was also a Christian member of the "Church of the East," but also established mosques in Islamic regions.

She was in many ways the guiding spirit behind the Mongolian Empire, partly due to her political acumen in furthering the leadership positions of her sons, and also for her role in promoting education, agriculture, administrative organization, and philosophy. She tried to have her four sons Mongke, Kublai, Hulegu and Ariq Boke broadly educated though it was only Kublai (1215 – 1294; reigned 1260-1294) that was influenced by this in any meaningful way, for he became a true scholar in youth and young adulthood showing special interest in China in general, Buddhism in particular, and an aptitude in Chinese language.

During the time his older brother Mongke was Khan, Kublai – an untested warrior - was sent south to China to conquer the Sung Dynasty, but his style was diametrically opposed to, for his example his younger brother Hulegu who – sent west to what is modern day Iraq and Iran - butchered some 800,000 of the million inhabitants of Bagdad after they had surrendered.

Hulegu then told the Caliph of Bagdad – who had surrendered the city before its conquest, he could live after the slaughter, and to choose 100 of his most special wives to take with him. Hulegu then killed the Caliph and kept the 100 most special wives for his own ger (Mongolian house).

In contrast Kublai spared Chinese cities if they surrendered and forbade his men indiscriminate killing rape and plunder during his conquest of the Chin and Sung kingdoms. Though at first this led to some financial difficulties for him, Kublai later made up for this by capturing silver mines and still later organizing huge farming estates in the south of China. Kublai Khan was a most unusual man for his culture which was famed for ruthlessness, and he is revered by many Chinese for his Buddhist beliefs and compassion. No doubt he was aided by many advisors, including Chinese scholar-official, diplomat, advisor and imperial tutor Yao Shu (姚樞 1201 - 1278) and court adviser, city planner and architect Liu Bingzhong (劉秉忠 1216–1274). It was Yao Shu and Liu Bingzhong that made plans for Kublai leading to a revitalization of Songshan Shaolin martial arts, as they hosted numerous competitions to identify the most talented in many spheres of influence, including government administration and the military. They also organized debates between leading Chinese Buddhist, Daoist and Confucian scholars.

It was within this crucible of influences and events that Abbot Fuyu was given jurisdiction over Faxing Si – the monastery that was some years later to become the North Shaolin Monastery.

Fuyu

The following is Fuyu's story from the *Goshen Biography of Eminent Monks*.

> Monk Fuyu who is called "Snow Court" with the word "Hao Wen," and surnamed Zhang, was born in Wenshui, Taiyuan (now Wenshui County, Shanxi Province). At the age of nine, he went around chanting words. Not long after there was some social unrest and he was orphaned.
>
> Before long he met an old monk. The older monk persuaded him to study Buddha, saying: "It would be enough if you are able to recite the *Hokke Sutra*."
>
> Fuyu replied: "Buddhas teaching, is it only one book, *Hokke Sutra*?"

The monk was surprised feeling that the child was not average, and subsequently brought him to a place named Xianyan, Wenzhou, in Zhejiang Province. There they met an old monk named Xiu Lin. After the old monk met Fuyu, he said to him: "You are the seed Dharma-Dragon and I'm sure you can make achievements in the future." Right away he shaved the child's hair and changed his dressing. Fuyu received full ordination.

Fuyu and Guanggong, who came from Shuangxi (today in Jinjua, Zhejiang Province) took Co-Chair Deacon positions, and later had tours of Yen Ching (now called Beijing), and sheltered the monk Wansong for a long time. Fuyu's reputation was rising at the time. A lot of seekers after Dharma went to learn from him.

Before Emperor Kublai Khan ascended the throng, he ordered Fuyu to Shàolín Temple to preside over the General Assembly.

Soon after Fuyu was ordered by Emperor Yuan Taizong (also called Ögedei Khan who reigned 1229-1241) to manage Taiping Xingguo Temple located in the capital city Hala Helin.

In the Xinhai year (1251) Yuan Xianzong (Möngke Khan, 4th Great Khan of The Mongol Empire, reigned 1251-1259) led troops in battle in Beiting, Xinjiang province and later resided there. Month after month he asked Fuyu about the Buddha's teachings. Fuyu answered simply and correctly which entered deep into the mind of the Emperor.

As soon as Kublai Khan (Yuan Yuán Shìzǔ - reigned 1260-1294) ascended the throne he appointed Fuyu to be the head of the Buddhist Affairs over all the country, and built a monastery for him in his hometown which was named Baoen Temple. He also gave substantial land to the temple.

In the spring of 1271, Kublai Khan wrote an order to have the monks of the world gather in Beijing. Among those monks, the students of Fuyu stood as one third. The quantity of monks was magnificent and all were very talented in different areas, which pleased the Emperor. At that time, there was no head master in Shaolin temple, and two excellent monks named "Wan Song Xing Xiu" and "Hai Yun Yin Jian" both recommended Fuyu to be the Abbot. Kublai Khan looked at Fuyu and said: "You have hosted the General Assembly of Shaolin temple, which means your destiny is tied with Shaolin Temple. Please take this position as the head master of Shaolin temple and make a change of this weak circumstance, revitalizing Shaolin Temple."

When Fuyu arrived at Shaolin temple, millions of people came to Shaolin temple because of his reputation, and millions of people made a donation. Temples in Song Yang were all decorated and renovated shiningly and brightly. At Bai Ma Temple in Luoyang, there were no breaks between lectures about Buddha and all of these scenes were due to the leadership of Fuyu.

But Fuyu was very calm regarding his achievements, meditating as usual, like nothing had ever happened. Fuyu was very generous and humble; his posture was elegant and beautiful. He had made speeches for more than thirty years, with golden sounds like drums and thunder, his character was shining like the moon and sun. He inherited the forefathers' goodness and standardized the code of youth; it was much more like he was the spring of all good merits. At that time, the dried pool sprang out with water; old palaces shined brightly, these great phenomena occurred frequently. Fuyu told people around him, "Don't spread this news out." Yet everybody knew he will attain nirvana.

In 1312, Yuan Renzong (also called: Buyantu Khan who reigned 1311-1320) was on the throne, entitled

> Fuyu as: “Si Kong”, “Kai Fu” and “Yi Tong”, and also conferred upon him the posthumous title: “Jin Guo Gong”, and wrote epitaphs in order to memorize his contributions to the empire. Emperor Yuan Renzong spoke to the country in person that: ‘The fore emperors were very humbled, and he was strong but did not to show his power by killing. He ruled by our forefathers with kindness.
>
> I feel like manifesting the merits of our ancestors, continuing our work to build a better world, the only way to achieve these is to keep our ancestors’ kindness and continue benefiting the people in our country. In memory of our saints, I feel sad because I can never witness his appearance in person.
>
> Although the past and the future are all like dreams, is it our obligation to entitle the great name to our saint only after he is gone? The reason we are conferring upon you a posthumous title is to convey my grief for your loss, and inspire the latter, to sing your merits of goodness.’ From this speech, we can see that Fuyu was admired and memorized to an incredible extent.
>
> Wang, Rutong (Ed.) (2013) *Goshen Biography of Eminent Monks* (P. 258-260) English translation by Wang Chen Gang (Not previously published)

(Chapter 2 discusses the founding of North Shàolín Monastery in greater detail.)

Before closing this section on the Yuan Dynasty is should be noted that in 1327 Japanese monk Shao Yuan came to Shàolín Monastery and lived there for 21 years. During that time, he was appointed to several positions of authority including Secretary, Chief Elder, and others.

On March 26, 1351 “Red Turban rebels” (uprising aided by the White Lotus Society devoted to overthrowing the Yuan Dynasty) laid siege to Shàolín Temple, and monk Kinnara frightened them away with “miraculous divine power.” (Shi Yong Xin, Shàolín Abbot, Publ. 2013)

Ming Dynasty (1368–1644)

Born a poor peasant, the founder of the Ming Dynasty Hóngwǔ (reigned 1368–1398) was a monk himself a couple of times as a youth and young man. He learned to read and write in the monastery and became emperor at age 40 in 1368 after leading a truly massive rebellion against the decaying Yuan Dynasty. Nonetheless in 1372 he issued a proclamation reinstalling restriction placed upon Buddhism rather similar to those in the Song Dynasty. The third emperor of the Ming added to those restrictions including a rule that no one may enter the monastery until age 40.

Emperor Jiājìng (1521–1566) enacted even harsher mandates against Buddhist temples. Not surprisingly people sympathizing with the monks whose temples had been plundered and burned by soldiers joined the "White Lotus Society" which ultimately played a pivotal role in ending the Ming dynasty (1644).

None-the-less, the Shàolín Temples sailed through these times by again, defending the state against murderous, rapacious aggressors and in support of the Emperor.

> "During the Jiajing (1522-1566) reign, the Liu bandits, Wang Tang, and the pirates, as well as Shi Shangzhao and others created violent disturbances. This monastery's fighting monks (*wu seng*) were repeatedly called upon to suppress them. They courageously killed the bandits, many earning the merit of putting their lives on the line. Thus this monastery's monks have relied upon culture (wen) and warfare (wu) alike to protect the state and strengthen its army. They are not like monks in other monasteries throughout the land, who merely conduct rituals, read the Sutras, and pray for the emperor's long life…"

> "It might have been Zhang Yong who suggested to the emperor that Shaolin monks be invited to the palace. We know that Zhu Houzhao employed Shaolin monks at the Leopard Quarter (Baofang) the pleasure grounds he built himself within the Forbidden City. It is unclear what the monks' role within this private palace was, whether they served as bodyguards, or whether the emperor was fascinated with their religious powers, as he was with Tibetan Lamas. At any rate that they served the emperor in his private chambers indicates that Shaolin monks enjoyed unprecedented access to the imperial throne, maintaining an intimate connection with the reigning emperor himself."
>
> Shahar, Meir (2008) P. 72, 73

This symbiotic relationship between the Shàolín Monastery and the emperors, and the imperial largesse it engendered continued throughout the Ming Dynasty.

In 1548 a pagoda was erected for Shàolín Kungfu monk Zhou You, inscribed with "A rival of the world, a Warrior Monk of Buddhism." Six years later in 1554 more than 30 Shàolín monks received the imperial order to fight against pirates in the Southeast coast area of China and sacrificed their lives in that war. (Recall that Warrior Monks (*Sēng bīng* 僧兵), are different from fully ordained monks, Bǐqiū (*Bǐqiū* 比丘).

In 1561 the famous general Yú Dàyóu (俞大猷) (1503–1579) came to Shàolín Temple to inspect martial arts and selected monks Zongqing and Pucong to study club techniques with him.

Chen Yuanbin from Hangzhou came to Shàolín Temple to learn Kung Fu and in 1638 traveled to Japan to teach and promote club techniques.

Qing Dynasty (1644-1911)

Unfortunately, the Qing Dynasty, also called the Manchu Dynasty (1644-1911) wasn't much better for most Buddhists and in many ways worse. Emperor Kangxi for example was a strict Confucian and issued a verdict labeling religion that deviated from Confucianism as heretical. Most people at the time, and historians today believe this was due to his fear of secret societies that had sprung up during the Ming leading to its downfall. None the less, Emperor Kangxi was a supporter of both Songshan and North Shàolín. In 1704 Emperor Kangxi inscribed "*Bao Shu Fang Lian*" (Treasured Trees and Lotus Fragrance) and "*Shàolínsi*" to Shàolín Temple. He also visited North Shàolín many times, building a palace not far above the temple for himself and another for his mother, the foundations of which remain today.

His son (Emperor Yongzheng) wasn't a Shàolín supporter, forbidding for example, the Shàolín monastery from using weapons, however his grandson Qiánlóng (reigned 1735-1796) was not only favorably disposed towards Buddhism but also an avid supporter of the Shàolín, especially the North Shàolín Temple on Panshan. (See Chapter 2)

In 1775 Henan Governor Xu Ji took charge of renovation of the Thousand Bodhisattva Hall, also called Pilu Hall, and Western Sage Hall. In this hall today one may see the deep impressions in the stone floor made by Shàolín monks during forms practice. In 1828 Henan government Yang Guozhen and others donated over 3,700 Liang of silver (185 kilos) for renovation of the Shàolín Monastery.

In 1912 the child emperor Puyi was forced to resign brining to an end over 2,000 years of imperial rule in China. Unfortunately, this created a power vacuum which was filled by competing warlords that tore the country apart.

On March 15th, 1928 Warlord Shi Yousan set fire to Shàolín Monastery. Ninety percent of the buildings burned including "Scripture Hall," and Shàolín Temple Annals (the history library). The greatest documents of the most enlightened minds in history were destroyed, along with the greatest collection of Chán Buddhist Shaolin history.

Dynasty Summary

From this brief history of the fluctuating relationships between religions and state in China one may observe that Emperors had a great deal of control over the disposition of the three major religions prevalent at that time, Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, much more so than for example European kings, who for the most part had to bow before the centralized power of the Roman Catholic church for most of their histories at least until the Reformation.

This absolute power of the Emperors in China is derived from the Confucian concept that the Emperor rules only with the "Mandate of Heaven," (*Tiānmìng* 天命) and if he rules unjustly or unwisely he will lose that mandate along his throne. Buddhist temples in general had many great and terrible times usually dependent on the philosophical orientation of each emperor, as well as political, military and macro-economic trends e.g. need for monastic support in internecine warfare, or even weighing the materialistic productivity of monks compared to farmers or other working people.

Chán Training - *Gōng'àn* (Koan) and *Huàtóu*

> "If there was anything that was distinctive about the Chán monasteries, it was not the stress on *zazen* (seated meditation) or the occasional ritual in which the entire community was required to perform manual labor together (*fushin samu*) - those practices were common to all the public monasteries.
>
> No, what distinguished the training in Chán monasteries was chiefly the teaching style of the abbots, who based their talks and debates on the koan literature that was the hallmark of the Chán tradition."
>
> Foulk, Griffith T. (1995) *History of the Soto Zen School*

Gōng'àn (公案), called "*Koan*" in Japanese are usually thought of as simple nonsense statements and questions for Chán Buddhists to meditation on, like "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" Mediation on *Gōng'àn* is one way to break the chains of the sometimes-questionable logic that locks us into a narrow perspective of the universe, at least for a while. However, meditation on *Gōng'àn* is more than paradoxical anti-intellectual nonsense designed to stop logic. This is evidenced by the fact that Chán tradition produced the largest literature of any Buddhist school in East Asia (Sharf, R.H. 2007).

In Chinese Chán meditation, "*Huàtóu*" (話頭) or "word head" is a common practice. *Huàtóu* is the critical phrase of a *Gōng'àn* and is also sometimes called "the point beyond which speech exhausts itself." In this meditation, a fragment of the *Gōng'àn*, such as "mu," (emptiness and nothing) or a "what is" question is used by focusing on it and repeating it over and over again. The *Huàtóu* or critical phrase was usually part of a larger or more involved *Gōng'àn*.

The *Huàtóu* method was instituted by the Chinese Chán master Dahui Zonggao (1089 – 1163) who was a member of the Linji School (of Chán). Master Dahui was interested in teaching the lay community, particularly the educated Chinese scholar-officials. According to Dahui, Huàtóu is also a form of meditation that "can be carried out by laymen in the midst of their daily activities."

The following are some examples:

"Who is it now that repeats the Buddha's name?"

"Who is dragging this corpse around?"

"What is it?" (This comes from an interaction between the Sixth Patriarch of Chán, Hui-neng [638 – 713] and a disciple.)

"What is the original face before my mother and father were born?"

Huàtóu is not about answering the question, but rather locking the mind into an open-ended question with no real simple logical answer. The meditator can play with and examine the question from all angles inside and out and never get an answer.

There is a saying about *Huàtóu* meditation, "small doubt, small awakening, great doubt great awakening, no doubt, no awakening."

Dahui was against the intellectualism that he felt had begun take over *Gōng'àn* practice with the book, "Blue Cliff Record" (碧巖錄) written his master Yuanwu Keqin (圜悟克勤). Dahui subsequently burned his copy of the "Blue Cliff Record."

Most people would question: "Isn't logic necessary for a good life?" The answer is "Yes" usually, but not always. For example, a smart person won't close their eyes and run out into a busy street. That would be illogical unless they wanted to die. On the other hand, some people get so locked into (negative) "logical" thinking that they suffer depression and worse. Learning how to let go of the logic sometimes can free people to see the world simply and clearly as it is, rather than just a reflection of personal egoistic history which many people carry with them everywhere they go, unconsciously projecting it onto the world around them. Thieves tend to think everyone is a thief, business people often think everyone is out after money, and so on.

On a deeper level a more accurate translation of *Gōng'àn* is "legal case." "Calling the teachings of Chán masters "public (legal) cases" *(Gōng'àn*) started during the Tang Dynasty (618 – 907 AD) and became popular during the Song Dynasty. They are in one way an expression of official documents of secular law. However, when facing a wall (in meditation) it is the zero point. The perceptive master tests for this with scolding, shouting and even blows to see the real extent of attainment, like an old magistrate testing evidence." (Adapted from Sharf, R.H. 2007).

> "Someone asked, 'Why is it that the devices and encounters of the Buddha and patriarchs are commonly called public cases' (Gōng'àn)? Huan (Zhongfeng) replied: 'Public cases' are likened to case documents of the public court (*gongfu zhi andu*). They embody the law, and thus the control of disorder through the Kingly Way truly depends on them. 'Public' (Gōng) refers to the ultimate principle (*li*) by which the sages unify the wheel ruts and standardize the roads through the empire. Cases (*an*) are the authoritative writings recording the principles set forth by the sages."
>
> Sharf, Robert H., (2007) *Thinking in Cases, Specialist knowledge in Chinese Cultural History*, published in Furth, C. et. al, (Ed.) P. 209

Part of the deeper meaning of some *Gōng'àn* stems from ancient debates regarding the sentience (有情佛性 *yǒuqíng fóxìng*) of animals and plants. This question arises as important because Buddhists can eat plants, but are forbidden to eat meat. Both are living, but why one and not the other?

A monk once asked Tang Dynasty Chán Master Zhaozhou Congshen (赵州禅师): "Does a dog have Buddha nature?" (狗会有佛性?) Zhaozhou replied "No." (無門關)

On one level this stops the mind because it directly contradicts the Mahayana belief that all things have the Buddha nature. From a Chán historical perspective, its unbelievable, illogical, mind stopping and potentially mind opening.

However, there is another level of analysis here. It was during the 7th and 8th centuries in China that the doctrine that all sentient beings contain the Buddha nature, including plants, trees, stones and even dust particles emerged.

However, others argued that only the sentient can attain Buddha nature. The sixth century Monk Jingying Huiyuan (523-592) made a distinction between the "Buddha-nature that knows" (*néngzhī xìng* 能 知性) and the "Buddha-nature that is known" (*suǒzhī xìng* 所知性).

The "Buddha nature that knows" then, was classified as "true consciousness" (真實性) which would include animals (sentience) and capable of awakening to Buddha nature through the elimination of ignorance. The "nature that is not known" was associated with the dharma-realm, emptiness, ultimate truth and so is universal, penetrating everywhere and applies to sentient and non-sentient things. Thus, a dog being an advanced, sentient life form, definitely has the Buddha-nature. Zhaozhou's "No" therefore was simply astonishing.

Later on, in the Tang Dynasty this dichotomy between sentience and non-sentience became quite accepted. However, the ninth Tiantai Patriarch Zhanran (711-782) took this a step further by asserting 1) Mahayana doctrine insists on the universality of Buddha-nature, and 2) therefore cannot make a distinction between sentient and insentient things: the absolute principle is not dualistic and there are no objects apart from mind. Again, the dog has the Buddha-nature.

Zhaozhou's "No," (無門關) therefore was either an outrageous denial of classic Chán philosophy, or perhaps his "No" wasn't an answer to a question at all, but rather an indication that the question itself was wrong, i.e. this is a false dichotomy, and the famous "No" was an admonishment to the questioner rather than an answer to a question and perhaps should be written (at least in English) as: "No!"

> "This 'No' is not, in the end, a denial of Buddha-nature to dogs so much as it is a rhetorical strategy for eluding the conceptual trap laid for him. Zhaozhou must neither affirm nor deny the doctrine of Buddha-nature and at the same time must avoid postulating a third 'transcendent' position."
>
> Sharf, Robert H. (2007) published in Furth, C. et. al. (Ed.) P 226

The controversy regarding Zhaozhou's dog did not end there but resonates up and down the corridors of Chán philosophy and the above is only one example in the long history of this Gōng'àn.

Another dialogue centering on Zhaozhou's dog can be found in the Jingde Era Record of the Transmission of the Lamp (景德傳燈錄 Jingde chuandeng lu):

> "A student asked: 'Does a dog also have Buddha-nature or not?' The Master said: 'It does.' The monk said: 'Does the Reverend also have it or not?' The Master said: 'I don't have it.' The monk said: 'All sentient beings have Buddha-nature. Why does the Reverend alone not possess it?' The Master said: 'I am not all sentient beings.' The monk said: 'Since you are not a sentient being, are you a Buddha or not?' The Master said: 'I am not a Buddha.' The monk asked: 'Ultimately what sort of thing is it?' The Master said: 'It is also not a thing.' The monk said: 'Can it be seen or thought?' The master said: 'If you think of it you won't reach it; if you deliberate on it you won't get it. Therefore, it is called inconceivable.'"
>
> Sharf, Robert H. (2007) P. 241

Thus, *Gōng'àn* were/are more than simple mind stopping paradoxes. They also represent authoritative precedents on how a Chán trainee is to respond to doctrinal questions and challenges. This quote from the "Transmission of the Lamp" should also illustrate that answers to questions such as about Zhaozhou's dog vary according to the questioner and context. There is "no one size fits all" correct answer to a *Gōng'àn*.

Indian Buddhist doctrine compares the Buddha's teachings to a raft used to cross the river. Once the river has been crossed, the raft must be left behind. Chinese Buddhists used a similar metaphor, referring to a finger pointing to the moon and one's attention should not be focused on the finger but rather the moon to which it points. Thus, the teachings of the Buddha are in many ways similar to the raft and the finger, they help along the way but will become an obstacle if taken for the truth itself.

The question: "Why can Buddhists eat living plants but not animals?" is a reasonable one, and the answers are not always simple but they are reasonable, until one confronts non-dualism which like the famous finger can only point the direction but never replace the moon.

These *Gōng'àns* were central in a Buddhist Chán Monastery, Shàolín or otherwise as there can be no understanding of life in the Shàolín monastery without them. They were and are the focal point of meditation and meditation is the center of life in a Buddhist monastery.

> "Patriarch Bodhidharma once said: 'Our mind must be like a wall in order to reach realization, without grasping of external appearance and with equanimity of mind.' This statement refers to Mahayana's Wall-Gazing Dharma Gate, whereby we use one thought to overcome all the tens of millions of thoughts. Only then can we achieve our monastic vow. As the ancestral monastery of Chán sect, Shaolin Temple considers the recognition of meditation as the most important and critical process of restoring the tradition and continuing the development of Shaolin Temple."
>
> Shaolin Abbot Shi Yong Xin (2013) *Shaolin - Temple in my Heart* P. 142

Abbot Shi Yong Xin also notes: "Historically Chán is also derived from debating and *Gōng'àn* is the result of the monastics' disputes and examinations." In his thought-provoking book, he goes on to recount some topics used in previous Chán debates at Shàolín Temple. In 2008 they used: "All the dharma (Buddhist teachings) coverage on one, and on what would this one converge?" And "The non-empty Tathagatagarbha Sutra, is it emptiness or non-emptiness?" The topics in 2009 were: "Outside of mind there is no dharma; the eyes are filled with blue mountains. Why?" "On Heaven and Earth, I alone am the Honored One. For what is he honored?" "Bodhidharma faces a wall, where he turns his back?" (*ibid* p. 164)

Chán Training - Mantra

Màntèlā 曼特拉

Also essential in a Buddhist Chán Monastery is chanting of prayers.

According to the Official Shàolín Temple site, every morning, all monks in the monastery gather in the Mahavira Hall to chant two sessions of sutras starting at 5:30 am. The morning sutras are:

1. The Shurangama Sutra, (*Dà Fódǐng Shǒuléngyán Jīng* 大佛頂首楞嚴經) which provides clear understanding of Buddhist principles, moral discipline, essential Buddhist cosmology, development of Samadhi (a very high level of meditation in which mind becomes very still and is able to observe and gain insight into the changing flow of experience), and how to avoid falling into various delusions in meditation.
2. The Sutra of Sahasrabhujasahasranetra Avalokite'svara (Heart Sutra, a prayer for guidance from Guan Yin) and ten minor sutras.

There are tranquil and pleasant songs of praise before and after each session. This is followed by breakfast at 6:30 am.

At 4:40 pm Evening Chanting commences. There are three sessions of the evening chanting.

1. Chanting “The Buddha Expounding Amitabh Sutra” and Buddha’s name
2. Homage to 88 Buddhas & Great Repentance
3. Mount Meng Food Offering Rite

“The first session is for the deliverance of oneself to the Western Paradise World, the second session is for the repentance of the sentient beings, and the third session is to take some grains of rice from lunch and offer these to the Pretas (hungry ghosts). The first session is chanted on the odd dates, the second one on the even dates, and the third one daily.” (Official Shaolin Site)

This evening session lasts till nearly 5:30 pm at which time the monks are allowed supper called "Medication," as traditionally monks were not allowed to eat after noon. However due to social development, an evening meal is now allowed.

Tradition holds that Bodhidharma's chosen sutra was the *Lankavatara Sutra*, and he was described as a "Master of the *Lankavatara Sutra*."

An early history of Chán in China is titled *Record of the Masters and Disciples of the Lankavatara Sutra*, (*Léngjiā shīzī jì* 楞伽師資記).

It is also sometimes said that Bodhidharma himself was the one who brought the *Lankavatara Sutra* to China.

The *Lankavatara Sutra* can be found online and read for free in many languages. It is about a meeting of Buddhas and in the form of a question and answer session between Mahāmati the Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva who had visited all the Buddha-lands, together with all the Bodhisattvas, and the Blessed One (Buddha Gautama). Reading just a paragraph or sentence is enlightening. Below is part of that sacred scripture.

> "The Bodhisattvas-Mahāsattvas, Mahāmati, will before long attain to the understanding that Nirvana and Samsāra are one. Their conduct, Mahāmati, will be in accordance with the effortless exhibition of a great loving heart that ingeniously contrives means [of salvation], knowing that all beings have the nature of being like a vision or a reflection, and that [there is one thing which is] not bound by causation, being beyond the distinction of subject and object; [and further] seeing that there is nothing outside Mind, and in accordance with a position of unconditionality, they will by degrees pass through the various stages of Bodhisattvahood and will experience the various states of Samādhi, and will by virtue of their faith understand that the triple world is of Mind itself, and thus understanding will attain the Samādhi Māyopama. The Bodhisattvas entering into the state of imagelessness where they see into the truth of Mind-only, arriving at the abode of the Pāramitās, and keeping themselves

> away from the thought of genesis, deed, and discipline, they will attain the Samādhi Vajravimbopama which is in compliance with the Tathāgatakāya and with the transformations of suchness. After achieving a revulsion in the abode [of the Vijñānas], Mahāmati, they will gradually realize the Tathāgatakāya, which is endowed with the powers, the psychic faculties, self-control, love, compassion, and means; which can enter into all the Buddha-lands and into the sanctuaries of the philosophers; and which is beyond the realm of (43) Citta-mano-manovijñāna. Therefore, Mahāmati, these Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas who wish, by following the Tathāgatakāya, to realize it, should exercise themselves, in compliance with the truth of Mind-only, to desist from discriminating and reasoning erroneously on such notions as Skandhas, Dhātus, Āyatanas, thought, causation, deed, discipline, and rising, abiding, and destruction."
>
> "In order to make it attractive to all beings, a picture is presented in colors. What one teaches, transgresses; for the truth (*tattva*) is beyond words."
>
> Suzuki, D.C. (Trans. 1931*) Lankavatara Sutra*

The above quotes strongly suggest the reasons why the Shàolín Monastery moved away from the strict Buddhist Vinaya rule system and entered "pure" Chán during Bodhidharma's stay.

Monastic Codes

Sīla 戒律 and Vinaya (*Lǜ* 律)

"*Sila*," in Buddhism is one of three subsections of the Noble Eightfold Path (right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right remembrance, right meditation) and is a code of conduct solemnly devoted to harmony and self-restraint with the main focus on non-violence, or at least freedom from causing harm. It is translated as "virtue," "right conduct," "morality," and "moral discipline."

To understand life in the ancient Shàolín Monastery it is also necessary to understand least some of the Chán monastic codes, the earliest of which goes back to "*The Great Canon of Monastic Rules*" (*Mó hē sēng qí lǜ* 摩訶僧祇律) a work of the Vinaya of the *Mahasamghika* school, translated into Chinese in 416 by Buddhabhadra, (佛陀跋陀罗 *Fótuó bátuó luó* - the translator, not to be confused with a Shaolin Abbot with the same name) a monk from northern India, and Fǎxiǎn (法显), a Chinese Buddhist pilgrim.

Fǎxiǎn left *Cháng'ān* (present day Xi'an) in 399 and journeyed to India to seek Buddhist texts. He obtained the Sanskrit text of "*The Great Canon of Monastic Rules*" and brought it back to China. This work divides the Buddhist precepts into two large categories—those for monks and those for nuns. (Adapted from Soka Gakkai Dictionary of Buddhism).

And then there was the "*Chányuan Qīngguī*" (*Rules of Purity*) written by Changlu Zongze (長蘆宗賾 died c. 1107) a Chán Buddhist monk in 1103. This document is the earliest guide to seated meditation in the Chán tradition. These rules governed daily life, and outlined very precise procedures for communications between the abbot and monks and laymen.

> "The Chinese text entitled '坐禅仪', or '*Zuo-Chán-Yi*' translates satisfactorily into English as 'Seated Meditation Regulation', and appears in the Chinese Ch'an Buddhist manual entitled '禅苑清规', or '*Chán-Yuan-Qing-Gui*', which translates as 'Rules of Purity for Ch'an Monasteries'. This manual was compiled in 1103 CE by the emanate Chinese Buddhist named Changfu Zongze who lived during the Song Dynasty and represents one of the earliest attempts to formulate a regulatory manual for Ch'an communities – although traditionally the work by Tang Ch'an master Baizhang (720–814), entitled '百丈清规', (or '*Bai-Zhang-Qing-Gui*') is considered older.

> In this respect, the manual of master Baizhang is written in a descriptive, narrative style that suggests the correct 'Buddhist' conventions for the organizing of a Ch'an community – it is a 'rule' in a broad sense. Changfu Zongze's text, by way of comparison, although not as old as master Baizhang's work, nevertheless, may be described as providing a specific guide to personal behavior within a Ch'an monastic community – as its structure offers detailed advice in the form of exact 'rules'…"
>
> Richard Hunn (2013) *Zuo-Chán-Yi*

> "The Songshan Shàolín today follows the '*Bai-Zhang-Qing-Gui*' rule system established by Master Bai Zhang during the Tang Dynasty."
>
> (Official site of the Shàolín Temple, Chán Origin, Chán Rules, Monastic Routines.)

However, this was not always true in the Songshan Shàolín Temple.

Recall that the Shàolín Temple was built by Emperor Xiaowen of Northern Wei Dynasty for the eminent Indian monk Bhadra (also called "Batuo," and "Fotuo") who came to China in AD 464.

> "As the patriarch of Vinaya and Chán, Bhadra initiated the Vinaya tradition and Chán tradition at Shaolin Temple… A few years after Bhadra's arrival, another eminent Indian monk, Bodhidharma visited Shaolin Temple and his teachings were a 'special transmission outside the scriptures,' and 'letting one see into nature and attain Buddhahood' initiated the mind-to-mind line of transmission and developed into the Chinese Chán sect. These historical events are all recorded on the book 'Biographies of Eminent Monks.'"
>
> Abbot Shi Yong Xin (2013)

Thus, Vinaya rules were suspended in favor of pure Chán.

Sometime later the Shàolín returned to the Vinaya system. However, not long after the Tang Dynasty (618 – 907) the Shàolín Temple abolished the Vinaya tradition (again) and adhered strictly to the Chán tradition. (Abbot Shi Yong Xin, 2013) Again, sometime later the Vinaya system returned.

> "During the Tang Dynasty however, "there was a Tripitaka master Yijing, who had been to India to study Buddhism just like Xuanzang. He set up the ordination platforms to transmit precepts at Shaolin Temple. According to historical records the latest precept transmission ceremony was held during the Qing Emperor Kangxi's reign (1662-1722). During the Kangxi era, the officially designated Shaolin Temple Abbot Bi'an Haikuang held a precept transmission ceremony. After the passing of Haikuang, Shaolin Temple had no officially designated abbot and thus creased to conduct the precept transmission ceremony."
>
> Abbot Shi Yong Xin (2013)

The Kangxi Emperor of the Qing Dynasty was a strong supporter of Shàolín Temple and he wrote the calligraphic inscriptions that still hang over the Heavenly King Hall and the Buddha Hall today.

This went on for some three hundred years, until it was revived under the auspices of Abbot Shi Yong Xin, May 24, 2007.

> "Since 1999 we have been making meticulous preparations for the restoration of Shaolin Temple's Ordination Platform. In 2001 we held a special academic conference on "Shaolin Temple and Chinese Vinaya Sect." The reconstruction of the Ordination Platform commenced in October 2005 and completed in August 2006. The new Ordination Platform, 26 meters high and 3 stories, follows the architectural style of Qing Dynasty. It is so far the tallest wooden structural ordination platform in China."
>
> Abbot Shi Yong Xin (2013)

Coincidence or not, there is an "elevated platform" very near North Shàolín Monastery (only a couple of hundred meters uphill at the top end of the *Ta-Lin*, or graveyard), about 25-35 meters tall made of a very huge rock. However, whether or not it was used as a Vinaya Sect ritual ordination platform is not known at this time. Though it looks impossible to climb, there is in fact an ancient stairway behind it, though it is extremely decayed and covered with forestation. It may have served a number of monasteries in the vicinity, principally perhaps Zong Fa Si (Middle Law Monastery), just above North Shaolin on Panshan as members of royalty often retired there. (Personal communication from Mr. Yao, a Taiwanese gentleman who spent a great deal of time on Panshan interviewing locals and the history.)

Roads to Becoming a Shàolín Monk

Rù zhòng 入衆

According to Gene Ching, Editor of Kung Fu Tai Chi Magazine and one of the world's foremost authorities on Chinese martial arts, "In English, the word 'monk' means someone who is accepted into a monastic fraternity.

The warrior monks are accepted as part of Shàolín's lineage. However, in English, we use the word 'monk' to refer to *Bǐqiū* (比丘), a much more specific term. A *Bǐqiū* is a fully ordained male Buddhist monastic. Among their vows is the 'no killing' abstinence.'

Now, a warrior monk, or *Wuseng* (*Wǔsēng* 武僧), is technically a *Súјiā Dìzǐ* (俗家弟子), a secular disciple who does not take full ordination vows. All martial disciples fall into this class... The *wuseng* are fully accepted by the monastic fraternity of Shàolín." (Gene Ching, Jan. 2014, correspondence)

To clarify the above distinctions:

- *Wuseng* (*Wǔsēng* 武僧) Warrior monks – who fought for example thieves and pirates, but were not fully ordained monks in the western sense of the word "monk," though in

Chinese language *Wuseng* are called monks. Even today there are *Wuseng* as there is a special initiation ceremony, vows which must be taken and they must follow an accredited Shaolin Gong Fu Master.

- *Sengbing (Sēngbīng* 僧兵) Military monks – fought as part of an army, i.e. at the founding of the Tang Dynasty, but also were not fully ordained monks in the western sense of the word "monk." According to the head monk at North Shaolin Monastery Shi Yan Pei: "During special periods in Chinese history, Sengbing were organized to help the country, but they do not exist at this time as China is now in peace."

The above two were

- *Súјiā Dìzǐ* (俗家弟子) or Chán Buddhist lay disciples as compared to:

- *Bǐqiū* (比丘) Fully ordained monks who did and do not engage in martial activity outside the temple (though one might speculate that they might have during the last great battle against the warlord Shi Yousan that finally burned the Songshan Shaolin in 1928, or in the case of the North Shaolin, *Bǐqiū* may well have joined the Chinese resistance movement fighting against the Japanese, however according to Vinaya rules, by joining an army they would be violating their vows and thereby revoking their status as *Bǐqiū*).

This short explanation by Shi Yan Pei was followed by a short story: "According to ancient Buddhist law, monks in India were not allowed to carry money. So, when it was necessary to carry money they hired someone to carry it for them."

This may have been a metaphoric example justifying the use of employing *Wuseng* and or *Sengbing* to engage in military affairs, thus keeping the ordained Shàolín monks free from violations of monastic codes.

Asked about the steps necessary to become a Shàolín *Súјiā Dìzǐ* Shi Yan Pei answered with the following:

- First, one must have the intention to become a Buddhist
- Then, find a Master from the Shàolín Temple.
- Then, after deep communication with the Master and the development of a bond of trust
- accept "Wu Jie" (*wǔjiè* 五戒 which means Five Precepts – see below) and food requirements

The food requirements include a) following a vegetarian diet (*sùshí* 素食) and b) wasting no food. These precepts are not formulated as absolute imperatives for the *Sújiā Dìzǐ*, but as training rules that laypeople undertake voluntarily to facilitate practice. (Note: In different countries and monasteries different levels of adherence to these rules may be enforced.)

After a sincere belief in Buddhism is established, there is a formal "*Gui Yi*" (*Guī Yī* 皈依) ceremony, wherein one becomes a "S*újiā Dìzǐ*."

The Buddhist *Gui Yi* in China is a formal ceremony where one pledges the "Three Refuges," (also called "Triple Gem," 三宝 *Sānbǎo*): the Buddha (佛陀 *Fótuó*), the Dharma (teachings of the Buddha, the Sutras, 法 , *Fǎ*) and the *Sangha* (the Buddhist community, 僧, *Sēng*).

In some *Gui Yi* initiates wear either a black or brown floor length wide-sleeved traditional robe. At others people wear their regular clothes.

It begins with the about-to-be lay disciples assembling, usually in the "Buddha Hall" of a monastery, or in some cases a larger venue as the needs require. Usually the Abbot of a monastery will preside though in some cases another high ranking monk will take that position.

Then there is a formal ritual invitation requesting the monks to attend and grant *Gui Yi*, who upon assent then solemnly parade in and assemble on a raised platform at the front of the assembly.

> "Your eminence, all of us, your disciples, who are now supplicating that your eminence will the master who transmits the Three Refuges to us, so that relying on your eminence we take pure Three Refuges. We take pure Three Refuges all due to the kindness of your eminence."

(The above is a formalized version, not always adhered to exactly. As Gene Ching noted: "Every *Sújiā Dìzǐ* ceremony is unique… They are like weddings. The ceremony reflects the couple.")

The initiates (may) then offer incense - holding it first vertically in folded prayer hands, then turning it horizontally in front of the forehead before placing it in an incense burner.

> "We offer this incense, taking refuge with and paying homage to the Buddha, who is the king of the Dharma."

In some *Gui Yi* there is a Repentance portion:

> "For all the evil karma that I have done in the past,
>
> Arising from beginningless greed, hatred, and ignorance,
>
> And created by my body, mouth, and mind,
>
> I seek to now repent of and reform all before the Buddhas."
>
> "Now you have repented before the Three Jewels, your bad karma is sure to be purified, and consequently, your body and mind are purified. Externally you should follow the ritual procedures; internally you should contemplate to generate compassion towards and protection over all the sentient beings and non-sentient objects, and vow to never do any evil but do all good things so as to benefit all the living beings."

At some point, probably near the end of the Ceremony, the formal "taking of Refuges" is performed.

> I, disciple _____, after taking refuge with the Buddha, will only take refuge with the Buddha.

I, disciple _____, after taking refuge with the Dharma, will only take refuge with Buddhist canon.

I, disciple _____, after taking refuge with the Sangha, will only take refuge with Buddhist communities.

Again, each *Gui Yi* is unique and the exact wording and specifications may be different.

During most of the ritual initiates are kneeling with the body upright, though in a few parts disciples are standing. Bows with the forehead touching the floor follow each major section. *Gui Yi* initiates take classes or do advanced study before this solemn occasion to ensure they can fully recite and understand what they are vowing. The chanting is slow and beautiful and there are different melodies to the different prayer and proclamation chants.

Part of the Mahayana *Gui Yi* Ceremony in China has the initiates proclaiming: "I (name) will not follow other religions or read the sacred books of other religions…"

The Chinese Shaolin *Gui Yi* Ceremony is a little different with the initiate pledging to follow only Buddhist teachings. This is quite different from *Gui Yi* at the U.S.A. Shaolin Temple where initiates are reminded to continue to believe in whatever they believe, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohamed, God or Buddha. (usashaolintemple.org)

After this Ceremony the initiates are officially and at least in China, legally, *Sújiā Dìzǐ* .

In China after the *Gui Yi* the new *Sújiā Dìzǐ* receives a certificate, maybe similar to a Diploma, or in the form of a small booklet, like an I.D. with the date of his or her *Gui Yi*, the presiding temple official and his or her new Dharma name. The first name will be the generation name of the Buddhist group family name cycle, followed by a second "personal" or given name chosen by the *Shifu* (pronounced: "Sherfu"), or Master.

If a person's true desire is only for enlightenment (开悟 *kāi wù*) then they can consider becoming a *Bǐqiū* - a fully ordained Buddhist monastic who forsakes the world, shaves the head (*tìdù* 剃度) and follows the 250 Disciplines. This final series of steps to becoming a fully ordained monk is called *Chujia* (*Chūjiā* 出家). The entrant makes vows to the Temple, to Buddha and to his or her Master.

To enter the assembly of ordained monks; also, one must follow the Five Rules for the Entrant, (*Rù zhòng wǔ fǎ* 入衆五法): Submission, Kindness, Respect, Recognition of rank or order, and none but religious conversation.

Since the reopening of the Songshan Shàolín about thirty years ago, most monks at the Songshan Shàolín were exceptionally talented Shàolín Kung Fu students living in the area around the Temple, who also inculcated the Buddhist virtues of the Eightfold Path. However, foreigners are definitely welcome to join the Sangha.

Asked if a Jewish, Christian and/or Muslim could also be a Buddhist, Shi Yan Pei answered: "That is a matter of personal choice."

Within the past ten years very traditional methods have been included as part of the Vinaya process at Shàolín Monastery for someone that wishes to become a fully ordained monk.

> "The 'Three Ordination Platforms' refer to the three assignments that the monastics must get through from the householder to the home-leaver or monkhood.
>
> "At first, the monastics go to the Three Refuges and receive the Five Precepts, then the Ten Precepts for *Sramanera* which is considered as the entryway for the monastic life. Afterwards (prospective monks) take the two hundred fifty *Bǐqiū* Precepts in advance of receiving *Bodhisattva* Precepts.
>
> *"Sramanera* Precepts, *Bǐqiū* Precepts and *Bodhisattva* Precepts are the three assignments that the monastics must go through. This is what we call the Three Ordination Platforms."
>
> Abbot Shi Yong Xin (2013) P. 152

Though these may sound very esoteric and incomprehensible to the average person, taken one by one they are not difficult to understand.

1. Three Refuges (*Sānbǎo* 三宝) (See above)
2. The Five Precepts form the basic Buddhist code of ethics followed by lay and ordained Buddhists in both Theravada and Mahayana schools. These are:

    a. I undertake the training rule to abstain from killing
    b. I undertake the training rule to abstain from taking what is not given.
    c. I undertake the training to avoid sensual misconduct.
    d. I undertake the training rule to abstain from false speech.
    e. I undertake the training rule to abstain from fermented drink that causes heedlessness.

3. A "Sramanera" is a novice Buddhist monk. The 10 traditional Precepts are:

    1. Refrain from killing living things.
    2. Refrain from stealing.
    3. Refrain from unchastity (sensuality, sexuality, lust).
    4. Refrain from lying.
    5. Refrain from taking intoxicants.
    6. Refrain from taking food at inappropriate times.
    7. Refrain from singing, dancing, playing music or attending entertainment shows.
    8. Refrain from wearing perfume, cosmetics and garland (decorative accessories).
    9. Refrain from sitting on high chairs and sleeping on luxurious, soft beds.
    10. Refrain from accepting money.

4. Two Hundred Fifty *Bǐqiū* Precepts

> (This refers to the) "Two hundred and fifty precepts according to 'The Fourfold Rules of Discipline,' set forth for monks. The term *Bĭqiū* means one who begs, particularly for alms, and generally one who devotes oneself to Buddhist practice and subsists entirely on alms received from laypersons through the practice of alms-begging.
>
> A nun is called *Bĭqiūni*. With the development of the community of monks and the establishment of a system of monastic rules, Bĭqiū came to refer to only those men who had gained admission into the Buddhist Order by going through an established ordination ceremony.
>
> They were permitted to own only three robes, all made of cast-off rags, and one begging bowl. Thus equipped, they carried out their practice of religious mendicancy. Monks still in their teenage years were not recognized as *Bĭqiū*. In the early period of Buddhism, *Bĭqiūs* lived alone in forests and other quiet locations, devoting themselves to meditation and other practices. Later they gathered with other Buddhists to form a community."
>
> *The Soka Gakkai Dictionary of Buddhism*

(Monks in North Asia, China, South Korea and Japan are not permitted to beg, while those in South Asia do.)

The 250 rules can (roughly) be summarized as follows:

> "Rules of discipline to be observed by fully ordained monks of Hinayana Buddhism. They are set forth in The Fourfold Rules of Discipline and consist of eight groups:
>
> (1) Four prohibitions. The prohibition of the four major, or unpardonable, offenses: killing, theft, sexual relations, and lying. Lying refers particularly to claiming a level of insight or understanding that one has not in fact attained. A monk who commits any one of these offenses can be automatically expelled from the Buddhist Order.

(2) Thirteen major prohibitions. Monks who violate these may be divested of membership in the Buddhist Order for a certain period.

(3) Two indeterminate prohibitions. The prohibition of two kinds of offenses by monks: being alone with a woman in the open and being alone with a woman in seclusion. They are called indeterminate because the punishment for violating them varies according to the nature of, or circumstances surrounding, the act.

(4) Thirty standards that prohibit monks from storing things they are not allowed to possess or storing things they are allowed to possess either beyond the prescribed amount or by prohibited means. These offenses are considered light and can be pardoned if the violators confess their offense and relinquish their improper possessions to the Order. Refusal to confess is regarded as a cause for falling into the three evil paths.

(5) Ninety standards, the violation of which requires confession to other monks. They deal with light offenses, such as lying about an insignificant matter, killing an insect, and duplicity with the intention of causing discord between two monks.

(6) Four standards that concern the receiving of donated meals. For example, a monk is prohibited from receiving an offering of a meal from a nun who is not his relative. The breaking of these rules requires that one confess to another monk.

(7) One hundred standards, which concern such matters as meals, dress, preaching, and daily behavior. Violations of these constitute light offenses. Those who commit such offenses unconsciously are required to repent in their hearts, and those who have done so consciously are required to confess to another monk.

(8) Seven rules for settling disputes within the Buddhist Order. As an example, when monks are involved in a dispute, both parties must appear before the other monks, who arbitrate the disagreement."

The Soka Gakkai Dictionary of Buddhism

Other essential knowledge for monks includes:

The Buddha's Four Noble Truths (*sì fǎ shī* 四法施): all life is suffering (苦 *kǔ*), the cause of suffering is desire (*Yù* 欲), emancipation comes only by eliminating passions (*fánnǎo zhàng* 滅/灭) the way (*dào* 道) to emancipation is the Eight-fold Noble Path (*bāzhèngdao* 八正道).

The three fires [poisons] are desire, hate, and stupidity, (*sān dú* 三毒).

Most people living in the illusory world, eat, and dream in swirling deep seas of desire for power, wealth, beauty and other physical pleasures. Monks have to let go of (impure) desires to attain enlightenment.

The way of the monk is not easy for it requires a level of spiritual, mental and physical discipline which most people cannot even conceptualize.

For a Shàolín monk this must be exceptionally challenging as they have to endure intense physical training in addition to the spiritual and mental disciplines.

But no human or monk is perfect and indeed it seems some monks lean towards the martial end of their training while others towards the more spiritual/mental aspects, whereas a third smaller group finds the road between – the middle path – and truly excels at both.

Like China itself, the Shàolín Temple remains somewhat paradoxical. Some monks stay in the temple their whole lives, some go to other monasteries to live and/or teach, while others travel in or outside of China and teach. Some monks decide to stop being a monk, in some cases getting married. In some ways monks are free to do as they wish within certain parameters, however the organization itself is very top-down power oriented. The Abbot makes the decisions and the disciples do what they are told. But, as with the assignment of *Gōng'àn*, decisions are likely to be contextually driven and tailored to assist the monk along his or her unique path to enlightenment. This is part of the special bond between *Shīfu* (master) and disciple. Not everyone that wants to become a Shàolín monk can. It takes a special kind of individual and a unique relationship between the aspiring monk, his or her *Shīfu*, the temple community and Abbot.

The Abbot's Role in the Monastery

Zhùchí 住持 - Abbot

The Abbot in a traditional Chán Monastery, following the judicial metaphor holds the role of magistrate and judge in assigning the *Gōng'àn* to monks and is the quintessential spiritual and administrative leader of communities that sometimes number in the thousands.

The North Shàolín Temple at its inception probably mostly followed Song Dynasty Vinaya monastic rules. Faxing Buddhist Temple was officially incorporated into the Shàolín family and named "Bei Shàolín Si" (North Shàolín Temple) in 1315, though it was at least nominally under the direction of Abbot Fuyu since 1245, even before the beginning of the Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368) and at the end of the Song Dynasty (960 - 1271).

Thus, rituals at the North Shàolín Temple were likely to have followed Song dynasty tradition ultimately based on Chán monastic codes known as "pure rules" (*qīngguī* 清规).

In regards to the function of Abbots, at least two rituals from the Song Dynasty (960 - 1279) deserve special note. First is called "Entering the Chamber" where the Abbot provided religious instruction to individual monks or small groups in personal interviews, and second, delivering formal talks in ceremonies attended by the entire assembly of the monastery.

In the first of these rituals the (strictly advanced) monk(s) had to follow an elaborate procedure called "Entering the Chamber" (*rùshì* 入室) which included prostrations to the abbot and offerings of incense. Then the student would move in a proscribed manner to take up a position in the southwest corner to face the Abbot with hands folded reverently. The monk was then permitted to speak as (briefly as possible) and the Abbot may or may not have chosen to respond or engage in conversation. The student then withdrew with hands still folded and made a final series of prostrations. In some ways this procedure was a reenactment of the meetings between even more ancient Chán masters and disciples. "The student was required to enter and exit the room as if he were in the presence of a living Buddha." (Sharf, 2005)

The second ritual is called "Ascending the Hall" (*shàngtáng* 上堂) wherein the Abbot addressed the entire monastic assembly within the Dharma Hall (sometimes called "Buddha Hall"). The Dhyana Chair (*chányǐ* 禅椅) was the ceremonial "throne" of the Abbot located on a raised platform in the rear center of the hall, facing south. The most senior monks stood in the front row and subordinates behind in order of seniority.

In both "Entering the Chamber" interviews and "Ascending the Hall" assemblies the Abbot's discourses focused on sacred texts and recorded sayings and transmissions of the Chán tradition. Although Abbots were appointed by Emperors, they were regarded as the embodiment of Buddha by followers within and without the monastery.

To quote Robert Sharf, a preeminent scholar of Chán Buddhist tradition:

> "The Chán Abbot was treated, by virtue of his office, his spiritual genealogy and bona fides, and his deportment, as an enlightened master and living Buddha… Enlightenment is better viewed as a "social fact" constituted through his monastic office – earned as it was through years of intense study and practice – and displayed and reaffirmed in an ongoing cycle of ritual performances. In these performances the abbot was rendered the object of worship; monastics and laypersons would approach the abbot with prostrations and offerings in the same manner as they approached a consecrated icon."
>
> Sharf, R. H. (2007) P. 232

Contemporary Shàolín Temple Abbots

Abbot Shi Yong Xin is the 30th generation Abbot of Songshan Shàolín Temple. At the age of 16 in 1981 he left home and went to the Shàolín Temple asking to be accepted. Then Shàolín Abbot Xingzheng asked him why he wanted to be at Shàolín and the future abbot answered that he wanted to become a monk and study martial arts. The Abbot told him to return home and get a letter of introduction from his parents, who then strongly objected and tried to dissuade him. Eventually however, realizing the sincerity and steadfastness of his intentions, they agreed.

Shi Yong Xin's master, Abbot Xingzheng was an phenomenal person: abandoned at the Shàolín Temple at the age of six and practically blind by the age of nine, but none-the-less possessing of an extraordinary understanding of Chán Buddhism, memory and ability in mathematical calculations, he went on to begin leadership of the Shàolín temple during the great drought of Henan province in 1951. He also led the Shàolín Temple through the very difficult years of political change in China, patiently and intelligently ebbing and flowing with those changes until he passed away in 1987, some five years after the rebirth of the new Songshan Shàolín and the world fame that came with it.

According to Abbot Shi Yong Xin:

> "My master took up the helm of Shaolin Temple during most difficult period in its history. He put his life on the line in order to secure the resumption of management of the monastery by monks. He was truly extraordinary and a living Bodhisattva. I and many others, including the older generation in our municipality and the villagers who knew him and his deeds and life story, all acknowledged the legendary life of the old abbot and deeply respected him. People did not think much of him when he was alive. It was only after his passing when people started to remember all that he had undergone for the sake of Shaolin, including his sincere and uncompromising commitment to Buddhism. They felt a deep sense of loss. The old abbot's life was not easy. The old abbot's contribution to Shaolin was monumental. Had it not been the old abbot, the continuity of Shaolin would have been truncated and the Shaolin that we know today would not have existed."
>
> Abbot Shi Yongxin (2013) P. 23

When Shi Yong Xin was 19, Abbot Xingzheng named him as one of the heads of the Management Committee of the monastery and other monks began to refer to him as the "Second-in-Charge." Shàolín has always been traditional in that each abbot is appointed by his predecessor, involving among other things the ritual passing of the Abbot's dharma scrolls, alms bowl and robe to the successor. In 1987 on the edge of death, Abbot Xingzheng passed these sacred objects to Shi Yongxin. At the time there were 48 monks at the Shàolín Temple. Abbot Xingzheng's last words to his successor were: "You must do your utmost to revive Shàolín's reputation, and prosperity to its former height."

For a variety of reasons however Shi Yong Xin's official term as the 30th Abbot of the Shàolín Temple did not begin until August of 1999.

At the Platform Ascension Ceremony, Master Benhuan, Chairman of Consultative Committee of the Buddhist Association of China and the Abbot of Hongfa Monastery in Shenzhen performed the formal ceremony of presenting ceremonial instruments and his platform to him. Thus, he was consecrated as the 30th abbot of Shàolín Temple.

The Buddhist Association of China (BAC, 中国佛教协会), founded in 1953 and headquartered in Guangji Temple in Beijing is the official supervisory and regulatory organization for Chinese Buddhism sharing jurisdiction with the State Administration for Religious Affairs. The current president of the BAC is Venerable Master Yi Cheng. The BAC encourages participation of Chinese Buddhists in international Buddhist events and supports local Buddhist associations in paying clerics' salaries, in registering temples with the government and other functions. The association publishes a journal called: *Chinese Buddhism*.

In 2013 Shàolín Temple Abbot Shi Yongxin published a book titled: "Shaolin – Temple in my Heart," in which he wrote about his master Abbot Xingzheng, his own path to becoming Abbot, and many fascinating anecdotal stories about the near destruction of the Songshan Shàolín Temple during the Cultural Revolution, the rebirth of the monastery that occurred as the direct result of filming and release of the movie "Shaolin Si" starring Jet Li (Li Lianjie) in 1982, and many other fascinating things.

In Chapter 16, titled "Eternal Dhyana" Abbot Shi Yongxin goes into some detail about the life of a monk in the Songshan Shàolín Temple of today.

"*Dhyana*" (禅) in Chán Buddhism refers to various forms of meditation; however, *Dhyana* proper is the concentration of the mind resulting in *Samādhi* (*Sānmèi* 三昧). After development of *Samādhi* the mind becomes purified of defilements, resulting in calm tranquility and luminosity. Once a strong concentration has become achieved, the mind can see into the ultimate nature of reality and eventually obtain release from suffering (enlightenment). Buddhist sutras mention that *Samādhi* practitioners may develop extraordinary and even supernormal powers and list several that the Buddha developed, however warn that these should not be allowed to distract the practitioner from the larger goal of complete freedom from suffering.

Watching movies or reading books about the Shàolín Monastery, or Shàolín Kung Fu in general one gets the impression that it's mostly a life full of innocent playfulness or martial heroism. In fact, now and historically, the life of a Chán Buddhist monk – Shàolín or otherwise - revolves around meditation. Abbot Shi Yong Xin's book reinforces this assertion strongly.

> "Meditation is the focal point of the daily life of a Shaolin monk and monastic members are able to transcend life and death only through meditation, which is the foundation of Shaolin's culture. Other forms of cultural expression perfected with meditation include, Wushu, medicine, calligraphy, architecture and sculpture."
>
> Abbot Shi Yongxin (2013) P. 141

He goes on to say that the ideal state of Shàolín Kung Fu is the attainment of "immutable mind," raising the question, "what exactly is immutable mind?"

> "Immutable mind-corpus, or mind-nature, (*Xīnxìng* 心性) is the self-existing fundamental pure mind, the all, the Tathāgata-garbha, (or 如來藏心). Another definition states that mind and nature are the same when there is awareness (wù 悟) and understanding, but differ when in illusion (*mí* 迷); and further, in reply to the statement that the Buddha-nature is eternal but the mind not eternal, it is said, the nature is like water, the mind like ice, illusion turns nature to mental ice form, awakening melts it back to its proper nature."
>
> Soothhill, W.E. & Hodous, L. (2003) *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* (P. 150)

One of the more arduous challenges for Chán monks is the longstanding *Chán Qī*, or Chán Seven, engaging in seven days of retreat.

The Shàolín *Chán Qi* is a series of seven back to back Chán Qi sessions lasting 49 days, called - *Dà Chán Qī* - mainly done in winter.

Not many outsiders know about this practice as canonical rules stipulate that monks remain in a state of austere practice behind closed doors and undisturbed in the Meditation Hall.

Not every monk can even enter the meditation hall, not to mention participate in *Dà Chán Qī*. The participant must have reached a certain level in meditation and be physically fit and strong. They must be able to sit comfortably for prolonged periods of time with crossed legs and must understand the rules of the Meditation Hall. There are many rules, over a thousand in fact. For example, talking is not permitted and everyone must act according to instructions and follow the rituals precisely. Everyone who enters the Meditation Hall, also called the "Great Realization Hall" has a different vow but must have the goal to completely shed their old self and be re-born in the 49 days of *Dà Chán Qī."* Monks are disciplined if they doze off, sleep, shake or turn their heads, scratch or mumble. Those who breach the rules are reprimanded by the incense staff. There are also group leaders who talk to the monks and offer advice for their individual progress in meditation.

For the entire 49 days the monks contemplate the same "*Huàtóu*."

During the *Dà Chán Qī*, monks wake up at 4:30 am and rest at 11:45 pm, taking a break from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm. For the first 35 days the monks are not allowed to wash their face, shave or bathe. The monks cannot take a nap in the Meditation Hall and there are specific times when the monks can use the bathroom.

Essentially, they sit in meditation for the duration of burning 12 incense sticks, then walk for the same duration which results in an estimated distance of 35 kilometers per day while meditating on their *Huàtóu*. The rules and schedule of the meditation hall are quite strict.

Again, to quote Abbot Shi Yong Xin:

> "Through Dà Chán Qī, the monks undergo a major change in their inborn qualities and state of mind. The sense of "omnipotence" and transcendent joy that they experience cannot be described with words."

Comparison of Songshan Shàolín Temple and North Shàolín Temple

Little has been said publicly regarding the plans for North Shàolín upon completion. As of this writing (Summer 2014) two of five main halls have been built: Sutra Hall and the Buddha Hall. The next building planned to be built will be the Monk's quarters, designed to house around 100 monks. Completion date for the entire temple complex has been estimated by construction crew chiefs as around 2016 or 2017.

Conversations with Shi Yan Pei, acting head of the small contingent of Shàolín monks currently living adjacent to the construction site suggest that North Shàolín will be even more focused on Buddhism than Songshan Shàolín has been in the past, but closer to that which is evolving now, and there will be less commercialism in the area around the Monastery grounds. This latter assertion will be assisted by the fact that North Shaolin Monastery is in a much more rural area than the headquarter monastery which is adjacent to Dengfeng city – a major metropolitan area.

2020 Update – According to Shi Yan Wan, on-site construction executive manager at North Shaolin, due to expanded design plans the current estimated date of construction completion is in 2025.

Giving and Equanimity

Dana (Bùshī 布施) and *Upekkha (Ānzhīruòsù* 安之若素)

In Chapter 19 of his book Abbot Shi Yong Xin defines "*Dana*" as giving, a means to eliminate greed and uses the encounter between Emperor Wu and Bodhidharma as an example of someone who puts accomplishments in the material world before cultivation of the perfection of self and cultivating the liberation of sentient beings. *Upekkha* he defines as equanimity, one of the four Immeasurables: Loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy and equanimity. He went on say that *Upekha* and *Dana* are closely linked and unified.

Historically the Shàolín Temples and most or all Buddhist temples in general helped the poor and needy in good times and bad. As the proud inheritor of Shàolín's fine tradition, Abbot Shi Yong Xin is extending that tradition in a number of different areas.

- In 1988 Shaolin Temple Kung Fu Monks Team was founded to assist in promoting traditional Shàolín culture.
- In 1993, Shaolin Charity and Welfare Fund was established with a mission to relieve people from poverty.
- In 1995, the Shaolin Publishing House was established and published the quarterly journal "Chan Development," "Collection of Shaolin Kung Fu," "Medical of Shaolin Kung Fu," and "Collections of the International Chan Cultural conference" designed to promote Chán culture.
- In 2004, the Shaolin "*Ciyou*" House (orphanage) was opened to support the "Thousand Orphan & Light Opening" project they initiated in 2003.
- In 2008 they sent a monk medical team to the Wenchuan Earthquake zone and donated more than 100 million Yuan to help relief projects there.
- Following the 2010 Yushu earthquake they donated some 230,000 Yuan for relief.

The above are just some of the more high-profile charitable efforts made by the Shàolín temple, but does not include the thousands of smaller more personal efforts made by monks and other members of the Shàolín family in helping people both materially and spiritually worldwide.

> "I feel India's Buddhism is not entirely the same as China's Buddhism. Indian Buddhism emphasizes traditional meditation and many monks have exceptional achievements in mediation even attaining the state of perfection.
>
> There were many Chinese Buddhists who practiced meditation in the time before Chan Buddhism was founded in China. An example was Gao Shi-An, who spread the teachings of Chán and translated many Buddhist cannons.
>
> However, after Bodhidharma came to China, the approach to meditation underwent a profound yet harmonious transformation. Meditation no longer followed the Indian meditative approach whereby a practitioner would stay away from the world,

engage in asceticism and focus on the pursuit of deep contemplation and meditation.

Instead, the practice of dharma and meditation are integrated into all aspects of everyday life, whereby meditation is not separated from eating and sleeping or daily living and one could engage in contemplative meditation in everything that he does and realize awakening at any moment. Just as the saying goes, 'walking is Chan, sitting is Chan, abide in a state of mindfulness when talking, when silent when moving or when staying still.'"

Abbot Shi Yongxin (2013) P. 193-194

Buddhism and Other Religions

Background

In 1971 John Lennon first released his visionary magnum opus, "*Imagine*." The song encourages people to imagine a world at peace, not divided by nationalism, religion and material possessions. Naturally, he was murdered as have so many of the world's greatest teachers of peace.

The world's population exceeded seven billion on March 12, 2012 and increasing population has resulted in increasing competition for resources which are perceived to be in limited supply. The ridiculous thing is the sun is the primary energy source for earth and as a resource it appears virtually unlimited.

Simultaneously, humanities killing power has increased logarithmically. All life on earth (except perhaps for some frozen cockroaches floating in the stratosphere) can be extinguished in a matter of hours using thermonuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

Clearly vastly greater cooperation between religions is desperately needed to promote peace. Buddhists can and should help play a major role in making that happen.

Is Chán Buddhism a religion?

Buddhism is about the path to "Enlightenment," (开悟 *Kāi wù*) and "Chán" means "meditation."

Certainly, anyone can become "enlightened," that is, truly in touch with reality without egoist biases, and the baggage of individual's semi-random experiences in life funneled by language, culture, and global trends. Unenlightened people are trapped by materialism and lead more animalistic lives driven solely by base selfish desires. There can be and are, more and less enlightened Hindu, Jewish, Christian and Muslim peoples. Likewise, there can be and have been very enlightened Hindu, Jewish, Christian and Muslim people.

Buddhism is totally unique as a religion in that there is no affirmation or denial of any God; it is simply a methodology for attaining enlightenment in some ways the same as medicine is a methodology for curing disease and attaining health.

Some people believe that one can be a Jewish, Christian or Muslim Buddhist, just the same as one can be a Jewish, Christian or Muslim scientist or artist. No "faith" in an unseen God is required in Buddhism, but as with the other major religions of the world, an effort to free oneself of selfish, base animal level desires is required.

Like Buddhism, the three major monotheistic religions generally assert that what is not forbidden is permitted and thus religious scholars of all major religions should in theory claim no "divine right" to forbid the practice of meditation (Chán Buddhism) to its followers.

The Buddha referred to "Buddhism" as *Dharma-Vinaya* — "the doctrine and discipline." In Buddhism *Dharma* means cosmic law and order, something that physicists, astronomers, biologists, psychologists, and anthropologists try to define.

Newton's Laws for example are not forbidden by any religion and neither should *Dharma* be forbidden. *Dharma* means essential quality of the cosmos or one's own nature, virtue, and law and in traditional Buddhist practice is used to promote equality and harmony among people, e.g. altruism.

Most rational people view this as a complement to other religious philosophies rather than a contradiction or denial of their beliefs. And, Chinese Chán Buddhism is more "secular" (practical) in its philosophy and practice than traditional Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism which are more scripturally bound.

It is safe to say that Chán Buddhism is absolutely unique and cannot be classified simply. It is about a direct intuitive path to a greater awakening to reality, what some call "enlightenment."

Over the centuries some people have confused and mixed the religious. Some people have accidentally inherited odd mixes; syncretic amalgams of different religions yet believe they are practicing this religion or that. No Buddha ever said or suggested in any Sutra I have read: "Worship me," or anything like it. That is "leak" from other religions into Buddhist practice.

Certainly, many people bow before statues of Buddha, but in East Asia (but not China) people bow to each other and it is not a form of worship, but rather simply a show of respect. Great respect in English is called "reverence," in which case the Buddha is worthy of reverence as Buddhism is definitely one of the great religions. People of all great religions should agree that respect between humans and for clean ethically minded ideals is a good thing.

Is Buddhism a religion? For many people it is and for others it is not. Is Chán Buddhism a religion? This is a ridiculous question not worth answering as Chán (in particular and potentially all forms of Buddhism) transcends dichotomist categories.

Judaism and Buddhism

A Jewish Buddhist – also sometimes called a *Jubu* – is a person with a Jewish background who practices forms of Buddhist meditation and spirituality. The term "*Jubu*" was first widely introduced by the book *The Jew in the Lotus* (1994) by Rodger Kamenetz.

Another Jewish writer, David M. Bader has written a couple of books finding common traditions and goals within Buddhism and Judaism.

These are humorous and enlightening books well worth reading. *That's Funny, You don't look Buddhist* by Sylvia Boorstein and *Dharma Punx* by Noah Levine are both Jewish Buddhist crossovers, entertaining, and highly rated as well.

Catholicism and Buddhism

Pope John Paul II built some walls between Catholicism and Buddhism in his 1994 book *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* clearly rejecting any notion that the two are of like purpose and insisting that Buddhist principles are to be gravely cautioned against.

The current Pope Francis appears vastly more "enlightened" and appears to follow the liberal reform policies of Jesus of Nazareth far closer than any pope since Peter.

Regardless as to shifting policies at the top of the Catholic church, some Catholic priests and nuns have become recognized as Zen Buddhist masters - while maintaining Catholic vows. For example, Robert Kennedy, S.J. Roshi is a Jesuit priest and Zen teacher in the White Plum lineage who is also the author of *Zen Spirit, Christian Spirit: The Place of Zen in Christian Life.* Another Christian/Buddhist mix was written Paul Knitter, *Without Buddha I could not be Christian.*

Islam and Buddhism

The book titled *Common Ground between Islam and Buddhism* by Reza Shah Kazemi, includes an introduction by several famous people including His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi bin Mohammad of Jordan and Professor Mohammad Hashim Kamali, and shows numerous overlaps and parallels between these two great religions and spiritual philosophies. In regards to the *Diamond Heart Sutra*, Kazemi wrote: "These images are aimed at inducing a state of mind and being, which is referred to simply in terms of two imperatives: 'detachment from appearances' and 'abiding in real truth.' To be detached from what appears is practically tantamount to realization of what never disappears, that which eternally transcends the realm of appearances, 'the real truth.' Thus shall ye think of all this fleeting world: A star at dawn, a bubble in the stream; A flash of lightning in a summer cloud, a flickering lamp, a phantom and a dream."

“This might be compared to such verses of the Qur'an as the following: Know that the life of the world is only play, and idle talk, and pomp, and boasting between you, and rivalry in wealth and children; as the likeness of vegetation after rain, whose growth is pleasing to the farmer, but afterwards it dries up and you see it turning yellow, then it becomes straw... (57:20).”

It is believed in Islam (by some) there were around 500-600 prophets of God...while the total number of divinely inspired “Messengers” reach around 124,000 though only 25 Prophets of God are mentioned in the Quran. All prophets were messengers...but all messengers were not necessarily prophets depending on whose interpretation of the Hadith one wants to believe. Thus, Buddha may have been a Messenger, even within the rather strict interpretations of Islam. But to absolutely assert that he was or was not a Messenger would be forbidden (*Haram*) in Islam.

Some assert Islamic Sufism is influenced by some Buddhist practices. All of people’s beliefs are influenced by everything they learn and the wise are tolerant of broad knowledge and wisdom.

Hinduism and Buddhism

Hinduism is usually considered to be the third largest religion in the world with some 1.3 billion followers. It is possibly the oldest world religion in existence, though Jewish and Muslim people also claim this title. Hinduism and Buddhism share many cultural and historic commonalities but there are also many great differences. Hinduism is a polytheistic religion whereas Buddhism is fundamentally atheistic, though not specifically affirming or denying the existence of God(s) (much in the same way as physics, math, etc.) Many Hindus and Buddhists revere and practice Yoga. A variety of syncretic Hindu/Buddhist philosophies have evolved over the past 2,500 years. Historically Buddhism can be thought of as a branch of Hinduism.

Conclusions on Buddhism and Other Religions

Chán Buddhism is a form of Mahayana Buddhism which asserts that enlightenment can be attained through meditation and intuition alone rather than through faith and devotion and is thus not at least in theory in conflict with other major religions. Buddhist philosophy addresses the cause of suffering and the road to enlightenment which

can be experienced by anyone regardless of race, religion or nationality. Many consider Buddhism to be the first major school of psychology with its emphasis on the cessation of suffering and goal of transcendence. There are many fascinating parallels between Buddhist philosophy and different branches of psychology, especially cognitive and humanist (non-dualistic) branches, phenomenological psychology (particularly in the Abhidhamma), and clinical utility (mindfulness). Scientific research on the health benefits of meditation number in the thousands.

Within each of the major religious denominations there is a divide between liberal and conservatives, and in general the liberals tend to be more open minded, whereas conservatives tend to reject anything not precisely defined within the strictest interpretations of their own religion. Such dichotomies are natural in any large group, and from a Buddhist viewpoint should be tolerated and then transcended. In some ways however, Buddhism might be considered the most "conservative" of all the great religions in that eating any kind of meat is forbidden. Life – all sentient life at least – is so sacred in Buddhism care must be made to not even step on a worm or ant.

Simultaneously, Buddhism is also the most liberal in that there are no penalties for believing or not believing (as compared to the three major monotheistic religions). In Buddhism one collects karma and merit, irrespective of one's philosophy, religious or otherwise.

The core of most religions teaches people to: "Be good, be clean, be kind and help the needy," in addition to: "The good will be rewarded and the bad will be punished." Certainly, wars can be fought over the exact workings and wordings of these teachings, but these commonalities remain.

One doesn't have to abolish religions to create a more peaceful world (as John Lennon seemed to suggest), and Buddhism does offer a kind of neutral middle ground – a potential safe bridge between various cultures, religions, philosophies, arts, sciences and ways of life.

"If the rulers sincerely desire the empire to be wealthy and dislike having poverty, desiring to have it orderly and dislike having it chaotic, they should bring about universal love and mutual aid."

Mozi

~ ~ ~

"A man is not called wise because he talks and talks again; but if he is peaceful, loving and fearless then he is in truth called wise."

Gautama Buddha, *The Dhammapada*: *The Sayings of the Buddha*

~ ~ ~

"Three beliefs in Buddhism (三想 *Sān xiǎng*): The three evil thoughts are: desire, hate, malevolence; the three good thoughts are thoughts of (love to) enemies, the same to family and friends, the same to those who are neither enemies nor friends, i.e. to all."

Gautama Buddha, Dhammapada: *The Sayings of the Buddha*

~ ~ ~

"Still your mind in me, still yourself in me, and without a doubt you shall be united with me, Lord of Love, dwelling in your heart."

Bhagavad Gita (Sacred book of the Hindus)

~ ~ ~

"Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord."

Hebrew Bible Lev. 19:18

~ ~ ~

"Whoever fails to love does not know God, because God is love."

Christian *New Testament Bible*, John, 4:8

~ ~ ~

" And do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good."

Quran 2:195

~ ~ ~

" To each of you We prescribed a law and a method. Had Allah willed, He would have made you one nation [united in religion], but [He intended] to test you in what He has given you; so race to [all that is] good. To Allah is your return all together, and He will [then] inform you concerning that over which you used to differ."

Quran 5:48

Chán Buddhism and fighting skills

Chán is meditation. Meditation is not this or that as these are the benchmarks of dichotomous thinking we first learn as infants and in very early childhood. As we "develop" we learn to separate ourselves from others more and more and shatter that harmony of oneness that permeates the universe.

The Shàolín temples were the nurturing centers where the harmonization of mind, body and the environment first re-occurred bringing humanity back to humanity, cutting through the "culture" and "civilization" that divided us. *Gōng'àn*, (legal case) is a very apt metaphor for the testing of enlightenment, as the needs of individuals and society are fluid and absolutely unique to each situation.

Kung Fu (*Gōngfu* 功夫) is a lot more than kicks or punches. Kung Fu really means art, skill or discipline, depending on the situation. An attorney arguing brilliantly in the Supreme Court is using Kung Fu, just the same as a poet reflects the shimmering heat waves on a steamy summer day or frog jumping sounds in a small pond with words. There is immediacy, purity of purpose and clarity in the movements of a Kung Fu master that is instantly recognizable. There is no wasted movement (words or colors) in Kung Fu; the art flows effortlessly yet has tremendous irresistible power. Conscious thought is transcended and the artist is only a tool of greater forces in the universe expressing themselves. Meditation is the crucible, the rich fertile earth, the empty circle wherein creation is birthed. Without it there is no art, no Kung Fu, no harmony of forces.

But Shàolín Kung Fu is more than oneness or perfection of fighting skills. Babies, psychotics, drug addicts and morons can be experience "oneness" and cruel evil people can have masterful fighting skills. Shàolín Chán Buddhism is unique even among other Buddhist schools because it perfected these arts within the context of a moral framework that protects life not only by non-action (meditation, being vegetarian, etc.) by also by fighting and sometimes dying to protect life, the community and nation. This moral purpose, centered in meditation and harnessed by an absolute commitment to the protection of life adds a depth of commitment and purpose not found elsewhere in human experience.

Practice of meditation can have a peculiar effect on the perception of time. During meditation time becomes more fluid. One can observe how the perception of time can speed or slow depending on internal mental activity (perception and cognitive flow). One second can last an eternity, or hours can flash by in an instant. The speed of the flickering of images through our minds is conditioned in us from birth and entirely unconscious but in meditation we can learn to become aware of our mind's activity and harmonize it to the ongoing needs in and of our environment.

During fighting times seems to slow because of hyper acceleration of the mind and body.

During fighting the entire organism becomes focused; both concentration (one pointed – right hemisphere of the brain) and awareness (everything at once – left hemisphere of the brain) are perfectly integrated and enhanced (a gestalt function). The "whole is greater than the sum of its parts." Mental focus – concentration is perfect with awareness expanded not only to the relationship between fighters but also their relationship to the environment and useful potential tools in the environment that can be helpful in achieving the artists' goal, whether it is a fighter, painter or someone arranging flowers.

For a fighter, past present and future merge as he utilizes ongoing learning of the opponent's strengths and weaknesses which is integrated into predictions regarding the probability of their attacks and reactions to any particular attack or defense – without "thinking." Openings, weaknesses and their intentions become obvious. This is all processed unconsciously in the most ancient parts of the midbrain.

Chán meditation opens what doors are needed to enhance the harmonization needed for the artist to optimally express their art, whatever it may be, within the context of a moral framework illuminated by the masters who have gone before us. Time is not a "hallway" but an n-dimensional horizon – a blank canvass upon which we can paint a better, more peaceful and harmonious future for everyone.

True masters do not seek power and work hard to avoid the powerful and complications that go with the material world if for no other reason than the old immutable rule that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Masters are perfectly happy to cultivate their own enlightenment until they experience the great awakening (成佛 *Chéngfó* in Chinese, *Satori* in Japanese), and at that point many of the masters then help others upon their own path to enlightenment.

For those of who don't have to fight to survive or protect their communities with martial endeavor the applications of meditation are still omnipresent.

Meditation has been demonstrated to have positive effects on everything from high blood pressure to problem solving skills, Olympic performance, improving sleep and attaining joyfulness. (For more on this subject see *The Physical and Psychological Effects of Meditation: A Review of Contemporary Research*, by Michael Murphy, Steven Donovan, and Eugene Taylor.)

Chapter Conclusions

The foregoing should demonstrate that Chán (meditation) Buddhism is at the foundation of the Shàolín Monastery and Shàolín Kung Fu and is a philosophy unique in the world. Whereas most religions rely on rigid dogmas to perpetuate faith, Chán Buddhism in China has been and remains fluid to meet the ever-changing needs of individuals seeking enlightenment within the context of the teachings of the masters and ongoing needs of communities, the nation, world and cosmos and without. Chán Buddhism (meditation) speaks honestly and directly to the heart and mind bringing us to higher levels of awareness, freeing us from the chains of associations, fears and "overthinking" that inhibit and dull our perceptions (and fighting skills).

On the back-cover Shi Yong Xin's book "Temple in My Heart" it states:

> "As the successor of the Shaolin culture, my mission is to work tirelessly to perpetuate what our predecessors had left us and to pass on the Chinese Chán lineage from one generation to another. On this matter I admit that I am a staunch conservative because our tradition contains wisdom that can creatively respond to the realistic problems of individuals, society and nature."
>
> Abbot Shi Yongxin (2013)

Ultimately the truth of Chán Buddhism is infinitely greater than any words can describe. The greatest truths are wordless:

> "Words are not known in all the Buddha-lands; words Mahāmati, are an artificial creation."
>
> Suzuki, D.T. (Trans. 1931) Lankavatara Sutra (Bodhidharma's chosen sutra)

Interestingly this concept is reflected in the first sentences of the Dao (Tao). Below are a few translations of the first sentences:

> (Line 1) The Tao that can be described in words is not the true Tao. The Name that can be named is not the true Name. (Marby Trans.) Line 2: The Nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth; The Named is the mother of all things. (Chan Trans.)

(For an interesting collection of 23 translations of Dao De Jing (Tao Te Ching) in English, see: taopage.org)

> "Xuefeng asked, 'As for the style of our school that has been handed down from the past, how do you show it to people?' [Deshan] said, 'My teaching has no words or phrases. Truly there is not a single dharma to give to people.'
>
> Sasaki, R.F. (2009 c) The Record of Linji, P. 237

But in the end, "words" and "wordless" are just another dichotomy. Let 'em go.

Author's Note: I am no master or guru, simply a researcher and writer. Please refer to the references below that were used in this Chapter for a much more complete reflection of the essence of Chán. Links to many of the most important Buddhist Sutras are provided.

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Chapter 2 - History and Reincarnation of the True North Shàolín Monastery

北少林寺的历史

Běi Shàolínsìde Lìshǐ

The premier mountain retreat in China for those in search of the twin lures of enlightenment and martial perfection and for a long line of China's most notable Emperors before being destroyed and even lost to memory is now being rebuilt bigger and more beautiful than ever.

North Shàolín Monastery – Background Summary

The Chán (Zen) Buddhist North Shàolín Monastery currently being reconstructed on Pan Mountain (Panshan) in Ji County (Jixian), 120 Km. north of Tianjin and 90 Km. east of Beijing in northeast China is in the imperial heartland of China and thus was exposed to much more direct mostly foreign aggression than the older headquarter Songshan Shàolín which is located closer to central China. Panshan (the location of the North Shàolín) has a strategic location in Jixian, and Jixian in China due to its location as a critical mountain pass from the sea inland, and from North to South not far inland from the eastern coast.

Jixian County is only 28 kilometers south of the Huangyaguan Great Wall (黄崖关 *Huángyáguān* – meaning Yellow Cliff Pass) located at the summit of high mountain ridges.

With an unscalable precipice serving as a natural barrier in the east and sheer cliff serving as a natural wall in the west, the Huangyaguan Great Well possesses ferry and land passes, battlements, watch tower strongholds and large-scale barracks which collectively make this section of the Great Wall impregnable.

It has always been a hotly contested spot in military history. According to historic records the Huangyaguan Great Wall was initially built in Tianbao 7th Year of the North Qi Dynasty (557AD). It was redesigned, tiled and overhauled by Qi Jiguan, the Commander in Chief of Ji Town during the Ming Dynasty.

The North Shàolín Monastery, originally called "Faxing Temple" was first built in the Wei Jin Dynasty (220 - 317 AD). It is the oldest temple in the very large mostly rural Jixian area. According to the official Shàolín Temple internet site it became part of the Shàolín family under the auspices of Abbot Fuyu during the Mongolian rule of the Yuan Dynasty about a thousand years after Faxing Temple was first built, however that is a bit of an oversimplification.

In spite of its long noble history, ask most people in China where the "North Shàolín Monastery" is and surprisingly they say "*Zai Songshan*," (at Song Mountain, Songshan) in central China.

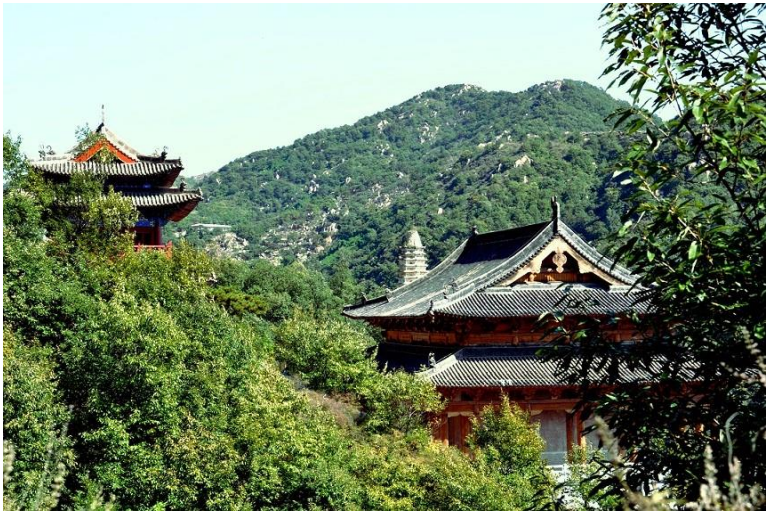
This suggests that the curious set of events leading to the destruction of the North Shàolín Temple - from the anti-martial policies of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) and 1928 rumors of the arrival of a warlord bandit's army, to May of 1942 during the 2nd Sino-Japanese War when it was burned to the ground - effectively erased even the memory of that glorious temple from the Chinese people.

This isn't to say or suggest that the North Shàolín monks went out in a blaze of glory fighting the Japanese at the Monastery, as that clearly didn't happen, though indeed Japanese Imperial Forces did burn the Monastery down during a battle with resistance fighters, some of whom may have been monks or former monks, however the Monastery had been all but abandoned some years before for a variety of reasons. Instead, Northern Shàolín Kung Fu disseminated widely prior to the final destruction of the Monastery, especially in the Beijing/Tianjin/Pingu areas specifically and Hebei Province in general and thus a suicidal battle was avoided and maximum use of their unique skills was used rather than obliterated along with the monastery.

Following the destruction of the North Shàolín Monastery few remains existed of the original Monastery except for the foundations of a few buildings and one lovely white 13-tiered ancient pagoda from the early-mid Qing Dynasty which is currently in serious need of repair i.e. crumbling foundations under it, bullet holes in it and foliage growing on it. What wasn't destroyed during the fighting was later looted.

North Shaolin c. 1993 – Photo by Wei Min

At present, the ancient Northern Shàolín Monastery is being rebuilt.



North Shaolin in 2014

> "In fact, Shàolín Quan was the manifestation of the wisdom of the monks of the temple, secular Wushu masters and army generals and soldiers. Shaolin Kung Fu originated from folk Kung Fu of the Central Plains. According to archeological records, the Kung Fu in the Central Plains developed at a certain level during the Eastern (206 BD – AC 25) and Western Han 25-220) Dynasties. The Qigong also accumulated rich experiences. The monks of the Shaolin Temple are mainly from the Central Plains, so some monks had already learned Kung Fu before entering the temple, and they taught each other after entering the temple. The Shaolin Temple always held the tradition of widely absorbing the best Kung Fu Performances from the monasteries and continued to improve upon them."
>
> Wang Guangzi (2010) P. 15

Yi Jin Jing and Shaolin Kung Fu

The classic "Shàolín legend" is that Bodhidharma laid the foundation of Shàolín Kung Fu by introducing the "Muscle Change Classic" ("*Yi Jin Jing*") to the Shàolín Temple. Some modern historians, including Tang Hao (2008) and Matsuda Ryuchi (1986) refute this asserting that the oldest known available copy of the *Yi Jin Jing* was published in 1827. Tang Hao wrote that the *Yi Jin Jing* was "amateurish," "not from the Shàolín" and "taking advantage of the Shàolín name." (Published in *Shaolin Wudang Kao Taiji Quan Yu Nei Jia Quan*, P. 13-14)

Though Bodhidharma is revered as the first patriarch of Chán (Zen Buddhism), there is no substantial evidence that he introduced martial arts to the Shàolín. The Chinese martial arts *Shuai Jiao* (a kind of wrestling similar to Judo in some ways) and *Sun Bin Quan* (kicking/punching art that utilizes the full range of meta-strategies from the "*Art of War*") were well evolved centuries before the establishment of the Shàolín Temple. The history of Chinese boxing dates as far back as the Chou Dynasty (112 - 255 BC) (Draeger & Smith 1969).

Does this necessarily mean that Bodhidharma didn't pass on a series of stretches and strengthening exercises to the monks at the Shàolín Monastery; one he may have learned in India and/or Central Asia and/or developed on his own to help keep the monks refreshed and wakeful during meditation?

Religions have historically always had secret traditions. For example, in Jewish tradition it was against the law to write down the oral laws given by God to Moses: "*Torah she-be'al peh*," though after the fall of Jerusalem (1st Century AD) they were recorded in the *Talmud* (the "Learning") and *Midrashim* (the "Interpretations") and can now be found in most libraries.

Some secrets however are revealed more slowly. Hebrew theology was traditionally divided into three distinct parts. The first was the law (*Torah*) the second was the soul of the law (*Mishnah)* and the third was the soul of the soul of the law, the *Kabbalah*. The law was taught to all the children of Israel. The *Mishnah* was revealed to the Rabbis and teachers. But the *Kabbalah* was very cleverly concealed and only the highest initiates among the Jewish people were instructed in its secret mystic principles.

"*Kabbalah*" means "secret or hidden tradition," the "unwritten law."

However, these secret mysteries were written down and disseminated widely in the 18th and 19th centuries, *though different versions have different levels of authenticity.* No one however doubts the extreme antiquity of their origin or their Jewish roots.

Just so, it is possible that Bodhidharma passed on or created a series of stretching and strengthening exercises which were transmitted through the ages in secret at the Shàolín Monastery, and then in the 1800s some renegade monk perhaps revealed them to a wandering Taoist who "created" or more accurately revealed the so-called *Yi Jin Jing*. Certainly, it could be a complete fraud; however, no one can definitively conclude this. Thus, despite *Yi Jin Jing's* questionable authenticity, it may have some foundation in ancient Shàolín tradition. Further research is required to definitively substantiate or refute the true origins of Shàolín Kung Fu, however it is a truism that some secrets of history are never fully revealed.

Bodhidharma and Yoga

There is however, relatively good evidence that Bodhidharma may have practiced and taught Yoga, which is also a series of stretching and strengthening exercises, and a lot more.

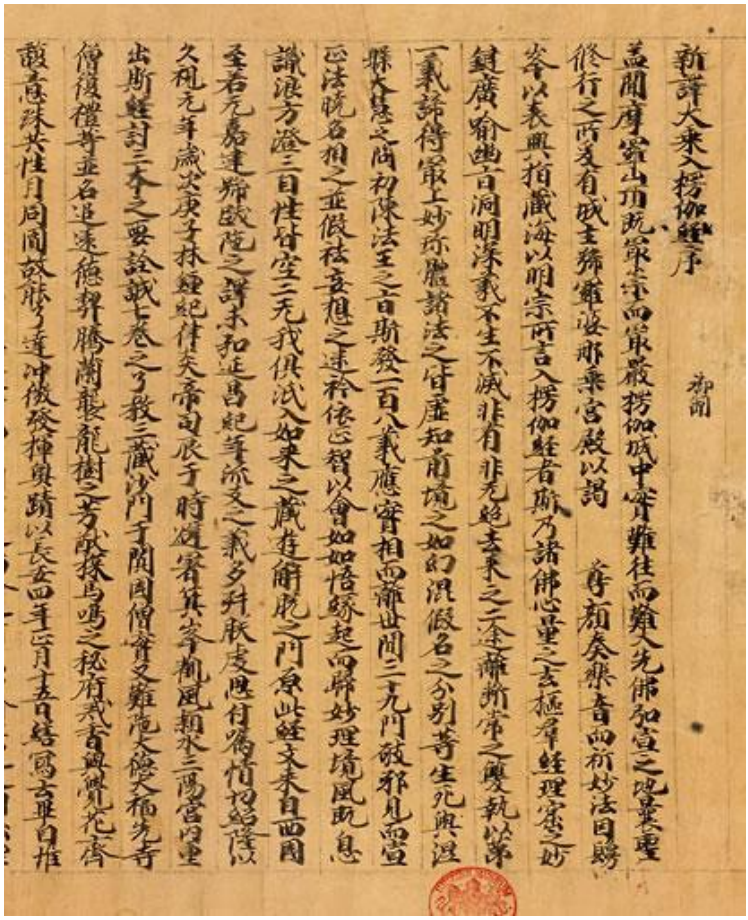
Bodhidharma taught only one sutra, the Lankavatara Sutra, and that sutra historically and philosophically draws upon the concepts and doctrines of Yogacara and Tathagatagarbha traditions.

> "Firstly, the Maitreya Belief has a profound theoretical basis and a complete practicing system. In the history of Buddhism, patriarchs and great masters who devoutly believed in the Maitreya Pure Land had committed themselves to the promotion of the Yogacara School. They include Asanga Bodhisattva, Vasubandhu Bodhisattva and Abhidharma Master Shilabadra of India; Master Xuanzang and Master Kuiji of China; Master Taixu and Cihang Bodhisattva of modern China."
>
> *Maitreya Belief: Destination of the Earthly Pure Land*: Speech presented at the Opening Ceremony of the 2010 China Fanjingshan Buddhist Culture Symposium. 8/29/2010

Maitreya may have been the actual founder of the Yogacara (mind-only/non-dualistic/egoless) school which attaches great importance to the religious practice of yoga as a means to attaining final emancipation from the bondage of the material world. The stages of yoga are systematically set forth in the doctrine and treatises associated with this tradition.

Simply put, Bodhidharma's favorite sutra, the only one he taught, was the Lankavatara Sutra:

> "In the beginning Dhyana Master Bodhidharma took the four-roll Lankā Sūtra, handed it over to Huike, and said: "When I examine the land of China, it is clear that there is only this sutra. If you rely on it to practice, you will be able to cross over the world."
>
> Broughton, Jeffrey L. (1999) *The Bodhidharma Anthology: The Earliest Records of Zen*, Berkeley: University of California Press



Manuscript of Lankavatara Sutra

The Lankavatara Sutra was the first of the Yogacara texts introduced in China (5th century AD - during the lifetime of Bodhidharma) and Yogacara religious practice emphasizes regular practice of yoga as a means to attaining enlightenment. Thus, did Bodhidharma practice and/or teach Yoga? It is certainly possible – even probable, suggesting that one of the multitude of Shaolin Kung Fu's roots may be Yoga. Yoga is a very scientific system of stretching and strengthening exercises used in combination with a variety of breathing techniques, meditation, relaxation inductions and guided visualization exercises in addition to being an advanced school of enlightenment philosophy practiced by Buddhists in India, China and Japan.

According to Gene Ching, editor of Kung Fu Magazine: "Chan is yoga. Chan comes from Dhyana which comes from yoga." (Correspondence dated 11/20/2014.)

Origin of Shaolin Kung Fu

It is definitely true that neither Bodhidharma nor the Shàolín "invented" martial arts in China. Warfare is ancient in the extreme and martial arts play a key role in preparing for war. It is also definitely true that Buddhism was the central theme of the Shàolín Temples, and Chán Buddhism was founded in China by the Patriarch Bodhidharma.

Songshan Shàolín's history of military endeavor outside the monastery is quite old too going back at least to the seventh century, specifically warding off bandits and subsequent support for the future Emperor Li Shimin's (Emperor Taizong of Tang Dynasty) campaign against the former Sui Dynasty General Wang Shichong (620-621).

In his book "*The Shaolin Monastery History, Religion, and the Chinese Martial Arts*," Dr. Shahar critically examines the dates of the origin of Shàolín Kung Fu, and notes that helping Prince Li Shimin's defense of the realm against Wang Shichong was not proof or even very solid evidence that there was a "Shaolin Kung Fu" at that time, as the Shàolín warriors that fought against Wang Shichong might have been former soldiers. In an earlier article Dr. Shahar wrote that, "Furthermore, the literature of the ensuing Song and Yuan periods does not allude to Shaolin martial practice either." (Shahar, M. 2001, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 61, No. 2, Dec., P. 364)

However, Tang Hao in his classic book "*Shaolin Wudang Kao*" relates a story as follows:

> "Near the end of the Sui Dynasty things around the Shaolin Monastery were in a mess. There were thousands of thieves in the area. An old monk with a staff kept thieves outside of the temple. The old monks chose hundreds of young strong monks to teach them the use of the staff. The Shaolin Monastery got rid of the thieves."

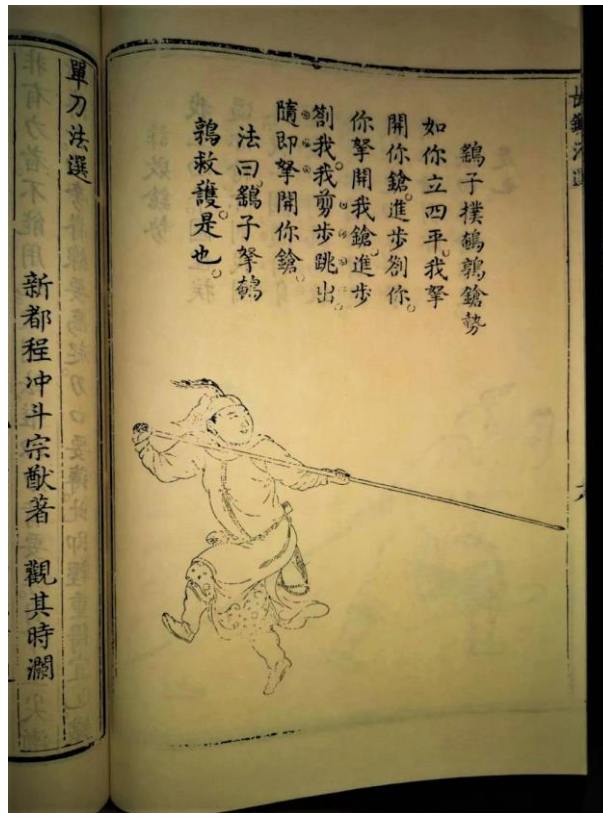
> Tang Hao (2008) *Shaolin Wudang Kao Taiji Quan Yu Nei Jia Quan*, published by Shanxi Kexue Jishu Chuban She, P. 57, published posthumously
>
> His reference was: Zi Zhen Ma Liang (1919) *Zhong Hua Xin Wu Shu – Gun Shu Ke* (*China's New Wushu – Staff Skill Science*) Published by Shang Wu Yin Shu Guan Yin Hang, Nov.

This suggests "regular martial training" was taking place at the end of the Sui Dynasty (581–618), long before the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). This does not however suggest that ordained monks were participating in military affairs, but rather defense of the monastery, in a way similar to policing.

Please recall that monasteries were the centers of civilization in ancient China serving as libraries, universities, hospitals, hotels for Buddhist travelers, tea culture centers, shelters for the dispossessed, and the moral backbone of often lawless lands. They definitely *always* had a need for self-defense capabilities.

In *Shaolin Wudang Zhi*, (in which Tang Hao's formal name Tang Fan Sheng is used as author) there is a picture from the Ming Dynasty of Shàolín Staff training *that was copied from an earlier Yuan Dynasty source.* (P. 33)[2] In his book *Shaolin Wudang Kao Taiji Quan Yu Nei Jia Quan* one can find the names of various staff forms from the Yuan Dynasty.

[2] Tan Hao (1897-1959) has a fascinating biography: From a poor family in Jiangsu he went to Shanghai when he was 10 to find a job. His first Wushu master was in Shandong however he traveled widely including Wudang, Songshan and Chen Village. The Kuomintang persecuted him and he moved to Japan (1927) where he studied law and politics as well as Judo and sabre fighting. In 1932 he was back in China studying law and politics at Shanghai Political University. Before his death in 1959 he was a member of the China Sports Communication Weiyuan Committee and was a Deputy of the People's Congress in Shanghai. The Wushu Association of China nominated him as Chief Secretary. Most of his writings about martial arts were published in newspapers of the time. His articles have been collected and published posthumously. He is considered to be the 20th Century pioneer of Chinese sports history.



Brundage photo

During the Five Dynasties Period (907 - 960) Shaolin Fuju invited 18 martial arts masters to help improve Shaolin martial arts. Fuju absorbed the best martial art techniques from others and compiled the Shaolin Quan. During the Jin and Yuan dynasties (1115-1234), Shaolin monk Jueyuan, Li Sou a famous martial artist from Lanzhou and Bai Yufeng, a famous martial artist from Louyang (entered the temple and took the name Qiu Yue Chan) created more than 70 Shaolin martial techniques. Shaolin Kung Fu gradually developed from the Sui and Tang dynasties to the Jin and Yuan dynasties.

Wang Guangxi (2010) *Chinese Kung Fu – Masters, Schools and Combats*, P. 15

Though the Shàolín monks needed to protect themselves and their community, and (presumably *Sujia Dizi* – lay disciples working for the Shaolin Monastery) were invited to work in service to the emperor many times in succeeding centuries, it was in the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) that military (lay disciple) monks attained their greatest glory.

> Even though the piracy war was their most famous, it was not the only campaign in which Shaolin monks took part. Beginning in the first decade of the sixteenth century, Shaolin warriors were regularly drafted to quell local unrest in North China. In 1511, seventy monks lost their lives fighting Liu the Sixth and Liu the Seventh, whose bandit armies swept through Hebei and Henan.
>
> In 1522-1523 Shaolin fighters battled the miner turned bandit Wang Tang, who pillaged Shandong and Henan, and in 1552 they participated in the government offensive against the Henan outlaw Shi Shangzhao.
>
> "The monastery's military support of the Ming continued into the dynasty's turbulent last years. During the 1630s, Shaolin monks were repeatedly enlisted to the doomed campaigns against the swelling rebel armies that by 1644 were to topple the dynasty."
>
> Shahar, M. (2008)
>
> "During the Jiajing period of the Ming Dynasty (1522 - 1566), the Shaolin Temple sent more than 80 martial monks to fight the Japanese pirates and defeated the enemies.
>
> In the 40th year of the Jiajing reign (1561) Ming General Yu Dayou (1504 - 1580), who was reputed for his anti-Japanese military service, went to teach cudgel-fighting skills in the Shaolin Temple.
>
> After this, Shaolin monks switched from cudgel fighting to fist fighting, so fist fights could be promoted to match cudgel fights. At the end of the

> Ming, Shaolin monk Hong Ji also learned outstanding spear fighting skills from Liu Dechang."
>
> Wang Guangxi (2010) *Chinese Kung Fu – Masters, Schools and Combats*, P. 15

It is worth noting here that in common Chinese Putonghua (Mandarin) people often refer to lay disciple "*Sujia Dizi*," (*Wuseng* martial "monks" and/or *Sengbing*, military "monks") as "monks," and consequently it's easy enough to misinterpret exactly which groups were engaged in policing and military affairs, however as noted in Chapter 1, ordained monks are absolutely prohibited from taking life, precluding their ordinary participation in military affairs.

None-the-less, they were certainly needed to train for example, former soldiers that took "*San Bao*" (Three Treasures/Three Jewels) making them Shaolin Lay Disciples, in the Monastery. Ordained monks would probably not be prohibited from normal "policing" as it isn't really necessary to kill thieves, as in most cases a few good whacks with a staff would suffice to send them off.

As reward for the Shàolín Temples' support (via *Sujia Dizi* Lay Disciple: *Wuseng* - martial "monks" and/or *Sengbing* - military "monks") of the Ming dynasty they were protected from numerous purges by succeeding anti-Buddhist Emperors of which there were many - who mostly favored the domestically brewed religions Confucianism and to a (much) lesser extent Taoism.

By late Ming dynasty the role of military "monk" had grown to truly epic proportions leading to criticism inspired by envy, corruption or fear and possibly all three. This prejudice continued into the Qing Dynasty, no doubt for similar reasons.

> "In 1832, for example, a Dengfeng Country magistrate issued a strict warning to the Shaolin Monastery concerning the behavior of its subsidiary shrine monks, whom he accused of not only dietary transgression, but also of sexual offences. Shaolin-affiliated monks, magistrate He Wei (fl.1830) charged, engage in drinking, gambling and whoring."
>
> Shahar (2008) P. 48

If this magistrate's charges were true, it sounds more like some ungentlemanly "Lay Disciples," than ordained monks, emphasizing again that in Chinese, Lay Disciples are frequently called: "monks."

The monks were also accused of "colluding secretly and collaborating in all sorts of evil."

Interestingly, the October 14th 1307 arrest of the Templar knights in France was accompanied by a long list of charges including "secrecy," which was only a precursor to the November 22nd 1307 Papal Edit ordering the arrest of all Templar knights across Europe and seizure of their properties and assets.

This rather negative view of some Shaolin "monks" (*Wuseng* and/or *Sengbing*) however was not the popular vision of the romanticized "warrior monks" and the trend of increasing power of the Shàolín increased through most of the Qing Dynasty in spite of the dynastic leader's escalating fears regarding that very same power.

> "During the late Ming and early Qing era, Shaolin Kung Fu absorbed the best features of many Northern boxing schools, the cudgel fighting skills of Fujian Province and spear-fighting skills of Sichuan Province... At the same time, because Shaolin Kung Fu became more famous, many boxing schools in northern China also claimed themselves as part of the Shaolin boxing family. In this way, the Shaolin boxing family covered nearly all the Chinese martial schools of northern regions. Shaolin Kung Fu became the general term for Wushu in the Northern region."
>
> Wang Guangxi, (2010) *Chinese Kung Fu – Masters, Schools and Combats*, P. 16-17

Origin of the North Shàolín Monastery

The North Shàolín Monastery was founded and formally named following the resolution of a 30-year conflict between Taoists and Buddhists on Panshan. According to the official Shàolín Temple site: "In 1245 Fuyu (1203-1275) was appointed by the first Emperor of the Yuan Dynasty Kublai Khan as the abbot of (Songshan) Shàolín Monastery before the former took the throne." (Shaolin.org, "Fuyu")

Fuyu's good friend Yelu Chu Cai, also a Buddhist was reputed to be Genghis Khan's foremost warrior at that time. Fuyu had earned extraordinary merit in a variety of ways, for example he was famous for inviting martial artists from all over China to the Songshan Shaolin Monastery to harmonize the best of their techniques into an even wider and more effective Shaolin curriculum. Fuyu was given permission by the Khan to open five other temples, one of which was 70 years later to become the North Shaolin Monastery (Panshan Zhi).

Thirty Year Buddhist/Taoist Conflict and Historical Records

In 1286 Taoists who reportedly had "great power" led by Zhang Zhi Ge gradually started moving into many temples in the Panshan area including Faxing Buddhist Temple, (later to become 'North Shaolin Monastery'). After staying for a while, they reported to their Quanzhen Taoist masters how nice it was and then they completely took over, (allegedly) smashed some Buddha statues, burned the main hall, and destroyed the white pagoda tower, which they later denied and instead blamed on the Buddhists. The Panshan Mayor at that time however liked them and disregarded the accusations. (Buddhist Website, 2009, Gao, W. 2009, Panshan Zhi – Qianlong version)

The Quanzhen Taoists were popular because of their good relationship with Genghis Khan, initiated when the Khan heard about the teachings of Qiu Chuji and invited him to a discussion which occurred between April 14th and May 12th 1222 in the Hindu Kush Mountains in what is now Afghanistan.

Qiu urged the emperor to be less brutal in his conquests and instructed him on the basic principles of cultivating health and longevity. In the words of author Stephen Eskildsen in his 2004 book "The Teachings and Practices of the Early Quanzhen Taoist Masters,"

"As a result of this mission, Qiu is said to have saved many lives." Genghis Khan also decreed that all Taoist monks and nuns in his domain were to operate under the authority of Qiu Chuji. (P. 17) As word of these actions rippled out, the locals on Panshan and elsewhere within the Mongol domain were favorably inclined toward the Quanzhen Taoists.

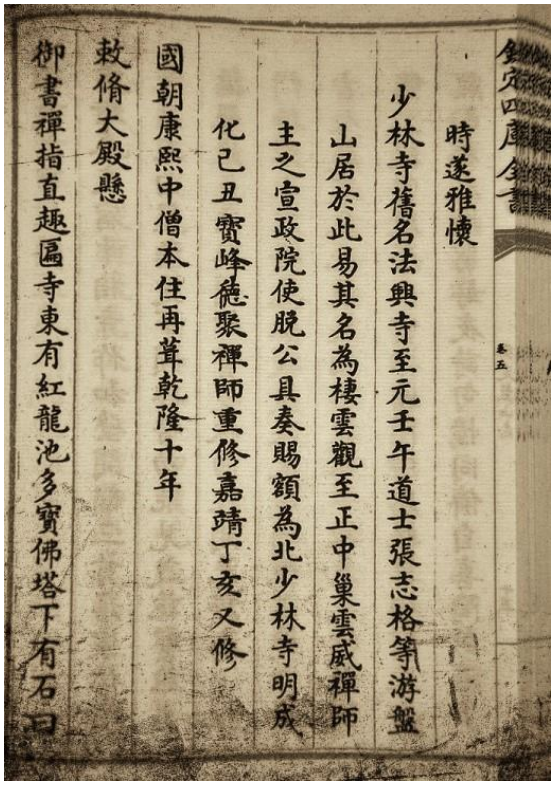
Then the Taoists applied to the Jixian government for ownership of the temples, which in turn applied to the Emperors mother. The Empress Dowager changed the name of what was then Faxing Temple to "Cloud Taoist Temple."

In 1315 an honored Buddhist monk – Fuyu's student and successor Yun Wei (his Buddhist name, also sometimes called "Chao Yun") looked at the damaged temple and went to appeal to the Mongolian Court.

Ayurbarwada Buyantu Khan, (reign: April 7, 1311 – March 1, 1320; also known as Emperor Renzong of Yuan) residing in "Datu" (capital of Yuan Dynasty at that time and current location of Beijing) hosted a grand debate between the Buddhists and Taoists and ultimately decided in favor of Yun Wei the disciple of Fuyu and officially changed the name to "*Bei Shaolinsi*" North Shaolin Monastery (Buddhist Website, Panshan Zhi – Qianlong version).

Then Yun Wei came back to Faxing Temple/Cloud Taoist Temple and broke the Taoist's "stone," (like a signboard declaring the temple's name: "Xi Yun Guan" meaning "Stay on the Cloud").

There are some discrepancies in the historical records of this time, i.e. different versions of the Panshan Zhi (Pan Mountain History, e.g. Qianlong and Zhi Pu) and they are somewhat at odds with the oral traditions that still exist on Panshan.


欽定四庫全書
卷五
時遂雅懷
少林寺舊名法興寺至元壬午道士張志格等游盤
山居於此易其名為棲雲觀至正中巢雲威禪師
主之宣政院使脫公具奏賜額為北少林寺明成
化己丑寶峰德聚禪師重修嘉靖丁亥又修
國朝康熙中僧本住再葺乾隆十年
救脩大殿懸
御書禪指直趣區寺東有紅龍池多寶佛塔下有石

Emperor Qianlong's Panshan Zhi - Taoists take over Faxing Temple and application to emperor rebuilding as North Shaolin Monastery

What everyone does agree on is that Taoists took over Faxing Temple in 1254, and Buddhists got it back around 1315 under the auspices of Fuyu's successor Yun Wei at which time it was named: North Shaolin Temple. According to oral tradition on Panshan Mountain however the temple was (also) called: "*You Ji Shao Lin Chan Yuan*" ("*You Ji*" is a very old name for Jixian County and "*Chán Yuan*" means Chán – Zen Temple; Source: interview with Yang Li Min, accountant for Wa Yao Village wherein the North Shaolin Temple is located).

It seems virtually everyone in Wa Yao Village has knowledge of the Monastery and its history. Incidentally, "Wa Yao" means "roof-tile kiln," referring to the fact that the ancestors of the people in that village moved there specifically for work making construction materials for the many temples on that mountain, principally roof

tiles and bricks, though these days it is a widely scattered collection of farms and guest houses located on the paradisiacal Panshan mountain.

The most widely read Panshan Zhi, or history of Panshan was part of a massive collection of writings and artwork collected and sponsored by Emperor Qianlong (1711-1799).

> "It is not surprising that one of Qianlong's grandest projects was to assemble a team of China's finest scholars for the purpose of assembling, editing, and printing the largest collection ever made of Chinese philosophy, history, and literature. Known as The Four Treasuries project, this mammoth undertaking spanned the years 1773 to 1784 and required the careful examining of private libraries to assemble a list of around eleven thousand works from the past, of which about a third were chosen for publication. The works not included were either summarized or—in a good many cases—scheduled for destruction on the grounds that they contained scurrilous material, revealed important geographical information that might be of use to China's enemies, or else insulted the Manchus in some way. The Four Treasuries was thus a true symbol for Qianlong's reign: carefully planned, historically grounded, culturally sophisticated, but at the same time massive, intrusive, and coercive."
>
> Spence, J. (2003/2004) P. 26-27

The Four Treasuries project, or *Siku Quanshu* (四庫全書), published in 36,000 volumes, containing about 3450 complete works and employing as many as 15,000 copyists was also an excellent way to permanently silence political opponents.

Thus, it should not be terribly surprising that Panshan oral traditions are often quite different from the official versions of the history, and furthermore constitute an extremely interesting and colorful mix of legends and history. One of their stories about Emperor Qianlong goes as follows:

As a boy Hong-Li (the emperor's given name) was often sick and people around him said it was his destiny to become a monk as at that time it seemed unlikely that he would become the emperor. He then made a promise that if he could become healthy, he would become a monk. But later he became healthy and the emperor so he found another man, Zhi Pu from Panshan who was born on the same day, month and year as him to take his place as a monk. It was Zhi Pu who wrote the Panshan Zhi and one reason Emperor Qianlong so loved Panshan. (Source: interview with Xu Wen – Wa Yao Village Mayor).

Colorful as this story is, it is also rather unlikely. Zhi Pu (智朴) was born in 1636 and a friend of Emperor Kangxi, Emperor Qianlong's grandfather. (Baidu Encyclopedia: Zhi Pu) Interestingly, Emperor Kangxi's father, Emperor Qianlong's great-grandfather Emperor Shunzhi was very much a contemporary of Zhi Pu being born in 1638. Accidentally substituting Emperor Qianlong's name for Emperor Shunzhi would be an easy mistake for a story teller in Panshan to make sometime during the past nearly 400 years given that Emperor Qianlong did visit Panshan some 32 times and he had dozens of his poems extolling the beauty of Panshan carved into the huge stones on Panshan many of which still can still be found today.

Emperor Qianlong’s poetry on rock on Panshan, Jixian, Tianjin

Emperor Qianlong was born in 1711 and though he may have met Zhi Pu, the emperor would have been very young and Zhi Pu quite old. Emperor Qianlong did however like Zhi Pu's Panshan Zhi and it was clearly admired by his grandfather Emperor Kangxi. One difference between the original Zhi Pu Panshan History and Emperor Qianlong's Panshan History is that the Emperor's redacted version is full of praise for the Emperor, whereas Zhi Pu's was focused solely on Panshan.

Regardless as to differences between historical texts and oral traditions, Buddhists and Taoists in China have in some ways integrated in China. Nowadays large Buddhist temples often have a Taoist hall somewhere and Taoist temples often have some token alter for Guan Yin or other Buddhist semi-god/goddess. In the Songshan Shàolín Temple one can find a large black stone engraved with a picture of a rather round vaguely monk-like character with symbols integrated on his personage depicting the three major philosophies in China dedicated to the "Three Teachings" called: *San Jiao He Yi* (三教) imparting a message of harmony between Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism.[3] This integration however did not apparently happen on Panshan per se, as there are or were 72 Buddhist temples on the mountain and not one Taoist temple. Locals have fearsome stories of Taoists leading cults that result in people being possessed by animal spirits and other odd things, though their martial prowess is often extolled as well.

[3] Lin Longjiang (1517-1598) of the Fuzhou Jinshan Temple was the founder of a popular religion known as the "Three in One Religion" (San Yi Jiao 三一教) which assimilated the teachings of Confucianism, Daoism (Taoism) and Buddhism into one religion. He is also recognized as having played a major role in providing food and medicine to the Chinese who suffered from the bloody attacks of the Japanese pirates during this time.

It is worth noting however that Baita (Buddhist) Temple in Panshan town (about 200 meters from Dulesi Temple – mentioned in Chapter 2) has a Palace of the Goddess with a sign that says: “This palace was built in the Ming Dynasty and rebuilt in the Qing Dynasty. It is a well-known Taoism area in Jixian district and its surround areas. The new site of the palace was built in 1993 and the images of Taoist figures were remodeled.”

Jixian History and the Monastic Order

The cooperation between Genghis Khan, Kublai Khan, Ayurbarwada Buyantu Khan, Fuyu and Yun Wei was after at minimum of 700 plus years of North Chinese martial valor repelling Mongolian invaders that finally succeeded in conquering China, and Jixian was in the thick of it throughout. The Huangyaguan Great Wall (557 AD) referred to above protected Jixian from direct northern attacks, however didn’t stop invaders from basically going around it further to the east and west. The major construction of the "modern" Great Wall of China began in the Ming Dynasty (1388-1644 AD).

For some 1,500 years at least Jixian has been a crucible of Chinese military forces in civil wars and wars against foreign invaders. During the transition from Ming to Qing Dynasty (c. 1644) there were three massacres of large portions of the Jixian population by Qing Dynasty military forces attributed to policies of Emperor Hong Taiji (1592 – 1643) considered to be the first true emperor of the Qing Dynasty by “virtue” of his vast conquests, though he died shortly before his conquest of Beijing, a job finally finished by this son. The fact that the Jixian militia survived three massacres suggests that the people there 1) exhibited extraordinary martial valor, and 2) were exceedingly resilient to genocide.

This isn’t to say that the North Shàolín Temple as an institution was involved in a large number of military engagements per se, but rather it survived in an exceedingly deadly neighborhood and *Wuseng* warrior monks (as compared to *Bǐqiū*, fully ordained monks) were recruited into the temple area as the need arose.

During the late Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) Songshan Shàolín monks along with North Shàolín monks and others e.g. from Mount Wutai (五台山 Shangxi) and Mount Funiu (伏牛山 Henan) repeatedly distinguished themselves fighting against Japanese pirates supported by other foreigners and Chinese bandits called "*Wokou*" (倭寇 *Wōkòu*) who relentlessly raided coastal towns on the eastern coast of China. The Ming Dynasty General Tang Shunzhi (唐顺之) from North Shàolín fought Japanese Wokou in Jiangnan until his death (martyrdom) there.

The above map makes it clear that the three monasteries in Fujian claiming to be Shaolin, probably were. Also, the North Shaolin would have been critical in protecting Dengzhou in the bay east of Beijing.

But it was another Shàolín trained Chinese General, martial artist, poet and weapons inventor that finally defeated the pirates, Yu Dayou from a junior officer's family in Anhui. (1503–1579). According to Dr. Meir Shahar, author of *The Shaolin Monastery History, Religion, and the Chinese Martial Arts*:

> "Their (the pirates) attacks were especially severe along the Jiangnan coast, where they pillaged not only the countryside but even walled cities. In 1554 for example, the city of Songjiang was captured and its magistrate put to death. The government encountered tremendous difficulties in its attempts to control the situation, partly because the local authorities were themselves involved in trade with the bandits and partly because of the decline of the regular military. It was not before the 1560s when order was restored to Jiangnan, partially through the efforts of the above-mentioned generals Yu Dayou and Qi Jiguang.
>
> Several sixteenth century sources attest that in 1553, during the height of the pirates' raids, military officials in Jiangnan resolved to mobilize Shaolin and other monastic troops. The most detailed account is Zheng Ruoceng's (1505-1580) "The Monastic Armies' First Victory" (Sheng bing shou jie ji"), included in his The Strategic Defense of the Jiangnan Region (Jiangnan Jing Lue) (preface 1568)…"

> "The monks scored their biggest victory in the Wengjiagang battle. On July 21, 1553, 120 fighting monks defeated a group of pirates, chasing the survivors for ten days along the twenty-mile route southward to Wangjia-zhuang (on the Jiaxing Prefecture coast). There, on July 31, the very last bandit was disposed of. All in all, more than a hundred pirates perished, whereas the monks suffered four casualties only. Indeed, the monks took pity on no one in this battle, one employing his iron staff to kill an escaping pirate's wife.
>
> "Not all the monks who participated in the Wengjiagang victory came from the Shaolin Monastery, and whereas some had previous military experience, others presumably were trained *ad hoc* for this bottle. However, the cleric who led them to victory did receive his military education at Shaolin. This is Tianyuan, whom Zheng extols both for his martial arts skills and for his strategic genius. He elaborates, for instance upon the ease with which the Shaolin friar defeated eighteen Hangzhou monks, who challenged his command of the Monastic troops..."
>
> Shahar, Meir (2008) P. 68-69

That North Shàolín monks would not have participated in this military action is inconceivable.

Jixian, formerly called *Jizhou*, (and before that Yuyang 渔阳) home of the North Shàolín has its own story of martial valor dating back at least as far as the Northern Qi Dynasty's (550 to 577) construction and defense of the great wall long before Faxing Temple joined the Shàolín family in 1315.

Thus, Jixian had its own form of war hardened "Folk Wushu," predating and later influencing and being influenced by North Shàolín Kung Fu, and consequently also Songshan Shàolín Kung Fu styles as well.

And yet, the Wokou pirates did continue their raiding despite their losses.

An 18th-century Chinese painting depicting a naval battle between Japanese pirates and the Chinese. Public Domain, Rijks Museum, Amsterdam

7th Generation Master of North Shaolin Kung Fu Shang Mian Hui on left

The Royal Road on Panshan

The Royal Road on Panshan

One factor that led to the North Shàolín Monastery being built so beautifully within the paradisiacal Pan Mountain range was that it enjoyed the favor of many emperors for over 1,500 years.

There once was a royal road leading up to the North Shàolín Temple from below along which many Emperors of China from the Three Kingdoms period to the end of the Qing dynasty walked. This royal line stretched from Wei Emperor Cao Cao (155 - 220), Emperor Liao Taizong (902 – 947) and so on until the Qing Dynasty Emperor Kangxi (1654-1722), his grandson Emperor Qianlong (1711-1799), Emperor Jiaqing (1760 – 1820), and Emperor Daoguang (1782 – 1850).

Many are the stories about these royal visits.

It is said that Emperor Liao Taizong wrote several poems about Panshan of which the following is a part:

"The Jade green fields

A journey filled with adornments

The mountains geological beauty

Like a talisman

Always increasing, enduring like an ocean

The air - a hundred kinds

The pine trees so tall a canopy

There is no need to rush or change

outside the city."

(G. Brundage Trans.)

A thousand years later Qing Dynasty Emperor Qianlong first inspecting Panshan excitedly said: "If I had known the beauty of Panshan, why would I have lived in the south?" (Buddhist Website, 2009)

Emperor Kangxi visited North Shàolín Temple many times as did Emperor Qianlong who had part of the North Shàolín Temple rebuilt, some of his officials live at the Temple, made laws protecting the forests in the area (especially the chestnut trees) and even built a palace nearby for himself and family. So beautiful was Panshan that his mother came often and spent considerable time at their new palace, North Shàolín and other nearby temples.

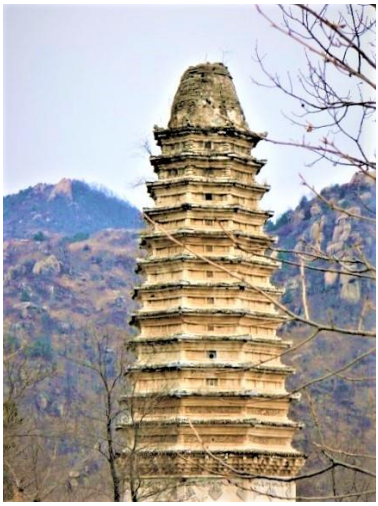
Unfortunately, the Royal Road was cut when a large dam was built in 1993 about a kilometer below the Temple and is mostly forgotten now except by locals, though many parts of that ancient stone pathway from the original road remain in the area.

It leads up right beside the North Shàolín Monastery and up further through the *Ta Lin* (pagoda forest graveyard) of *"Zhong Fa Si",* meaning Middle Law Temple (because it's midway up the mountain) to other temples and (locally) famous caves and locations in the mountains. *Zhong Fa Si* was the 'central' monastery on Panshan; it was the training center for most of the monks that went to the 70 temples on the mountain. It was a very large temple." It is locally believed some or many of the monks at *Zheng Fa Si* had been *Wang Ye* or cousins of the Emperors. The father of Emperor Kangxi, the *Shunzhi* Emperor (reigned 1643 – 1661) and first Qing Dynasty Emperor to rule over China gave up the throne to his son Kangxi to become a monk. Thus, it might not be a great surprise that some or even many royal cousins and other family members might follow this tradition and enter the monastery. (November 17th, 2013 interview with Mr. Yao, the Taiwanese American gentleman who rebuilt *Zong Fa Si's* Ta Lin starting in about 2005.)

Though that temple was also destroyed during the burning of the mountain in 1942 by the Imperial Japanese army, the remains are more intact, partial buildings at least, than North Shàolín which was virtually obliterated except in the hearts and minds of the Shàolín survivors and some local people. Temples can be distinguished from palaces on Panshan by the color of the stones that remain. The emperors virtually always imported their stones which tended to be more pink colored than the local gray, brown granite stones.

Red Dragon Pond

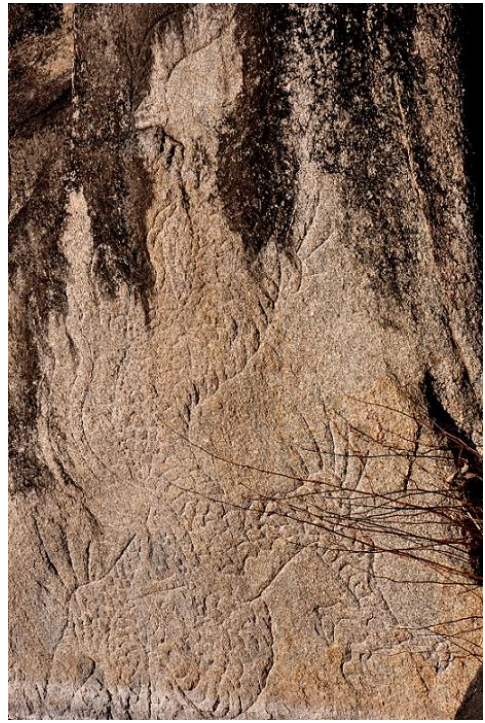
Though most of the North Shàolín Temple was destroyed during conflicts from 1928-1942, there were actually two survivors, the beautiful 13-story Baofou White Tower/Pagoda on a hill in the mountain adjacent to the old temple grounds, and at the foot of that hill is "Red Dragon Pond."



Bai Ta – Ancient White Tower at North Shaolin (2010 photo)

After restoration in 2018-2019

Red Dragon Pond 2013



The red dragon

Locals say that it never dries up and is an amazing beauty. There is a dragon engraved into the stone. On a sunny day the dragon can be seen rippling on the water as if it was swimming through the water.

There are many legends about the Red Dragon Pond like the following: The East China Sea Dragon King's grandson Red Dragon, after seeing Panshan region's utter desolation from drought sent a heavy rain despite a ban on such things by the Dragon King. He then ran to the Crystal Palace and asked the Dragon King: "Why do we have a thousand areas of boundless expanses of water, but thirsty are the people?" Dragon King, none too pleased locked up Red Dragon. Later, Red Dragon secretly ran out and fixed up the pond with an abundance of water that never runs dry. Since then, Panshan has had abundant harvests.

Decline and fall of the North Shàolín Temple

The roots of the destruction of the North Shàolín can be traced to early Qing Dynasty wide-spread repression of martial art training, probably having something to do with the Shàolín supporting the Ming Dynasty till the bitter end and rumors that the Shàolín may have supported other anti-Qing government rebellions, like the White Lotus Rebellion (an anti-tax movement 1794–1804) and Boxer Rebellion (anti-foreign imperialism movement 1897-1901), though the North Shàolín had some but not complete immunity from that anti-martial education movement by virtue of its relationship with 4th Qing Dynasty Emperor Qianlong (1711 – 1799) his special love for the temple as well as many other preceding and succeeding emperors who shared his sentiments. The suppression of martial arts training did have some negative impact on the North Shàolín Temple specifically in the form of a somewhat lower population of monks (Gao, W. 2009).

Warlord Era and the Buddha's Belly

In 1928 rumors started spreading that Dulesi Temple, about 10 kilometers down the mountain from the North Shàolín Temple had a large Buddha with pearls in its crown and treasures in its belly. Hearing these rumors, the leaders of Dulesi Temple asked the monks from North Shàolín to assist given that a particularly voracious warlord named Sun Dianying (孙殿英 1887–1947, who at first fought against the Japanese until his defeat, then fought for them

against Chinese) was on his way to (violently) collect those treasures. This was after all the "Era of the Warlords" in Eastern China (1916-1928) when the country was despotically ruled by a collection of large murderous well-armed gangs of bandits some of which had up to half a million men.

The Era of the Warlords came about as the result of several factors, including the Qing Dynasty's loss to the European powers (specifically and primarily Britain in the Opium wars), and secondly a relatively high level of corruption throughout the empire which included widespread slavery and crushing poverty. The fall of the Qing Dynasty left a power vacuum which the Warlords filled ruthlessly. The destruction of both Songshan and North Shàolín Monasteries was the direct result of the many failures of the Qing Dynasty leadership.

> "The Qing court and foreign aggressors had collaborated from 1860 on to suppress the Taiping Revolution. The American adventurer Frederick T. Ward, conspiring with the Qing officials and their agents in Shanghai recruited foreign mercenaries and organized them into a Foreign Rifle Detachment. Britain and France also sent troops to join the Qing campaign, while Russia supplied the Qing government with 10,000 rifles and fifty cannon along with troops to intercept the Taiping's attack… The domestic and foreign counter-revolutionary forces there gained a reprieve as the Taiping army had to back off and return to defend Tianjin which the Qing troops had again besieged."
>
> Bai, S. (2010) *Outline History of China,* P. 406

On 12 February 1912, Empress Dowager Longyu issued an imperial edict bringing about the abdication of the child emperor Puyi. This brought an end to over 2,000 years of imperial China and a few years later resulted in a 12 year period of warlord factionalism (1916 - 1927). The number of rebellions and loss of life following the Opium war in China is staggering to the imagination:

Major wars and regional conflicts 1839-1949

The following table briefly summarizes most of the major wars and regional conflicts in China between 1839 and 1949.

War Rebellion Name	Date	Parties	Number Killed	Results	Chinese Death Toll: Sub-totals
First Opium War	1839 - 1842	China/ Britain	19,500	Treaty of Nanking	19,500
Second Opium war	1856 - 1860	China/ Britain	25,000	China forced to sign further unequal treaties, pay "compensation" and cede Hong Kong to the British	44,500
Taiping Rebellion	1850 - 1864	Civil War: Anti-Qing Dynasty	About 20 million	Qing regime was eventually victorious and crushed the rebellion	20,044,500
Punti-Hakka Clan Wars	1855 - 1867	Civil War – residual war from Ming-Ching Dynasty transition	About a million	Qing government sent the imperial army to suppress the conflict with indiscriminate savagery. Some captives were sold to Cuba and South America as coolies through Hong Kong and Macau, and others sold to the brothels of Macau	21,044,500
Nien Rebellion	1851 - 1868	Civil War	Over 100,000	Qing regime was victorious and crushed the rebellion. Weakening of the Qing Dynasty	21,144,500
Miao Rebellion	1854 - 1873	Civil War	4.9 million	Qing regime was victorious and crushed the rebellion. Weakening of the	26,044,500

				Qing Dynasty	
Panthay Rebellion	1856 - 1873	Civil War	About a million people	Qing regime was victorious and crushed the rebellion Weakening of the Qing Dynasty	27,044,500
Dungan Revolt	1862 - 1877	Civil War - rebellion Muslim ethnic groups, Shaanxi and Gansu,	About 10 million	Qing regime was victorious and crushed the rebellion Weakening of the Qing Dynasty	37,044,500
Tonghak Rebellion	1894 - 1895	Civil War	100,000 – 300,000 Ave: 200,000	Qing regime was victorious and crushed the rebellion Weakening of the Qing Dynasty	37,244,500
Dungan Revolt	1895 - 1896	Civil War - rebellion Muslim ethnic groups in Qinghai & Gansu, China	About 20,000	Qing regime was victorious and crushed the rebellion Weakening of the Qing Dynasty	37,264,500
First Sino-Japanese War		China/Japan	15,000		37,264,500
Boxer Rebellion	1897 - 1901	China/Foreigners in general and Christians in particular	Mini-mum 200,000	Beijing, Tianjin, and other cities in northern China were occupied for more than one year by the international expeditionary force under the command of German General Alfred Graf von Waldersee. Occupation, looting and atrocities.	37,279,500
Xinhai	1911	Civil war	220,000	End of Qing Dynasty	37,499,500

Revolu-tion					
Warlord Era	1916 - 1928	Civil war created by power vacuum following the fall of the Qing Dynasty	About a million	Fragmentation of China	38,499,500
The Northern Expedition	1926 to 1928	Led by KMT against Warlords	250,000	Resulted in the Chinese reunification of 1928.	38,749,500
Sino-Soviet conflict 1929	1929	Russia/China	3,000	Temporary loss of territory in Dongbei to Russia	38,752,500
Central Plains War	1930	Between forces of Chiang Kai-shek and coalition of three military commanders.	300,000+	Ended Warlord Era, Chiang became undisputed leader of most of China for a time.	39,052,500
Xinjiang War	1937	In 1937, an Islamic rebellion broke out in southern Xinjiang.	5,000+	The pro-Soviet provincial forces of Sheng Shicai established their control over the whole of Xinjiang. All rivals were eliminated, and the defeat of the 36th division caused the control of the Chinese Central Government in Xinjiang to cease.	39,057,500
Second Sino-Japanese War	1937 - 1941		About 3.3 million		42,357,500

* Multiple sources

Effects on the Shaolin Monasteries

Ninety percent of the Songshan Shàolín was burned in 1928 by the Warlord, Shi Yousan.

A question arises as to about how many warrior monks the whole Shàolín extended family had.

According to Shàolín Abbot Shi Yong Xin:

> "Since the famous Shaolin abbot Xueting Fuyu established Shaolin's hereditary succession and branch system, Shaolin Temple had since become the nucleus of a cluster of branch monasteries that are situated around Shaolin Temple. Shaolin Temple had a total of forty branch monasteries during its most prosperous period, with most of those monasteries situated in the Central Plains region.
>
> "Most of these branch monasteries are of the Caodong lineage and their monks are part of Shaolin's hereditary succession system. In fact, those who were in charge of Shaolin's affairs were all chosen from these branch monasteries, resulting in a continuous thriving pool of talented monks. It was exactly the hereditary succession and branch systems that allowed long period of stability and cohesiveness that contributed to Shaolin Temple's continuous prosperity."
>
> Abbot Shi Yong Xin (2013) P. 32

Having some 40 branch temples suggests that the Songshan Shàolín may have had many hundreds or even thousands of monks as part of its extended family.

According to Gene Ching editor of and writer for Kung Fu magazine (USA),

> "In 1922, Miao Xing, who had served as a regimental commander in the army, became the acting abbot of Songshan Shaolin. He accepted a large number of monks and layman disciples, and led them to eradicate bandit gangs in the local vicinity. Three years later Heng Lin, then acting abbot, gathered a large number of monk warriors for an oath-taking ritual at the temple. But this expansion of the order was not enough. In 1928, Shaolin Temple took its most serious blow. A warlord name Shi Yousan set fire to the temple. It burned for over 40 days, destroying 90% of the buildings. Many of Shaolin's most precious relics were looted. Its massive library of Buddhism and Kung Fu was reduced to ash. Shaolin would not recover from this destruction until the late 1980s."
>
> Ching, Gene, (Ed.) Kung Fu Magazine

Regardless as to the exact number of monks at Songshan Shàolín, or under the Shàolín umbrella, the North Shàolín Temple was always significantly smaller than the Songshan Shàolín Temple. After the rumors regarding the arrival of a Warlords army's imminent arrival (1928), some monks from both Dulesi and North Shàolín started leaving the temples. Siege warfare is not profitable for those within wooden temples. By virtue of the monks leaving the North Shàolín Monastery, the Temple was spared destruction during the Warlord Era in China and the monks survived to apply their special skills elsewhere primarily in Hebei province.

According to North Shàolín historian Gao Wenshan (2009) the monks didn't completely abandon the North Shàolín in 1928 but the number of monks declined significantly, though "weapons racks remained near the front gates and the remaining monks continued to teach."

Japanese Invasions

In 1931 Japan invaded China first taking over Manchuria in the Northeast as a follow-up on the assassination of the local warlord Zhang Zuolin, June 2nd, 1928.

In 1937 Japanese expanded their domain in North East China taking Beijing and Tianjin in a matter of weeks following their July 7th attack. Cities were relatively easy for foreign invaders to pound with artillery into submission, but mountain folk especially in Jixian proved vastly more challenging. Mountain people are tough, especially Jixian people with their nearly two-thousand-year legacy of martial valor. That Buddhists in general and the remaining Shàolín monks in particular had some sort of intelligence gathering and sharing mechanism in place seems likely, and being better educated (e.g. literate), having maps, etc., certainly would have made them desirable candidates for leadership roles within the resistance movement for Northeast China, mainly based in nearby Tianjin.

Shaolin monks were not the only Buddhist candidates to defend the nation.

> "During the Anti-Japanese War, Ven. Master Taixu sent an open cable to the whole nation immediately after the July 7th Incident in 1937, calling on Buddhists across the nation to "heroically defend the country", organizing them into rescue units in direct participation in the Anti-Japanese War. He also went abroad to reveal the appalling inhumane atrocities committed by the Japanese aggressors.
>
> Ven. Master Yuanyin remained faithful and unyielding and manifested a lofty national integrity in spite of the horrible torture he suffered in the Japanese prison. And Ven. Master Hongyi put forward an advocate, "Remembering to rescue the nation while chanting Buddha's name, and chanting Buddha's name when going to the rescue of the nation,"
>
> All this demonstrated to the full the great patriotism cherished by China's religious communities. The bravery and courage displayed by the monks moved and inspired the whole nation so profoundly that appeals were made by the press across the country to "learn from

> monks." Looking back on our history, we come to realize that such spirit is still our matchlessly valuable resource for conducting education in patriotism." (Ven. Xuecheng, Abbot of Guanghua Monastery, Fujian Province, 2002).

Mountain people, like those in Jixian, have the advantages of mobility and concealment. They are not so vulnerable to artillery or air attacks as people in cities like Beijing and Tianjin due to that mobility and tree cover. They're also experienced hunters and trappers. Jixian like any wide area is composed of a number of clans which sometimes cooperate and sometimes compete; however when faced with a foreign aggressor, they put local differences aside and cooperate in many ways.

Shaolin Diaspora Theory

In 1928, Shi Yousan (1891—1940) a powerful warlord burned some 90% of the Songshan Shaolin. On June 2nd, 1928 the Japanese assassinated another powerful warlord in Northeast China (called "Manchuria" by foreigners) and installed the deposed Qing Emperor Puyi as puppet emperor heralding in an era of exceptional cruelty in that vast land area.

Given that Buddhism and tea culture traveled along the same routes in both China and Japan, it is entirely possible Shaolin intelligence regarding Japanese intentions was rather good.[4]

A plan for the Shaolin monks to disperse around (primarily Eastern) China in order to prepare the nation for the upcoming war would seem logical (though empirical historical evidence for this is lacking at this time). However, why else would most of the monks have left North Shaolin Monastery as early as 1928?

On one hand, they might have been ordered to leave to protect the temple itself.

[4] Such a theory is not without historical parallels. The Catholic Church in Europe, South America and Asia had a vast and very well organized intelligence gathering operation centuries before this. They had a multi-tiered system with spies to watch their spies, and other spies to keep an eye on the secondary level spies.

Also, they might have been ordered to come to Songshan Shaolin to help rebuild.

However, it is also possible there was a diaspora of Shaolin Monks around Eastern China to prepare the Chinese people for the incipient Japanese invasion.

Coincidence or not, the Guanghua Monastery (about two kilometers south of Putian city at the foot of Mount Phoenix and home of Abbot Ven. Xuecheng, quoted above) is located in Fujian Province, also home of the somewhat controversial "South Shaolin Monastery."

> "Approximately 500 warrior monks, led by a legendary Shaolin cudgel fighting monk Dao Guang, were sent to Fujian to fight against the pirates in the early 7th Century.
>
> "The monk warriors used their special talents, helping local Tang soldiers to suppress the invasion successfully, but quite a number of them died in the battle. Preparing to return to Songshan Shaolin Temple local people asked them for ongoing protection. For the burial of the dead monks and to grant the people's wish, Dao Guang and his warrior monks got the Abbot's permission from Songshan Shaolin Temple and settled down in Linquan Complex in Putian."
>
> http://baike.baidu.com/view/147761.htm

The Japanese were exceptionally angry and vengeful in regards to Shaolin Monastery during the closing years of the war.

> "By 1941 the Japanese invasion had made it to the Shaolin Temple. What the monks had been working so hard to restore was ruthlessly burned down once again.
>
> But that wasn't the half of it. By some accounts, Japanese troops went even further to humiliate the monks.

> They violated Chinese women right in front of the Shaolin Temple gate while the monks had to watch helplessly under gunpoint. Shaolin Temple was reduced to a secondary school during the Japanese occupation."
>
> Gene Ching, (Editor of Kung Fu Magazine) Shaolin versus the Warlords [5]

This level of cruelty towards Buddhist monks was unusual even for the Japanese given the fact that Japan is primarily a Buddhist country, and Japanese Buddhism came primarily from China. Also, the Japanese by in large left monasteries alone provided they weren't working with Chinese resistance movements.

Whether or not there was a South Shaolin is not really important here,[6] however Fujian has several port cities, was (and is) a major trading center for silk and tea, and would certainly have had connections with Buddhists all over China providing valuable commodities as it did, and thus was a likely location for the collection and dissemination of the most valuable commodities of them all, information. Training in paramilitary resistance fighting would seem a logical extension of their efforts given their history and current war with Japan.[7]

[5] http://ezine.kungfumagazine.com/ezine/article.php?article=157

[6] According to some there were three Southern Shaolin Monasteries in Fujian located in Quanzhou, Putian and Fuqing respectively. The one in Fuqing is known as "the legitimate one" because of an archaeological discovery June 4, 1993, where remains of the "original" South Shaolin are claimed to have been found. (http://baike.baidu.com/view/147761.htm) It is entirely possible that some Shaolin Kung Fu training occurred in all three. However, even though Shaolin Abbot Shi Yongxin denies having found any reference to a "South Shaolin," it is not impossible or even unlikely that some monastery (or monasteries) there did have some monks training others in Shaolin Kung Fu and the name became popular, though possibly not official.

[7] Nationalist resistance to Japanese forces in Fujian Province is documented in the popular book: The *Man Who Loved China: The Fantastic Story of the Eccentric Scientist Who Unlocked the Mysteries of the Middle Kingdom*, by Simon Winchester

Fujian Province is one of the provinces of China with the greatest number of Buddhist temples (it is quite mountainous and Buddhist monasteries and temples are usually build on mountains) and also one of the most highly productive tea growing areas of China (the co-evolutionary relationship between the spread of tea culture and Chan Buddhism in China is documented in Chapter 4 - The Original Chinese Chán Buddhist "Way of Tea").

Though none of this is proof of a Shaolin Diaspora in 1928, various histories do confirm most of the Songshan Shaolin was burned in that year, the North Shaolin Monastery mostly (but not entirely) abandoned and the Japanese were making major advances in North China as a prelude to further invasions to the south. Thus a diaspora to train Chinese resistance fighters is not inconceivable.

> "So, although much of Fujian had been occupied briefly in the later 1930s, by 1944 it was back in Chinese hands. And halfway along the coast was the province's principal city, the former treaty port of Fuzhou; it, too, was now stubbornly under Chinese control, and continued to run as it had before the Japanese arrived.
>
> Winchester, Simon (2008) P. 143

Jidong Rebellion

It was only natural that the Chinese fought back (in an organized manner) against the Japanese offensive, beginning in 1937 with the "Jidong Rebellion" (East Hebei Rebellion) called: "*Jidong da Baodong*" (冀东大暴动) in Chinese. Panshan was the Jidong Rebellion base (Baidu Encyclopedia: Jidong Rebellion) which followed in the wake of the Japanese military moving south from Beijing through and including Jixian County. They recorded successive wins against the Japanese till the end of 1938. This rebellion was attributed to orders passed down by the CPC Central Committee and the Northern Bureau. The Japanese however, counterattacked and retook much of what they lost.

As if that wasn't bad enough, in 1939 a large group of well-organized bandits broke into the North Shàolín Temple, tied the few monks that remained and temple workers in the stone mill outside the Shàolín temple, smashed many pagodas and the temple was looted. (Gao, W. 2009)

North Shaolin Monastery pre-1942. Photo provided by Professor Gao.

In the early 1940s there were only two disciples caring for the Shàolín Temple who were then killed in the temple, leaving it unattended. (*Ibid*)

What is surprising is not that the North Shàolín was destroyed, but rather that it survived so long, given that assertive righteousness doesn't last long in an environment ruled by absolute tyranny and supported by the most advanced weapons in the world – gleaned from the European powers since the beginning of the Meiji Restoration - which the Japanese had.

Great Campaign of One Hundred Regiments

The Jidong Rebellion was followed by the CPC coordinated "Great Campaign of One Hundred Regiments" (August 20, 1940 – December 5, 1940) (百团大战 *bai tuan da zhan*: 八路军与日军在华北地区的一次规模最大战役) which also occurred in Hebei, the province wherein Panshan could be found at that time (hebei.gov, 2009). (Jurisdiction of Panshan changed in 1972 from Hebei to Tianjin.)

Sanguang politics

The Japanese responded to this "Great Campaign of One Hundred Regiments" with the *Sanguang* politics (三光政策 *Sānguāng Zhèngcè*) the infamous "three cleans," robbing, burning, and killing until "clean." Though initiated in 1940, it only came into full effect in 1942. The Japanese called it the "Three Alls Policy" (光作戦 *Sankō Sakusen*).

Also, gas and biological weapons were also used delivered from Japan's Unit 731.

The "research" done by this infamous very large scale chemical and biological weapons center included live vivisection on prisoners of war without anesthesia after infecting them with diseases, and all kinds of "surgical procedures," as well as weapons testing on live prisoners and germ warfare attacks which included spreading plague fleas, infected clothing and infected supplies encased in bombs dropped on various targets.

The resulting cholera, anthrax and plagues were estimated to have killed at least 400,000 Chinese civilians.

The fact that Jixian was subjected to repeated extreme counter offences during the war of resistance against Japan is reminiscent of their role fighting against the incoming Qing Dynasty when they were reportedly massacred three times during the 1600s.

In May of 1942 in an anti-Japanese armed siege the North Shàolín Temple was burned. (Gao, W. 2009) This is not surprising given that Chinese resistance soldiers held meetings at the North Shàolín Monastery during the 2nd Sino-Japanese war 1937-1945.

The North Shàolín Temple was then looted of what little remained, primarily building materials like roof tiles and bricks. (Gao, W. 2009)

Remains of North Shaolin after the war

Memories

Locals on Panshan who survived the war years there have many stories to tell.

> "In came great grandma, Wang Xiu Lan who sat down with us, pulled out a long traditional Chinese pipe and carefully stuffed its small bowl with tobacco I found out was grown locally.
>
> "After a few puffs she smiled sweetly and I had to admit I felt almost overwhelmed by the joviality of this rather elderly lady.
>
> "'Just how old is she?'" I asked my translator to ask her.
>
> "'Eighty-three,'" came back after a moment. We all did calculations for a while trying to figure out her birth date, finally concluding that it must have been 1929 plus or minus a year or two because she like most country people in China calculate age according to the lunar calendar.
>
> "Pretty soon I was asking her about the war years around the Shaolin. I found out she moved there with her family when she was 14, or around 1943.

“Her memories of that time seemed very clear.

“’We were running and hiding all the time,” she said, “always trying to escape. When the Japanese found Chinese, they killed us, because of *Sanguang* politics (robbing, burning, and killing until clean). We often hid in caves. First, they sent in dogs. If we killed the dogs sometimes, they put in poisoned gas. Sometimes they came in and killed everyone. Sometimes they left thinking the dogs just got lost in the cave. So, some of us survived.’”

“’Do you remember the Shaolin Temple at all?’”

“No, most of it was destroyed by then. Only the base of the temple remained at that time.”

“Then I asked a stupid question: “Did you lose many friends?”

“She didn’t say anything but I could see her eyes had filled with tears. Her hand shook slightly and she took another puff on her pipe.”

Brundage, G. (2013 a)

Grandmother Wang Xiu Lan

In a subsequent interview (February 15, 2014) grandmother Wang Xiu Lan shared the following:

> "Those were very terrible years. We were 17 and 18 when married and we were given 14 liters of yellow beans as a wedding gift, but we had to leave home too. So we built a small house from the broken pieces of the Shaolin and other destroyed buildings plus straw and mud. We were always hungry especially in the winter and running and hiding. The Japanese headquarters was in Bang Jun Village (蓟县邦均 *Jìxiàn bāng jūn* - about 15 kilometers) away. They came back so many times to kill and burn. At first, we fled to the caves, but then we just started living in the caves because they came so many times. We learned we have to be independent; to take care of ourselves because nobody could help us." (Author interview; not previously published)

Finding the location of the true North Shàolín after the wars

Because the Songshan Shàolín library was burned in 1928 and the North Shàolín so obliterated in 1942, after the wars no scholars knew the exact location of the former North Shàolín Monastery. Even finding where it had been was quite difficult after the wars when peace returned and people finally had a time and resources to try to recover some of the huge past that had been so brutally lost.

That discovery process was led by Mr. Gao Wenshan, one of the first professors to graduate from the Tianjin Institute of Physical Education, Professional Wushu Program. In 1979 he first heard there was a Northern Shàolín.

At the beginning of the 1980's Mr. Gao took part in a Wushu performance in Tianjin and met up with Shang Bao Liang, the 6th Successor of the Northern Shàolín Kung Fu (see Chapter 3). After that he visited Jixian many times looking for the Temple, and finally found the beautiful 13 tier white pagoda that led him to first suspect that it was the answer to his long quest for the North Shàolín Monastery. Following that he wrote the book: Research of North Shàolín Temple (北少林寺考) which proved to be a major contribution to further researchers.

> "Following a clue given by Mr. Gao, a journalist came to the Wa Yao Village. Standing in the yard of Wei Fang, a villager, he saw the Pagoda, a "white Buddhist pagoda towering like a giant." Wei Fang said that people called it the "Rouge Tower" and it is in fact the site of a gem Buddhist Pagoda. He subsequently found out that Chinese soldiers had held meetings there during the War of Resistance against Japanese Invaders. "The Japanese invaders fired all the temples here, and only this Pagoda survived."
>
> Brundage, G. (2011)

Reconstruction after the wars

It's been more than 70 years since the destruction of the North Shàolín Temple but for the past five years the North Shàolín Temple has been undergoing reconstruction with funding from the Songshan Shàolín Monastery and Tianjin government; not a copy of the old North Shàolín Temple, but a larger, and even more beautiful temple, with architecture based on Song Dynasty designs and built in the traditional Chinese manner using *Dougong* - a system of interlocking wood brackets on top of columns supporting crossbeams with the brackets formed by bow shaped arcs, called *Gong*, and cushioned with blocks of wood called *Dou*. The temples contain no nails.

The (re)construction of Northern Shàolín Temple is being done in several stages. The first stage started on June 5th, 2009 with a total proposed area of approximately 8,000 meters.

As of this writing, two of five main building have been built - two great classical Song Dynasty designed Buddhist Temple halls – the upper one – Sutra Hall (*Cang Jing Ge* also called *Fa Tang Hall* – a library for sacred scriptures) is painted with divine glory in immaculate detail and beauty, the other just below – Prayer Hall (*Tian Wang Dian*) – unfinished as yet and appearing rough-hewn but magnificent in its enormous simplicity and elegance.

In a recent interview (July 28, 2013) the newly assigned Head Monk of the Northern Shàolín Monastery Shi Yan Pei said the next major building to be built would be the monks living quarters where over 100 monks will live. (Brundage, 2013 b)

When complete the reincarnated temple will include the following:

1. 入口园区 Entrance garden, 2. 大殿区 Central Temple/Hall/Library area: Zhong Zhou Hall (Center Hall), Cang Jing Ge (Fa Tang) Sutra Hall, Shan Men (Entrance Gate Hall), Tian Wang Palace (Heavenly King Temple), 观音殿区 Guan Yin Palace (Bodhisattva Temple), 3.生活区 Monk living quarters, 4. 演武区 Wushu practice area, 5. 遗址区 Tower and forests site - Ta Lin - ancient Tower-forest – Tombs up and behind the Temple, and a 6. Performance area.

According to media reports, Songshan Abbot Shi Yongxin stated: "Attention to minute detail is being made to integrate the design of the buildings with the natural environment, and to ensure that the natural landscape is preserved during installation of their advanced information network, solar energy systems, air conditioning, and heating."

The village around the North Shàolín Temple (*Jixian Guan Zhuang Zhen - Wa Yao* Village) is truly rustic and most people, especially the young are very much looking forward to the economic prosperity that will come from the (re)opening of the North Shàolín Monastery though owners of guesthouses and farms very close to the new construction site are concerned they will be forced to move as happened during the construction of the Songshan Shàolín 30 years ago.

In August of 1999, Abbot Shi Yong Xin inherited the Shàolín in a state of extreme disrepair both in terms of its physical structure and Vinaya (traditional monastic rules). Most will agree that he has done a magnificent job rebuilding the Songshan Monastery to the point of rivaling its ancient glory and realigning it with its roots in Vinaya designed to strengthen the spiritual foundation of the monastery.

Though the Songshan Shàolín Temple has come under some criticism for being "too commercial," and overly focused on the martial arts, the North Shàolín is being planned from the beginning to be more focused on traditional Chán Buddhism. In all fairness to the Songshan Shàolín, the commercial enterprises are outside the temple area and tourists are only allowed within some parts of the monastery. As with most monasteries, some monks prefer to live secluded from the public whereas others research and teach, and others are involved in social-work kinds of things. Songshan Shàolín also runs a large orphanage. That shops outside the Temple grounds sell things like plastic "Shàolín" swords is no great surprise, such things are done at landmark locations all around Europe and the U.S. as well. Songshan Shàolín Temple was recognized as a World Cultural Heritage site in 2010, one of only 39 in China.

Based on interviews with numerous Shàolín monks living adjacent to the North Shàolín construction area it appears this temple will differ considerably from Songshan in other ways as well, for example most of the monks seemed uncertain if the huge Ta Gou Martial Arts School[8] from Songshan will be incorporated in the North Shàolín Temple area, or even nearby. It is the only martial arts school open to the public inside the Songshan Shàolín Temple.

Based on its' location and history it seems likely that the North Shàolín Temple was always a very special place even within the Shàolín Temple family. The differences are many:

- North Shàolín Monastery is not located so close to any city as Songshan Shàolín is to Dengfeng and Luoyang. In 493 Luoyang became the capital city of the Northern Wei Dynasty (386 to 534) and the Eastern Capital during the Tang Dynasty (618–907). North Shàolín's remoteness enhances its' ability to remain pure of city influence and allows the monks a more pristinely natural environment – rather like the Buddhist sages of old – in which to pursue enlightenment.

[8] The Shaolin Ta Guo Educational Group (少林塔沟) established 2006 includes elementary, middle and high schools, as well as the world's largest martial arts training vocational College with over 20,000 students world-wide. Its curriculum includes traditional Wu Shu as well as Sanda, boxing and Taekwondo.

- The North Shàolín Monastery specifically and Jixian (County) in general was geographically closer to the action when it came to foreign invasions and thus subjected to the greatest martial forces from the north and overseas.
- Panshan people certainly pride themselves on being "straighter" than peoples to the south. The more liberal philosophies of Taoism and magic are just not tolerated there now or for the most part, historically.
- Perhaps in a way a monastery is like a house or apartment, being smaller and newer helps to keep it clean.

Conclusions

If the peace loving and enlightening philosophies of Buddhism married to the absolute discipline required for mastery of martial arts forms a kind of ideological crown for China, the North Shàolín Monastery may be the jewel in that crown. Songshan Shaolin is the parent, older, bigger and far better remembered by history, but by virtue of its remoteness, the ruggedness of the Panshan mountain folk focused by the resistance movement coordinated by the CPC, and having learned the lessons of Songshan Shaolin in 1928 (e.g. fighting the warlords using the monastery as a base isn't a good idea), the North Shaolin survived to fight a little longer during the darkest days of Chinese history.

The completeness of North Shaolin Monastery's obliteration is a testimony to its commitment to the cause of freedom from foreign domination. In some ways its darkest days were its brightest in that the light of liberty must from time to time be replenished by the blood of patriots.

How many if any monks were there at the end, and if any or how many survived is unknown at this time and further research is clearly needed to make this research more complete.

But even after its destruction the Monastery lived on helping provide pieces of its broken body to the homeless nearby who were still living – often in caves - under the terrible shadow of brutal oppression.

People who have never been in a war, or been refugees from a war can look down on those homeless souls struggling to survive the

later years of the war, and accuse them of “looting” the Shaolin Monastery (and Emperor Kangxi’s palace) however they were doing what had to be done to survive as best they can. Looking around the mountain one can even today find old caves with sections that have been shored with bricks and stones from the old monastery and one can only marvel at the resilience of those that stayed and hung on to the land, preferring to risk their lives and honor to cling to the mountain that is their heritage.

Thus, the monastery lived on after its death and today is being reborn upon and incorporating pieces of its old self. The life of the Temple however was and is not in the bricks, stones and timber, but in the honor and truthfulness of its teachings. The old monastery never really died. It lives on as long as there are those who remember and honor the teachings of the old masters. Though so much was lost most of the teachings and culture have survived and lives on today.

Rebuilt North Shaolin, October 2014

Shàolín Abbot Lineage Name Poem

Every Shàolín monk memorizes this poem/prayer before his/her ordination. When someone becomes a monk they enter upon the path of enlightenment and let go of earthly desires and attachments including to their biological family. But as a monk they are never alone. Memorizing this poem is a prerequisite to joining the Shàolín Chán (Zen) Buddhist family.

Generation names in Chinese culture may be the first or second character in a given name. Shàolín monks are usually called: "Shi" followed by two given names. This poem provides the first of the two given names. So, if a monk's master was Shi "Yǒng" Xin for example, his disciples would be called: Shi "Yán" something, as Yán comes immediately after Yǒng in the poem. After the seventy generations the poem repeats. This generation/lineage middle name poem cycle is common in large and/or distinguished families in China. The following 70-character poem was written by Xueting Fuyu (雪庭福裕 1203–1275):

Read from left to right all the way across – Interpretations can be found below

嵩山少林寺曹洞

正宗传续七十字辈诀

福慧智子觉 了本圆可悟

周洪普广宗 道庆同玄宗

清静真如海 湛寂淳贞素

德行永延恒 妙体常坚固

心朗照幽深 性明鉴崇祚

忠正善禧祥 谨志原济度

雪庭为道师 引汝歸铉路

In English, Pinyin, and Chinese characters:

Songshan Shàolín Temple Generations

Sōngshān Shàolínsì cáo dòng

嵩山 少林寺 曹洞

Authentic seventy generation mnemonic

zhèngzōng qīshízì bèi jué

传续 七十字 辈 诀

1	fú huì zhì zǐ jué	2	liǎo běn yuán kě wù
3	zhōu hóng pǔ guǎng zōng	4	dào qìng tóng xuán zōng
5	qīngjìng zhēnrú hǎi	6	zhàn jì chún zhēn sù
7	déxíng yǒng yán héng	8	miào tǐ cháng jiāngù
9	xīn lǎng zhào yōushēn	10	xìng míng jiàn chóng zuò
11	zhōng zhēng shàn xǐ xiáng	12	jǐn zhì yuán jǐ dù
13	xuě tíng wéi dào shī	14	yǐn rǔ guī xuàn lù

Half-line by half-line literal and interpreted meanings, along with Pinyin pronunciations follow:

1. 福 慧 智 子 觉 *fú huì zhì zǐ jué*

Literal: Blessed intelligent wisdom virtuous awaken

Interpreted as: Only the holy person can understand the way and then attain wisdom and bliss.

2. 了 本 圆 可 悟 *liǎo běn yuán kě wù*

Literal: Understand clearly, original source, fullness, can realize

Interpreted as: Using the whole to see the principles you may understand the way.

3. 周 洪 普 广 宗 *zhōu hóng pǔ guǎng zōng*

Literal: Widespread, great, universal, broad, clan/school/ancestor

Interpreted as: We must spread Chán (Zen) like the rays of the sun all over the world.

4. 道 庆 同 玄 宗 *dào qìng tóng xuán zōng*

Literal: natural/ethical path, celebrate, together, deep/black/mysterious, clan/school/purpose

Interpreted as: All the branches of Buddhism celebrate the same root.

5. 清静 真如 海 *qīngjìng zhēnrú hǎi*

Literal Translation: Peaceful and quiet, Tathata (true character of reality; suchness) ocean

Interpreted as: Clarity and stillness are deep as the ocean.

6. 湛 寂 淳 贞 素 *zhàn jì chún zhēn sù*

Literal Translation: Deep/crystal clear, silent, pure/honest/genuine, loyal/chaste, nature/essence/element/always

Interpreted as: When you abandon attachments your true face emerges.

7. 德行 永 延 恒 *déxíng yǒng yán héng*

Literal translation: Virtue, always/everlasting, extending, permanently

Interpreted as: Only virtue is never ending.

8. 妙 体 常 坚固 *miào tǐ cháng jiāngù*

Literal Translation: Fantastic system/style, always firm/solid

Interpreted as: Your pure heart never changes

9. 心 朗 照 幽深 *xīn lǎng zhào yōushēn*

Literal Translation: heart/mind/center, bright/clear, illuminates brightly/clearly, serene/hidden depths.

Interpreted as: When your heart is still, its' brightness will dispel the darkness.

10. 性 明 鉴 崇祚 *xìng míng jiàn chóng zuò*

Literal Translation: Moral Character, bright/clear/open/perceptive, reflection/warning, esteemed, blessing/throne

Interpreted as: Your true nature is the highest.

11. 忠 正 善 禧祥 *zhōng zhēng shàn xǐ xiáng*

Literal Translation: Loyal/devoted/honest, just/upright/straight/honest, virtuous/benevolent/kind, joy, auspicious

Interpreted as: If you are loyal, upright and kind, you will receive happiness and peace.

12. 谨 志 原 济度 *jǐn zhì yuán jǐ dù*

Literal Translation: Careful/solemn, aspiration/the will, original, to aid/help/assist, tolerance/accomplish

Interpreted as: Always remember your Buddha heart.

13. 雪庭 为 道师 *xuě tíng wéi dào shī*

雪庭福裕 Xueting Fuyu was the Shàolín Abbot that wrote this poem

Literal Translation: Snow/bright, main hall/front courtyard, purpose/reason, natural path/the way/morals, teacher/master

Interpreted as: Follow the Way (Dao) of Master Xueting (Fuyu) to enlightenment.

14. 引 汝 歸 铉路 *yǐn rǔ guī xuàn lù*

Literal Translation: To lead/guide/cause, thou/you/your, return, base/platform/foundation, road/journey

Interpreted as: This is the way to Buddhahood. Or alternatively: In this way you can be returned to the road towards our (common) foundation (of enlightenment).

Xueting Fuyu

Conclusions

The Songshan Shaolin Monastery was destroyed many times during its history and North Shaolin once too. But the Spirit of Shaolin lives not in the buildings or statues, the scriptures or sutras but in the hearts and minds of those that elevate it beyond the ordinary illusions of the material world.

It is a moral ideal, a place that can be anyplace, anytime, (here and now are real, everything else is illusion) where people can clear their minds and work towards enlightenment (mainly through meditation) and in the case of Shaolin aided by the discipline of the world's premier martial arts. But, this is only an illusory staff pointing to the moon melting under the glare of an old master. Ultimately one can at best defeat one's self and truly awaken. Each strike, kick, and punch is an expression of the ancient way, and each welt received is an admonishment from the masters - a new awakening of the most immediate kind, a nudge to climb out of the confining self-made box of mind and see clearly. The human mind is too small to comprehend this, so let it go.

As many old masters said: "The mind dies on the meditation cushion."

> "The dog, Buddha-nature,
>
> the authoritative pronouncement.
>
> The moment you implicate 'has' or 'has not,'
>
> your body and life are lost."
>
> Sharf, Robert, H., P. 229

> "Wumen said: 'To study Chan you must pass through the barrier of the patriarchal masters; to gain marvelous enlightenment you must completely sever the way of mind. If you have not passed through the barrier of the patriarchs and not severed the way of mind, then you are no more than the spirit that haunts the grasses and the trees.'"
>
> Sharf, R. H. (2007) *How to Think with Chan Gong'an*, published in *Thinking with Cases – Specialist Knowledge in Chinese Cultural History*, published in Furth, C., Zeitlin J.T. & Hsiung, P.C. (Eds.) P. 225

The Shaolin Monasteries were destroyed and reborn. The cycle of rebirth continues until all attain enlightenment. Until that time, remember the words of Bruce Lee: "Reality is a punch in the face."

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Chapter 3 - North Shàolín Kung Fu

北少林寺功夫

Běi Shàolínsì Gōngfu

Historical background and an interview with 7th Generation

Master Shāng Mián Huī from Panshan in Jixian, northeastern China

Introduction

Though a form of North Shàolín Kung Fu coming from the south of China called "Bak Sil Lum" is well known in the west, "Shang's Kung Fu," a direct descent North Shàolín Kung Fu style from Pan Mountain (Panshan), home of North Shàolín Monastery is currently becoming well known again at least in China after 60 plus years of relative obscurity.

North Shàolín Kung Fu is in many ways different from Songshan Shàolín Kung Fu as the result of the different physical (anatomic) make-up of the people, geopolitical, cultural and historical forces which shaped it.

First one must note the old maxim in Chinese: "*Bei tui, nan chuan*," or "North leg, south fist." Northerners tend to be taller, leaner and do more kicks, whereas southerners tend to be shorter with more powerful upper bodies and do more punches.

Second, the North Shàolín Monastery currently being reconstructed is in the imperial heartland of China and thus was exposed to much more direct mostly foreign aggression than Songshan Shàolín which is located closer to central China. Panshan (the location of the North Shàolín) has a strategic location in Jixian, and Jixian in China due to its location as a critical mountain pass from the sea inland, and from north to south not far inland from the eastern coast.

Third, each province in China has its own unique character shaped by many different factors.

Though most of the people currently living in the Panshan area moved there after the wars, some of the old families remain. North Shàolín Kung Fu Master Shāng Mián Huī is from one such family.

Interview with Master Shāng Mián Huī

The leading living exponent of North Shàolín Kung Fu in China at this time is seventh generation practitioner Master Shāng Mián Huī, from Panshan, in Jixian. He trained at Songshan Shàolín for several years and is currently living at his family home in Panshan.

Master Shāng is also a disciple of Shi Yong Xin, Abbot of the Songshan Shàolín.

The Shang family is legendary in Panshan.

Since 1938 everyone in Panshan, Jixian and north China that has wanted to learn North Shàolín Kung Fu has trained with Master Shang (his father, or grandfather). For those above 60 years of age and living in Panshan, almost everyone trained with the Shang family. During the war the Japanese took away their swords and spears, yet the art flourished in secret until 1949.

Asked for some differences between North Shàolín and Songshan Shàolín Kung Fu, Master Shāng responded: "Our philosophies and styles are derived from the same source. However, since old times North Shàolín's location near the Great Wall[9] and near the frontier juncture of Jixian, it has occupied a very strategic location. Because North Shàolín was located in an area frequented by wars, the style is very powerful, more powerful than other martial arts, and the character of the people here is straight. North Shàolín Kung Fu is more practical and attractive, more original, and mixes *yǎngshēng* (nourishing life, a branch of Traditional Chinese Medicine) with martial arts. In North Shàolín Kung Fu the flow of *qì* is smooth."

Master Shang said there were about 100 North Shàolín Taolu (forms). Below are the top 10 he mentioned.

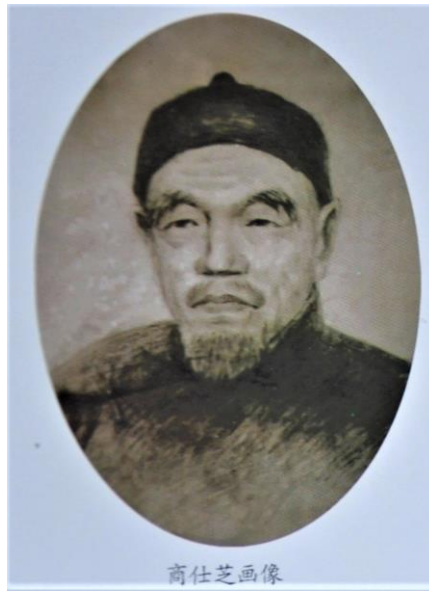
[9] He was referring to the Huangyaguan Great Wall, 28 kilometers north of Jixian. See Chapter 2 for more on this famous section of the Great Wall.

	Name in Chinese	Name in Pinyin	English name
1	弹腿	Tán tuǐ	Spring Kick
2	炮腿	Pào tuǐ	Gun Kick
3	梅花腿	Méihuā tuǐ	Plum Blossom Kick
4	太祖拳	Tàizǔ quán	Mao Fist
5	五封炮	Wǔfēng pào	Five Seal Gun
6	洪拳	Hóng quán	Great Fist
7	同备拳	Tóngbèi quán	Tongbei Fist
8	乾坤 拳	Qiánkūn quán	Universe Fist
9	八卦 枪	Bāguà qiāng	Eight Diagrams Spear
10	青云 刀	Qīngyún dāo	Clear sky (or fast advancement) blade

Shang's North Shàolín Kung Fu received Tianjin City Cultural Heritage status in 2013 and is applying for Chinese National Cultural Heritage status at this time. (Songshan Shàolín Temple was recognized as a World Cultural Heritage site in 2010 and is one of only 39 in China.)

Asked how long his family has been associated with the North Shàolín Monastery, Master Shang responded, "Since year 12 to13 of Emperor Jiaqing, about 1532 – 1533. Going with the conservative estimate of 1533, Master Shang's family has been associated with the North Shàolín for 480 years as of this writing (2013).

Asked about public records regarding his family's involvement with North Shàolín and shortly thereafter he produced a very old copy of the "Jixian Zhi," or "History of Jixian." His seventh-generation ancestor, Shang Shi Zhi (商仕芝) was indeed a disciple of North Shàolín Master monk Jǐng Lǐ (景礼).

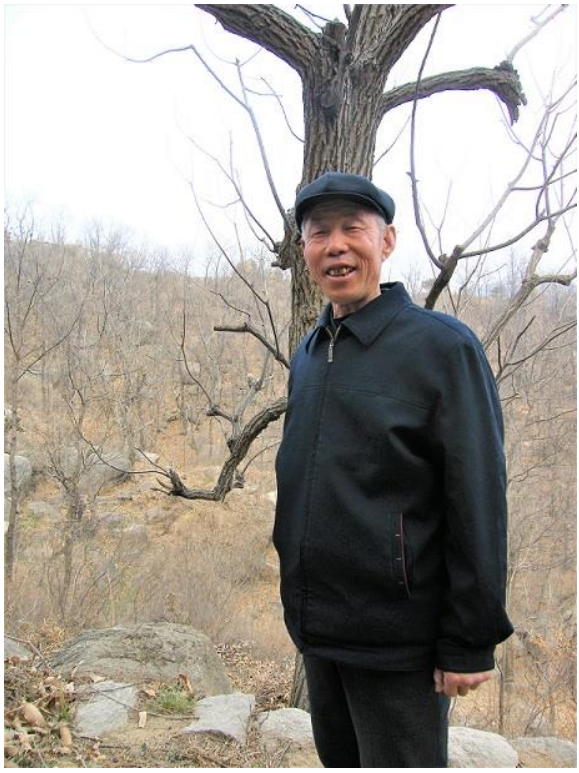


North Shaolin Kung Fu Shifu Shang Shi Zhi

One family legend goes like this: One day Master Shang's ancestor Shang Shi Zhi was walking along a country road nearby the North Shaolin Monastery when he saw a monk running on the water at a lake. He couldn't believe his eyes but it was definitely a man running *on top of* the water. He ran over by where the monk came to the shore and inquired how he could do that. It turned out the monk was Jǐng Lǐ. Later the monk agreed to teach North Shaolin Kung Fu to Shang Shi Zhi and thus began what was to become the family heritage. Jǐng Lǐ wasn't an ordinary monk either as he had been one of the monks engaged in warfare against the *Wōkòu* (mostly) Japanese pirates that had been terrorizing the east coast of central China especially around Jiangnan for decades.

Another version of the family legacy can be found in an article from the Tianjin Daily (2007) which had an extensive interview with Shāng Mián Huī's father, Master Shang Baoliang (in Chinese) speaking about his sixth-generation ancestor Shang Shi Zhi.

On left, North Shaolin Kung Fu Master Shang Baoliang, on right Professor Gao who discovered the location of the lost North Shaolin Monastery after the war.



Master Shang Bao Liang

The following is a short (translated) excerpt of the Tianjin Daily newspaper article:

> "Shang Shi Zhi studied martial arts since childhood and when he was 13, he was introduced to a North Shaolin worship ceremony where he met Master Jing. After some years the temple master watched his progress and encouraged him to go to Songshan Shaolin for four years. He returned at age 26. According to the Jixian History, Shang Shi Zhi had a profound skill in Chinese boxing and was offered positions in many nearby towns and the military. But, he chose to stay in Panshan and teach local people, men and women, boys and girls alike as he was open minded and not conservative. At that time, Shaolin Wushu was a part of popular culture and every lunar New Year's there would be great festivals with singing, dancing and Wushu contests. It

> was like a battlefield of heroes dueling with drums and gongs, people got kicked, thrown, and rolled around, there was sword play and cheers for the winners. Eight years later Master Shang Shi Zhi was elected to the Beijing Palace to work as one of the Emperor's Sword Guard."
>
> Tianjin Daily (2007)

Oral traditions are frequently like this. One can listen to very divergent accounts of events and consider which sounds most reasonable, but most reasonable or probable isn't always the most accurate history either. [10] [11] Running on water? Yes entirely possible. Magic? No.

On the top floor of Master Shang's house is a large, open air gym-like area with a weapons rack on one wall which includes the standard Shàolín arsenal including staff, spear, halberds and also a three-section staff.

[10] *Mizugumo* (water spider) was a set of wooden shoes which allowed the ninja to walk and or possibly run on water. There were also leather semi-balloon style shoes used. The question can be asked, 'did they learn these techniques from Shaolin somewhere back in history?' Though superficial analysis may "prove" such things unlikely, it is definitely also true that such technologies were absolutely secret and the whole truth would never be revealed to foreigners. Martial arts in Asia were and to some extent still are by definition secret.

[11] Chinese seem to have the unique ability to look at diametrically opposing viewpoints equally and be accepting of both in some cases. For example, in "Three Kingdoms" probably the most famous books of Chinese classic literature Cao Cao is painted as a power hungry minister that manipulates the emperor in evil ways while trying to kill the three heroes in the story. However ask any Chinese person if Cao Cao is an evil guy and most will deny it instead extolling his virtues. (Thus, religion – notably Buddhism and Confucianism - plays an especially important role in China setting moral guide posts to guard against potential absolute moral relativism.)

Some of Master Shang Mian Hui's top junior students with weapons rack in the background

Following the interview, this reporter asked to be allowed to check out their defense and attack repertoire in that order. Permission granted he commenced with Mr. Shang's student Gen Zhi Yuan. This reporter started his attacks with single kicks aimed at the head then combinations of front, turning and sidekicks, sometimes followed by spinning kicks, with each kick or kick combination followed by punches. In every case Gen's defense was no more than three moves to completion, generally either evasions or pulling blocks simultaneous to or immediately followed by explosively powerful close-quarter centerline counterattacks.

In some ways Mr. Gan's North Shàolín Kung Fu defense systems seemed to vaguely resemble Songshan Shàolín Kung Fu, and Baji Quan, though there was more emphasis on kicks and a kind of hard-style Tai Chi like sort of defense system that incorporated pulling blocks (trapping hands) simultaneous to explosive inside counterattacks. Tan Tui (Springing Leg) style however seemed to be to me the most interesting branch of his repertoire of Taolu (pre-arranged sequence of attack and defense movements) (however I might be biased because I like kicks).

A while later Master Shang sparred with one of his students which appeared to be straightforward very powerful mostly centerline Chinese boxing with more evasions, a few low kicks and again those pulling blocks coupled with counterattacks. Asked if they did many high kicks, the answer was, “yes, a few.” Most of the kicks seen at this session were to the shin, knee, and groin area. Mr. Gen did demonstrate one or two high kicks, but not during interaction with this reporter or sparring with his master. It deserves to be emphasized that this is a war art, not a sport.

Then Master Shang and some of his students demonstrated various North Shàolín Taolu.

As it was getting dark, everyone moved outside and the Taolu continued.

Masters of North Shaolin Kung Fu and Writer

Writer having fun with Master Shang's students – the Horse Stance is in some ways the foundation of Shaolin Kung Fu

After an hour or so, a little tea, light family centered conversation and some more pictures the first interview and demonstrations were concluded. In subsequent months more visits were made and photos taken of their kids' classes and adult weapons Taolu.


Shang Mian Hui

The Shang Family Lineage Name Poem

A person's first name in China is always the family name (surname), followed by a middle name, and ending with a truly "given name," (though many in Hong Kong don't follow the traditional system any more). Mr. Shang's family uses a 14-generation rotating middle name (second character) cycle. Generation names in Chinese culture may be the first or second character in a given name.

Not many families in China use this system any more, but larger families and families with illustrious histories do.

The first three lines of the chart below are family middle names; the fourth is the completion of a poem made of the entirety of the rotating middle name cycle. However, the poem cannot be interpreted simply based on the meaning of individual characters, because Chinese characters often combine to make compound words with other meanings all together.

The translations found below the Pinyin version are only a few of many associated with each character. Interpreting and translating Chinese poetry is an awesome skill than can only be practiced by a master of the language and someone sensitive to the different levels of direct and implied meanings within the context of the intent of the artist that composed the poem. Still, the reader is invited to guess the meaning of the poem.

Shang Family Lineage Name Poem

显 宗 定 朝 闻 广 仕

原 布 洪 琪 宝 绵 阳

启 兴 家 庆 光 明 远

富 国 安 邦 永 世 长

Xiǎn zōng ding cháo wén guǎng shì

Yuán bù hóng qí bǎo mián yang

Qǐ xīng jiā qìng guāng míng

(Fù guó ān bang yǒng shì zhǎng)

Line 1

显 [xiǎn; Illustrious], 宗 [zōng; ancestor & purpose], 定 [ding; calm & settle], 朝 [cháo; imperial court, dynasty, face], 闻 [wén, hear, reputation], 广 [guǎng, broad & numerous], 仕 [shì; official and the two Chinese chess pieces that guard the king]

Line 2

原 [yuán; original, forgive], 布 [bù; cloth, publicize, arrange], 洪 [hóng; big, great], 琪 [qí; fine jade], 宝 [bǎo; treasure], 绵 [mián; silk thread, continuous, soft], 阳 [yang; positive, sun, male]

Line 3

启 [qǐ; open, enlightened], 兴 [xīng; prosper, begin, motivation], 家 [jiā; family, home, expert], 庆 [qìng; celebrate], 光 [guāng; light, glory, smooth], 明 [míng; bright], 远 [yuǎn; far],

---

Line 4

富 [fù; rich abundant], 国 [guó; country], 安 [ān; quiet, calm, safe], 邦 [bang; country], 永世 [yǒng shì; eternal, forever], 长 [zhǎng; constant, to enhance, develop, oldest]

Using this chart one can figure out that Shāng Mián Huī's father's middle name was Bao, because Bao precedes Mian on the chart above as his father was Master Shang Baoliang. One can also reason out that Shāng Mián Huī's son's middle name would have to be "Yang."

Chapter 4 - Chán Buddhist “Way of Tea”

禅茶道

Chán Chádào

Tea plantation

According to Chinese mythology, in 2737 BC the Chinese Emperor, scholar and herbalist Shénnóng was sitting beneath a tree while his servant boiled drinking water. A leaf from the tree dropped into the water and Shénnóng decided to try the brew. The tree was a wild tea tree. There is an early mention of tea being prepared by servants in a Chinese text of 50 BC.

~ ~ ~ ~

The most famous legend is that one day during Bodhidharma's (440-528) nine years of "just sitting" facing a wall in a cave (of the Wuru peak) he became annoyed about his tendency to fall asleep. He is said to have cut off his eyelids so they could not close during meditation and threw them to the ground just outside the cave. And out of those remarkable eyelids, the first tea bushes in China grew.

~ ~ ~ ~

"Tea tops in refreshment all the six main beverages in China and emanates its aroma to the five continents in the world."

Tea Poem by Zhang Zai of the West Jin Dynasty

Introduction

Chán Chádào, "Zen Way of Tea" or "Zen Tea Ceremony" is a manifestation of Chán spirit, a path of transformation and awaking - opening the mind/senses in the eternal flow of now, beyond suchness and non-suchness, this and that and other mundane dichotomies.

In some ways one can say that *Chán Chádào* is different from regular Chinese *Chádào* in that the Chinese Tea Ceremony is mainly about the tastes, smells and other sensations of tea whereas *Chán Chádào* is about mind (no-mind). One of the more interesting facets of *Chán* is that no description can possibly do it justice, as *Chán* is beyond any words to describe, and thus all words fall short.

Still, some masters teach and some students learn or unlearn as the case may be. All things of this mundane reality are actually processes, which should begin with good intentions combined with concentration/awareness and letting go all that precedes it and what may come after. This may be called the first stage. The second stage is the doing of it, the sensations and movements of harmoniously preparing tea perfection. It may be very formal or as casual as the situation requires. In the final stage a new person and relationships emerge from the chrysalis of past experience. Chán Chádào is a path to transformation, Chán experience.

In a way *Chán Chádào* is similar to martial arts. In the beginning one learns mechanical movements and the mind is occupied with that learning. Over time the practice become reflexive and one learns to harmonize them with the movements and intentions of others. This is where practice of emptiness (*Shunyata*) comes in. It's a letting go process; letting go of ego and robotic unnecessary movements and thinking that interferes with the eternal flow/stream of now.

One of the hallmark characteristics of someone along the *Chán Chádào* and martial arts path is "seeing emptiness." First one learns the form, then emptiness, and finally that form is not different from emptiness. This is discussed in the Heart Sutra of the Prajnaparamita. It is not just wisdom, but the perfection of wisdom.

Another way of approaching *Chán Chádào* is via the 10-picture story of the Ox Herder best known in China by Sung Dynasty (960 - 1279) monk Kuòān Shīyuǎn (廓庵師遠). In this path of enlightenment process the ox symbolizes the mind and the herder symbolizes the seeker. The steps can be summarized as follow:

1. Search for the bull (ox)
2. Discovery of footprints
3. Perceiving the bull
4. Catching the bull
5. Taming the bull
6. Riding the bull home
7. Transcending the bull
8. Transcending bull and self
9. Attaining the Source
10. Return to ordinary life

Several good translations of the Ox Herder story and accompanying illustrations can be found on the Internet (e.g. Koller, John M. and Suzuki, D.T.).

When making and drinking tea a master observes the mutual interdependence of wood, fire, water, metal and earth in the tea and tea set, the environment and guests simultaneously. All five elements are harmonized. Balancing the five elements is known to cure all disease.

Visit a Shàolín Abbot or monk's abode or office and one can expect to be served tea. It may or may not be a transcendent experience depending on the receptivity and expectations of the guest(s).

But, exactly where it all began in China is anybody's guess. One account claims a Buddhist monk named Gan Lu (Sweet Dew) brought tea back with him when he returned from a pilgrimage to India during the first century. Seven "fairy tea trees" he supposedly planted are said to still to be seen on Mt. Mengding in Sichuan.

Others adamantly assert (with pretty good evidence) that tea is of Chinese origin.

> "Tea (botanically termed '*camellia sinensis*') is a fine plant indigenous to South China, the size of which varies from one to two feet up to dozens of feet in length, depending on where they vegetate."
>
> "In addition to "Cha" tea has also been referred to in the classics under various bynames such as *jia*, *she*, *ming*, *tu* and *chuan*. Duke Zhou Gongdan of the Zhou Dynasty (1046 B.C. – 256 BC) once illustrated: "*Jia* is a kind of *tu* with bitter taste."
>
> Yu, Lu (780 AD - Jiang Yi & Jiang Xin, Trans., 2009) *The Classic of Tea*, Chapter 1, *Tracing to the Origin of Tea* (P. 5)

In the Song Dynasty (960 - 1279), monks got up, washed their face and hands, and drank tea in the morning. Then, they sat during meditation before taking a nap. When they got up, they washed and drank tea. Then, they had a meal, washed their face and hands, and drank tea. Monks were and to a large extent still are inseparable from tea in daily life. Tea ignites the vitality and strengthens the will.

In the Song Dynasty many Chinese temples formulated ritualized ceremonies for drinking tea. The most famous was the tea banquet of Jingshan Temple (径山寺) in Yuhang District, Hangzhou city, Zhejiang Province. Built in the early Tang Dynasty this temple became like the Vatican in the Song Dynasty, while Hangzhou was country's political, economic and cultural center, rather like Kyoto.

The earliest Buddhist communication between Jingshan Temple and Japanese Buddhists was in 1235 when Japanese Buddhist monk Enni Ben'en (圓爾辯圓 called Yuan'er Bianyuan in China, 1202–1280) studied various forms of Mahayana under Chinese Master Wúzhǔn Shīfàn (无准师范) at Jingshan (*Jìngshān* 径山) Temple.[12]

Thus, it might be said that Jìngshān Temple originated the Japanese Tea Ceremony. Nanpushaoming, who learned tea planting, tea making and tea banquet ceremony during his studies under Wúzhǔn Shīfàn, the 40th Abbot of Jìngshān Temple, brought the tea ceremony back home to Japan and developed it in every corner of the nation. (Chen Saiyan, 2009)

The Ancient Tea Horse Road

Chámǎgǔdào 茶马古道

The historic "Tea Horse Road" goes over some of the highest terrain in the world and was once the primary international exchange channel in Asia. It was not only cultural exchange, but the roads by which civilization spread. Definitely tea and horses traveled these routes, but also Buddhist learning, vegetables, fruits, and all manner of luxury and exotic goods.

There were seven main lines to the Tea Horse Road.

1. The "Snowy Road" had two main branches that went from Southern Yunnan in Dali, Lijiang, Diqing through Tibet into India, Nepal and other countries.

[12] Wuzhun Shifan (Chinese: 無準師範, 1178–1249 AD) was a Chinese painter, calligrapher, and prominent Chán monk who lived during the late Song Dynasty (960-1279). Wuzhun Shifan was born in Zitong, Sichuan province, China. He eventually became a renowned Buddhist abbot at the Temple of Mount Jingshan. He was once summoned by Emperor Lizong of Song (理宗; r. 1224-1264) in 1233 in order to share with him the doctrine of Chán Buddhist Dharma. For this Wuzhun was given the title Fojian Yuanzhao Chanshi (Mirror of the Buddha, Chán Teacher) as well as a gold-embroidered kaśaya that he wears in his portrait painting of 1238.

2. The Tribute Tea Trail went from the south via Simao, Yunnan, Dali, Lijiang Sichuan Xichang (south Sichuan province), and Chengdu the capital of Sichuan, to the Central Plains region (lower reaches of the Yellow River which formed the cradle of Chinese civilization, modern-day Henan, the southern part of Hebei, the southern part of Shanxi, and the western part of Shandong province).
3. Buy a horse trail: From the ancient city of Dali (southwest Yunnan) to Kunming, Chuxiong (Central Yunnan).
4. Burma India Road: This is the earliest historical records of a trail, from the Xichang via Yunnan Lijiang, Dali to Baoshan, then Tengchong (west Yunnan, known for its' volcanic activity) into Burma, then into India and other countries.
5. Dianyue Trail: From Kunming, via the Red River into Vietnam.
6. Old Southeast Yunnan Road: From Yunnan to Laos and then Southeast Asia.
7. Picking Road: Yunnan tea to customers around the area including Xishuangbanna (tropical rain forest on southern tip of Yunnan), Simao (southern Yunnan), and other major tea consuming areas.

Chán Buddhism and Tea

Just as early Buddhists learned to sculpt the figure of Buddha traveling through Greek ruled Central Asia, so in western China tea adapted to the needs of religion. Nearly all early teas were named for mountains which had large Buddhist monasteries. The role of tea in Buddhism is rather like that of wine in the Catholic Church in that Catholic monasteries were centers of grape cultivation and wine making, whereas Buddhist temples evolved increasingly sophisticated methods of tea cultivation and preparation. Over the centuries Buddhist monks developed white, green, red, black and oolong teas.

Oolong (乌龙 *wūlóng*, meaning "black dragon") teas are produced using a unique process that involves withering under the strong sun and oxidation before curling and twisting. Oolong tea is especially popular with tea connoisseurs in south China and Chinese expatriates and their descendants worldwide, as is the Fujian preparation process known as the "Gongfu tea ceremony." (Here "Gongfu" refers to "art and skill" as compared to the martial endeavor.) This elaborate tea ceremony in its complete form is rich in history and symbolism.

Historically in China Buddhist monasteries were not only temples for meditation and rituals, and homes for monks, but they were also hospitals, schools, universities, research centers, libraries, art galleries, inns, orphanages, refuges for those in need, police stations, the goals of pilgrimages, publishing houses, cultural centers, meeting halls and specialty tea centers. When emperors traveled they often stayed at monasteries which were the apex of civilization at that time, because monks were the largest class of well-educated people; not so different in some ways from Catholic monasteries in Europe even though Chán culture is and always was radically different from Catholic, or any other "traditional culture" for that matter.

Visitors to Buddhist monasteries were virtually always invited to drink tea, and thus did tea culture spread. Tea was also used for a variety of ritualized ceremonies including the appointment and departure of abbots, seasonal assemblies, meetings with guests including emperors and commoners, and the arrival and departure of monks.

Buddhists also used tea as an aid to meditation, social intercourse and a general health tonic. It engendered sobriety and wakeful tranquility in addition to spiritual refreshment. The rituals in preparing tea created an atmosphere of transcendence for those partaking of it.

Writer enjoying an informal cup of tea with monks at temporary office during construction of North Shaolin. Shi Yan Wan is center.

The role Buddhism has played in the history of tea in Asia parallels the role of Catholicism in the history of wine in Europe. Their respective drinks donned rituals and transcendent significance and the practitioners of both traditions became devoted adherents.

By the Tang dynasty (618-907), China had centuries of experience with Buddhism and Chán Buddhism was the formless cup within which that tea steeped.

The Classic of Tea

Chájīng 茶经

It was during the Tang Dynasty that the original and legendary Sage of Tea, Lù Yǔ (陆羽 - 733–804) grew up and wrote "The Classic of Tea." But, as one might surmise, the road to becoming a master is never without challenges. In some cases, those challenges start very early upon the road of life. According to the "New Book of Tang" (Xin Tang Shu) Lù Yǔ was abandoned as an infant by Xihu Lake in a suburb of Jingling City (present day Hebei).

A Buddhist monk, Zhiji brought him back to the Longgai Temple (present day Xita Temple).

Since his foster father monk Zhiji had a profound interest in tea, Lù Yǔ used to pluck, process and brew tea for him accumulating an unusually high level of expertise and ability. But, because of his wide interests and curiosity Lù Yǔ left the monastery at an early age, though he maintained a good relationship with his kind old master throughout the old monk's life.

As he grew up Lù Yǔ traveled with his friends to where wonderful teas and superb water could be found. In 755, Lù Yǔ returned to his hometown Jingling to sort out his travelogue. Not long after Lù Yǔ set off again to major tea growing areas including the upper, middle and lower Yangzi River and around the Huai River. Along the way he formed strong bonds with a number of scholars in Buddhist and literary fields and together they explored the world of teas, legendary spring waters, and exquisite poems about tea.

Lù Yǔ Visits Tea Water Well

On a cold winter night
a friend dropped by.
We did not drink wine
but instead drank tea.
The kettle bubbled,
the coals glowed,
the bright moon shined
outside my window.
The moon itself
was nothing special -
But, oh, the plum-tree blossoms!
Tu Hsiao Shan (Song Dynasty)

~ ~ ~ ~

The Way of Tea

A friend presented me
with tender leaves of Oolong tea,
for which I chose a kettle
of ivory-mounted gold,
a mixing-bowl of snow-white earth.
With its clear bright froth and fragrance,
it was like the nectar of Immortals.
The first bowl washed the cobwebs from my mind -
The whole world seemed to sparkle.
A second cleansed my spirit
like purifying showers of rain.
A third and I was one of the Immortals -
What need now for austerities
to purge our human sorrows?
Worldly people, by going in for wine,
sadly deceive themselves.
For now I know the Way of Tea is real.

Chio Jen (Tang Dynasty)

These extraordinary translations were downloaded from
http://www.oolong-tea.org/chinese-tea-poetry-poems-about-tea/

In 760 Lù Yǔ settled down in Huzhou City (Zhejiang) “where tea flavored the land,” and began to organize his research. It went through several revisions and with the help of his friend Jiaoran, Lù Yǔ got “The Classic of Tea” printed in 780, composed of three volumes.

Chapter 1 describes the origin, characteristics, functions and different designations of tea. In this chapter one learns the different compositions of Chinese characters for tea, which include categorizing tea as an herbage, arbor or shrubbery which is somewhere in-between.

Chinese characters have a “radical” (stem part, found on the left or top of a more complex character) which in regards to tea as an herbage was “艹” which means grass, and then combined into 茶 or chá, (tea). When tea is regarded as an arbor, the Chinese character for wood was used (木, mù) was used in the character 木茶, mù chá as was recorded in the Treatise of Materia Medica by Emperor Shennong. In this fascinating chapter Lù Yǔ makes the point that wild tea strains growing up naturally in their wild habitat are better than those cultivated in gardens, and those grown on the sunny side of hills yield superior teas. Lù Yǔ offers tea as treatment for anxiety, fidgeting, headache, blurry eyes, weak limbs and painful joints. He concludes this chapter with recommendations for finding the best forms of ginseng in China and Korea.

In Chapter 2 titled “tools to pick and store tea,” Lù Yǔ recommends and intimately describes the best equipment to pick and process tea. These include baskets for collecting freshly picked tea leaves (woven with think bamboo strips), a ground cooking range (without stovepipes, they used sweet smelling wood for fire in those ancient beautiful times), a parching wok, steam box, stone pestle and mortar, an iron mold (traditionally teas were powdered and shaped with a mold in China before selling and use), tea processing work table, a cloth (usually silk) for the mold, bamboo rack, awl knife, bamboo rope, and so on. His chapter ends with a description of the Yu, a wooden square case walled with woven bamboo strips and pasted with paper. “During the rainy season as plums are ripening in the south of the Yangzi River, the fire is made to burn a bit more scorchingly…” Attention to every minute detail was a hallmark characteristic of Lù Yǔ, something he by necessity learned in the Chán monastery where he grew up.

Chapter 3 explains the time and methods for tea picking and processing, with the best months being the third and fourth months of the Lunar year (usually May and June) and the best times for picking is just before daybreak "when dew is still glittering" on the leaves. According to Lù Yǔ the leaves can be harvested after three years. The fleshy smaller leaves are recommended as best and only clear and fine days allow for harvesting.

Volume Two contains only Chapter 4 which explains the 24 types of instruments for tea-making procedures. Wind stoves are described in minute detail, for example they're made of either bronze or iron, with a shell .3 inches in thickness, rim of .9 inches, with .6 inches bending inward to form a chamber which is plastered with a layer of clay. The tripod stand has 21 ancient characters cast there, which also are described, as is the smelting of the tea boiling wok, tea supporting stand, tea tongs, paper bag to keep roasted tea, the whisk, tea sieve and box, measuring spoon, water tank, water filter pouch, and so on. Anecdotal stories are sprinkled into these descriptions. Colorful language is used throughout that gives the reader the feeling of really being there.

Volume Three starts with Chapter 5 titled "Techniques for Brewing Tea," which introduces the most sublime processes for preparing the finest most fragrant teas and the quality of various waters. For example, mountain springs are preferred with the next option being river water, followed by well water. However, dripping trickles from stalactites and slow creeks from rocks are ideal waters for tea as well. A pinch of salt is recommended but stern warnings about too much being added: "How can tea sipping be depreciated as salty soup savoring?" This chapter needs to be read slowly and carefully (sipped) by all lovers of tea.

Chapter 6 provides guidelines and codes for savoring tea during and before the Tang Dynasty as well as a short bibliography of ancient literature on tea drinking.

Chapter 7 is a fascinating collection of tales and legends concerning tea in history beginning with a really detailed "who's who" of tea history in China. There is also poetry.

"The civil official Zuo Si in the Jin Dynasty once wrote a poem *My Cute Girls*, of which are few lines are quoted:

"My two daughters are cute girls,

Fair and flawless as lily pears.

We give the younger the name Pure,

Her tongue's glib but never demure.

The elder's name is an orchid fine,

brows are rainbows and eyes shine.

They brisk in woods like two fairies,

can't wait to get ripe fruits and berries.

To flowery nature they're so much bound,

wind and rain chorus a cheerful sound.

Tea scents from home lure them with desire,

pursing rosy lips they help blow the fire.

Yu, Lu (780 AD - Jiang Yi & Jiang Xin, Trans., 2009) *The Classic of Tea* P. 57

This chapter has dozens of quotes from all different sources including *The Book of Songs*, *Treatise of Materia Medica*, *Canon of Moxibustion and Acupuncture Preserved in Pillow* (*Zhen Zhong Fang*), *Prescriptions for Children* (*Ru Zi Fang*), *Record of the Northern Wei Dynasty*, *Biography of Eminent Monks*, *Sequel to the Biography of Eminent Monks*, as well as writings of the literati, poets, and so on.

Chapter 8 summarizes in detail the distribution of tea producing regions in the Tang Dynasty and compares the quality and merits of every type from each area and states that Shannan District (present day Hebei, Hunan, Shaanxi, and Sichuan) *Xiazhou* tea is the best. Lù Yǔ goes district by district around primarily south China noting where and what the best teas are.

Chapter 9 is very short and presents some simplified sets of apparatus for preparing tea under different circumstances, including climbing a rope to a cliff cave, rural temples and along creeks and streams. It concludes with the following admonition: "However, for a tea ceremony to be held at a metropolitan location or a dainty household, the whole array of the 24 tea utensils must invariably be embarked upon the occasion. A single miss may render the observance a less decent one."

Finally, Chapter 10 consists of one paragraph only and suggests tea loving people copy *The Classic of Tea* in scrolls and hang them on the wall for good guidance. Lù Yǔ was surely an artist in his vivid descriptions and scientist in his detailed methodologies; in many ways he was the first secular priest and scientist in the Way of Tea.

The Sequel to the Classic of Tea

Xù Chájīng 續茶經

Very close to a thousand years later writer, compiler, and editor Lu Tingcan penned *The Sequel to the Classic of Tea* containing advances throughout the Tang, Song, Yuan and Ming and Qing Dynasties as described in quite a number of monographic works written throughout that enormous period of time. He kept to the format used in *The Classic of Tea* but didn't repeat any of it.

A short story in Chapter 1 illustrates one part of the relationship between the spread of Chán and tea culture to the north of China.

"Tea used to be a beverage favored only by people in the south, while few northerners drank it. Such a situation changed since the Kaiyuan Period[13] when Zen monks launched an upsurge in promoting the Zen religion. As the pious adherents in their prolonged and intense practice were supposed neither to sleep, nor to have any supper, tea because their only energy source. Thus each practitioner was seen carrying his tea cup, and every nook and cranny held a tea-brewing pot. The practice was favored and thenceforth a convention came into being. Gradually the convention spread from the states of Zou, Qi, Cang and Di (the present Shandong and Hebei Provinces) to the capital city of Chang'an. Teahouses sprang up everywhere in urban areas just like mushrooms after a spring rain, appealing to consumers with the fragrance of tea. With a coin paid, everyone, monk or layman could enjoy a good drink…."

Tingcan, Lu (1734 - Jiang Yi and Jiang Xin Trans, 2009) *The Sequel to the Classic of Tea* P. 101

13 The Kaiyuan Era is known as the early half of Xuanzong's reign (712-756) when China reached the height of her powers. Kaiyuan was chosen as the year name during the early reign of Xuanzong, when the emperor was famous for his efforts in managing the country, promoting talents, developing economy as well as being a patron of the arts. The world was at peace during the period, therefore, the historians in later generations called it "Kaiyuan Era".

The Sequel to the Classic of Tea is about ten times longer than the Lù Yǔ's original *The Classic of Tea* but retains the brilliant well referenced anecdotal stories as well as analytical descriptions of methodologies and the reasons for them proving that the higher levels of arts are sciences and the higher levels of sciences are indeed arts.

> "The recent fad is for Luojie from Changxing, which is believed to be the ancient Purple Bamboo Shoot from Guzhu. As to the sites producing *Juojie*, though quite a few, only the Dongshan Mountain yields the first-class strain. *Yao Bodao* has a poem on in it, which goes:
>
> *'The vale is known as Bright Moonlight.*
>
> *Tasty tea brings fame to the green sight.*
>
> *Its charm reveals in shy grace,*
>
> *its taste excels all,*
>
> *though mild and slight.*
>
> *Indeed the tea is a divine crystal*
>
> *blessing us with pure delight.'"*
>
> *Ibid* P.161

In some ways *The Sequel to the Classic of Tea* is a bit more of a compendium than observational science compared to the original *Classic of Tea*; the books are similar but different.

> "Throughout history, scores of people have compiled books about tea, of which Lù Yǔ's *The Classic of Tea* and Cai Xiang's *Comprehensive Work on Tea* are the most far-reaching ones. The practice at that time was however to grind the leaves into a minced paste for solid tea cakes, thus the products of Longfeng Tuan (Dragon and Phoenix Ball), Xiao Lontuan, (Petite Dragon ball). It was not until the Xuanhe Period (1119–1125) that tea leaves in light color began to enjoy preference. Extracted from the *Encyclopedia of Civil Surpluses* (*Chang Wu Zhi*) by Wen Zhenheng."
>
> *Ibid*, P. 165

Reading Chapter 1 of *The Sequel to the Classic of Tea* one can see how tea culture spread out from the monasteries to all branches of life over the centuries in China.

> "'As a folk tale from the monks in the mountains goes: A few tea seeds accidentally fell into the soil. When they sprouted and grew up, their branches interlocked as if they were joined on one root. That is why tea has been presented as a precious gift to newly wedded couples to embody an intimate and solid relationship.'" Extracted from *Gardening Methods and Anecdotes* (*Guan Yuan Shi*) by Chen Shijiao)"
>
> *Ibid* P. 173

Chapter 2 of this magnificent sequel is practically all quotes from Chinese classics (most of which unfortunately did not survive the ensuing centuries) but begins with poetry and continues with stories about the equipment used to make tea.

As with *The Classic of Tea*, Chapter Three of the *Sequel to the Classic of Tea* describes processing and sorting teas, revealing all the secrets of a thousand years since that first great classic again, using meticulously recorded references. At this point in the book readers become acutely aware that Lu Tingcan must have had an enormous house to contain the thousands of references in this sequel, or perhaps access to an imperial library. In any case he must have had an extraordinarily well-developed index system to organize the prodigious quantities of quotes and references.

In addition to a vast cornucopia of innovations in tea art and science, Chapter Three also mentions infusing teas with flowers to add a unique touch to the flavor.

> "A recipe for making lotus tea: Early in the morning at sunrise, tea makers need to go to the lotus pond before breakfast. Seek the buds ready to bloom, push the pistils aside gentle to feed in as much tea as possible into the packet. Enlace the stuffed buds with strings for a whole night. The next morning, untie the petals to get the content out, and wrap it in paper to get dried in the sun. Three times of this routine prepare the lotus tea ready to be put in a tin pot and wrapped up for storage. Extracted from *Stories of the Predecessors* (*Yun Lin Yi Shi*) by Monk Yun Lin"
>
> *ibid*, Chapter 3, P. 245

As the chapters and centuries roll on, it's apparent that respect for the skills of the monks in the cultivation and preparation of tea remained strong:

> "'The now world famous Songluo stayed in the shadow of such eclipse until a monk from the *Huqiu* stayed at a temple (later called Songluo Temple) and initiated a tea-making practice in a *Huqiu* way. It is truly a shame that Stone Horse Well never made its presence known to Lù Yǔ, nor did the tea plants of Diannan have the stroke of luck to meet the monks from *Huqiu*.' Extracted from *Traveling Sketch of Yunnan* (*Dian Xing Ji Lue* by Feng Shike.)"
>
> *Ibid*, P. 263

Reading these two greatest classics of tea one can discern the harmony between *Chán* and *Chádào* and the natural pattern of both growing from the south to the north and from inside the monasteries to all the towns, villages and remote areas in China. As tea culture became more of a lay activity however, criticism even of some monks' preparations emerged:

> "'The lofty and cliffy areas around Wui, Zimao (Purple Cap) and Longshan (the Dragon Mountain) all yield tea. Good as the strains are, the maladroit treating by the monks discredit them…' Extracted from *Elegant Writings on Peaceful Life* (*Tai Pin Qing Hua*) by Chen Meigong."
>
> *Ibid*, P. 265

Chapter Seven, like the original is titled: *Records and Legends of Tea* and contains more than a dozen stories involving Buddhist temples, monks and miracles. Below are just a few.

> "A Jinshi (advanced scholar) named Quan Shuwen once told such a story: Prior to ascending the throng, Emperor Wendi of the Jin Dynasty dreamed in his sleep that his skull had been altered by a supernatural. Thereafter the emperor began to suffer from constant headache. Later on he got acquainted with a monk who gave the emperor a remedy. Then a certain kind of tea in mountains was plucked and decocted to the emperor. The tea turned out to be truly effective. Ever since then, people became fervent in collecting and drinking tea. Thus there ran a poem expressing people's craze about tea: 'A carload of tea is worth more than a thorough study of Spring and Autumn Annals (*Chun Qiu*) and Hetu (*Yellow River Diagram*) or the Eight Diagrams.' Extracted from

Crouching Dragon's Encyclopedia (*Qian Que Lei Shu*)."

Ibid, P. 443

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"'Master Li Zhiji was a pious Buddhist abbot at Jingling. He had long been indulged in tea, but the tea he drank had to be brewed exclusively by his prentice Lù Yǔ. When Lù Yǔ went out on long tea missions he would rather go without any tea even for several years. One day Master Zhiji was invited into the imperial palace by Emperor Daizong for certain oblation ceremonies. The emperor had a royal tea expert make tea to entertain him, only to find him have but a small polite sip. Not believing such a faith to Lù Yǔ's brew, the emperor sent his men to get Lù Yǔ to his palace in secret.

The next day, Emperor Daizong treated Master Zhiji to dinner at which the tea brewed by Lù Yǔ was served to him. The moment Master Zhiji held the cup of tea in his hand, he was beaming with happiness. Slurping and praising the tea with satisfaction, the abbot bottomed it up. He then explained to the surprised emperor that the tea seemed to be had by his 'dear boy Lù Yǔ.' Completely convinced of Master Zhihi's expertise on tea, the emperor called Lù Yǔ out to meet his master.'

Extracted from *Postscript to a Painting of Lù Yǔ Performing Tea Arts* (*Lù Yǔ Dian Cha Tu Ba*) by Dong You."

Ibid, P. 463, 465.

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"'Poet Bai Jui used to practice Buddhist vegetarian meals. Once his friend Liu Yuxi suffered from drunkenness. To sober him up, Liu Yuxi offered Bai Juyi some minced chrysanthemum seedlings and preserved radish, in exchange for his refreshing Liuban (Six Speckle Tea).' Extracted from *Chorography of the Man'ou (Wenzhou) Area (Man Ou Zhi)."*

Ibid P. 465.

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"'Once Emperor Huizong and Crown Prince Qinzong of the Song Dynasty were captured by the Kin soldiers. On the way to the Kin Kingdom, they got by a temple where stood two stone warrior attendants of Buddha's both cupping one hand in the other before chest. The josses in the temple were so lofty that their heads almost touched the crossbar of the roof. There were no other oblation vessels but a few stone calyx and censers on the altar. A Hu (non-Han nationals living in the north and west of China in ancient times) monk came out and inquired the two with a bow, 'Where are you from?' 'From the south.' Hearing this, the monk immediately called in two boy servants to brew tea

for them.

The tea was so nice that the emperors would like to have some more. But by then, the monk and the boy servants had retreated to the back hall. Waiting for a long time in vain, the emperor and his son went in to look for them, only to find the hall vacant. What they saw in the bamboo holt was no more than one small house with carved stone statues of the Hu monk and two boy servants. The statues looked exactly like the two boys who presented tea to the emperors.' *Extracted from Floristics Home and Abroad* (*Hua Yi Hua Mu Kao*)."

Ibid P. 503.

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"'The Tea Immortal Pavilion was situated on the Langya Mountain in Chuzhou. This thatched hut was built in the Song Dynasty by some country monks for a prefectural governor Zeng Zhao (alias Zikai). The name of the pavilion was derived from a poem by Du Mu (alias Fan Chuan):

Who knows the poor governor, diseased?

Secluded here as a tea immortal, pleased.

"Zikai also mentioned the pavilion in his own poem:

Country monks are so warm-hearted,

For me a thatched hut is constructed.

Tea Immortal and herb sage get connected,

From Du's poem the pavilion is imparted.

"This poem was written in the second year of the Shaosheng Period, when Zeng Zhao worked as a prefectural governor.' Extracted from *Records of Scenic Spots and Historical Sites* (*Ming Sheng Zhi*)."

Ibid P. 521.

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"'As a custom, each household would brew some new tea on the Beginning of Summer, and present the drink together with fine fruits and nuts to their relatives and neighbors. Such a ritual present is called Seven House-hold Tea.

"'Monk Qianshi from the Nanping Temple was known for his masterpiece at such tea ceremonies. He described his own expertise as 'heart to hand' intuition, which could hardly be learned through verbal instructions."

"'Thanks to the Dignitary Monk for His Sweet-scented Osmanthus Tea," a poem written by Liu Shiheng reads:

"'Gold Osmanthus and fair buds scenting over the fire,

By Crane Rill with a hare-hair cup I sip and admire.

Vernal drizzles oil the leaves echoing thunders new,

Petals are touched with celestial tones of autumn hue.

Its scent exceeds Yangxian the famed green book,

Its drinkers inspired high to the Palace of the Moon,

Lu Tong's tea ode proves too charming to mold,

I'm to escape Zen but pause for the nice tea code.'

"Extracted from *The West Lake Travelogue* (*Xi Hu You Lan Zhi*)."

Ibid, P. 563.

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The Tea Classics are more than reflections of arts and sciences, or proof of the parallel co-evolution of tea and *Chán* in China, as they are part of the living, breathing, social, cultural and technological evolution of a people. For example, whoever would guess that the humble tea-saucer was invented in the *Jianzhong* Period after the daughter of the Prime Minister of Shu Kingdom, Cui Ning, burned her fingers when her tea cup slipped? (*Ibid* P. 273)

Chapter Conclusions

Chán does not live inside empty and overflowing teacups, but rather here and now in the ordinary and extraordinary events and non-events of life. Smell the subtle aromas, relax, breath in the vapor, and savor every sip of life taking the bitter along with the sweet. But, if one day your teacup should slip, don't forget the daughter of the Prime Minister of Shu Kingdom, and get a saucer.

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Chapter 5 - Shàolín and Chinese Traditional Medicines (CTM)

中医学

Zhōngyīxué – Chinese Medicine

“In Shàolín, we have three treasures: Chán (Zen), Wǔ (martial arts), and Yī, (medicine).”

“The three treasures are one.” (San bao hui yi 三宝会意)

Medicine Buddha at Songshan Shaolin

"According to (Master Monk) Dejian, Shaolin self-healing is fostered by quieting your mind, adjusting your body and controlling your diet. His prescription begins with Shaolin Qigong, specifically the two methods attributed to Bodhidharma, the Muscle-Tendon Change Classic or *Yìjīnjīng* and the Marrow-Washing Classic or *Xǐsuǐjīng*. "*Yìjīnjīng* changes the meridians of your body," asserts Dejian. "*Xǐsuǐjīng* improves your circulation, fosters Qi, makes you strong and adjusts your body physically and psychologically."

Gene Ching, (2005) *Shaolin Trinity – Shaolin Monk Shi Dejian Discusses the Three Treasures*

(Note: Shi Dejian is one of the few living Masters of Shàolín Medicine at Songshan Shàolín today.)

Introduction

Shàolín Medicine can be thought of as a specialty branch of Chinese Traditional Medicine (CTM). It specializes in areas relating to promotion of health, fitness and longevity with an emphasis on meditation and wound healing (traumatology) which incorporates most forms of Traditional Chinese Medicine given the holistic natures of Shàolín Medicine and CTM.

However, given that anywhere from 70 to more than a hundred monks live at Songshan Shàolín Monastery at any one time, and that historically they functioned as a hospital for surrounding communities, the full spectrum of Chinese Traditional Medicine (CTM) was certainly used and nowadays in some cases is combined with western medicine to ensure and promote the health of all.

Brief Overview of CTM

CTM is the oldest, most comprehensive, effective and safest form of medicine in the world. It has sustained and nourished the longest ongoing civilization for over five thousand years with meticulously kept written records dating back some three thousand years. Chinese medicine is more focused on prevention than fixing problems after they happen than western medicine, and looks at more multi-causal systems that create illnesses when they do happen than western medicine which tends to focus on treating symptoms. Health is viewed in CTM as a harmonious interaction of human systems with nature and disease is interpreted as a disharmony in those interactions. The goal of CTM is to restore organic harmony by creating a new equilibrium when energies are in excess or deficient. Fundamental to these harmonies is the concept of "*qì*," (a section on this ubiquitous energy can be found later in this chapter.)

Herbal Medicine

Cǎoyào 草药

According to legend Chinese herbal medicine was founded Chinese Emperor Shénnóng in about 2737 BC.

Emperor Shénnóng was famed for "inventing" Chinese herbal medicine and the phrase all Chinese children seem to learn is: *Shén nóng cháng bǎicǎo* (神农 尝 百草) which means: (Emperor) "Shénnóng tasted a hundred herbs." *Shénnóng Běn Cǎo Jīng* is a book on agriculture and medicinal plants attributed to Shénnóng which was written sometime between 300 BC to 200 AD. It is a compilation of information about these herbs and the medicinal uses of plants. This book classifies 365 species of plants, woods, roots, grass, animals, fur and much more into three main categories. Emperor Shénnóng is also called the "Farmer God," and the "God of Five Grains."

There is some disagreement between scholars as to whether the *Shénnóng Běn Cǎo Jīng* was written before or after what arguably is the greatest classic of Chinese TCM, the *Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon*, (*Huángdì Nèijīng* 黃帝內经). Written between 475 - 221 BC the *Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon* was radically different from previous medical texts in that the natural effects of diet, lifestyle, emotions, environment, and age are viewed as the causes of disease rather than demonic influences as had previously been thought. The text contains two parts, each composed of eighty-one chapters or treatises in a question and answer format between the legendary Emperor Huangdi (Yellow Emperor) and six of his finest ministers. Extensive discussion of plants and herbs can be found in the texts. This book covers not only medicine but also psychology, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, military, strategy, mathematics, astronomy, meteorology and ecology.

The *Compendium of Materia Medica* (*Běncǎo Gāngmù*) is a Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) pharmacological record written by Lǐ Shízhēn which quotes Shénnóng's original work extensively. This book contains information about 1,892 herbs and even today is still widely used as a reference.

In the 1977 *Encyclopedia of Traditional Chinese Medicinal Substances*, 5,767 substances are identified as part of the traditional *Material Medica*.

The huge number of substances listed is a result of extensive research into the traditional folk applications of substances in different parts of rural China.

A typical practitioner may routinely use between 200 and 600 substances. Typical prescriptions are prepared as a decoction usually containing about 9 to 18 herbs.

Typically, the herbs are boiled for about half an hour, however a variety of different approaches are used. Some ancient traditional Chinese "herbal" medicines also included various animal parts however these are generally not used in modern practice.

Other sources report there are approximately 12,807 kinds of traditional botanical medicines used in China and over 100,000 medicinal recipes recorded in the ancient literature. (Chen, K. Yu, B. 1999, P. 934)

Acupuncture and Moxibustion - Overview

The origin of acupuncture and moxibustion are attributed to Fu Xi and his creation of therapeutic techniques using stone needles ("*bian* stones" 砭) and Huang Di's invention of acupuncture and moxibustion. These tools were first used during the "New Stone Age" which lasted from 8,000 BC to about 2,000 BC.

> "Three thousand years ago in the Shang Dynasty the hieroglyphs of acupuncture and moxibustion appeared in the inscriptions on bones and tortoise shells. Because of the development of bronze casting techniques there appeared bronze medical needles. But bian stone was still used as the main tool for treating diseases. During this period the philosophical thinking of yin-yang and five elements was formed, and in the field of medicine the ancient physicians had a preliminary understanding of pulse, blood, body fluid, qi, shen (manifestations of vitality), essence, five sounds, five colors, five flavors, six qi, eight winds, etc. as well as the ideology of relevant adaption of the human body to natural environment. Thus, germinated the sprout of the basic theory of traditional medicine."
>
> Cheng, Xinnong (Chief Ed. 2012) *Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion,* P. 4

Acupuncture

Zhēnjiǔ 针灸

One way acupuncture works is by channeling *qì* into the 12 main meridians and eight subsidiary medians which transmit *qì* and blood, and balance the yin and yang of the whole body, nourish tendons and bones and improve joint function. Nutritive *qì* flows inside the meridians and defensive *qì* runs outside the meridians. Research on acupuncture and *qì* has ancient roots and continues to this day.

As the Iron Age emerged during the Warring States Period and Qin Dynasty, acupuncture techniques developed by leaps and bounds. Many famous treatises were written on acupuncture. However:

> "Because the earliest acupuncture books contained mistakes and differences, and had missing information, the famous medical doctor Huángfǔ Mì compiled the book *Systematic Classic of Acupuncture and Moxibustion* (*Zhēnjiǔ jiǎyǐ jīng*) in 256-260 by collecting the materials of acupuncture and moxibustion from the ancient books Plain Questions, Canon of Acupuncture and Essentials of Points, Acupuncture and Moxibustion. The book consists of 12 volumes with 128 chapters, including 349 acupuncture points… It is the earliest exclusive and systemized book on acupuncture and has been one of the most influential works in the history of acupuncture and moxibustion.
>
> Cheng, Xinnong (Chief Ed. 2012) *Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, P. 5

Over the next thirteen hundred years the science and art of acupuncture and moxibustion evolved enormously. Unfortunately, in 1822 the authorities of the Qing Dynasty ordered the permanent abolishment of acupuncture from the Department of Imperial Medical College because "acupuncture and moxibustion are not suitable to be applied to the emperor." *Ibid*, P. 8

In July of 1951 the Experimental Institute of Acupuncture-Moxibustion Therapy was set up directly under the Ministry of Public Health and since then the sciences and arts of acupuncture and moxibustion have experienced a tremendous revival in China and nearly world-wide acceptance.

A search of PubMed's database [14] for scientific articles on acupuncture shows there are more than 19,000 studies on this ancient Chinese treatment for a very wide range of medical problems. A similar search on "moxibustion" reveals the publication of and access to 2,665 articles and books on this subject. A search on PubMed for Qigong results in 376 medical abstracts, 408 full text articles, 61 books and another hundred or so other references. In other words, western medical science is taking Chinese Traditional Medicine seriously these days.

Moxibustion

Jiǔshù 灸術

> "Moxibustion treats and prevents diseases by applying heat to points or certain locations on the human body. The material used mainly Moxa-wool in the form of a cone or stick. For centuries, moxibustion and acupuncture have been combined in clinical practice, thus they are usually termed together in Chinese. Chapter 74 of Miraculous Pivot states, "A disease that may not be treated by acupuncture may be treated by moxibustion." In the Introduction to Medicine it says, 'When a disease fails to respond to medication and acupuncture moxibustion is suggested.'" [15]
>
> Cheng, Xinnong (Chief Ed. 2012) *Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, P. 361

[14] PubMed is the world's largest (and best) publicly accessible database for medical research.

[15] Moxa-wool (*Artemisia Vulgaris* is a species of chrysanthemum.)

Chinese medicine is generally focused on different ways to restore balance. Heat improves *qì* and blood circulation, whereas cold inhibits it. Moxibustion is one way to improve circulation. A common form of Moxibustion is called "Cupping" which is done by placing small jars on the skin wherein a vacuum is created by ignited material. In ancient China Cupping was called "Horn Method," as an animal horn was used to dispel pus. Over the centuries techniques have improved and Cupping has for centuries been and remains very popular in China, Korea and Japan especially for lung disorders.

Qìgōng

Qìgōng 气功

Qìgōng is the skill of body/mind exercise that integrates body, breath and mind. It is probably the hardest to date given that it grew out of many natural human behaviors like stretching and dancing, however respiratory exercises, massage, and sitting meditation appear to also date back to the New Stone Age, some four thousand plus years ago.

Some believe that medical Qìgōng "officially" began with the Outwards-Dispersing Dance (*Xuan Dao Wu*) somewhere between 3000 – 2000 BC. *The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic* (*Huángdì Nèijīng* 黄帝内经) dating back to the Warring States Period (475-221) may also be said to mark the beginning of medical Qìgōng with the application of *qì*-guiding, conducting and pressing the body (*Dao Yin An Qiao*).

Buddhist Qìgōng

Buddhist Qìgōng focuses on cultivation of human spirituality by adjusting the mind and breath. Most forms are static involving prolonged meditation as in Yin Shi Zi's Tranquil Sitting.[16] Internal Nourishing Qìgōng (*Nei Yang Gong* 内养功) promoted by Liu Gui

16 Yin Shi Zi was trained in Chinese Medicine. He practiced and taught Chinese Medicine at a time when the Chinese people started to re-focus their medical practices more on Western methods. The result is a change of language, describing events in words more suited to a Western audience, e.g. "Tranquil Sitting." Yin Shi Zi describes his experiences of meditation in words easily understood from a Western point of view.

Zhen was derived from Buddhist Qìgōng.

> "A contemporary of Bodhidharma, Tan Luan (曇鸞) in the northern Wei was a distinguished monk of Pure Land Buddhism (Jing To Zhong) who studied Qìgōng under Daoist priest Tao Hong Jin (陶弘景). After years of intensive practice, he mastered the advanced skills of Qìgōng and could diagnose according to a patient's complexion. In addition, he created the method "Using intent to direct Qi" (*Yi Yi Yin Qi*) which is still in use today… In the Sui and Tang dynasties Buddhism reached its peak, and so did Buddhist Qìgōng. This was manifested by the fact that many Confucians, Daoists and medical experts converted to Buddhism and began practicing Buddhist Qìgōng. This resulted in interchange and interpenetration among various Qìgōng schools and traditions… P. 69
>
> Liu, T. (Chief Ed. 2010) *Chinese Medical Qigong*, P. 69

The fourth Chinese Chán master and founder of the Buddhist Tiantai Sect Zhi Yi (智顗 *zhì yǐ*) contributed greatly to the development of Buddhist Qìgōng. His writings are collected in his four monographs on *Vipasyana*, or contemplation: *Primary Shamatha* and *Vipasyana*. (*Shamatha* can be translated as "calming" and "*Vipasyana*" as "insight knowledge").

Martial Arts Qìgōng

> "Martial arts Qigong attaches great important to the body's physical shape or form and includes methods to train the tendons, bones, muscles and skin. This tradition involves a large number of hard physical exercises and conditions requiring an integration of the *Yi* (intent), *Qi* (energy), and *Li* (physical force). It follows the major principles

which are "Use intent to lead the *Qi*, and physical for (*Li*) accompanies *Qi*."

Liu, T. (Chief Ed. 2010) P. 71

After the Song Dynasty and spread of *Baduanjin Qìgōng* (also called *Eight Pieces of Brocade*) martial arts Qìgōng developed rapidly. The Northern branch, called "*The Martial Eight Pieces of Brocade*" (*Wu Ba Duan*) derives from the famous general and martial artist Yue Fei (岳飞).[17] His form called for sturdy and vigorous movements with many of them utilizing the horse stance.

No story about martial arts Qìgōng – however brief – would be complete without at least some mention of Taiji Quan (known as Tai Chi in the West).

Chen Wang Ting, (陈王庭, 1580–1660) also known as Chen Yu Ting, a general who lived at the end of the Ming and the beginning of the Qing (dynasties) created Chen style Taiji Quan. Its unique characteristics with emphasis on internal energy (*qì*) and flexibility greatly enlarged the scope of martial arts Qìgōng.

~ ~ ~

In addition to the major branches of CTM briefly outlined above there are other equally important though perhaps not as well-known therapeutic disciplines which include *Tui Na*, or Therapeutic Massage, and *Die Da Jiu* which are utilizes different kinds of liniments for topical application.

Chinese Therapeutic Massage

Tuīná 推拿

Chinese Therapeutic Massage or *Tuīná* (推拿) uses the hands and fingers to stimulate the meridians and acupuncture points, using kneading, rubbing, pushing, lifting, pinching, and other techniques to clear the meridians, facilitate blood flow, alleviate wound pain,

17 Yue Fei is widely seen as a patriot and national folk hero in China; after his execution at the hands of the Southern Song government in 1142 his image evolved into the epitome of loyalty in Chinese culture.

speed recovery, *Qūxié* "righting" (祛邪扶正, fully mobilizing the body's resistance to disease) and balance Yin Yang. Though some spas around the world claim to offer "Shàolín *Tuīná*" there is a high probability most are less than the genuine article.

> "In Thailand, the art of Thai massage is believed to be a direct transmission of the therapeutic teaching of *Jivaka*, Buddha's doctor. Just as Thai boxers make devotional bows before bouts, Thai masseurs give offerings to statues of Jivaka as part of their sessions. (Shaolin TCM Master) Dejian attributes the tradition of Shaolin medicine to Shaolin's patriarch Bodhidharma."
>
> Gene Ching, from *Shaolin Trinity – Shaolin Monk Shi Dejian Discusses the Three Treasures*

Liniments

Diē dǎ jiǔ 跌打酒

Liniments are used for treatment of traumatic injuries including muscle and bone bruises, rheumatism and related diseases. *Die Da Jiu* are generally used to stimulate circulation of "*qì*" (Spelled "*chi*" in Taiwan and called "*ki*" in Japan - a somewhat mysterious energy discussed later in this Chapter) and blood to alleviate pain. There is a saying in Chinese *Tong Ze Bu Tong, Ze Tong Bu Tong* – "Where there is pain there is no flow, where there is flow there is no pain." Bruising can create accumulations of stagnant *qì* and blood that can cause serious health problems especially as people age. *Die Da Jiu* liniments were developed to open the critical channels and disperse those accumulations.

One can on the Internet find a variety of "recipes" for Shàolín *Die Da Jiu*, however in some of most cases they are probably of questionable origin.

Legendary Origins of Shàolín Medicine

According to Shàolín legend, after the second Patriarch Dazu Huike (487–593) cut off his arm, the temple monks healed his arm on Boyu Peak with herbs collected in the mountain. Since then Shàolín Medicine has been carried down from generation to generation verbally and in some cases secretly.

According to the *Biographies of Eminent Monks*, Huike (known as *Shenguang* at the time) met his teacher Bodhidharma at the Shàolín Monastery in 528. Bodhidharma initially refused to teach Huike who then stood in the snow outside Bodhidharma's cave all night until the snow reached his waist. In the morning Bodhidharma asked him why he was there. Huike replied that he wanted a teacher to "open the gate of the elixir of universal compassion to liberate all beings." Bodhidharma refused, saying, "How can you hope for true religion with little virtue, little wisdom, a shallow heart, and an arrogant mind? It would just be a waste of effort." (Cleary, T. 1999)

Finally, to prove his resolve, Huike cut off his left arm and presented it to the First Patriarch as a token of his sincerity. Bodhidharma then accepted him as a student, and changed his name from Shenguang to Huike, which means "Wisdom and Capacity." At that time Huike was about 40 years old and went on to study with Bodhidharma for six years.

Regardless as to the love of Chán Buddhists for allegorical stories and the probability of this story being literally true, suppose it did unfold exactly as the legends say. What kind of traditional Chinese medicine might have been used to treat such a grievous wound?

Ancient Chinese Surgery and the Shàolín

Wàikē 外科

> *"Shàolín Medicine can cure various kinds of diseases, specialized in treating traumatic injuries, and has many divisions such as surgery and internal departments, which forms the featured culture of Shàolín Chán Medicine."*
>
> Official Shàolín Internet Site - *Origin of Shàolín Chán Medicine*

According to the Book of Later Han, the famous Chinese physician Hua Tuo (Late Eastern Han Dynasty, 140–208) performed surgery. He is reported to have been the first person in China to use anesthesia during surgery. He used a general anesthetic combining wine with an herbal concoction called *máfèisǎn* (麻沸散 - mainly made of Stramonium flowers which make patients numb when taken with alcohol). Unfortunately, besides very brief descriptions in historical records, not many of the specifics of Hua Tuo's surgical techniques survived in subsequent Chinese medical texts. According to some sources he learned Ayurveda medical techniques from early Buddhist missionaries in China. (Mair, Victor H. 1994)

> "If a sickness were concentrated internally where the effect of acupuncture needles and medicines could not reach it, Hua-tuo would recognize that it was necessary to operate. In such cases, he would have his patients drink a solution of morphine powder whereupon they would immediately become intoxicated as though dead and completely insensate. Then he could make an incision and remove the

diseased tissues. If the disease were in the intestines, he would sever them and wash them out, after which he would stitch the abdomen together and rub on an ointment. After a period of about four or five days, there would be no more pain. The patient would gradually regain full consciousness and within a month he would return to normal."

Mair, Victor H. (1994) P. 688 - 689

This is a remarkably modern procedure especially given that it's almost two thousand years old; what's more these procedures were circulating in Buddhist tradition. Such surgical procedures would have been critically important in subsequent centuries when the Shàolín was involved in military affairs. Given that it was in use in Buddhist circles hundreds of years before the Shàolín Monastery's involvement in martial affairs, it reinforces the notion that Buddhist monasteries were among many other things also local hospitals.

A few wound healing herbs

In regards to the healing of Huike's wound, some candidate herbs might include *Lingzhi* mushroom (*Ganoderma lucidum* and *Ganoderma Tsugae* 靈芝) which has been used in China for more than 2,000 years, grows exclusively on mountains, and has a huge number of scientifically tested medicinal applications including specifically wound and skin healing. Chinese medicines however are usually composed of several different healing substances, herbs, roots, barks, berries, etc. according to classic formulas.

Another herb that could have been used is "*Huáng qî*" (黃耆) also called "*Běi qí"* (*Astragalus propinquus*) one of the 50 fundamental herbs used in CTM. A search of PubMed (the best available online medical research database) has some 51 different scientific studies (as of November, 2013) on different wound healing Chinese herbs. Virtually every aspect of Chinese Traditional Medicine has been extensively studied by western scientists and most have been found to have sound medical applications.

Ginseng root is a widely acknowledged herbal medicine and according to the Shàolín Internet site: "It is recorded that Master Sengchou had made soup with the ginseng of the Song Mountain for Master Bátuó," also known as "Buddhabhadra." Bátuó came to China in 464 AD and preached Hinayana (*Xiǎochéng* 小乘– the "Lesser Vehicle") Buddhism for thirty years. Because Master Bátuó preferred a place of tranquility, thirty-one years later, in 495, the Shàolín Monastery was built by the order of Emperor Xiaowen of Northern Wei for his teachings and thus he was the first Shàolín Abbot). Emperor Xiaowen established the temple for him in the Shaoshi woods of Mount Song which was later to be called "Shàolín."

Prior to his discipleship with Bátuó, Master Sengchou learned the "Sixteen Extraordinary and Victorious Methods from the Chán (Zen) Master Daoming at Mount Changgong. While eating as little food as possible and pursuing a long period of meditation practice, his already enlightened mind became even purer. Later he went to Shàolín Monastery and explained his experience to Master Fotuo, who praised Sengchou so highly as to say, "From Pamir eastward, if there is the highest state of Chán you are the person who knows it." (Kim, S. 2011)

Though Master Sengchou ate very little, he apparently knew the medicinal values of ginseng which is now one of the world's best-known medicinal roots and spices. Type "Ginseng" into PubMed and abstracts of more than 5,000 scientific studies on this healing root can be found.

The Shàolín internet site also mentions that Huguang, Batuo's other disciple had treated a patient in a coma with iron needles. An "Advanced Search" in PubMed as of this writing reveals 25 published scientific articles on "acupuncture" and "coma."

Shàolín Pharmacy

Shàolín Yào Jú 少林药局

Shàolín Pharmacy Bureau was built around 1217 AD, however it closed during the late Qing Dynasty due to political turmoil. In 2004, Shàolín Temple resumed the institution of Shàolín Medicine, and incorporated Shaolin Yaoju Co. Ltd.

Shaolin Yaoju Co. Ltd. is a research institution for researching and protecting Shàolín medicine culture, by systemically regulating and exploring the history and traditions of Shàolín Medicine. In addition, it combines traditional Shàolín medicine with modern medicine so as to better protect these treasures and benefit people.

There is a book called: *Shaolin Martial Arts Secrets of Medicine* (*Shàolín wǔgōng yī zōng mìjí* 少林武功医宗秘笈), which is composed of selected Tang, Ming and Qing Dynasty writings and illustrations compiled from diverse ancient literature. The book is composed of ten volumes, with 2,000 illustrations and by all accounts is a monument of Chinese traditional culture. This collection was a "Special Publication" collected and prepared by the *Zhonghua Book Company* (a respected publisher in China). Only 2,000 international sets were printed and some were given as gifts to foreign dignitaries visiting China for the International Olympic and Asian Games.

Although it's quite impossible to adequately summarize this amazing collection, it advocates unifying mind, emotions and breath, has illustrations of all kinds of Qigong therapy exercises, an extensive collection of (formerly) secret recipes and techniques for enhancing Kung Fu ability and promoting life extension. "What was once the possession of the mountain, served the people and then the nation, is now presented to the world."

Shàolín Dantian Breathing

Dān Tián hūxī 丹田呼吸

Dan Tians are critical focal points for meditation, Chinese medicine and martial arts. The word *Dan Tian* used by itself refers to the lower *Dan Tian* located an inch and a half or two below the navel. It is the *qì* center of the body and also the location of the body's center of gravity. When learning proper breathing techniques for meditation, Chinese medicine and martial arts students are taught "belly breathing," that is breathing with the use of the entire diaphragm down to the *Dan Tian*.

The other two major *Dan Tian* are the Heart *Dan Tian* (associated with storing *qì* and health of internal organs) and the Upper *Dan Tian* at the forehead between the eyebrows, also called the "Third Eye" by adherents of Yoga and Buddhists, especially Tibetan Buddhists. But it is the Lower *Dan Tian* that is considered critical in breathing.

An article titled *Shaolin Dan Tian Breathing Fosters Relaxed and Attentive Mind* published in the Journal of Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine, (Chan, A.S. et. al., 2011) found that "a positive effect of the Shàolín *Dan Tian* Breathing (DTB) technique on enhancing human neural activity and connectivity, which may possibly enhance mood state and cognitive functions" which in plain English means their research suggests that Shàolín breathing exercises appears to help people be happier and think better. Their literature review and research methodology were very well done and the article is essential reading for those interesting in meditation, traditional systems of medicine, especially CTM and Shàolín Medicine.

Brief Overview of the History of Chinese Traditional Medicine

CTM classic texts and theories

This history of Chinese medicine appears to date as far back as the Shang Dynasty (14th to 11th Centuries BC). Evidence from inscriptions written on bones and tortoise shells suggest that members of the royal Shang dynasty received medical treatments for a variety of ailments.

One of the oldest written documents on Chinese medicine is the Recipes for Fifty-two Ailments (*Wǔshí'èr Bìngfāng*, 五十二病方) which had been sealed in a tomb in 168 BC. It was one of the first books to write about the Yin Yang Theory of medicine and the "Five Phases" which were brought together in a sophisticated manner. It also made mention of spirits and magic.

The oldest surviving written truly scientific document on Chinese medicine is probably the *Yellow Emperor's Inner Cannon,* (*Huángdì Nèijīng*, 黄帝内经) briefly described above. It explains the relationship between humans, the environment and the cosmos.

Another truly ancient document was the "Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders and Miscellaneous Illnesses" (*Shānghán lùn*, 伤寒论) put together by Zhang Zhongjing between 196 and 220 CE at the end of the Han Dynasty. This text focused more on drug treatments rather than acupuncture and was the first to combine Ying Yang theory, the Five Phases and drug therapy. The resulting formulary was the first Chinese medical text to organize symptoms into clinical patterns (*Zheng*). This text evolved over the eons and has been sub-divided into two books, the Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders and the Essential Prescriptions of the Golden Casket (*Jīnguì Yàolüè*, 金匮要略), which were reorganized and edited separately in the 11th Century during the Song dynasty. During following centuries, the Yellow Emperor's Inner Canon was also subdivided into separate smaller works that attempted to summarize the information.

One was the Canon of Problems (*Huangdi bashiyi nanjing* 2nd Century CE). The AB Canon of Acupuncture and Moxibustion (*Zhēnjiǔ jiǎyǐ jīng* 針灸甲乙經) was compiled by Huangfu Mi sometimes between 256 and 282 CE. This work concerned mainly acupuncture. Then there was the Canon of the Pulse (*Maijing* 脈經 280) which was a comprehensive handbook on diagnostics and different therapies.

Ying Yang Theory (*yīnyáng* 阴阳) Ying Yang is not simply white and black. They are interconnected polar complements to each other. As a unity it expresses dynamics rather than a static relationship, and process rather than unchanging facts. Yin is the black with the white dot, representing cool, moist, feminine, stillness, water, receptive, hidden aspects. Yang is the white side with the black dot representing hot, dry, motion, fire, manifest, masculine characteristics. In CTM diseases are often or usually attributed to an imbalance of Yin and Yang. From a Western medical perspective this could be an imbalance of foods within one's diet, or an imbalance between diet and exercise, acid and alkaline, or any number of other dynamic relationships within the body or between the body and the environment/nature. During the Song Dynasty a philosopher named Zhou Dunyi (1017 – 1073) wrote the *Taijitu Shou* or *Explanation of the Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate*. This was very much about the dynamic balance of Yin and Yang.

The Five Phases (Elements) Theory (*Wǔxíng*) is based on the dynamic interactions between Water (*Shuǐ*), Wood (*Mù*), Fire (*Huǒ*), Earth (*Tǔ*) and Metal (*Jīn*). This may have been in some ways like an early metaphoric precursor to the periodic table. It was at that time believed that all things in the universe could be broken down into those five "elements." These elements were part of a matrix that included: Direction east, south, center, west, north, color, climate, taste, "Zhang Organ" Fu Organ, sense organ, facial parts and eye parts. Some analysis of this branch of TCM see them more as ancient mnemonic devices and uses the English language words: "movements", "phases" or "steps" rather than "elements." These five "phases" are widely used in Chinese medicine, astrology, music, and martial arts strategy.

One aspect of this cycle is that:

- Wood feeds fire
- Fire creates Earth
- Earth bears metal
- Metal carries water
- Water nourishes wood

Diagnosis

Chinese medicine has a vast array of methods with which to do diagnosis. Some of the more important tools for diagnosis can very briefly be summarized as:

Look (*wàng* 望 𥄫)
Smell (*wén* 闻)
Inquire (*wèn* 问)
Pulse (*qiè zhěn* 切诊)

Looking focuses on the face and particularly on the tongue, including analysis of the tongue size, shape, tension, color and coating.

Smelling refers mainly to body and breath odors.

Inquiries are similar to collecting a medical history

Pulse is one of the most complex branches of TCM. Generally, pulse is first and most importantly taken at the radial artery (wrist). Pulse is examined for several characteristics including rhythm, strength and volume. Particular times of day are important in pulse taking with just before dawn preferred.

Some of the more famous Chinese doctors from history

To be a physician in a Shaolin Monastery one would have had to studied widely and be familiar with past masters of the healing arts. Below are just a few of the vast constellation of famous doctors in Chinese history.

Bian Que (Biăn Què 扁鹊, 407 - 310 BC)

Bian Que is often recognized as the earliest diagnostician in history. He advocated a four-step diagnoses of 1) Looking (at the patient's tongue and outside appearance), 2) Listening (to their voice and breathing patterns), 3) Inquiring (about their symptoms), and 4) Taking (their pulse). He is the author of the *Internal Classic of Bian Que*. Acupuncture was one of his preferred treatments.

Chunyu Yi (Chúnyú yì 淳于意, also known as Cāng Gong 仓公, c. 200 BC)

Famous for keeping clinical records and case histories and using them for prognosis. He also made extensive study of the circulatory system.

Zhang Zhongjing (Zhāngzhòngjǐng 张仲, 150 – 219)

Born in Nanyang, he was one of the most famous Han Dynasty doctors and greatest Chinese doctors in history. He established the foundation upon which later Traditional Chinese Medicines were built. He is perhaps most famous for writing the "*Treatise on Cold Pathogenic and Miscellaneous Diseases*" (*Shānghán Zábìng Lùn* 傷寒雜病論)

Hua Tuo (华陀 Huá Tuó, 140 – 208)

First use of anesthetic combined with surgery. He is sometimes called the father of Chinese surgery.

Wang Shuhe (王叔和 Wáng Shūhé, 201 – 280)

Master diagnostician during the Jin Dynasty, his research on pulse diagnosis is legendary. He was the author of *The Pulse Classic* (*Mai Jing).*

Ge Hong (葛洪 Gé Hóng 284 - 364)

Ge Hong became famous for research on early chemistry, and preventive medicine and transmission of disease, especially via food and drink, as well as febrile (relating to fever) disease. His most famous writings include the "*Jin Kui Yao Fang*" and "*Zhou Hou Jiu Zu Fang*." best known for his interest in Daoism, alchemy, and techniques of longevity

Huang Fumi (皇甫谧, Huángfǔ Mì, 214-282)

Famous for his skills in acupuncture therapy he is author of one of the most famous and important texts in Chinese medical history, the "*Huang Di Zhenjiu Jia Yi Jing*" (针灸甲乙经 *Zhēnjiǔ jiǎyǐ jīng*).

Sun Simiao (孙思邈 Sūn Sīmiǎo, 581-682)

He was a child prodigy that mastered the Chinese classics by the age of 20. A renowned Tang Dynasty doctor he complied the famous *Qian Jin Yao Fan* and the *Qiang Jin Yi Fang*. His specialty areas included gynecology and obstetrics, as well as nutrition. His nicknames included the "Herbal King."

Tao Hongjing (陶弘景 Táo Hóngjǐng, 456-536)

His most famous contribution to Chinese medicine was the "Herbal Classic Notes" (本草经注, *Běncǎo jīng zhù)*, a reorganization of the *Shen Nong Ben Cao Jin*, a comprehensive listing of medicinal herbs which included 365 new herbs bringing the total of medicinal herbs used at the time to 730.

Chao Yuanfang (巢元方 Cháo Yuánfāng, 550 – 630)

Physician to the emperor, Chao categorized and described many diseases summarizing Sui Dynasty advances in medicine plus his own research. He edited and compiled the first medical book to classify the etiology and symptoms of disease, the *General Treatise on the Etiology and Symptoms of Disease (Zhubing Yuanjou Zonglun)*. This book consisted of fifty volumes with some syndromes describing the etiologies of various diseases.

Jian Zhen (鉴真 Jiànzhēn, 688~763)

Dr. Jian was a Tang Dynasty Buddhist monk. Upon invitation he, after several unsuccessful attempts, brought Traditional Chinese Medicine to Japan where it flourished.

Wang Dao (又名 Wáng Dào, 702 – 772)

Author of Medical Secrets of an Official (*Wài tái mì yào* 外台秘要) published in 752 AD Wang meticulously described over a thousand medical categories of illness and disease and six thousand herbal prescriptions.

Qian Yi (钱乙 Qián Yǐ, 1032 – 1113)

Qian Yi was author of a book on pediatric physiology, pathology, dialectical therapy and medication. The classic Chinese herbal formula text: "*Liu Wei Di Huang Wan*" (六味地黄丸 *liùwèi dìhuáng wán*) was published in "Key to Therapeutics of Children's Diseases" (*Xiǎoér Yào Zhèng Zhí Jué* 小儿药证直诀) in 1119 by Qian Yi's student.

Liu Wansu (刘完素 Liú Wánsù, 1110 – 1200)

Liu Wan-su observed the high frequency of fever and inflammation in serious diseases and promoted the idea of using herbs of cooling nature to treat these conditions. This was a step in the opposite direction of many of his predecessors, who focused on using warming herbs. This work had much influence on the later concept of epidemic febrile diseases (*wen bing*) which corresponded to (and preceded) the Western concept of contagious disease. He also undertook a detailed study of the *Yellow Emperor's Internal Canon*, medical text (300 BC *Nei Jing Su Wen* 黄帝内经素问), describing the etiology of disease in relation to the teachings of that famous text.

Zhang Yuansu (张元素 Zhāng Yuánsù, 1151-1234)

One of the most historically influential TCM doctors during the transition from China's Northern Jin Dynasty to the Mongolian Yuan Dynasty, Zhang integrated medicinal materials into the five element theory (*Wuxing*) with both five *Shen* herbs and *qì* Meridians. His most famous work was the *Bag of Pearls*, (*Zhēnzhū Náng* 珍珠囊). He helped to more clearly define the association of the "tastes" of medicines and their believed effect on the different organ systems. Zhang asserted that herbs entered into and influenced the meridians.

Zhang Zihe (张从正 Zhāng Cóng Zhèng, 1156-1228)

Zhang developed more modern methods of purgatives to clean out disease. Zhang is known as the developer of the "attacking school" of Chinese medicine, emphasizing the use of diaphoretics, emetics, and purgatives to attack the pathogen and drive it out of the body. Though some believe this was a revival of the early Han Dynasty techniques that were based on driving out demons, in fact some modern therapies use similar techniques for a variety of reasons.

Li Dongyuan (李东垣 Lǐ Dōng yuán / Li Gao, 1180 – 1252)

Li focused on disease due to injury of the digestive tract, usually due to over-eating, drinking, working too much and the seven emotions. He was author of Treatise on the Stomach and Spleen, (脾胃论 *Pí Wèi Lùn*) and famous for creating the Chinese classic herbal formula 补中益气丸 *Bu Zhong Yi Qi Wan.*

Dou Hanqing (1196-1280)

Dou Hanqing was a truly extraordinary acupuncturist, writer and teacher in the late Jin and early Yuan Dynasties. He's primarily famous for his attention to the relationships between psychological and physical conditions within the context of natural cycles, and attention to all aspects of diagnosis and acupuncture treatment. Also he is quite famous for writing easily memorized poems to help students memorize acupuncture treatments some of which are still used today. Because of his very high level of medical expertise and sterling reputation he came to be singularly honored by Yuan Dynasty Emperor Kublai Khan.

Born in Feixiang County of Hebei Province Dou had to move a lot as a child and youth due to the initial waves of Mongol conquests in north China led by Genghis Khan. In 1213 Dou was captured by Mongolian troops when they invaded Henan and Shandong. Of the 30 people captured he was the only one to escape. The rest were killed.

Dou returned to his hometown, and was collecting herbs for his sick mother when Mongolians attacked again. During this escape he received an acupuncture manuscript by Liu Zhu Ba Xue. Two years later he'd settled down again this time in Henan and was taught medicine by a famous doctor, who betrothed his daughter to Dou. Seventeen years later in 1232 Mongolians attacked Henan. This time Dou fled to Caizhou and met Li Hao, a famous acupuncturist from Shandong, who taught him from the books of Tong Ren Shu Xue Zhen Jiu Tu Jing, and Zi Wu Liu Zhu Zhen Jing. It was around this time that Dou started his own rhythmic medical writing, starting with Liu Zhu Zhi Yao Fu.

In 1235, Mongolians were attacking again, but this time led by Mongolian Prince Kublai, who was educated by Chinese tutors in Chinese language and philosophy, and was altogether unique as Mongolian leaders went, for example he allowed sieged cities to surrender without slaughter and invited scholars of Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism to join in lively debates and lectures. Fortunately, Hebei had stabilized by this time and Dou returned home. He also changed his name to Mo Zishen (Silent / Good Reputation) and continued to work at academic studies, practicing medicine and writing. His fame spread.

Before becoming the great Khan, Prince Kublai invited Dou to one of his temporary houses ("ger" in Mongolian) for consultation, however Dou declined this and subsequent official invitations several times. To persuade him to visit, Kublai had his personal envoy visit Dou in plain clothes making it difficult for Dou to refuse. Later Dou became a renowned minister of the Yuan Dynasty.

In 1261 Prince Kublai became the great Khan and granted Dou the title of "Prince's Master" (a very high ranking official) in addition to being his teacher. Dou refused the title but did accept an appoint to be a member of the Imperial Academy. In 1280 Dou was 85 and granted the title of "Great Scholar." Later that year, loved by the people and honored by the Emperor Dou, passed away and was buried in his hometown of Feixian (2009, Two Annotated Poetic Proses on Acupuncture and Moxibustion, by Dou Hanqing).

Kublai was a most unusual Prince and Emperor as mentioned in Chapter 2, who played a pivotal role in the creation of the North Shaolin Monastery, but few histories of this remarkable emperor mention his interest in Chinese medicine or the unique relationship he forged with Dou Hanqing.

Zhu Danxi (朱丹溪 Zhū Dānxī /Zhu Zhenheng, 1281 – 1358)

Discovered that most chronic disease stemmed from overindulgence in unhealthy (drinking, eating, etc.) activities resulting in dysfunction of the Yin system. He recommended temperance and tonic formulas, focusing on the kidney and liver. A city in China, near Anxi in what is now Gansu Province, was named Suoyang. A 7th Century General named Xue Rengui and his army survived a siege there by eating a plant also called "*Suoyang*." It was first mentioned by Zhu Danxi in *Supplement and Expansion of Materia Medica*, (*Bencao Yanyi Buyi*) in 1347. It was an ingredient in his recipe for Hidden Tiger Pills (*Huquian Wan)* used for impotence and/or weak legs. Extensive modern scientific research has found it may be useful in stimulating the immune system. His most famous work was "Theories on the underlying principles of excess," (格致余论 *Gézhì Yú Lùn).*

Li Shizhen (李时珍 Lǐ Shízhēn, 1518 – 1593)

Li Shizhen's father, Li Yanwen and grandfather were local doctors but they were treated badly by local officials. At first Li Shizhen tried to pass the examination to become a local official himself, but mysteriously failed. Later, he decided to devote himself whole-heartedly to medicine. China's greatest naturalist he was author of the book *Bencao Gang Mu*, (本草纲目) in 1596. The book has details about more than 1,800 drugs including 1,100 illustrations and 11,000 prescriptions. He also published other books, such as *Ping Hu Mai Xue*, *Qi Jing Ba Mai Kao* and so on. He is considered by many to be China's greatest natural scientists, herbalists and acupuncturists.

Wang Kentang (王肯堂 Wáng Kěntáng, 1549 – 1613)

Wang was a Buddhist court official who later became a physician. He collected information about medicine and produced the *Standards of Diagnosis and Treatment of Six Branches of Medicine* (六科准绳 *Liù kē zhǔnshéng*) published in 1602 AD; it became the most widely used medical book of the 17th century.

Wu Youxing (吴有性 Wú Yǒu Xìng, 1582 – 1652)

Wu developed the concept that some diseases were caused by transmissible agents, which he called *li qì* (pestilential factors).

Ye Tianshi (叶天士 Yè Tiānshì 1690 – 1745) His book *Treatise on Acute Epidemic Febrile Diseases* (*Wēn rè lùn* 瘟疫论) can be regarded as the main etiological work that brought forward the concept of germs as a cause of epidemic diseases. His first great study was on Typhoid fever.

Wang Qingren (王清任 Wáng Qīng Rèn 1768 – 1831)

Greatest early modern study of anatomy used to diagnose and treat disease. He was also famous for dissection and surgery which had largely been ignored in Chinese medicine since Hua Tou. He promoted the idea that many diseases were caused by a lack of blood circulation. He prescribed many blood vitalizing formulas.

Legendary Chinese Doctors – Conclusions

Even from the above very incomplete list one can get a feeling for the evolution of the modern science of medicine. Certainly, new medicines and technologies have been added to the arsenal of doctors to fight disease, but Chinese medicine is different from Western in that it is prevention and systems oriented, focusing on causality more than treating symptoms. Certainly, in extreme cases western medicine can offer the best treatments, but for most problems, the slower acting, more natural, less harmful Chinese medical treatments are definitely the best.

Scientific Speculation on the Mystery of "*Qì*"

(气 Simplified Chinese, 氣 Traditional)

What is Qì ("Chi" in Taiwan and "Ki" in Japanese)?

Several westerners have tried to translate the word "qi." One was a Dutch physician named Willem ten Rhijne who worked for the Dutch East India Company in Japan from 1674- 1676. He reported Chinese and Japanese practitioners successfully treating a wide range of disorders, including pain, internal organ problems, emotional disorders and infectious diseases with acupuncture. Willem Ten Rhijne accurately translated the Chinese character for *qi* as "air" in his reports to the Dutch government and subsequent book: "*Dissertatio de Arthritide: Mantissa Schematica: De Acupunctura: Et Orationes Tres,*" the first book about acupuncture published in Europe.

Another attempt to translate the word qi was by Georges Soulie de Morant who lived in China from 1901 to 1917. He translated the Yellow Emperor's Internal classic (*Huangdi Neijing*), and translated the word "qi" as "energy." This translation has stuck firmly in the Western world, sometimes put together with other modifiers like "intrinsic energy," suggesting some kind of mystical qualities. In fact, this definition is probably the least accurate of many, certainly less accurate than Ten Rhijne's "air." A study of the history of the Chinese character for qi suggests over the centuries it has had many meanings corresponding to things in the real world, like "steam," "air," "oxygen," though in some cases it is used in more modern history in an abstract way, like spirit and energy.

Another questionable interpretation by Soulie de Morant was of the Chinese "Xue Mai" which he translated as "meridian," though "blood vessels," i.e. arteries, veins and corpuscles would have been more accurate.

In fact, acupuncture is not a "mystical" science using magical mechanisms, but rather, in most cases uses needle insertion to increase blood flow and thereby oxygenation, though in some cases for other things like stimulating the auto-immune system, e.g. production of different kinds of T-Cells, and/or re-directing (tricking) the auto-immune system (in cases of arthritis for example, treating the Yin to affect that Yang, and vice versa), increasing endorphin production, neurological interference with pain pathways, directing EM flow into acupoints (Kim S.B. et. al. 2014), etc. Certainly, acupuncture can and does work via a number of different, empirically based often synergistic physiological mechanisms. Though all are not clearly understood, medical researchers have progressively over the past 50 years discovered more and more of the science underlying acupuncture.

According to the textbook used in CTM training programs *Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion*,

> "*Qi* in traditional Chinese medicine denotes both the essential substances of the human body which maintain its vital activities, and the functional activities of the zang-fu organs and tissues."
>
> Cheng, Xinnong (Chief Ed.) 2012 *Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion*, P. 53

This textbook organizes *qì* into the following main categories:

- *Yuan qì* (primary *qì*) derived from congenital essence,
- *Zong qì* (pectoral *qì*) is formed by the combination of *qing qì* (clean *qì*) which is inhaled by the lung, and the *qì* of food essence which is produced by the spleen and stomach and promotes heart and lung function.
- *Ying qì* (nutrient *qì*) derived from the *qì* of food essence produced by the spleen and stomach, yin *qì* circulates in the vessels. It is closely related with blood and sometimes called ""*ying* blood."

- *Wei qì* (defensive *qì*) which is also derived from the *qì* of food but unlike *ying qì* is circulates outside the vessels. It functions to protect the muscular surface, defend the body against exogenous pathogenic factors, control the opening and closing of the pores, moisten the skin and hair, readjust body temperature, and warm up the *zang-fu* organs.

The activities of *qì* are called:

- *Qìhua*, which has two meanings. Firstly, it refers to mutual transformation among essence, *qì*, body fluid and blood, and it implies certain bodily functions, for example the function of the bladder in discharging urine.

Chinese literature uses this word to describe an even wider variety of phenomenon, from steam (like that coming off a cooking rice pot) to air, lightning, energy, power, etc. which individually or working synergistically could be called "*qì*."

Taken together one could speculate that *qì* is a collection of mechanisms that work together to fuel the universe and enhance performance in all-natural systems.

Zhu Ming (A translator of "The Medical Classic of the Yellow Emperor, published by the Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 2001) wrote in his Introduction to this great classic of CTM that:

> "The 'essential qi' is the source of the generation and formation of everything. The ancient Chinese philosophers regarded that the source of the cosmos was the essential qi... original qi. The qì is an invisible materialistic element that forms everything…. Man is endowed with the essential qi from nature and it is called essential qi, vital qi or original qi."

He went on to write that "*qì* is used in many compound words like: "true *qì*, ancestral *qì*, nutritive *qì*, defensive *qì*, liver *qì*, spleen *qì*, heart *qì*," etc."

This kind of quote reinforces the notion that different but related concepts are at work here.

The "essential *qì*" could be something that physicists are searching for, the fundamental or "essential" building blocks of matter for example. Molecules are made of atoms; atoms are made of particles called protons, neutrons and electrons. Protons and neutrons which are called hadrons are made of things called quarks and gluons, and physicists are searching for something even smaller… So far more than 50 subatomic particles have been identified with one theoretical particle earning itself special attention called the Higgs particle. Many physicists, if not most believe that this Higgs particle is the carrier of a field that pervades all space and interacts with all other particles.

On the other hand, essential *qì* used in the above context could be the "unified field force," (经典统一场论) that Einstein was looking for and never found (whose secret may be locked somewhere in the Higgs particle). Einstein identified four basic forces in the universe: gravitational, strong and weak intra-atomic forces and electromagnetic forces.

A particle like the neutrino, which sometimes is and sometimes is not, could have been the spark that was present at the creation of the universe, being the only thing, it would have been infinitely large and small at the same time, leading to the Big Bang.

> "This doctrine, Mahāmati, as it is held by the philosophers, is this: When the grasping of an objective world ceases the continuation of the Vijñānas is stopped; and when there is no more of this continuation in the Vijñānas, the continuation that has been going on since beginningless time is also destroyed. Mahāmati, the philosophers maintain that there is a first cause from which continuation takes place; they do not maintain that the eye-Vijñāna arises from the interaction of form and light; they assume another cause. What is this cause, Mahāmati? Their first cause is known as Spirit (Pradhāna), Soul (Purusha), Lord (Iśvara), Time, or Atom."
>
> Suzuki, D.T. (Trans., 1931) *Lankavatara Sūtra*

Though this kind of description of essential *qì* is loaded fascinating possibilities, it doesn't explain everything about *qì* either.

"Ancestral *qì*" (*yuánqì* 元气 - primary congenital *qì*) on the other hand would probably have to be carried in and/or around the DNA.

"Nutritive *qì*" (Zōngqì 宗气 - pectoral *qì*, Yíng *qì* 营气 - nutrient *qì* and Wèi *qì* 卫气- defensive *qì*) would probably have to be derived from the right combinations of air, foods, water and possibly sunlight; it might include something like blood sugar, and/or some enzyme.

Zōngqì sounds like oxygen, Yíng *qì* sounds like its carried in the blood, whereas Wèi *qì* sounds like adaptive immune system, including the lymphatic and lymphoid systems.

But, trying to find exact parallels between western medicine and CTM is a difficult task, albeit one that will provide topics for researchers in decades and possibly centuries to come.

To have every subatomic particle, electron, atom, molecule, cell, and bodily system functioning properly, obviously the right DNA and environmental nutrition would be required. Thus, related systems must be at work, but related how?

According to the Medical Classic of the Yellow Emperor they must be aligned with nature:

> "Only sages respond to the heaven to nurture their heads, respond to the earth or nurture their legs and respond to human matters to nurture the five zang-organs. The heavenly qì flows to the lungs. The earthly qì runs to the throat. The wind qi goes to the liver. The thunder qì gets to the heart. The grain qi flows to the spleen. The rain qì rushes to the kidneys.. The six channels are the rivers of the body.
>
> "To analogize man and nature: Sweat could be named rain, gasp could be named Speedy Wind, and rage could be named Thunder. The reverse qì of a man is similar to the heavenly qì not descending and the earthly qì not ascending. So, if health care does not observe the rules of heaven and earth, mishaps will certainly occur."
>
> Ming, Zhu (Tr. 2001) *The Medical Classic of the Yellow Emperor*, P. 19

Obviously, everything here is not to be taken literally. The writer uses analogies liberally. Secondly, the right kind of interactions between heavenly *qì*, earth *qì* and human *qì* flowing through the six channels is obviously essential for health.

A few examples: the "heavenly *qì* flows to the lungs." Here *qì* could be oxygen, and how well one's body can absorb and circulate oxygen. Thus, the quality of one's air might be important for good overall *qì*. Fresh mountain and ocean air tends to have more oxygen than say a crowded movie theater with poor ventilation in a big city. Also, good breathing habits, good lung and heart functioning, and sufficient iron in the blood help the body uptake and circulate oxygen better.

Shàolín Kung Fu, Tai Chi and Yoga teachers describe earth *qì* as flowing up from the earth, through the feet, the body and out the top of the head.

The earth consists mostly of molten iron which has a strong magnetic current.

These currents are known to have diurnal characteristics wherein the general direction of flow is towards the sun. Telluric currents will move between each half of the terrestrial globe at all times. Telluric currents move towards the equator during the daytime and toward the poles at night. These electric currents play across the human skin and acupuncture points like a rhythmic massage, or perhaps like the harp or guzheng players fingers across the strings of our meridians, interacting with all kinds of biochemical cycles.

Thus, another "*qi* mechanism" may be earth electromagnetic flow.

It is possible that the electrical nature of living cells stimulates resonance in a similar coherent, phased and polarized fashion as the earth energy that affects it, forming a synchronous system throughout nature and the human body. Likewise, humans evolved with lunar and solar electromagnetic fields (which might be called "heavenly," by some).

Interestingly, electromagnetic field effects on biological systems act as generalized stressors. Certainly, the sun wakes us up, darkness helps us relax (usually) and some people feel more energy during at the appearance of the new moon and leading up to the full moon.

Many years ago, a journal called "*Science*" published an article which told the story of some researchers that investigated electrical conductivity of the skin and found a map of points that were more conductive than others. Left on a lab table with no apparent use, another researcher walked in and asked: "What are you doing with the acupuncture map?"

This kind of story begs the question, "Why would natural evolution build into animals' sensitivity to electromagnetic (EM) fields?"

The answer is obvious: species that followed natural cycles of rest and activity, like night and day, within lunar cycles, survived better than those that didn't.

If indeed evolution built into humans and animals points on the skin that are more electrically conductive than others, how is this related to acupuncture? The answer could be as simple as needles (or acupressure) "triggering" or focusing EM energy into "soft spots" (more electrically conductive areas). This could for example trigger local "injury potential" messages to the brain which in turn sends out recuperative signals including inflammation from increased blood flow which carries additional oxygen, and an influx of healing white blood cells.

The research going on these days is fascinating.

An article titled: "*Evaluation of Applied Kinesiology meridian techniques by means of surface electromyography (sEMG): demonstration of the regulatory influence of antique acupuncture points*" reported:

> "We demonstrated the central working principles, i.e. sedation and tonification, of Applied Kinesiology through the use of specific acupoints that have an influence on manual muscle tests. Sedation decreases RMS signal in sEMG, whereas tonification increases it."
>
> Roy Moncayo and Helga Moncayo (2009)

An article in Wall Street Journal stated the following:

> "Studies in the early 1980s found that acupuncture works in part by stimulating the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals, much like vigorous exercise does. Now, a growing body of research suggests that it may have several mechanisms of action. Those include stimulating blood flow and tissue repair at the needle sites and sending nerve signals to the brain that regulate the perception of pain and reboot the autonomic nervous system, which governs unconscious functions such as heart beat, respiration and digestion, according to

> Alejandro Elorriaga, director of the medical acupuncture program at McMaster University in Ontario, which teaches a contemporary version to physicians."
>
> Melinda Beck (2010) "*Decoding an Ancient Therapy*"

At the end of this chapter there is a list of journals that publish articles relating to CTM.

Compound Chinese words using "*Qì*"

The word "*qì*" in Chinese is sometimes used alone, and is used in many, many compound words. The following is only a partial list but may convey the ubiquitous nature of this word and its' applications.

霸气 Bàqì	Aggressiveness / hegemony / domineering
臭气 Chòuqì	Stink, bad smell
出气 Chūqì	Venting anger
大气 Dàqì	Atmosphere, heavy breathing, open minded, grand and magnificent, generous
赌气 Dǔqì	To act rashly out of a feeling of injustice
毒气 Dúqì	Poison gas / toxic gas / manifestation of passion, anger etc. (Buddhism)
大气层 Dàqìcéng	Earth's atmosphere
风气 Fēngqì	General mood; established practice; common practice; atmosphere
贯气 Guànqì	Beneficial influence, esp. friends and from one's ancestral graves
骨气 Gǔqì	Integrity, unyielding character / courageous spirit / integrity / moral backbone

鼓气 Gǔqì	To puff up / to swell up / to inflate / to blow air into something / (fig.) to encourage / to support
精气神 Jīngqìshén	Three energies of Chinese medicine: 精, 氣｜气, and 神
	The above three energies are:
精, Jīng	essence / extract / vitality / energy / semen / sperm / mythical spirit / highly perfected / elite / the pick of something / proficient (refined ability) / extremely (fine)
氣 & 气 *Qì*	Gas / air / smell / weather / to make angry / to annoy / to get angry / vital energy
神 Shén	God / unusual / mysterious / soul / spirit / divine essence / lively / spiritual being
空气 Kōngqì	Air
口气 Kǒuqì	Spoken manner (maybe bad breath)
脾气 Píqqì	Temper/temperament
气氛 Qìfēn	Atmosphere (feeling)
气候 Qìhòu	Climate
气化 Qìhuà	To vaporize / evaporation / carburetion / transformation in traditional Chinese medicine (i.e. transformation of yin yang vital breath)
气他一下 Qìtāyīxià	Make him angry

气体 Qìtǐ	Gas (i.e. gaseous substance)
气味 Qìwèi	Odor / scent
气温 Qìwēn	Air temperature
气滞 Qìzhì	Stagnation of *qì* (traditional Chinese medicine)
生气 Shēngqì	Get angry
神气 Shénqì	Expression / manner / vigorous / impressive / lofty / pretentious
手气 Shǒuqì	Luck
受气 Shòuqì	To suffer maltreatment / be blamed/ a bullied (person)
疏肝理气 Shūgānlǐqì	To course the liver and rectify (traditional Chinese medicine)
书生气 Shūshēngqì	Characteristics of a scholar
香气 Xiāngqì	Fragrance / aroma / incense
邪气 Xiéqì	Evil influence / unhealthy trend / pathogeny (cause of disease) in traditional Chinese medicine / as opposed to vital energy
心气 Xīnqì	Intention, aspiration, ambition, will, state of mind, fresh mind, heart *qì* in traditional Chinese medicine
洋气 Yángqì	Foreign styles and trends

英气 Yīngqì Heroic spirit

硬气 Yìngqì Firm / unyielding / strong-willed

义气 Yìqì Spirit of loyalty and self-sacrifice / code of brotherhood

勇气 Yǒngqì Courage / valor

Some Chinese expressions using the word: *Qì*

荡气回肠 Dàngqìhuícháng: Heart-rending (drama, music, poem etc.) / deeply moving

和胃力气 Héwèilìqì: To harmonize the stomach and rectify *qì*

气味相投 Qìwèixiāngtóu: Birds of a feather; be like-minded

心平气和 Xīnpíngqìhé: In a calm state of mind

正气浩然 Zhēng qì hào rán: Healthy environment/energy vast / expansive / overwhelming

The above translations primarily from:

https://www.mdbg.net/chinese/dictionary

Chapter Conclusions

Shàolín medicine uses the full range of CTM and most of the mysteries of *qì* have yet to unfold, however someone with the right science background, open-minded attitude and curiosity could well move humanity through a new paradigm shift in our understanding of health and medicine.

The roots of Chinese Medicine, flowing from the most ancient prehistoric times, through Emperor Shénnóng, the Shàolín Monasteries, other masters of medicine and into the modern world have yielded flowers and fruit the world is only beginning to understand and enjoy. Is it even possible to imagine a world free of disease and hunger, where people can live in peace and harmony? Such are the dreams of the sages of old and most of the answers can be found in the writings of those very same ancient sages.

The formulas are mostly very simple. Take time in meditation, relax body and mind, be aware of breathing and eat fresh healthy foods. Most human problems come from the tyranny of ego and imagining of things that are essentially not real and can be prevented with a good/clean and simpler mind.

Vegetarian alternatives to meat require far less energy to produce and don't require killing sentient beings. They are also not loaded with artificial hormones and antibiotics like many meats.

The practice of Qì Gong exercises, from simple stretches to dancing, martial arts and more formal systems help people rediscover the naturalness of human movement and energy flow.

If someone has problems that western medicine can't help alternatives like herbal medicines, *Qì* Gong and acupuncture are clearly worth a try.

Though wars destroyed many of the buildings of the Shàolín, their simple basic teachings on how to live a healthy life remain as fresh as in days of old. In the tapestry of life those peaceful threads woven through the Shàolín Monasteries remain as vibrant, colorful and powerful as ever. Much has been made of Shàolín martial art Kung Fu specifically and Chinese martial arts in general, but an equal or even greater legacy is found in Shàolín and Chinese medicine, the

most powerful Kung Fu of all, for in harmonizing one's own Yin and Yang, and creating harmony between people and nature one finds the path to health and enlightenment. This is the one and most powerful legacy of Chan (Buddhism), Shaolin and China.

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CTM Journals

Chinese Medicine Journal (Open access journal)

https://cmjournal.biomedcentral.com/ Journal of Acupuncture and Tuina Science

https://www.springer.com/journal/11726 Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine

Recently published articles from Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine (Open access journal)

http://www.journaltcm.com/

Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine (in Chinese)

http://www.cjcmm.com.cn/WKE/WebPublication/index.aspx?mid=ZGZY

Journal of Chinese Integrative Medicine (Open access journal)

https://www.springer.com/journal/11655

Journal of Medicinal Plants Research (Open access journal)

https://academicjournals.org/journal/JMPR

Chapter 6 - Fighting, War and Peace

搏杀战争 和 和平

Bóshā zhànzhēng hé hépíng

"Evolution tends to favor extra aggression over extra caution as those species that fought when it wasn't necessary tended to survive better than those didn't fight when it was necessary."

~ ~ ~

"Let him who desires peace prepare for war."

by Flavium Vegetius Renatus, 4th Century (His military treatise *De Rei Militari* was the bible of European warfare for more than 1,200 years.)

Introduction

People of peace have always wondered about why humans fight and kill. Likewise, one might wonder, why would Buddhism, a religion and philosophy of peace and non-violence have a Shàolín Temple that fosters martial arts? The answers to these questions may be found in the evolution of life, the evolution of human social and economic systems and also within the philosophy of Buddhism.

Where did it all begin?

Astronomers think the Big Bang – the creation of the universe - happened between 12 and 14 billion years ago. The solar system is about 4.5 billion years old. Scientists think life began on earth about 3.75 billion years ago. The first living things were bacteria, one-celled prokaryotes. The food chain (where the big fish eat the little fish) began very shortly thereafter.

The concept of "food chains" was first introduced by the African-Arab scientist and philosopher Al-Jahiz in the 9th century and was later popularized in a book published in 1927 by Charles Elton, which also introduced the food web concept.

Scientists that tend to argue about just about everything agree that life on earth evolved with the food chain/web for about the last 3,750,000,000 years.

There are all kinds of other relationships like symbiotic relationships where two species of life help each other. Evolution has been guided by many forces like endoadaption (the ability to adapt to the environment which might include fighting off hungry predators and diseases and adapting to environmental kinds of changes like ice ages), and intra-selection (selection within the species for mates, which is determined by many factors including fighting ability, physical attractiveness and personality).

In biology there is a law which states: "Ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny," which means "the growth and development of an individual reflects the growth and development of the species." For example, a human fetus breathes in the womb through something rather similar to a fish gill, reflecting back to the time in our evolution when our ancestors were fish.

If the growth and development of a single human life summarizes all of evolution, Buddha's teachings of non-violence only occurred about 20 seconds ago, given that we are distilling 3.75 billion years (of evolution) into about 72 years (the average human life span).

Before our ancient pre-human ancestors climbed up into the trees they were meat eaters, and human eye-teeth and incisors are evidence of that. In the trees our human ancestors became herbivores; our flat molar teeth are evidence of that. Human ancestors were almost all vegetarian, *(*Dunn, R., 2012).

Our tree dwelling vegetarian ancestors are mainly fruits, nuts, and vegetables—especially fungus-covered tropical leaves with some insects and the occasional tree frog thrown in here and there. Even after coming down from the trees our ape ancestors - the genus Australopithecus - were herbivores.

At that point in evolution our pre-human ancestors needed each other far more than we do now. Our ancestors were not the fastest runners, didn't have the biggest teeth and were not particularly muscular compared to other large animals.

Humans survived during that time because of our ability to cooperate. Some theorists go so far as to suggest that early humans may have evolved something like a "god mind" in the brain to facilitate cooperation within and between the tribes because of the absolute need for the tribe(s) to act as one when competing against other predators (like saber tooth tigers) and the elements.

The largest brains in human evolution were those of the Cro-Magnons, who were European ice-age hunter-gatherers. Meat is the primary source of energy in the hunter-gatherer diet. The second largest brains were those of the Neanderthals - also hunter-gatherers - whose diet consisted mainly of meat.

Current Western Europeans according to recent D.N.A. studies, are largely descended from European ice-age hunter-gatherers, however their brains are about 300 cc smaller. This reduction in brain volume took place after the transition from a hunter-gatherer diet to an agricultural diet; in the latter, carbohydrates from grain products formed an additional major source of energy which did not exist before the invention of agriculture, thus reducing the need to eat meat.

There are some rough but clear parallels between brain evolution and location on the food chain. Predators tend to be smarter than their prey.

Most modern humans are omnivorous, which means humans eat almost anything. However, the human stomach is not designed for a heavy diet of grass like the noble cow, which has four chambers in their stomachs to digest food that humans would starve to death on. Instead each species has different nutritional requirements. Some berries that birds happily eat will kill humans.

None-the-less, humans can live solely on vegetarian food provided that we get enough essential nutrition, including protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals and fiber.

Vegetarians who are not careful with their diet often suffer from Vitamin B12 deficiency, and or an insufficient amount of protein, but these essential food substances can be supplied from vegetarian foods if the person is careful with their diet.

Thus, modern humans don't really need to slaughter and devour other animals to survive. But, for most people it's culturally appropriate so they engage in the killing (indirectly) and eating of animal flesh.

In a way we humans have transcended the food chain, at least in terms of eating animals. Still most humans do kill animals for food, and most unfortunately some "humans" also kill other humans for a variety of reasons usually not related to eating.

Psychology and physiology of aggression

Sigmund Freud, often called the "father of modern psychology" believed that humans are primarily motivated by sex and aggression. His belief was rooted in the then new discoveries in brain anatomy and also upon his investigation of human dreams. Later psychologists identified a rather large number of other "primary" human needs/motivators including a need for transcendence, i.e. Carl Jung and Abraham Maslow. Hermann Hesse (the author of *Siddhartha*) was a student of Carl Jung, and Abraham Maslow's book *The Further Reaches of Human Nature* is required reading for many psychology students. None-the-less, to some extent Freud was probably right; two of the deepest, oldest and most powerful human drives are sex and aggression.

Seven major kinds of aggression (*Qīnlüè* 侵略)

The most comprehensive research on human and animal aggression over the last 50 years was by Kenneth Moyer who organized a massive number of studies on human and animal aggression into seven major categories:

1) Predatory (*Lüèshí* 掠食)

2) Inter-male (*Nánrén zhī jiān de zhàndòu* 男人之间的战斗)

3) Fear induced (*Yǐnqǐ kǒngjù* 引起恐惧)

4) Irritable (*Bàozào* 暴躁)

5) Territorial (*Lǐngtǔ* 领土)

6) Maternal (*Mǔqīn* 母亲)

7) Instrumental (or learned aggression, like for example war). (*Xuéxí Qīnlüè* 学习侵略)

Understanding these categories in some detail helps a lot to understanding many of human's less desirable behaviors.

1) Predators hunt and eat prey; this is the fundamental relationship in the food chain. Predatory aggression is characterized by the 1) silent stalk, 2) watching and waiting for the best time to attack, 3) chase and leap 4) bite to the neck, 5) eating the prey, usually beginning in the abdominal cavity. This is an example of "classic food chain."
2) Inter-male aggression is usually ritualized and done for dominance within a group or fighting with another male specifically over reproduction rights to a female. In this form of aggression males will and often do injure each other, but almost never kill each other. It appears that in inter-male fighting killing is prohibited. Killing within a species is quite rare in nature (except for "humans").
3) Fear induced aggression is best exemplified by the cornered animal that will exceed all limitations to survive including vastly increased body strength and speed in anticipation of fighting.
4) Irritable aggression is elicited by relentless noxious stimulation resulting in an aggressive response to end that pain. Pain induced aggression is a subcategory of irritable aggression. In a now classic experiment researchers put two rats in a cage with an electrified floor and then suddenly

without warning gave them both electrical shocks. Interestingly the rats immediately attacked each other.

5) Territorial aggression – humans (and other) animals will fight and kill to maintain their territory.
6) Maternal aggression – mothers will fight and kill to protect their children (except for example pig mothers who must be separated from their babies because they sometimes accidentally eat them.)
7) Instrumental (learned) aggression is probably the most dangerous form of aggression of all, though not like the above six hardwired into our genes. Instrumental aggression is learned behavior and explains the most terrible killing behavior in humans: war. In wars humans do not want to eat each other, are generally not fighting over reproductive rights, usually are not acting out of fear, etc. Instead people fight wars because they learn it is the "right thing" to do.

Readers interested in research on human and animal fighting should refer to the writings of Konrad Lorenz, and also J. Michael Crabtree's "*Bibliography of Aggressive Behavior – a Readers Guide to the Research Literature*."

The final conclusion on this section is that humans are "hardwired" with a lot of (mostly midbrain) circuitry designed for fighting and killing (This would be one kind of congenital, ancestral, primary qì (元气 *yuánqì* – See chapter on Chinese Medicine).

Though this sounds like humans are doomed to live lives of endless aggression, this isn't necessarily so.

In some unusually peaceful cultures and people however, that circuitry never gets "woken up," (discussed later in this chapter).

But once that circuitry for violence does get woken up it's pretty darned difficult to put that genie back in the bottle, hence the need for the great religions to threaten people (with eternal damnation, endless cycles of rebirth as lowly creatures, etc.) not to kill each other.

Buddhists and (some) Hindus even go so far as to tell their followers to not kill other animals. People have incredible potential for peace and cooperation as well as violence, and our behaviors are determined both by the circuitry carried in our DNA and the extent to which that potential is woken by our environment. Religions in general teach people peace in order to build more stable and harmonious cultures.

The evolution of war

Some scientists believe that the human drift out of Africa took place less than 100,000 years ago populating Australia, New Zealand, many Pacific islands, Asia, Europe, and all of the Americas. Current estimates suggest a world population of about 3 million at 35,000 BC.

By the time agriculture was getting started in the Fertile Crescent, about 10-12 thousand years ago human population had increased to an estimated 10 to 15 million. Anthropological evidence suggests that the first wars were around that time, not long after humans started farming and the rise of settled cities. Before that humans were mostly nomadic hunters and gatherers, grouped into tribes that tended to have about the same access to food, obviating the need for wars.

Thus, humans have not always warred as most people believe. Even today some tribes of humans did and do not war, engage in aggression or even competition.

For example, the culture of the Semai, the peaceful people of Malaya have no government and no police. Instead they have a non-competitive "gift economy." Semai children are never punished or forced to do anything against their will. The games of their children are also non-competitive. The Semai culture makes no distinction between private and public.

An interesting list of peaceful societies can be found on the Internet site: peacefulsocieties.org. These cultures individually and collectively prove that humans can live without the aggression and violence most people think are intrinsic parts of human nature. (Of course, that internet site and/or the people that built it might get eaten at any time, so it's best to check it now while it's still there.)

Conclusions

The history of violence between living things on earth is as old as life itself however cultures can live without violence. "*Ahimsa*" or non-violence should be the guidepost for all civilized humans. It may be a "natural state," but it can also definitely be learned.

Certainly, it is true that violence begets violence in an endless chain of karma as Buddhists believe. It appears that wars began shortly after the rise of farming in human social and economic evolution, as one group, by virtue of planning and work had more than others, suggesting that the root causes of war may involve inequality. Thus, some answers to this problem of endless violence may come from more equal education such that individuals and entire groups do not suffer from great disparities in opportunities, either in the material or spiritual worlds engendering the kind of inequalities that led to those first and subsequent wars.

And it is also true that weakness invites disaster, as noted by the quote attributed to Flavium Vegetius Renatus at the opening of this chapter. Historically the Shàolín helped protect China, and Buddhism by virtue of its' spiritual and physical strength. Perhaps today also the strength of its multifaceted teachings and leadership can play a similar role. Protecting life is the first responsibility of a Buddhist.

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Chapter 7 - Future of North Shàolín Temple

北少林的未来

Běi shàolínde wèilái

(Author's Opinion)

Shàolín Abbot Shi Yong Xin has been expanding the Shàolín in a brilliant and conservative fashion. His first goals have been to rebuild the Shàolín monasteries and bring back Vinaya, the traditional rule system that historically governed Chán Buddhist Monasteries in China for most of their histories. He wisely chooses to nurture a pure and good Chán Buddhist Shàolín with a solid foundation true to its roots. This certainly is reasonable. Simultaneously, I hope that once that solid foundation is firmly established, he can move forward towards expanding the Shàolín into some or all of the directions outlined below.

Chán Buddhism has from the time of Bodhidharma been different from Indian Buddhism as Yamada Mumon noted in the Forward to the book *The Record of Linji* (Sasaki, 2009): "Indian Buddhism is distinctly contemplative, quietist, and inclined to speculative thought. By contrast, Chinese Buddhism is practical and down-to-earth, active, and in a sense transcendental at the same time."

What might the future Shaolin Monasteries be like?

There could for example be a Shàolín University with colleges like medicine (both CTM and Western Medicine, with specialties in sports medicine [18] and vegetarian nutrition), law (national and international), political science (specializing in diplomacy [19]),

[18] Fascinating research is going on in human performance enhancement, like muscle growth, accelerating bone regrowth and in other sports medicine areas, including imagery training for enhanced performance, etc.

[19] The Shaolin has a long, long history in diplomacy. According to Chou Hai Tu Bian (Illustrated Book on Maritime Defense – Ming Dynasty writer Zheng Ruoceng), Buddhist monks were asked to negotiate between the first Song Dynasty Emperor Taizong and the Japanese invaders. Among other strategies they gave gifts including gold and silk, gems, crystal bottles, black ink, and seals. (P. 166) Later the Japanese tried to buy land from the Chinese offering silk pots, wooden boxes, perfume and clothes which they gave to the Governor. (P. 166- 168).

history, Chinese cultural studies, psychology with emphasis on conflict resolution and peace research, mental health facilitation, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, anthropology (with majors in cultural and physical anthropology, with special attention to archeology), and business.

It would be very nice to see a Shàolín Vegetarian Restaurant franchise[20], Shàolín fashion brands (light gray, loose, formal, casual and sportswear), Shàolín Sports Equipment (emphasis on martial arts training gear), Shàolín nutrition (vegetarian protein powder, vitamins, etc.), and Shàolín Entertainment (including music and movies).

Naturally there would have to be stringent quality assessment and controls in order to use the Shaolin name.

The Shàolín Monasteries support myriad charitable causes and human needs both inside and outside China. These needs are huge beyond measure. There could be Shàolín schools, daycares and kindergartens for the very young, nursing homes for the elderly, hospitals, drug and alcohol treatment centers, and health clubs – all clean, honest and state of the art. Again, very high-level quality control measures have to be built into every stage of every design and operation. To speed up this kind of growth, Shàolín could joint venture with already existing business entities that have the kind of qualities and goals shared by the Shàolín.

The Shàolín Central Library should be one of the finest in the world because historically Buddhists in China were the largest class of well-educated people and today really should strive to live up to that heritage. They'd have to network with all major libraries in the world to ensure maximum access to the most ancient and modern resources in the world.

[20] I was rather disappointed when I went to Panshan in 2011 and found out there was no vegetarian restaurant in the entire town or even neighboring towns. As of this writing (2014) there is no vegetarian restaurant there.

Given the needs to learn more about Chinese history in general and Shàolín history specifically, it would be very nice if the Shàolín could start up some sort of *Translator Resource Network*. Not too many people can read, for example, Ming Dynasty Chinese, and being able to access those individuals would be very helpful for people with real research needs.

The Shàolín could definitely benefit from advertising its charities more and letting people know how to donate.

I'd also like to see more women monks. Buddhist temples are not like the stereotypes portrayed in movies where people can escape from reality. Chán in particular is just the opposite: getting in touch with reality; realities greater than individual egos and superficial desires. Women clearly have these needs the same as men. As I understand it there are no women Shàolín monks at this time yet they can and should be a powerful force for good in the world just the same as men. The path to enlightenment includes transcendence of dualities and gender is just one more illusion. Monks were the original selfless social workers.

According to legend, a Shàolín Buddhist nun and abbess, Ng Mui (Wǔ Méi Shī Tài 五枚師太) witnessed a fight between a crane and a snake. Ng Mui incorporated those movements into her own style of Kung Fu to form a new style, which she later taught to her student, Yim Wing Chun, and thus was born the Wing Chun (詠春 Yǒng Chūn) style of Kung Fu, which passed through several generations to Yip Man (Yè Wèn 叶问), the teacher of Bruce Lee.

It was Bruce Lee that made Kung Fu enormously popular in the U.S. in the 1970s, creating a huge market, which encouraged the Chinese government to begin to open up and rebuild the Songshan Shàolín for a movie with Jet Li (Li Lianjie) called Shaolinsi, which opened in 1981. Bruce Lee's movie "Fists of Fury" really inspired the director of Shaolinsi, Liao Chengshi, who was appointed by Deng Xiaopeng.

Monks for the first time in decades were permitted to wear robes and things at Songshan Shàolín Monastery started changing very fast after that and religion started to open in China.

To summarize, Ng Mui, a Buddhist nun created a new martial art that eventually opened a huge American market for Kung Fu, helping ultimately to bring a fresh wind of change that revitalized the Shàolín in the 1980s.

Thus, having some Shàolín Buddhist nuns around today might be a good idea, not only for them, or for now, but for the future.

Of all of the above I would most like to see the Shàolín Monastery get back into the field of diplomacy. The world is ripped apart by so many conflicts and growing percentages of national economies are being devoted to "defense." That trend can and should be reversed. I think the Shàolín could produce a new generation of "super-diplomats" that help intercede and prevent conflicts before they occur and when conflicts do arise, they would facilitate honest sincere communication to bring about speedier resolutions. The United Nations is clearly overwhelmed and not able to live up to its' mandate.

Historically the Shàolín Monastery was a friend to those in need, to some extent still is and can be even more-so in the future. Buddhists were often or usually the most highly disciplined and educated people in China. Who better can inculcate the self-awareness and self-control necessary to administrate and negotiate in extremis than a monk whose life is centered on meditation?

I would definitely not let a bunch of critics, mostly foreign cynically whining and shouting: "Too commercial" stop me or anyone from living up to their rightful historical heritage. Money, as the old saying goes: "Doesn't grow on trees." The needs of China and the world are too many and too extreme to ignore.

Historically religious organizations have been the front-line helpers for social needs providing assistance to the poor, orphans, widows, special needs individuals and the elderly. The government here in China or anywhere cannot afford to meet all these needs.

Charitable non-profit organizations need money and the Shàolín has a high profile, easily recognizable, and honorable name. To not use that name and legacy in the face of these huge needs might even be unethical.

Perhaps one day there will be hundreds of Shàolín Monasteries not too far from every large city in the world networking with all religious and other non-profit organizations to help build a more peaceful, enlightened, healthy and happy world. In Thailand it is practically mandatory for young men to spend a year in a monastery. Overcoming ego, controlling desire and enhancing awareness are worthy educational goals most schools don't teach, but the Shàolín monks do.

Rebuilding the North Shàolín is one step to healing the wounds of past injustices in China and hopefully a quiet but long step into a more peaceful world for everyone. But it takes creativity, courage, hard work and more than a little meditation to make it happen in line with the history, tradition, ethics and goals of Chán Buddhism and Shàolín Monastery. Ultimately, however, these are all words, only words.

> "Words are not known in all the Buddha-lands; words, Mahāmati (the Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva), words are an artificial creation."
>
> Suzuki, D. T. (1931) *Lankavatara Sutra*

2020 Update

Preparing the *Rebuilding the North Shaolin Monastery* book I got in touch with Shi Yan Wan who is at the venerable North Shaolin monastery now. He sent me some recent photos of the monastery and a photo of the newest design model for the monastery. I was more than a little surprised when I looked at the latest design. It's huge!

This should not be surprising. We live in a world increasingly drifting away from enlightenment. Conflict has become the mainstay of international news and the world keeps getting more and more polarized every day, economically, politically, militarily, socially, etc.

In contrast the entire histories of law and religion are designed to promote peace between people. And, there is no doubt that different people are attracted to different philosophies and religions.

Thus, I was delighted to see the new design for North Shaolin as I believe teaching transcendence is a very good thing. On one hand I love universities and analytical thinking, but on the other hand I truly believe people need to spend more time finding commonalities between people and learning to transcend superficial dichotomies defined by things like gender, race, religion, nationality and so on.

Shi Yan Wan told me it will be five more years before the new/ancient monastery construction will be finished. I look forward to anything that will help people "get it together" and find peaceful ways to live.

2009 design for North Shaolin

Peace and blessings upon this noble endeavour.

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Appendix 1 - Vegetarian Lifestyle

素食生活方式

Sùshí shēnghuó fāngshì

A book about a Buddhist monastery would be remiss to not mention some advantages of a vegetarian lifestyle.

Many people think they need to eat meat to stay healthy and strong, but the legacy of the Shàolín Monastery proves that incorrect.

> "Controlling your diet is an important element of healthy living. Buddhism stressed vegetarianism. 'Vegetarianism improves your health,' states Dejian (a Master of Shaolin Medicine at Songshan Shaolin Monastery). 'The Shaolin vegetarian diet includes grains and vegetables without spices. We eat fruits but nothing too spicy. No ginger or garlic. Monks do not eat anything from animals, garlic, ginger, or onions - nothing spicy or odiferous. We don't eat eggs but can use milk.'"
>
> Gene Ching (Ed.) *Shaolin Trinity – Shaolin Monk Shi Dejian Discusses the Three Treasures*

Many people also think that a vegetarian lifestyle would be very complicated, e.g. balancing amino acids, getting enough vitamins and minerals, etc. But, in fact it's all very simple if a few simple things can be kept in mind.

First, people need a balanced diet with something like 65% carbohydrates, 15% proteins, and 20% fats (these are "healthy fats" from polyunsaturated vegetables, seeds, grains and beans, not the "beastly" fats from slaughtered animals.)

Proteins

Proteins are made of amino acids of which there are 22 found in nature, but adult humans need only nine of them to get a complete dietary protein. Three others are required by infants and growing children.

Some vegetarian foods are more or less complete, meaning they contain all essential amino acids, but most have more amino acids than others and so mixing vegetarian proteins is a good idea. Mixing vegetarian foods to get more complete proteins means finding "protein compliments." This is easier than most people think.

Common Protein Complements

Proteins are made of amino acids and different species have different ratios of combinations of amino acids they need for the proteins unique to those species.

Human protein requires eight "essential" amino acids:

Isoleucine

Leucine

Lysine

Methionine

Phenylalanine

Threonine

Tryptophan

Valine

(Histidine a 9th amino acid is sometimes added to this list because adult bodies don't process it. Some experts include it as one of the "conditionally essential" amino acids.)

Getting good quality protein is essential for top performance and even proper brain functioning.

[Some religious cults for example put followers on low protein diets so they can't think very well and instead become mindless slaves. This is useful for the leaders of those cults, but decidedly not healthy for those followers!]

"Protein complement" means the total protein is greater than the sum of the proteins because of the way the essential amino acids line up in the human body.

This means that mixing different vegetarian protein rich foods can produce much higher total protein. The following are some protein complement combinations that are especially good for humans.

- Brown rice and beans
- Dairy foods and grains
- Potatoes (a tuber - lacking only Leucine) and dairy products, seeds and dried legumes
- Corn (lacking only Lysine) and dairy products, oats or other cereals and/or pinto beans

Most ethnic foods have vegetarian protein complements as main dishes:

- Curried chickpeas and rice
- Beans and rice (and cheese)
- Moroccan couscous and lentils
- Breakfast cereal and milk
- Peanut (and other nut and seed) butter and whole wheat bread

NOTE: Brown rice not only has more protein than white rice, but also a delicious slightly nutty flavor and a lot more vitamins and fiber. Ditto for whole wheat bread and pasta.).

A useful thing to remember about vegetarian proteins is called Biological Value (BV), which measures protein quality. It is measured by nitrogen retention compared to the amount of nitrogen taken in. Amino acids have nitrogen incorporated into them, which is where that measurement comes from. By comparing how much goes in to how much stays in, you get the Biological Value of the protein. From this perspective beans, rice, pasta and oatmeal weigh with relatively high BV. But whey isolate has about triple their values per weight, so some protein power made of whey isolate is a good idea for athletes that need maximum protein to rebuild muscles that are literally torn down by extreme exercise. Most sedentary people don't really need that extra protein.

Some other super protein vegetarian sources include:

Quinoa – This ancient seed contains all essential amino acids, making it a complete protein that is loaded with nutrients

Tempeh - and other soy products – Tempeh is a fermented soy product. Homemade soybean milk however is easy and cheap to make. The hulls that get filtered out make a delicious hot cereal mixed with oatmeal, milk, raisons and honey.

Sesame seeds – 1 oz. of Sesame seeds has a whopping 6.5 grams of protein. Majiang (麻酱), (also called *Tahini*) is a Chinese "dip" rather like peanut butter made from sesame seeds and is a great addition to milk, soy milk, whey and other things in smoothies. Majiang is easy to make at home too. It is a high protein food.

- 1 oz. cashews – 4.4 grams of protein
- **1 oz. sesame seeds – 6.5 grams** of protein
- 2 oz. walnuts – 5 grams of protein
- 1 oz. pistachios – 5.8 grams of protein
- 2 tbsp. almonds – 4 grams of protein
- 1 cup Broccoli – 5 grams of protein
- 1 avocado – 10 grams of protein

Incidentally natural peanut butter (without hydrogenation) is not generally available around China, though regular commercial (hydrogenated) American peanut butter is easy to find. Fortunately, it is possible to buy natural majiang and it makes a wonderful substitute for peanut butter. Also, fortunately most big cities in China have whole wheat bread (全麦面包 quán mài miàn bāo) these days, though there are pretty many fake ones advertising whole wheat, but are really only 2% whole wheat and 98% (loathsome!) white bread. A majiang jam sandwich on whole wheat is heavenly and served with yogurt produces a splendid high protein complement of amino acids.

Whole grains vs. refined white grains

This is not a matter of opinion. The entire industries of white flours, white rice and other refined grains should be sued for profit-driven premeditated murder.

All restaurants should be mandated to have whole grain options. Refined grains that have been stripped of their fiber rich shells, had their vitamins and other nutrients cooked out of them via for example high speed metal polishers and then are bleached(!) are correlated with adult onset diabetes, obesity and other significant and deadly health problems.

Nothing is more delicious than whole grain foods *if properly prepared*. This is another paradigm shift waiting to happen, and when it does happen life expectancy will leap upward.

The problem is it appears some people - like some doctors in the AMA and shareholders in pharmaceutical corporations profit hugely from sickness.

The whole refined grain industry is rather like the oil industry. A few people profit while the vast majority of people and environment suffer from the grotesque and deadly effects of decisions by the avaricious holders of monopolistic power.

Carbohydrates, fats and fibre

Luckily vegetarians have no problem getting plenty of carbs, natural vegetarian source fatty acids and fiber as long as they eat a wide variety of foods and don't get stuck eating a limited diet every day. Variety is the absolutely essential part of good nutrition.

Vitamins and Minerals

The best rule to remember to get complete vitamins is the color rule. Eat three or four servings of different colored fruits and vegetables every day and vitamins and minerals are no problem.

However, vegetarians sometimes can lack vitamin B12. Unfortunately, not a lot of foods have this vitamin however, dairy products and nutritional yeast have plenty. A lack of B12 can lead to early Alzheimer's disease, and other complications, but too much isn't good either so as in all things, a balanced approach is best.

Other good sources of information on vegetarian foods

Some popular magazines like *Runner's World* and *Muscle and Fitness* have search boxes on their Internet site front pages wherein one can type "vegetarian recipes" and get vegetarian ideas for the special diet athletes (like martial artists) need.

Diet is sport specific.

Long distance runners will typically eat more carbohydrates compared to body builders who usually need higher protein diets.

The Internet has thousands of sites with great recipes for vegetarians. Because these sites appear and disappear fairly regularly, they're not cited here. However, just typing "Vegetarian Recipes" into any search engine will open up new universes of nutrient rich foods.

Keeping up on nutrition news in general is a very good investment. As of this writing new research says that garlic can kill brain cancer cells, and low vitamin D has been linked to depression.

Most medium and large cities have vegetarian restaurants. They are excellent sources of ideas on how to spice up a vegetarian diet.

Vegetarian lifestyle and life expectancy

According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, *Internal Medicine* (Orlich, et. al. 2013), research involving over 70,000 members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church showed that vegetarian diets are linked to reduced death rates, with more favorable results for males than females. Vegetarian diets have been linked to a lower risk of several chronic diseases, including metabolic syndrome, hypertension, ischemic heart disease (IHD) and diabetes mellitus. A previous study involving over 60,000 Britons suggested that vegetarians have a lower risk of developing cancer than meat-eaters. A 2003 report published in the "American Journal of Clinical Nutrition" found that low meat consumption decreases risk of death and increases life expectancy. Reducing meat consumption can increase life span by 3.6 years. Societies with plant-based diets are more likely to live past 70 years of age.

Vegetarian lifestyle and the environment

> The 400-page report by the Food and Agricultural Organization, entitled Livestock's Long Shadow, also surveys the damage done by sheep, chickens, pigs and goats. But in almost every case, the world's 1.5 billion cattle are most to blame. Livestock are responsible for 18 per cent of the greenhouse gases that cause global warming, more than cars, planes and all other forms of transport put together.
>
> Burning fuel to produce fertilizer to grow feed, to produce meat and to transport it - and clearing vegetation for grazing - produces 9 per cent of all emissions of carbon dioxide, the most common greenhouse gas. And their wind and manure emit more than one third of emissions of another, methane, which warms the world 20 times faster than carbon dioxide.
>
> Geoffrey Lean (2006)

Starting a vegetarian lifestyle is the most efficient and healthiest way to lower a person's carbon footprint, reduce pollution, and save energy and water simultaneously. That's because meat production requires enormous amounts of land, water, and energy, compared to plant foods. Cattle consume 16 times more grain than they produce as meat, not including refrigeration and transportation costs. Livestock eat 70% of all the grain produced.

This brief review is not intended as a "guidebook" to vegetarian nutrition, but just a review of some very simple facts to help encourage and promote the ideas that a vegetarian lifestyle is not so difficult and has many potential benefits.

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Appendix 2 – Donate to the reconstruction of the North Shàolín Monastery

捐赠给北少林重建

Juānzèng gěi běi shàolín chóngjiàn

Donations to the reconstruction fund of the North Shàolín Monastery can be made to the following account.

Receivers Name : Zhong Guo Panshan Bei Shao Lin Si

Northern Shaolin Temple, Panshan, China 中国盘山北少林寺

Bank & Branch Name:

Gonghang Tianjin Shi ji Xian Zhi Hang

Jixian branch of ICBC Bank in Tianjin City

工行天津市蓟县支行

Account number: 0302 0966 09300 184901

Swift code: ICBKCNBJTJN

When sending money, please also send an e-mail to North Shaolin's head monk, Shi Yan Pei at shaolinyanpei@163.com saying how much was sent, your name and a signature.

Note 1: Upon receiving an e-mail, and notification of a deposit from the bank, Mr. Hu the Shaolin's accountant has to print the e-mail, and take it to the local (LaiGuanJu) "Government Administration of Foreign Exchange" to get the money, so the e-mail is actually very important. Without it he cannot withdraw the money.

Note 2: International bank transfers will probably cost the sender about $35. PayPal will charge the receiver 2%-4%. So, Bank transfers are probably better for large donations and PayPal for smaller ones.

All donations are sincerely appreciated.