

Combat & Healing

**The Nature Of The
Internal Arts**

The Old Yang Style

Taiji Broadsword/Sabre

Winning Without Fighting

The Scapular Spring

**Medically Speaking - Organ
Striking and the Delayed
Death Touch**

PLUS

**WTBA News, New Videos
etc.**



COMBAT & HEALING

The Magazine of the World Taiji Boxing Association

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FRONT COVER

Les Anwyl with new son, James William Anwyl. James could not have had a better start in this life in having parents such as Cath and Les. Congratulations.

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The Nature of Taijiquan

By Erle Montaigue

Look at the whole of Chinese philosophy and culture depicted in Chinese art and we see that just about everything is based upon what happens in nature.

The main thing that we notice in Chinese drawing and painting is the balance of yin and yang which is an integral part of becoming a good calligrapher. The whole of Chinese culture, philosophy, medicine and exercise is based upon balance in just the same way that we have perfect balance in nature. We may not like this perfect balance at times, for instance when we receive violent storms and "bad weather". But like it or not, we have to have bad weather along with the good weather in order for the whole world to remain in balance. When we have an imbalance in yin and yang, whether that is inside of your body or in the whole Universe, things begin to go wrong and if it is in the body, then we become ill and disease is allowed to creep in. The main way that we can remain disease free is to have a perfect balance of yin and yang Qi circulating throughout the body.

The 'New Age' movement did more to harm great martial systems such as Taijiquan than anything.

Chinese martial arts, especially those of the 'internal' type such as Taijiquan, Baguazhang and Xingyi ch'uan are also based upon what happens in nature. The internal martial systems have been founded by people of great genius who knew about the Qi (energy) flows in the human body, acupuncture meridians and balance. So when they devised the various Internal Martial/Healing systems they used this genius to invent exercises that were perfectly balanced. They were not only balanced in the physical things that we perform but also in that they had an even balance of martial and healing. Unfortunately, nowadays when someone mentions "Martial Arts" we conjure up pictures of Bruce Lee flying through the air attacking someone or Chuck Norris fighting twelve men using round house and back-spinning kicks! We have lost that balance. Once, in China, if one was a martial artist, that person would be held in high esteem because he or she would be regarded as a

person who had risen to a high level of healing ability and martial ability through very hard training internally and externally. Nowadays, I am loath to even say to strangers that I am a 'martial artist' for fear of being laughed at! That's where television and film have brought the martial arts down to in the West and it would seem even in China. However, Chinese film still has an element of 'Art' left in the Martial in most of their films. So they still have somewhat of a balance.

We cannot be calm and meditational at all times, we cannot be relaxed all the time, we cannot have peace, love, and harmony all the time as this is just not the way of nature, it is not balanced.

The 'New Age' movement did more to harm great martial systems such as Taijiquan than anything. When these "New Age Hippies" adopted for instance Taiji as theirs, they threw that martial art in particular completely out of balance with nature and thereby almost ruining the whole system forever! We cannot be calm and meditational at all times, we cannot be relaxed all the time, we cannot have

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peace, love dove, all the time as this is just not the way of nature, it is not balanced. And we cannot have a martial system that is either all hard or all soft.

Apart from the Taijiquan system that I teach and a couple of others, most Taijiquan now is all slow moving and performed at an even pace throughout the whole execution of the form. This is not balanced.

Apart from the Taijiquan system that I teach and a couple of others, most Taijiquan now is all slow moving and performed at an even pace throughout the whole execution of the form. This is not balanced. We like to quote stuff like "Taijiquan is like the flowing river" etc. And we conjure up images of a lovely gently flowing stream meandering through a calm valley. But what about the other side of that same stream when it turns into a raging torrent where to even venture forth would invite death! This is the way of nature, rivers can be calm one minute and raging torrents the next. And it's the same with all of nature where there are not many parts of the world that are always temperate. Thank God, that it is the way of nature that for the most part, nature has smaller swings

to yin and yang. But often there will be a reason for nature to go into wild swings of beautiful calm and sunny weather, then into wild storms where property and human life is taken. The epitome of this is 'the calm before the storm'. This always happens, it is the law of nature that before a huge violent storm (yin) we have on the opposite end of the scale a very quiet and calm period, (Yang). And it must be exactly the same way in all of our Internal Martial Arts systems. Baguazhang and Xingyi already have yin and yang where they are calm for a few movements, then explode into violence for the next. Fortunately, the new age movement did not get onto these two arts as they were thankfully not as proliferated as Taijiquan. So Taiji copped a bashing until it almost became extinct in its former glory being replaced by a totally useless set of wishy washy movements that did no more than what you could get from a long swim in a heated pool!

The downfall of Taijiquan was really its own fault because it is really quite easy to learn the relatively (to the other two internal martial arts) easy movements at their most basic beginner level. Unfortunately, those who taught in the early days of the West's embrace of this art only ever knew those very basic movements and

were never taught, or would not stay long enough with their initial instructor to learn the advanced ways of training. So all they ever got was a bunch of very basic stepping movements with some hand postures thrown in. It was not a balanced set of movements and for the most part went totally against what the old masters dictated to us as to how the movement should be performed. To get around this, many of the great classic sayings from the Chinese were translated incorrectly due to certain phrases in Chinese simply being untranslatable! And also to a lack of understanding and experience of the translators, some of whom had only been doing the basic forms for three years or less.

So here is the mistake, we took those sayings and rules and tried to place them over the top of very basic forms! So, we eventually lost it completely.

The old masters left us certain rules by which to perform our Taijiquan. But these were written at a time when these masters were very advanced in their own training. So here is the mistake, we took those sayings and rules and tried to place them over the top of very basic forms! So, we eventually lost it completely.

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One of the most important things about Taijiquan is that there must be Yin and Yang balance. Now to someone who does not know the more advanced methods of form, this can be translated into something that is very simple, like simply saying that the legs are yang while the upper body is yin. This is true, but what they miss out on by never learning advanced Taijiquan is that the whole body, not just the legs and upper body must also be in a state of balance between yin and yang. So if we take only the hands for instance, how can we have a balance of yin and yang when both hands are pushing and are both in a state of Yang?

And it doesn't stop there. Each balanced organ and portion of the body must also be balanced yin and yang.

We are told to be in a state of 'Sung' which has been mistranslated as to 'relax'. So the early instructors did the whole form with even paced movements, slow and calm for the whole form. This is not yin and yang! Sung actually means something like 'moving without the conscious knowledge of movement'. It does not mean to completely relax as we would fall on the ground if we were to do that. However, within this state of sung, there must also be yin and yang bal-

ance without losing the 'sung'. So built into the 'Old Yang Style of Yang Lu-ch'an' we have movements that balance each other out by having both yin and yang movements. We will be moving along calmly, slowly and in as a relaxed state as possible, then will come an energy release point in the form where we perform a movement or set of moves that are totally explosive. Not tense, but explosive still retaining that sung ideal. Then we will be back instantly into the calm and flowing movements, just like the great river or nature in general.

And it doesn't stop there. Each balanced organ and portion of the body must also be balanced yin and yang. So for instance when we are doing a movement like 'push', we never 'push' (which, by the way, is not actually a push at all but a devastating double strike) using both palms at the same time, but firstly use the left palm going yang while the right is going yin. Then in an instant the palms change state to the reverse is happening. This of course happens in an instant and is not seen by an onlooker. And here is one of the main reasons for the demise of Taijiquan. Others would secretly watch some of the old masters performing their forms and would learn the movements from this! I now personally of an old mas-

ter, now deceased from Hong Kong who used to watch Yang Sau-chung every morning in the park and simply copied his movements. He then put out a film (no video back then) and book on the Yang style! But what he did not see were the minute yin and yang movements of not only the hands but of the whole body because he was not trained to look for these. He did not see that the back was changing from yin to yang, from a 'C' back to a straight back as the energy was gathered and released.

I now personally of an old master, now deceased from Hong Kong who used to watch Yang Sau-chung every morning in the park and simply copied his movements.

He did not see that the backbone was being compressed to allow all of the vertebra to fall on top of each other thus forming a combined capacitor effect that had great power when released. The vertebra of the backbone look and act very much like capacitors, which are electrical devices for storing electricity and then releasing it when short circuited. He did not see that even the feet were continually changing from yin to yang as the old master stepped. He did not see the concave foot as the other foot was convex. He did

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not notice that the eyes were also continually changing from yin to yang in accordance to what the body was doing. And I am only talking here about the Yang Cheng-fu form let alone the original Yang Lu-ch'an form which was never performed in public because it was considered to be the crown jewels of the Yang Family.

And the 'quiet before the storm'? This is inherent in all forms of Taijiquan. However you cannot see it of course which is another reason that most have left it out. The quiet always comes in the 'empty' postures just before there is a relative yang movement. This is happening all the time just as in nature, so before a yang movement such as 'push' we will have a relatively yin movement where the whole body is empty or at the bottom end of the 'sine wave' just waiting to begin its move upward again, or when we are at the top of a yang movement just beginning to move down the wave again, these are the empty movements in Taijiquan that balance out the generally attacking movements. These are those times when we must attack an opponent because this is the time when he is the most vulnerable. This is one of the areas we learn about in push hands.

And the 'quiet before the storm'? This is inherent in all forms of Taijiquan. However you cannot see it of course which is another reason that most have left it out.

However, just as in nature, there are times when we must move away from the 'temperate' movements because we are about to build up a storm. So just before one of the many energy release points or fa-jing movements in the Old Yang Style, there is an extreme yin movement where the whole body is so still that you feel like an oak tree just being. Then the fa-jing movement happens extremely explosive because it is balanced with the extreme yin movement. And here lies one of the main areas of using Taijiquan for self-defense. It is very violent! Because we go into this extreme yin or 'quiet' just before an attacking movement, our attacking moves because extreme which is what they have to be in order to defeat an attacker.

New Video Titles

MTG188

Sudden Violence Vol. 4.

Includes four Bagua methods of violence. Often the simpler they are the more practical. Also some knife fighting.

MTG189

Yang Cheng-fu Corrections Volume Two

Carries on with the class corrections for Yang Cheng-fu's form. An excellent way to have corrections done as most get the same things wrong.

MTG190

Developing the Internal Energy

I discovered that many of my students, although they had the physical movements correct, they just weren't getting the internal development. So I took a look at what they were doing and developed a way of teaching how using what they already knew, form and push hands. Now, most of them at least have a better understanding of how to gain it and how to use it. (The Internal Qi)

MTG191

Sudden Violence Vol 5

Covers barging type attacks as grappling or football type of attacks.

MTG193

Sudden Violence Volume 6

This tape covers how to attack and opponent using sudden violence who has not himself attacked you physically. Also against multiple attackers.

MTG192

Qi Development Vol 2.

The 6 balanced body pairs & meridians in Yang Lu-ch'an's form.

The Old Yang Style

By Erle Montaigne

For years now, in fact since 1983 I have been teaching a style of Taijiquan that was contrary to the normal slow moving form and more common form of Yang Cheng-fu. I do teach the Chen Wei-ming version of Yang Cheng-fu's form (Yang changed his style three times), however, my main style is the Old Yang style of Yang Lu-ch'an as taught by Yang Shou-hou, the brother of Yang Cheng-fu. Shou-hou did not change his Father's style as did Yang Cheng-fu. Hence the style of Yang Shou-hou remained the Original Yang Style. However, it was not proliferated as was the Yang Cheng-fu form as Yang Shou-hou only had around three main students, one of whom was my instructor, Chang Yiu-chun and one of whom was his classmate, Chen Pan-ling.

Yang Cheng-fu saw a need for all people regardless of age and health to be able to gain the great health benefits that Taijiquan had to offer so he set about changing what he was originally taught by his Father, Yang Kin-hou so that all of the original leaping and fa-jing (explosive energy) moves were left out. When he had finished, he had invented what we now know as Taijiquan, the all slow moving form that most people practice. It was said that time, that this form could not be changed any more as Cheng-fu changed it only enough leaving in the essential healing essence of Taijiquan. In one of Yang Cheng-fu's books written by Chen Wei-ming, he actually states that to change this form any further would bring disaster! And of course this has happened with Taijiquan being derided by most other martial artists since the early 60's in the USA and Australia.

Others came along after Yang Cheng-fu and changed the form further leaving out all of the repeated and most important movements leaving only a shell of the original form with almost no healing or martial benefits! These are the so-called 'short forms'.

For years, people all over the world were mortified that some Australian would begin teaching the Old Yang Style of Yang Lu-ch'an! They even went so far as to say that I invented it! Even so-called masters from Hong Kong were saying this in order to hide the original form from anyone other than their own families, or that they simply did not want to admit that there was something else out there that they did not know.



From the Book, A typical Old Yang Style Move: Chen Pan-ling

Then, gradually small pieces of information began to surface which pointed to something other than the Yang Cheng-fu version of the Yang style, like in the Douglas Wile book, "Taiji Touchstones" where he makes comment of the fact that often people would see Cheng-fu performing a style other than his invented style which included fa-jing moves and leaps etc and was done much faster.

But still they kept saying that I invented my own system. Often I would even question myself and had to keep telling myself that I did indeed learn it and it was not all a dream!

Gradually snippets of information began to surface of a style of Taijiquan that had all of the ingredients of the Old Yang Style that I had been taught, but these were few and far between and usually from China or Taiwan and difficult to purchase, .. until now!

Recently a book and wall chart has been published in the USA using pictures taken in 1953 of Mr. Chen Pan-ling, classmate of my teacher, Chang Yiu-chun. The Book is called: "Chen Pan-ling's Original Tai Chi Ch'uan Textbook" One of Mr. Chen's main students, 82 year old Mr. Chang has published these old photos of Chen performing what amounts to the closest you will find from any Old Chinese master performing the Old Yang Style. It is almost the same as what I was taught by Chang Yiu-chun! Because Chen Pan-ling had other teachers, he has added some other movements and left out others, but this form essentially remains the same as what I was taught.

So how could Erle Montaigne have invented this form when I was only 4 years old? The book is a very well printed and published hard cover book with an accompanying wall chart of several pieces and is available from Mr. Chang and Ann Carruthers in the USA. Ann carru@aol.com

Fax: 1-504-861-4283 Or the publisher: 1-504-862-0210
See Inside front Cover for more details.

Thoughts on The Yang-style Sabre/Broadsword

by Michael Babin

I learned a yang-style saber form from my first Taiji teacher and practiced it for several years during the late 70s before neglecting it. In the last few years, I re-taught myself a similar form from a video by a yang-style expert, the late York Y. Loo. It was quite similar but not identical to the one that I half-remembered but I didn't pay much attention to the discrepancies.

More recently, I had a chance to compare the form for this weapon as taught by three recognized Chinese yang-family experts (Wen Mei-yu, Yang Zhen-duo and Doc Fai-wong) in the direct lineage from Yang Cheng-fu and was surprised to learn that, not only, were all three radically different from the one that I practiced but that all three were different, not only in the postures used, but in the structure of the form itself, when compared one-to-the-other.

This may be due in part to the difference in the weapon used by each. It is important to differentiate between the words "saber" and "broadsword" even though they are often used indiscriminately. The Yang-style saber more prop-

erly refers to the long, slightly-curved single-edged weapon that Yang Cheng-fu used in his later years. It was actually a European cavalry saber that someone gave him as a gift and he liked the feel of the blade so much that he had a traditional Chinese hilt put on it, even though he kept the western s-shaped hand guard.

It is important to differentiate between the words "saber" and "broadsword" even though they are often used indiscriminately.

The yang-style broadsword is the traditional Chinese "chopper" whose blade is thicker/wider and shorter in length when compared to the weapon used by Yang Cheng-fu. It is also heavier at the tip of the blade so that its balance is quite different from the aforementioned saber. It also quite often has a short, but sharp edge on the top side of the blade near the tip, making it useful for slicing upwards at short range.

This perhaps explains SOME of the different yang-style forms available (like the first one that I learned) that used only the traditional broadsword where the emphasis was

the weight of the tip of the weapon for slashing/chopping. By contrast the saber is a finer, more evenly balanced weapon capable of more, shall we say "finesse", in its slicing as well as cutting. There's an old saying that certainly applies to weapons: "form dictates usage; usage dictates form". Consequently, the weight, balance and function of the weapon that you use will certainly, to a great extent, dictate the structure and the body mechanics of any form which is designed to allow you to mimic using that weapon.

There's an old saying that certainly applies to weapons: "form dictates usage; usage dictates form".

Aside from this, it is very difficult to explain in objective terms how the same form from the same source could end-up being so different; but I think it is also yet another example of how forms and methods tend to differentiate depending on the skills, experience and body-types of those teaching them. It is also true that quite often forms end up looking and being different because the person demonstrating hasn't learned the original form properly; but this is hardly the case with the

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three experts mentioned in this case.

Within reason, I think this is a good example of why you shouldn't obsess about which form is "best" and which expert is "most correct" as Taiji and, for that matter, life- are rarely that cut-and-dried. In terms of training needs, the problem is amassing enough skill and experience to be able to know what suits your physique, skills and personality.

In any case, the saber is an excellent "entry-level" weapon for those interested in the traditional Taiji curriculum. I'm quite fond of the form that I now practice as it is short, doesn't take too much space (well, compared to the other traditional weapon forms) and its characteristics suit my build. Like Hsing-I, the movements of the saber are suited to the heavier practitioner who has skill.

In any case, the saber is an excellent "entry-level" weapon for those interested in the traditional Taiji curriculum. I'm quite fond of the form that I now practice as it is short, doesn't take too much space (well, compared to the other traditional weapon forms) and its characteristics suit my build.

The saber/broadsword teaches you about leading with the edge of the weapon and, as it (usually) only has one sharp edge, it's a little safer to do so when you first start exploring weapons — I didn't say better — I said "safer"! Its bold, twisting, wide-swinging tactics have a certain elegance and its use should teach you about angles and the various planes around the body. Doing the form properly is like being inside a steel cage or at the centre of a hurricane.

Every stroke should cut cleanly along one of the eight cardinal directions the square in the circle and the circle in the square. Have you figured out this Taiji conundrum yet? It is also a useful way of understanding that Taiji classic (I paraphrase): "Going forward, consider backwards".

I think this is a good example of why you shouldn't obsess about which form is "best" and which expert is "most correct" as Taiji and, for that matter, life- are rarely that cut-and-dried.

If you don't keep your balance when advancing, you're liable to fall over from your misguided momentum if it fall on "emptiness" (i.e., your target had the skill to move at the

last moment). You must learn to use the weight of the saber, not depend on it to power your stroke. The strikes are chopping slices; not the rise and fall of an axe! This is one way to learn to really relax the shoulder, elbow and wrist; but it is often a rather hard way of learning to do so.

The saber/broadsword is considered a weapon with a yang nature and it certainly is a challenge to use it properly even when moving in comparative slow motion when compared the fast and furious pace favoured by the harder styles. If possible, try to understand the basic martial function of this weapon if you can find an instructor who actually knows what they are doing. Even a marginal understanding of combative function will make your forms as challenging and rewarding as they are fun.

Michael Babin teaches in Ottawa in Canada and has been a contributor to Combat & Healing since its inception.

WTBA NEWS

The Erle Montague workshop in Folkestone in Kent, England is very popular so far. So please if you have not booked in with Christina, please do now as it could be large! Last weekend in October including the Friday for WTBA members.

We have several new WTBA instructors and the list of new members is too large to include in this Magazine!

Sam Wiley who lives and teaches in Ellijay Georgia USA has become our latest instructor and has earned himself the degree of 3rd degree, instructor. Sam has worked very hard over the past decade and has risen to a high level of expertise in the Erle Montague System.

Carl Rutherford our representative for the South/West of England has just been graded to 4th degree because of his hard work and persistence in the Erle Montague system. And we have to congratulate **Carl and Maria Louise** on their recent marriage in July.

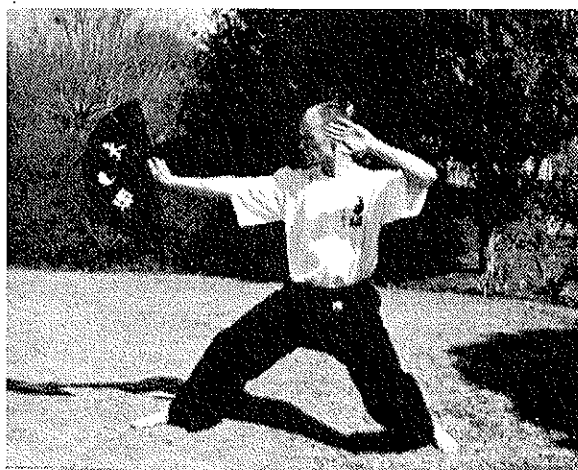
Carl has also received an upgrade to his WTBA and Erle Montague System grading up to 4th Degree, instructor.

Morne Swanpoel (Pictured Below) from South Africa has joined the WTBA as an Instructor 1st degree. Morne has a large following in South

Africa and has been teaching for the past decade.

Tomas Waldegren also joins us as an instructor 1st degree in Sweden. He too has worked very hard to attain a high level.

Darrin Coe in Colorado USA has been graded up to instructor 3rd Degree as he has also worked extremely



Morne Swanpoel, South Africa

hard over the past few years.

Tiziano Santambrogia from Italy joins us as an instructor 1st Degree.

Peter Smith (4th Degree,) and Carl Rutherford (now 4th Degree), were asked by our member in Syracuse, USA, Marvin Labbate to go and teach the Erle Montague system. The weekend in June was well attended and all were very impressed with Carl and Peter's knowledge. Our main USA representative, **Al Krych** was also on hand to help out.

Speaking of whom, **Al Krych** has produced some stunning "Erle Montague's Fa-jing Ch'uan, Explosive Energy Chinese Boxing" studs to be worn on the lapel or I guess you could even wear them as ear-rings! They are the nicest ones I have seen and you can order them directly from Al in New Jersey. He also has car window stickers with the WTBA logo. Call him on: +1 908-4751619.

I have just released a simple but nice CD album of my music. Called "Grayscale", it is made of of ten of my self written songs, some new some twenty years old. Ben my son and Kristian my son have accompanied me with Ben on piano and Kris on lead guitar while I perform all other instruments and vocals.

The album is available at the nominal price of USD15.00 or £10.00 or AUD20.00. We have made the whole thing ourselves, recording, burnt the CD and make our own CD duplications in typical Moontagu fashion!

Negotiations are in progress and we will hopefully soon have a Beijing China WTBA office! Watch this space.

Our May 2000 camp is filling up fast, so please get your firm orders in now! We have had many inquires from all over the world as usual.

WTBA KIWI CAMP '99

by Lyn McAlister

Waiheke Island is one of the gems to be found in the gulf off Auckland, New Zealand

It was here that the WTBA KIWI CAMP '99 was held on the weekend of 5-7th June.

Waiheke island is a 35-minute ride on a Quickcat ferry from downtown city. The island used to be the retreat for those wanting an alternative life-style but has recently become home also to many commuters, and consequently now has many cafes, shops and other attractions that bring city day-trippers in droves at weekends.

It has a micro-climate that is conducive to growing grapes, and the boutique vineyards produce a high (but costly) standard of wine. Olives are amongst the latest crop to be grown—all in a chemical free environment: NZ at its best.

Petro and Eddie felt that this year was an opportune time to convene a workshop here in NZ. Annie and I were the other WTBA instructors to be involved in the organising and instructing.

Annie offered for us to meet at her home on the island, which we did over several months. After a delicious lunch each time, we would get down to planning the workshop.

It was decided that the focus of the camp was to be on paired training, and to be adaptable for participation by WTBA students, whatever their level of tai chi.

A magical venue was found: Piritahi Marae, which is situated on the waterfront on Waiheke island. Set in lovely gardens and extensive grassy areas are two buildings:

A magical venue was found: Piritahi Marae, which is situated on the waterfront on Waiheke island. Set in lovely gardens and extensive grassy areas are two buildings: one with modern kitchen and dining area (we used for training), and the 'meeting house' where we held the traditional start and conclusion of our gathering; this was also used for sleeping. Some basic etiquette (customs) were to be upheld by us all on entering the 'meeting house': removal of shoes, no food or drink inside, and respect for all our people who have used this honoured place.

Marae are central to the culture of the Maori people of NZ. All important events, meetings and community gatherings take place in the Marae. Nowadays urban Marae, like Piritahi, can be used by other community groups regardless of whether they are Maori, so long as the buildings and surroundings are treated

with the respect their mana warrants.

Most of us arrived on the Friday evening, after a rather rough crossing on the ferry. I am usually a poor sailor and would have felt the effects of the swell but for the hilarious tale of one member of our group (I will leave you to guess who!) who had tried to dry his T-shirt on a heater that morning whilst taking a shower, only to find smoke shooting up in his living-room—needless to say he said he was still wearing the T-shirt!

At an opening of a gathering at a 'meeting house' it is tradition that

everyone stand up to identify themselves. This was an ideal opportunity for us to meet those who had travelled from afar:

the ladies from Australia: Pam (Sydney), Anne & Grace (Cairns);

Gary from Motueka in the South island; Ann (Bay of Plenty); Stewart, Nigel, James & Angie (Wellington).

Also Karyn, who had undertaken the task of feeding us three good meals a day.

Each day began at 7a.m with Qi kung and Cheng fu form—this was not too early for those staying on the marae who were woken by Petro's alarm at 5a.m: problem was that Petro slept through it!

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Morning training was for all to work together: the instruction given starting at basic levels up to completing some basic concepts.

Afternoon training we divided into two groups: those more senior able to work on advanced paired forms and techniques, whilst the others practiced what they had learnt that morning.

Throughout the training everyone was encouraged to change partners often, as one of the optimum benefits from shared training in a group, most of whom had not been together before, is to train with students at different levels.

The instruction was in half-hour slots, and each instructor had designated themselves to be responsible for a particular session/s.

Morning training covered: Single & double push hands; punching on mitts using fajing; dalu; vertical & lateral dragon-prawn boxing; small san sau. Ed taught us all a routine from bagwa 'Wooden man' which was new to us all.

Afternoon training covered: Large san sau; some advanced self-defense techniques; bagwa applications; double push hands attacks.

At the conclusion we all gathered in the 'meeting house': anyone who wanted to speak could do so, as is tradition: everyone had something

to say! They had enjoyed the training, the experience and the effort of organisation put in to make it such a success. Those who had traveled from afar were appreciated for the effort in getting there.

I found it a moving experience to hear the positive remarks and emotion that was felt generally, with the feeling that Tai chi becomes: no longer something that one 'does' but what one 'is'.



For myself I talked about how rewarding it was to see the next generation of our students there: all three of us instructors had been taught (and inspired) by Annie, and here were our students gaining levels of experience in their Tai chi. For myself I am inspired to see the achievement that my student Martin Schaake is extending in his training.

The "family tree" is continuing on in NZ.

One of our aims from the beginning was to achieve a financial success (which we did), to enable us to encourage Erle to visit our shores again, giving us the opportunity to further our tai chi training.

We hope to have a similar camp again as it is our aim to consolidate our standards and share our training with like-minded people, exchange ideas and foster a spirit of friendship.

WTBA instructors in New Zealand:

*Annie Blackman
Petro Smith
Eddie Sides
Lyn McAlister:*

They all hold Tai chi classes in Auckland, new Zealand

Winning Without Fighting; The Art of Strategy

Les Anwyl

*'Master carpenter does not cut wood,
Master Chef does not boil water,
Master warrior does not fight'.*

While on one level of interpretation this saying could mean that a master warrior becomes a general and is therefore removed from battle, like many things Chinese, it has several layers of meaning. Sun tzu, author of the ancient treatise on strategy:

'The Art of war', based his philosophy on the dictum 'to win without fighting is the best'.

A friend of mine, a builder, was at his work-site when a youth armed with machetes came to take his truck (it's a pretty tough neighborhood). 'Yeah no problem, I'll get you the keys' he calmly told him; 'just a minute, I left them in the shop across the road'. The youth waited patiently while my friend went into the shop and called the police. Just as they loaded the youth into the van my friend ran out waving the keys!

The reptilian brain is surely second to none for combat, but when it comes to strategy, it's not in the race with the mammalian brain.

Mind you, properly applied reptilian strategy of using barging and fa-jing techniques at close quarters on one to one must be surely unbeatable; either your attack comes first (or arrives first) and ends the engagement, or your block and attack are simultaneous and therefore unbeatable because the opponent is committed to his attack. How can you block a correctly executed fa-jing attack anyway? How can you block or attack an explosion? Either evade, be out of range, get in first, or its all over.

properly applied reptilian strategy of using barging and fa-jing techniques at close quarters on one to one must be surely unbeatable;

Barging technique is discussed in another classic work on strategy, this time by a Japanese master swordsman called Myamoto Musashi. In his "Book of five rings" he called it: 'Holding down the pillow; not letting someone raise his head'; 'Stopping an opponents

attack at the initial outset, not letting him follow through, is the sense of holding down the pillow.' 'For example, you stop an opponents 'attack' from the letter 'a', so to speak; you inhibit the opponents 'leap' from 'l', and the opponents 'cut' from the 'c'. 'Thwart the opponents very first impulse to try something, thus foiling everything'.

I read once of a very experienced street fighter and bouncer (or crowd behavioral supervisor as some like to be called these days) who said that it didn't matter how good you were, if you take a hit, count on being down at least 60% of your abilities. I don't for a moment advocate being the aggressor in a fight, but if it comes down to it, make sure that yours is the first blow to land; timing is crucial.

Erle's version of this is: 'Never give a sucker an even break'

If it gets to that stage though, you have not achieved the highest level of the master strategist. The highest master solves troubles before they have formed or lives his life in a way to avoid them altogether. One of my favorite stories is about a group of students trying to get past a cranky horse in a narrow Chi-

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nese lane. Some tried blocking its kicks, some tried evasion, some were aggressive; all of them copped a hiding, and none could get past. Just then they saw the master at the end of the lane, and said 'lets watch Sifu, he'll know the best technique'. The master took one look at the horse, turned, and went down the next lane!

Realistically, it may not always be possible or desirable to go down the next lane, but as well as avoiding conflict, Sun Tzu also talks of how to win battles before they are fought: *'Assess your opponents; cause them to lose spirit and direction so that even if their army is intact it is useless- this is winning by the Tao. The superior militarist strikes while schemes are being laid. Next best is to attack alliances; next best is to attack the army The lowest is to attack a city.'*

Strategic assessment is vital, and must begin with knowledge of your own strengths and weaknesses as well as those of the opponent: *'If you know others and know yourself you will not be imperilled in a hundred battles'. -Good warriors make their stand on ground where they cannot lose, and do not overlook conditions that make an opponent prone to defeat. -"Therefore a victorious warrior first wins and then seeks battle; a defeated warrior first*

battles and then seeks victory. This is the difference between those with strategy and those without forethought.'

Strategy is the art of the warrior which, all things being equal, will give the edge in a one on one battle or a war between opposing armies.

The battleground:

Assessment and if possible, choosing the time and place of combat is of primary consideration; Sun tzu was perhaps one of the first strategists to write about the importance of occupying the high ground and using the momentum gained from it to rush down with an irresistible attack like a torrent of water. Musashi also spoke of 'looking down on the enemy' and went on to say that you should also try to have the sun or the source of light behind you and make sure that there is nothing in the way behind you.' *Take a stance with plenty of room to the left such as to cut off the space to your right, and close in'* This would have been particularly effective with Musashi's style of battle, with long two handed swords that cut strongest from right to left when wielded by a right hander. *'It is essential to make sure that obstacles are to the rear of the opponent, then chase them into an obstacle any way that you can. 'Press your attack without letup*

so that they cannot look around'

In the art of war Sun Tzu wrote on the importance of keeping clear ground behind and forcing the opponent into bad ground. He also identified nine types of ground and the effects they had particularly on the psychology of combatants. For example, he spoke of deadly ground, in which one had to win quickly or perish, as if you were 'sitting in a leaky boat or lying in a burning house'. Under these conditions anyone will fight with extraordinary strength and resolve. Corner an animal, and it will be much more dangerous: *'Do not press a desperate enemy/ Where possible, choose the time and place of battle, and make it somewhere that gives you an advantage or puts the opponent at a disadvantage. Sun Tzu said: 'Good warriors cause others to come to them and do not go to others''*

Attitude:

Musashi wrote at length about attitude for warriors, and like Sun tzu, maintained that flexibility and spontaneity were vital; *'you should not have any special fondness for a particular weapon, or anything else for that matter. Fixation is the way to death; fluidity is the way to life To rely on one side or one technique or one weapon is to create a weakness that can be exploited by an opponent. He spoke of*

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how footwork should be the same as walking along a road as usual and how in the heat of battle *'the state of mind should remain the same as normal. let there be no change at all;-'* generally speaking, it is essential to make your ordinary bearing the bearing you use in martial arts and the bearing you use in martial arts your ordinary bearing; with the mind open and direct, neither tense nor lax, centering the mind so that there is no imbalance, calmly relax your mind and savor this moment of ease so that the relaxation does not stop even for an instant.' Note that there is no place for either fear or anger, for both mean danger. I have been in several situations, where either fear or aggression would have been the trigger for violent conflict, but in remaining calm and centered the situation was defused. Maybe I was lucky, or maybe this unexpected and unfamiliar situation weakened my adversary's resolve.

I am reminded of a story about a tea master who accidentally offended a samurai bully and was challenged to a duel. Terrified, the tea master sought the advice of a great swordsman. "You must prepare to die" he was told. Consequently the tea master prepared himself, and before the duel performed his tea ceremony perfectly, knowing it would be his last, completely calming and centering his

mind. When the time came for the duel he confidently raised his sword and the samurai, expecting to see a terrified tea-master saw instead calm determination, unshakeable and fearless resolve, total focus and concentration. The samurai, who was not prepared for death lost his nerve and went to pieces, offering profuse apologies and begging forgiveness.

Attack!

When people speak of the internal or soft styles of martial art they sometimes mistakenly imagine them to be primarily defensive or evasive. Anyone who has studied Tai chi or Bagua under a master like Erle soon realizes that nothing could be further from the truth. How could a martial art be effective without attack? Block and evade until the opponent gets tired? As has already been said, the barging technique turns the situation around and disrupts the opponents timing and shakes his confidence. Once again Musashi had something to say about this: *There is a totally different feeling in being attacked by others than in attacking others yourself. The sense of being able to wield a sword well enough to block and parry an opponents blows is tantamount to taking your spear and halberd and sticking it in the ground to use as fence posts. When you are going*

to strike an adversary by contrast, you can even pull up a fence post and use it as a spear or halberd.' Even when he spoke of guard positions, he thought in terms of attack; *'Whatever guard position you adopt, do not think of it as being on guard, think of it as part of the act of striking down the opponent'*.

Timing and Rhythm

Timing is of the essence. It is vital to fa-jing and successful strategy as well as avoidance of conflict and winning without fighting. Everything has its rhythm, the days the seasons, the rise and fall of empires and leaders. An old Chinese proverb says that if I sit long enough by the side of the river I will see the bodies of my enemies float past. Determining the time for action or the time for no action is something that can be learned but not taught. Its like learning all the moves to your forms, then leaving them behind to achieve spontaneity. The final chapter of Musashi's book was the book of the void or formlessness; *'having attained a principle, one detaches from the principle; thus one has spontaneous independence in the science of martial arts and naturally achieves miracles. Discerning the rhythm when the time comes, one strikes spontaneously and naturally scores' ...* Sun Tzu said; in military operations, formlessness is most effective; the most efficient of

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movements is the one that is unexpected; the best of plans is the one that is unknown'

Focus and Perspective:

In Kung fu we are taught to develop 'Eagle Vision', taking in the whole picture as if from a distance yet being acutely aware of tiny details, especially movement. The same principle is vital in strategic assessment. Do not overlook minor details which could swing the balance of power; likewise do not be distracted by details, which could cause you to lose sight of the bigger picture.

Also, from the larger perspective, it is no good to win the battle but lose the war; sometimes it is best to 'invest in loss'. A classic example of this concerns a contemporary of Sun Tzu who faced three divisions of an opposing army. He broke his army into three divisions also, the strongest, middle and weakest. He sent his strongest against his opponents' middle; his middle against their weakest and his weakest against their strongest. This fairly assured him of at least two out of three victories. His strategy was even more successful however, because his two strongest divisions quickly won their battles and were able to rush to the aid of the weakest division,

who realizing they were in a desperate situation fought bravely and held out until help arrived.

Another example where it may sometimes be better to invest in loss is where the consequences of winning a confrontation may be worse than that of losing it. I live in an area where blood feuds are taken very seriously; you might win a battle, but don't expect it to end there; expect the losers' whole clan to come after you and your family in an escalating cycle of violence. Wherever there are winners and losers, the war is not over, the victory is only a prelude to the next cycle of wars.

The solution:

A recent trend has been for executives to conduct their business as if they are at war, poring over Musashi and Sun Tzu for ways to defeat their 'enemies'. People carry this attitude into their personal lives as well, creating conflict and suffering. It must be remembered that Sun Tzu came from the 'warring states' period of China, over six hundred years of continuous war; likewise Musashi came from a time of political and social upheaval where might made right and duels to the death were commonplace. As bad as things are, we have come a long way since then. It must also be re-

membered that the whole point of Sun Tzu's strategy was to win without fighting. If the victory is to have any real success in creating long term peace and prosperity, then there must be no losers; we must always strive for a win I win situation. We all have in common that we wish to increase our happiness and decrease our suffering; we all have a common desire. In business and in personal life we are much more likely to fulfill these needs by fostering a spirit of cooperation, not competition. We must strive to find the root cause of conflict, and remove it, for true security and peace only happens when everyone feels secure and happy.

'Those who govern well need not prepare for war.

Those who prepare well need not battle.

Those who battle well, need not lose,

Those who lose well need not perish'.

Les Anwyl is the oldest (in terms of years being with us), WTBA instructor. He is still with the WTBA and lives now in the Northern parts of Australia in the Northern Territory. See Front Cover.

THE SCAPULAR SPRING.

by Paul Brecher

The Scapular Spring is an awesome Power Tool of the Internal Martial Arts. Its benefits and applications are numerous and once you find it in one place you start to see it every where. It is practiced in all twelve of The Qi Disruption forms and in The Old Yang Style Tai Chi Long Form, Pauchui and San Sau, Small San Sau, Long Har Chuan, Twelve Dim Mak Palms and with a partner in the Advanced Old Yang Style Single and Double Pushing Hands.

The Scapular Spring is an area that includes the shoulder and scapular (shoulder blade) and all the tendons, ligaments, muscles and sinue that surround them.

When the opponent attacks us the pressure of his attack on contact with us causes the compression of the Scapular Springs, we then have this potential energy to release in to our counterattack.

The Scapular Spring is activated via other Internal Springs in our bodies in the single person forms and by the opponents pressure on us in

the two person training methods.

In the single person forms, on each move, the K-1 of one leg pushes and that leg is given a spring like potential energy which is then released and then controlled by the other leg, this leg spring rebound causes the hips to rock as they turn. This causes a wave of the spine that creates a compression and release of the two Scapular Springs, one after the other.

With all the two person training methods the pressure on the Scapular Springs is supplied by the opponents pressure on our forearms.

Now the Scapular Spring Power can be released in two ways, either as a wave of Qi down the arm in a whip like movement which is released from the palm with an expansion of P-6. Or in a more straight way in which the arm is like a crossbow bolt being fired, sometimes both happen at the same time.

With all the two person training methods the pressure on the Scapular Springs is supplied by the opponents pressure on our forearms. In Push

Hands the whole body is like a spring being compressed and released, this generates more Qi energy and helps the body stay strong and dynamic. Without this compression and release the body would get stiff and weak, just like if a spring was left alone it would rust and break.

With the Advanced Single Pushing Hands the opponent does a palm strike which compresses my scapular spring and I then release that potential Qi in my counter palm strike. This is an excellent format in which to really feel and become familiar with the Scapular Springs. In the Single and the Double Push Hands if we have the wrists changing from Yin to Yang and back it helps the Scapular Springs to work better.

In the Basic Double Push Hands when we go Carry Carry Lock, Carry Carry Lock, Carry Carry Lock, you can see the scapular gently being compressed and released.

With Advanced Double Push Hands in which we use the double rebound Fa jin, the Scapular Springs are hammering away like pistons pumping power in to the moves.

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When the Scapular Springs are working properly in the Advanced Double Push Hands we do not need to turn the waist so much.

Both Single and Double Pushing Hands are not always what they seem, they have two separate but interconnected aspects, first there is the abstract subconscious reflex balanced movement training and second there is the conscious self defense technique methods, (all the Twelve Dim Mak Palms are in the Double Pushing Hands).

This picture explains the relationship between the two, at first it is a picture of a vase, then it is a picture of two people looking at each other. Eventually it's both at the same time.

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From Louis Levin

Presenting the exciting self-development, program *AutoDynamics* developed by WTBA Taijiquan instructor, **Louis Levin**, and based on his powerful motivational seminars.

With *AutoDynamics*, you will quickly understand the miracle that you are and how you can bring about the changes you desire in your life including success, happiness, wealth, health, peace of mind, and overall fulfillment.

AutoDynamics is an engaging, down to earth, valuable guide to successful living.

For more information on *AutoDynamics*, or to order the book, visit, <http://www.galaxymall.com/books/lifequest>

The Dream By John Wingert

I awoke the other morning, and checked my email. To my surprise there was an email from Erle, the subject: URGENT! Immediately, i opened it up, and this is what it said. John, I know that you are going through some tough times, and that the job scene isn't good for you mate. What i would like to do is to send to you 10 of my tapes, free of charge, each month for the next year. (You bet this really got be excited). Also, i will pay you the \$500 a month to view them. That is \$50 for each tape i will pay you. Also, since you have had a tough life, a couple injuries here and there, I will cast a spell on these tapes, so you do not have to practice anything that is on them. This knowledge will immediately be a part of you, perfect in every way. In short, you will become an instant master. Please accept this offer, and let me know so I can send the first shipment and your \$500 check today. Regards, Erle.

As you can imagine, I was really excited. I could now quit my job, work part time, watch a tape or two a week, and instantly become a "master". Then, as i hit the reply button on my email program, a little voice said to me, "WAKE UP!". "IT IS NOT ABOUT THE DESTINATION, IT IS ABOUT THE RIDE!" I started typing, Erle, I thank you so much for your offer. However, I must refuse. It really doesn't matter whether I become a Master, it really doesn't matter how easy life can be. What Matters is that I learn and grow each day. Most importantly, if I do not invest in loss, by taking the time to learn these things, taking the time to work out my problems in life, then there is no point in living.

Thank you for your generosity, and for teaching me this "grand ultimate lesson".

Medically Speaking - Organ Striking and the Delayed Death Touch

By Michael Kelly

Throughout martial arts history, there have been countless tales of a master striking an opponent with a delayed death touch or attacking an internal organ. Is this a myth, or is it a reality? In the martial arts world today, there are masters openly teaching the ancient methods of attacking vital points (dim mak, pressure points). They invariably state that the secret to understanding the techniques lies in the interpretation of forms. Today's masters explain the effects of vital point strikes in terms of acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine. While these concepts are familiar to most martial artists, some might question whether or not the effects of vital point strikes could be explained in the terms of modern western medicine. In addition, they might question the credibility of such techniques and assume that kata training is a waste of time. Even if one accepts the concept of striking vital points, is it possible that they can cause a delayed illness or even death? Furthermore, is it really possible to attack an internal organ by striking vital points? The answer to both questions is yes. The credibility of vital points can be found in the study of modern human physiology, neurology, and cardiology.

The human body is an integrated organism. All the cells and systems of the human body communicate by means of the nervous, endocrine, and cardiovascular systems. The brain and the nervous system integrate and coordinate the major systems of the body including the internal organs. The cardiovascular system supplies essential oxygen and nutrients. It is also responsible for removing toxic wastes. The nervous and cardiovascular systems

are the major systems that are affected by vital point strikes. These systems are attacked in an indirect manner through pressure points located on nerves that are vulnerable to attack.

These patterns of referred pain are closely related to the meridians of acupuncture.

To understand how dim mak points can cause internal injury, one must first understand how the internal organs communicate with the brain. Nerves that come from both the sympathetic and the parasympathetic nervous systems innervate all organs. The sympathetic nerves attached to the internal organs also function to carry pain impulses to the brain. Internal organs do not have nerves that monitor pain exclusive to themselves like other areas of the body. The nerves from the sympathetic nervous system (nerves from the internal organs) fuse with nerves that supply the structural system (muscles, bones, joints) of the body just before they enter the spinal cord. Thus, there is a connection between the nerves of the internal organs and the nerves of the structural system. Many of the nerves of the structural system are exposed and correlate with acupuncture points. It is through these points that the martial artist is able to attack the nervous system. The "funny bone" is an example of this. So are the lung and heart acupuncture points which are located on the radial and ulnar nerves respectively. Most of the common dim mak points can be traced to a vulnerable nerve.

The phenomenon of referred pain provides evidence of the connection between the externally exposed nerves and the sympathetic nerves connected to the internal organs. When an organ is diseased or injured, a person may experience pain in a completely different area of the body. For example, when a person is having a heart attack the pain may travel down either arm, up to the jaw, or even to the back. These patterns of referred pain are closely related to the meridians of acupuncture. The pain down the arm runs along the ulnar nerve, which corresponds to the heart meridian. The path up to the jaw is along the vagus nerve, which corresponds with many of the vital points of the neck. Finally, the pain radiating to the back is along the bladder meridian, which corresponds to the spinal nerve roots. There are many other patterns of referred pain. The main concept is that there are externally exposed nerves that are vulnerable to attack and are linked by the nervous system to the internal organs.

The next area of concern is how the external nerves affect the internal organs. There has been some fascinating osteopathic medical research in this area. It has been found that when an external nerve is stimulated, the internal organ that it is connected to turns pale. The pale color is indicative of decreased blood flow to the organ. This is known as a somatovisceral reflex. Further studies have tested the reverse relationship. When an internal organ is stimulated, the corresponding musculoskeletal area that is neurologically connected to it contracts. This is known as a viscerosomatic reflex. Most of these reflexes can also be traced along the meridians of acupuncture.

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Once it is understood that the nervous system has connections between the internal organs and external nerves, it becomes easy to visualize how striking an external nerve can have an effect on an internal organ. If vital points on a nerve that has a neurological connection to an internal organ are attacked, the brain may perceive the strike as coming from that organ. For some unknown reason, the body responds by decreasing blood flow to the organ. When blood flow is impaired, the organ begins to stop functioning properly because blood supplies oxygen and nutrients and removes toxic wastes. If the blood flow is stopped or decreased long enough, the organ will fail. The length of time that a nerve remains stimulated is proportional to the amount of damage the organ will obtain. If a nerve is struck hard enough with the correct focus, then the body responds with inflammation in the area of the strike. This can create a constant stimulation of the nerve. This may lead to a chronic decrease in blood flow to an internal organ leading to eventual failure.

The damage from pressure point strikes attacking the heart is explained somewhat differently and is very complex with multiple methods of attack. The effects are usually instantaneous and fatal. However, the same principles apply. A strike to a nerve that is connected to the heart can cause a decrease in blood flow to the heart. Decreased blood perfusion to the heart can cause a heart attack (myocardial infarction).

In order to magnify the effects mentioned above, one could also strike vital points that cause the blood pressure to drop due to a sudden increase in the diameter of the blood vessels (vasodilatation), a sudden decrease in the heart rate, or both. The result is usually syncope (fainting), but if this is combined with vital points that

connect to an internal organ, the result is an exaggerated decrease in the blood flow to the organ. This could cause the organ to fail even faster. Decreased blood flow and trauma could also cause a blood clot in a major blood vessel. This could result in death (an infarction) of the organ due to a lack of a blood supply. The rate of organ failure depends on which situation is created by the vital point strikes, and which organ is attacked. If a major organ like the liver was attacked, a person could become very sick and even die. This could happen quickly or more likely over a few days to weeks. If the liver failed slowly due to a chronic decrease in the blood supply, it would be a medical example of a delayed death touch.

How might this scenario change if the goal was immediate damage? When a nerve is struck, the result is usually severe pain. The body responds to pain with an increase in the activity of the sympathetic nervous system. This is one of the effects of the setup points like the heart and lung points on the arm. The increased sympathetic activity results in an increase in blood pressure and heart rate in addition to other effects. If after striking the set up points, one was to directly strike an organ hard enough to cause trauma and internal bleeding, the increased blood pressure and heart rate would lead to a faster blood loss. If the body were unable to stop the bleeding, the result would be a rapid death. Many of the internal organs can be attacked in this manner. An exception is when the spleen is attacked in a manner that causes trauma and internal bleeding. When there is trauma to the spleen, there is a window of time when a person will have no symptoms because the spleen has a large amount of blood inside of it. After this blood drains, which can take from seven to fourteen days, any further bleeding results in a sudden drop in blood

pressure and shock. This phenomenon is well known to trauma surgeons. This is another medical example of a delayed death strike.

How is it possible to strike an organ directly? Some vital points are located directly on an assessable portion of an internal organ like the liver, spleen, kidney, and heart. Physicians are taught to palpate these areas on the internal organs. In some cases, the organ, like the liver or spleen, is easily palpated through a large area. Some are a little harder like the kidneys. There is even a portion of the heart that hits the inside of the chest wall when it beats. This is called the point of maximum intensity (PMI).

It is not the intention of the author to disclose information that would allow a person to go out and cause great bodily harm to another human being. That is far from the true meaning of the arts. However, in order to be truly humane, one must have full knowledge of the possible effects of dim mak strikes. Such knowledge enables a martial artist to not only cause severe injury, but also the ability to avoid causing severe injury. There are many variables in a combat situation. The points must be struck accurately and in the correct order, depth, and force. These are skills that take years of diligent practice to acquire. The fruit of mastering the martial arts lies not in the capability of a delayed death touch, but rather in the mastering of oneself along the way. However, if one is going to spend a lifetime mastering an art, then he is entitled to know the truth about his art. If the truth about vital points is supported by modern medicine, then perhaps it is the responsibility of the martial artist to find the truth in the more important aspects of martial arts training like discipline, integrity, and honour.