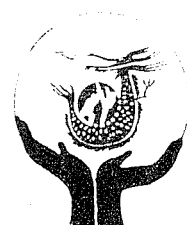




Fighting T'ai Chi

The Magazine Of The World Taiji Boxing Association
June 1990



INTERNAL FIGHTING ARTS OF THE WORLD

Fighting T'AI CHI

THE MAGAZINE OF THE WORLD TAIJI BOXING ASSOCIATION

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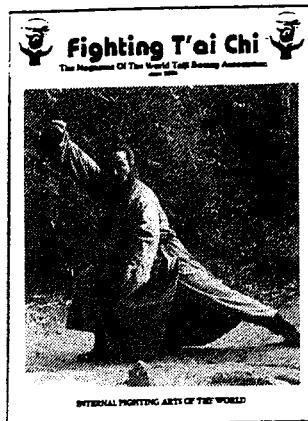
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ABOUT THE COVER

Master Wang Xin-Wu was a National Chinese T'ai Chi Ch'uan Champion long before it became fashionable to be so. 1975 saw Master Wang winning that year's honour because of his superb taiji form and pushing hands. A Student of Grandmaster Fu Zhongwen, the leader of the Yang Family in China, Wang is also a master of H'sin-I. He is Chairman of the Ningxia Wushu Association and was for years the Vice Chairman of the China Wushu Federation.

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NEWS

A NEW FILM ON VIDEO

The famous film made in China tracing the steps taken by *Yang Lu-Chan* in founding the Yang style of T'ai Chi a few years back is now available on video. It is still in Chinese but with all Chinese films, one is able to follow the action having only a few words of Chinese. The film begins with Yang being beaten up by some Chen style thug on a horse which leaves Yang thinking that he must have this new form of boxing.

Having tried all avenues to gain entrance and thus a teacher of the Chen style of t'ai chi ch'uan, Yang leaves town and comes back a few years later as a complete idiot, long hair, old clothes etc. (sounds like someone I know). He finally lies down in the snow outside the Chen Village until he is almost dead until one of the old masters takes pity on him and invites him to work in the village.

Having taken their hospitality, Yang Lu-Ch'an then begins to secretly take notes on what the advanced students are doing each evening in secret behind closed doors, literally peering through knot holes. One day Yang is called upon to defend the village and does so with great agility to the amazement of the other Chens. Then as usual, the building where *Chen Chang-Hsin* is sleeping is burned down by some evil looking people strangely resembling ninjas and it is up to Yang to save the old master where upon Chen takes Yang on as his personal student. The whole thing finishes with Yang becoming so good at t'ai chi that he leaves the Chen Village (now that he has what he wants of course). The film cuts short of telling and tracing how Yang actually began to change the style to form his own system called the Yang style.

It's an interesting film as many of the now masters and students from the modern Chen Village (Chen Chia-Goh) are used in the film and some inkling of what Chen taiji is like at a fighting level is seen.

EUROPEAN TOUR

Erle Montague is in the initial stages of planning a workshop tour of Europe and Israel beginning the 15th of September in Manchester. The World Taiji Boxing Representative in Manchester, Steve Hurst will host Erle's visit at his own club for the two day weekend workshop. The cost of the two days will be 70.00 pounds. To book for the Manchester workshop write to Steve Hurst at 4 Levens Place Moston Manchester M109DG.

OTHER CENTRES

NOTTINGHAM AND LEICESTER: Contact Tony Henrys at 11A New Eaton Rd Stapleford Notts. Or Russ Merryfield at 61 Mount Castle Rd Leicester.

ESSEX: Contact Mr Jim Uglow at, 6 Pedlars End Moreton Essex.

ISRAEL: Contact Mr Abi Moriya at 7-9 Herzog St Givitayim 53600.

FRANCE: Contact Mr Georges Saby at 37 rue de Coulmiers Nantes 4400 France.

INTERNAL ARTS ON THE INCREASE

The internal arts seem to be receiving more attention from the general Martial Arts Magazines of late. Many of them are including special sections on the internal such as *FIGHTING ARTS INTERNATIONAL* which is one such magazine.

The reason for this increase in popularity seems to be an increasing awareness by other styles such as karate and

taekwondo etc, as to the effectiveness of the internal styles either in straight out fighting techniques or in the area of balance and timing. The Chinese have always been secretive about their family styles and it is only really now that the truth about the most devastating fighting styles, the internal, are now emerging.

Bob Palmer has re-appeared after having been lost for several months. Bob is a founding member of the WTBA in the USA. It was not Bob's fault however, I somehow had the wrong address. All that was correct was the zip code and amazingly, one letter from the WTBA got through to Bob after about one year! One member of his local post office happened to know who Bob was and sent the letter to him. We now have his correct address and it is hoped that Bob will not be lost again.

John McMahon is going great guns on the Gold Coast in Australia. John is opening up new clubs as if his life depended upon it.

Peter Boston from New Zealand was recently graded up to 4th degree which makes Peter the highest fully graded teacher. He worked for it though and has many bruises to prove it. "It was worth it" Says Peter, "I really know that I earned this grade and hope not to do that again for a long time".

A new video on advanced pushing hands is available from Moon Ta-Gu Books in Australia. It deals with the very advanced and little known hinge and peng, square and small circle ch'i-na push hands. Lasting for 1 hour, it will cost 20 pounds in Europe and is in the British PAL system. It is available in the USA from Wayfarer in the NTSC system. Erle Montague's videos available in the USA from wayfarer; No.1, Yang Cheng-Fu Form and basic Qigong, No.2 Yang Lu-Ch'an form, No.4 pa-Kua Chang Complete, No.5 BASic Push Hands, No.10 Basic Qigong, No.11 How To Use Taiji And Pa-Kua For Self Defence. And Maybe No.3 Small And Large Shan-Shou, (if it is accepted, not known at this time)

Robin Whitewood has turned up back in the adipodes from his extensive trip to Japan and Taiwan. Robin, you will remember was the foremost H'sin-I teacher in Australasia and it would seem moreso now that he has received extensive training in the Orient. He is setting up a compelte centre for personal development based in the martial arts of the internal system. His phone number is Sydney 5198126.

Arno Schelka from Switzerland tells us that he has just returned to Switzerland from the central West of China after six months of Pa-Kua training in the Original system of Chiang Jung-Chiao. More on that in the next issue.

We are opening a "**Letters Section**" in the next issue so anything you wish to say (keep it clean) let us know.

Kit Nam-shu from Singapore will be travelling abroad next year to give workshops in his family's form of H'sin-I and Pa-Kua, we'll keep you posted.

John McMahon will be entering into the Koshoki Karate tournament later this year and performing t'ai chi hand forms and weapons. John is also one of the country's leading entertainers and so it will be the whole razzel dazzel! They probably won't have a clue as to what he's doing but good on you John for at least doing it.

If you have any news please send it in.

THE SUPREME ULTIMATE

by Erle Montague

Should any martial art be so bold as to call itself "the supreme ultimate"? We all know that this phrase is the translation of the words *T'ai Chi Ch'uan* but many martial artists, having studied t'ai chi as an adjunct to their own martial art question this name. Indeed many t'ai chi practitioners now also question this name preferring to say that the name was bestowed upon this martial art because of it's great healing benefits etc, leaving aside it's martial origins.

Many martial artists tend to respectfully deride t'ai chi because of it's delicate nature in performance and slow movements etc. Many t'ai chi people tend to fall back on the classics and quote untranslatable Chinese sayings etc. as being indicative of what this "supreme ultimate" martial art is all about. Many come well equipped with a bunch of old classical sayings that sound great when rolled off the tongue at parties etc. but when it comes to actual translation into 'use' then all of the classical sayings in the world won't help.

When I give workshops I usually begin with a couple of phrases which, to many of the harder style martial artists who attend, sound quite absurd. Until they see and hear what I have to say and why I have made these statements.

One such statement is that "T'ai Chi is the most deadly fighting art ever invented"! To this I always receive a few low chuckles and some nervous shuffling of feet etc. After about one hour of workshop, these people are usually converted to the internal and they too believe that t'ai chi is the supreme ultimate. Why? Let me tell you a story.

Once upon a time there was a man called Chang Sang-Feng. Chang was fascinated with the martial arts and was also good at acupuncture. In his quest to find the ultimate fighting art, one that could render a man immobile with only a medium to light strike to certain parts of the human body, Chang, we are told worked upon animals and some even believe that a few people were "worked upon".

Chang had a couple of buddies who were the top acupuncturists in China at that time and so the three of them set out to find out what points on the human body could cause the most damage when struck in certain ways. Chang and his buddies discovered that certain

points would cause more damage if they were struck in a certain way and direction. They then discovered that energy flows throughout the human body could be either "touched" in the direction of the qi for healing or 'touched' in the adverse direction to cause damage. Certain points had to be struck with either a counter clockwise screwing motion or visa-versa to cause the most damage for the least possible usage of energy.

During his research, Chang sang-feng also discovered that different points could be struck so that other points/joints etc. would be made much more vulnerable to a lighter strike, while others could be struck directly and have a dire effect.

After he was finished and Chang and his buddies were certain that they had invented the most devastating fighting art ever, they then set about to invent a form or set of movements so that their kin or preferred students could learn these deadly techniques without having to actually kill people. Then they thought that others, more nefarious than themselves might get a hold of their art and use it for evil or against them! So they set about to invent a form which was only an abstract way of learning the real techniques. This form was of a martial nature, ie; block, punch, lock, kick etc. but it was nowhere near as deadly as what the actual internal hidden meanings meant.

Chang's original art of course was called *Dim-Mak* or death touch and the art that he invented to cover up the hidden meanings was eventually to be called t'ai chi ch'uan.

Over the years however, most people have only ever been taught the physical or false meanings of the t'ai chi form. (T'ai Chi Ch'uan by the way is only a new name for the art which was originally known as *Hao ch'uan* or loose boxing) so that now we only see quite an inadequate form of fighting art, in the eyes of other martial artists.

Another phrase that I use to cause some concern amongst t'ai chi practitioners who attend my workshops is "there are no pushes in t'ai chi". How can this be they ask in horror when the whole of the t'ai chi repertoire is based upon pushing! I ask, why push! What does that do! Nothing, he just gets up and re-attacks unless you have pushed

him into the path of an oncoming bus. If t'ai chi is the supreme ultimate, why push! No, there are no pushes in t'ai chi, they are all strikes to certain acupuncture points and the mere execution of the form demonstrates the correct direction and way that we have to strike in order to do this damage. For instance, a man can be rendered unconscious with a screwing strike to the right or left pectoral to points known as "stomach 15 and 16." Now, if we are to strike at both pectoral points at the same time, then death is not far away. Isn't that indicative of the posture from the t'ai chi form commonly known as "push". Actually the exact translation for this character is *press* and not push and there we have a clue to it's real meaning. At seminars, this strike used only lightly will change any martial artist's ideas about t'ai chi and how effective it is.

The posture known as "double p'eng", you know, that seemingly useless posture just before the roll back posture and just after p'eng? This posture's true meaning actually is used to strike to a delayed and immediate death point called "stomach 9". This point is lateral to the thyroid cartilage and just under the sternocleidomastoid muscle running along the outside of the neck. Just inside the internal carotid artery just after it branches out from the common carotid artery there is a baroreceptor called the carotid sinus. This organ is responsible for governing the level of blood pressure in the body. When this organ is struck, (even lightly as in medical practice to lower the blood pressure), it causes the mind to think that extreme high blood pressure is present and so lowers the blood pressure immediately. Now, if high blood pressure is not happening then not enough blood gets to the brain and so the body just blacks out so that it will become lateral and allow more blood to travel to the brain.

This is the first area of this posture. The second involves even more sinister practice. You know when you roll your palms over to begin the pull down? Even this has an inner application. we are told by medical science that there are also three other organs in the body that when attacked or in great pain will also cause this lowering of blood pressure and cause knock out. The gall bladder,

the intestines and the ureta. As any acupuncturist knows, the gall bladder meridian and the intestines virtually run all over the human body from toe to head. So we now have hundreds of striking points which in effect cause the brain to think that either the gall bladder or the intestines have been struck.

Getting back to "double p'eng". As the palms are turned over, the left fingers again squeeze the S.9 point to cause further lowering of the pressure while the right palm attacks to the gall bladder point known as G.B. 14. just above the eye brows.

Every tiny movement in t'ai chi means something. For instance, I mentioned earlier that some points can be attacked directly while others need to be set up with other strikes. This is the case for the "play guitar" posture. In this case you will notice any old master or person who is adept at the internal meaning of t'ai chi actually push and pull his right and left palms respectively. Why? This is so that the whole energy system of the body will be upset by rubbing the flows back the opposite way on both sides of the forearm. This in turn will leave the knee joint vulnerable, more so than usual, to the more potent kick inherent in this posture.

What about that seemingly silly posture called "punch to knee"! Have you ever tried to punch someone's knee! No, this posture actually takes the attacker's wrist, squeezing it to cause the whole bodily energy to go to that point and then the right fist attacks to a point on the upper arm called Triple warmer 12.

I had a karate teacher attend one of my seminars and he was accidentally punched on a point called Nei Gwan just on the inside of the inner wrist which is a pericardium point. It was not a heavy blow but also not a light one but the chap turned slightly green and had to sit down for a few minutes.

To go into every minute movement in the whole t'ai chi form would take up a whole book so it is sufficient to say

that, no matter how insignificant the movement in your t'ai chi form, there is a reason for it. And that reason was worked out by men of genius many hundreds of years ago. Now we are spreading the good word that tells us that t'ai chi ch'uan **does** deserve it's name of distinction and we all of us can be proud that we are indeed studying the **supreme ultimate fighting art**.

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THE PRACTICAL SECTION

In this section we look at how each of the internal arts is used for self defence. In each issue we will be asking the many teachers from the World Taiji Boxing Association to put forth their favourite techniques, ones that they have found to be tried and true in real street fighting situations. We will also ask for some other techniques and how to apply them, those that aren't particularly street wise but have a certain aesthetic appeal to them, simply nice to execute.

So, if you have a favourite technique, one that you would like to share with the world! Please, send it in to us with a photo or two, not too many as space limits the amount of photos and with them, a simple easy to follow text explaining exactly what it is you are doing. The technique can be from any of the internal styles including Aikido, or even from a karate style, we don't care, just as long as it's interesting or useful.

JIM UGLOW: THE OLD SLIP BLOCK

Jim Uglow teaches in Essex in England. One of his favourite techniques involves the old T'ai Chi saying, "If he attacks you, hit him first".

In the photo, Jim's opponent attacks with a straight right. Using the simultaneous block and attack method, Jim simply punches to the attacker's face thus not only blocking the attack but also re-attacking almost simultaneously.

ERLE MONTAIGUE: THE OLD HINGED ELBOW

Once again, in keeping with the classic that says there must be no blocking. ie; your block must be your attack. As Erle Montague is attacked with the most common type of street attack of the old haymaker roundhouse punch, he turns into the attack and hammers the inside of the attacker's wrist on a point called "nei-gwan" with the metacarples of the left palm. This alone is enough to put someone down as this point controls the seat of power in the body. When struck, the body thinks that there is no energy left and so the knock out. However, just

to be on the safe side, better put in a simultaneous strike with the inside of the elbow hinging it into the carotid sinus area, or stomach 9 point another dim-mak point. There is no need to follow this one up!

When one knows how, t'ai chi is one of the most devastating fighting arts ever invented. Forget about pulling his

arm or grabbing his leg etc. Or pushing him, he'll only get back up. For self defence, we need to use t'ai chi at it's highest level, that of dim-mak. And this can only be performed when we have simultaneous block and attack.



Jim Uglow uses slip block



Erle Montague uses hinge elbow

PA-KUA CHANG

By Uri Slomonski. Poland

Unlike *T'ai Chi Ch'uan*, the internal martial art of *Pa-kua Chang* has not received the enormous amount of publicity and is only now starting to gain popularity in the West. One of the main reasons for it's non proliferation is because of it's inherent complexity of movement and application. But once mastered, this quite unique art becomes a most devastating fighting art which, like it's sister art, *t'ai chi*, has some amazing health benefits.

Although *Pa-kua Chang* is said to be the sister of *t'ai chi* it is only similar in internal movement being totally different in external movement. Many people still think that *Pa-kua* is some part of *t'ai chi* and should be practiced together with or after one has mastered *t'ai chi* but this is incorrect as it is a totally self contained fighting art. Of course, having the same internal aspects as *t'ai chi* one is able to grasp the twisting, turning often alien movements quicker having studied *t'ai chi* but this is not necessary.

Pa-Kua Chang, or *Bagwazhang* is said to be the sister of *T'ai Chi Ch'uan*, the mother of the three "internal systems". It is one of the newest Chinese healing/martial arts of the internal system and contains the very best of the Shaolin Martial arts as well as the very best of the Buddhist or Taoist fighting arts. It's intricacies are great and one is able to continually discover new techniques from within the complex postures and movements which go together to build the framework which we call the *Pa-Kua Chang* form or *kata*.

We only have a vague record of the history of *pa-kua chang* and it would seem that it was either founded by a man called *Tung Hai-chuan* (1796-1880) or he was pretty close to the original source. Many believe that *Tung* invented the art, not wishing to claim inventorship as it was not good to say that one had invented a whole fighting system by oneself but rather say that it was inherited from some old monk etc. The art was proliferated by *Tung's* disciples. *Cheng Ting-Hwa* was said to have been personally involved in the *BOXER REBELLION* in 1900. The story goes that *Cheng Ting-Hwa* died from multiple

bullet wounds when he attacked a group of foreign troops during the rebellion. Armed with only two small knives he took out ten of the soldiers before he died. *Cheng's* most famous pupil was *SUN LUC-TANG* while his son, *CHENG YU-Lung* (1875-1928) popularised the art throughout Beijing and Tientsin.

Sun Luc Tang (1860-1932) learnt the art from *Cheng Ting-Hwa* and gained the name of *SUN THE COWARD* because of his aversion to competition fighting. He could see no reason for a man to have to prove his art. His idea was that *Pa-kua chang* should only be used in defence of oneself or one's family etc. Because of this, *Sun* had very few students, however, at one time a very large Chinese wrestler challenged *Tung* and *Tung* turned him down. The wrestler decided to have the fight anyway and began to strike *Tung* with heavy blows. *Tung* took a few of these attacks and then with only two palm strikes put the man into hospital. After this many students wanted to join *Tung* but he turned to them and said that if he had to almost kill another human being to gain students then he would rather not.

The form has been slowly added to and taken away from until we have come to a highly evolved form of healing or self defence which only relies upon the palms and feet for attack and defence. With mainly circular foot movement, the form lays stress upon the stability of the stance and the flexibility of the waist which is complimented by the vigorous movements of the arms and palms while always being coordinated in legs, waist and upper body. *Pa-Kua* is said to have the fastest footwork of any martial art.

THE MARTIAL ART:

Two methods of attack and defence are taught. The first method is given to larger people who are able to literally crash their way in through any defence enabling them to reach the body's centre, this is the basic way of defence whereby we attack anything that comes within range.. In *Pa-kua Chang* there are no second chances, we do not wait for the attack but rather attack him before

he attacks. For instance, if someone is standing in front of you holding a strong on-guard position, the hammer palm is used to smash his right arm outward thus damaging it. Then immediately, the left arm is smashed open allowing us to attack the centre.

From the very basics of the eight palm changes or *Pa-Kua Cheng Chung*, (Orthodox Eight Diagram), the practitioner is able to go on to the highest level of *Pa-Kua* fighting, the *DRAGON PALM FORM*. This form consists of circular foot movements which enables the practitioner to evade to the side and come in at the rear in a circular movement at various speeds thus perplexing the opponent. At this level, attacks are mostly executed from the rear or to the side, having got around there by using the very unique *Pa-Kua* stepping method. **Photo No.1** shows a technique which is the epitome of *pa-kua chang*. I take the attacker's attacking arm and block it using single pounding palm as I turn my front foot in as far as it will go. His arm is now out of the way as I take my blocking palm over my head and my



Photo No. 1

other palm around behind my back like a hammer lock. **Photo No. 2.**

I now spin around on my front heel so that my other foot comes to the rear of

his front leg and extend my right arm to that it stretches across his chest. **Photo NO.3.** I am now able to either claw his eyes as I throw him to the ground over my leg **Photo NO. 4,** or I can use the shoulder as I barge in to crush his upper

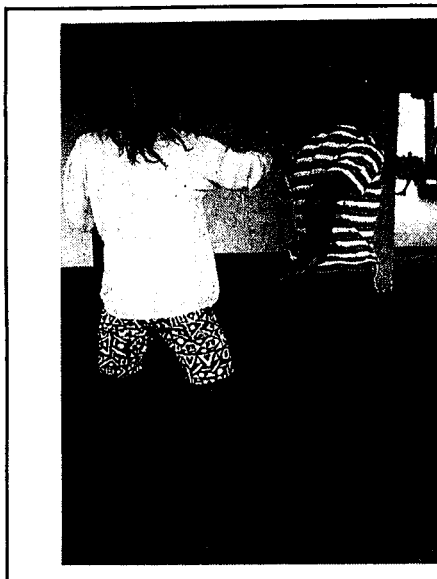


Photo No. 2

rib area and then throw him over.

This method is mainly for smaller people who do not have the physical strength of the larger person and would prefer techniques that took them under rather than over the opponent's arms. Particular attention must be given to training the waist to gain more power and flexibility as this is where almost all



Photo No. 3

of the power for Pa-Kua is derived. If one is able to control the waist with one's mind, then the waist will control the legs and feet.

THE HEALING ART:

The constant training of the waist, twisting, turning, bending etc, results in an effective exercise for the joints, sinews, muscles and internal organs so one is not only training in a fighting art but also a healing art. It is interesting to note that most of the old Pa-Kua practitioners lived to very old ages, those who weren't killed in fights or the *Boxer Rebellion*.

Pa-Kua is closely related to acupuncture whereby one is constantly twisting the acupuncture meridians to work upon each organ in turn thereby sending life giving Ch'i or energy to all parts of the body.

The dragon dances, undulates, twists, using flexible movements where necessary and rigid movements when needed. His/her movements are responsive, that is, movement is only reliant upon the actions of the attacker. Each movement has an equal and opposite reaction and these reactions are interwoven and coordinated with each other. This is how the *Dragon Form* was given its name.

Blocking is always done in a circular manner thus minimizing the attacker's power and at the same time always on the move, in to the centre. Never is an attack taken full on using brute force. Even when one is quite large and prefers to use the method of **smash and attack** as above, damaging blocks are still circular although to the untrained eye it would be hard to see. The movement is generated by the waist while the upper body stays rigid. The mind is concentrated on the lower abdomen with the breath regulated throughout the form.

The unique stepping method gathers no momentum, the power comes from the waist alone thus the practitioner is able to stop immediately and go the other way. there is never any weight placed upon the leading foot. The stepping is fast but only fast within each step's own boundaries. The momentum of each individual step must not go into the next step, it must stop when the foot stops, then the next step is begun. In this way the feet are able to



Photo No. 4

attack the opponent's ankle or at the highest, the groin.

In order to keep this idea of not gathering the momentum especially when executing the pa-kua technique of swinging around to defend from the rear, we use the technique known as *Cloud Shadowing Palms*. This technique involves the lifting of one or both of the arms straight upward as one spins around as in the previous technique when one arm was taken over the head thus keeping the centrifugal force to a minimum, we are able to keep the centre and thus keep our control in order to defend against great strength. The arms are in a position to be able to crash down upon the attack.

Pa-Kua Chang is an unique martial art which is the epitome of the Taoist philosophy. We not only gain a great self defence art but also heal the body and mind of any defects which have come as a result of bad living habits over a number of years.

THE CLASSICAL CIRCULAR FORM:

The very first area that we train in apart from the unique Pa-kua *qigong* is the circle walking. This simply involves one walking around the perimeter of a circle and turning to walk the other way using certain pa-kua footwork.

Many people think that we walk the circle to improve our form but this is wrong. We perform the circular form to improve our circle walking.

The form is performed around the circumference of a circle. We walk around the circle and when we come back to our starting point we execute one of the eight classical palm changes at great pace and power. The walking can be done slower or at full speed.

Although many of the movements from the form are martial in feeling, one should not think of those applications as one practices the form. However, you must know the application of many of these movements so that the therapeutic value comes through. It is enough to know the application so that the subconscious mind will know what the body is supposed to be doing at every other practice session. Even when striking with an explosive relaxed energy release, one should only do the movement and not think about striking someone etc. The form should be performed with no muscular tension. All of the movements including the fast explosive attacks should be performed with centrifugal force which comes from the waist rather than from the extending of the arms.

FIGHTING LINEAR FORM:

As well as the classical circular form, *Yen Te-Hwa* who learned from *Chou Hsiang* (1861-???) who in turn learned from *Cheng Ting-Hwa*, formulated a fighting or linear form which placed more emphasis upon the fighting aspects of the art. This is where we are able to learn how to use Pa-kua for fighting and self defence. Here we are able to see how the martial techniques work and we are able to put them together with a partner to form a two person learning aid, something akin to Kumite from Karate. This form is said to be the longest fast fighting form of any martial system and is quite energetic in application and requires an amount of fitness to perform straight through. The posture of "**dragon whips tail**", a sort of back spinning crescent kick is from the fighting pa-kua form. This form covers the four directions and the four corners.

Pa-Kua Chang The Future.

Today we have three main forms of Pa-kua Chang. **The Original Form** is the one founded by *Chiang Chung*

Chiao and is now regarded as the original formulated form. The **body swimming form** is the one founded by certain modern pa-kua masters on behalf of the Chinese Government and is used in the wushu tournaments. The **animal form** is a series of twelve movements representing the movements of the 12 traditional animals.

With the way that the Chinese government is "formulating" all of it's wushu it's anyone's guess as to what the future is for Pa-kua. The internal styles are internal because one "owns" the style. It's not a cast of taking some movements and then putting those movements onto one's body, it's a case of the forms changing to suit every body shape and so everyone will do the forms slightly differently. When we are attacked, we don't say that you must use this or that technique, you must simply react with what ever technique or "non-technique" that your subconscious mind says to use and if we're forced to do the physical forms exactly the same way that some dead master dictated, then we have nothing more than a karate type kata where every movement has to be exactly the same as it was founded.

I hope that it never comes to the point where the Chinese masters have to come to the West in order to re-learn their *folk* styles but the way it is going now it looks ominous. Governments should have no say in how the martial arts should be performed, unless of course if that particular minister is a practicing master of the martial arts himself.

Uri slomonski is a doctor of medicine and practices in Wasaw Poland

MICHAEL BABIN

Teaches Yang Style T'ai Chi form, Pushing hands, da-lu, self defence and weapons. His emphasis is upon the martial art of t'ai chi ch'uan but also stresses that in order to perform t'ai chi for health and meditation, one must learn it as it was originally intended, as a fighting art.

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GRANDMASTER FU ZHONGWEN

Grandmaster Fu Zhongwen is the recognised leader of the Yang Family in China today. He is the nephew of Yang Cheng-Fu and has been practising taijiquan since he was very young. He is now 87 years old

It is possible to train with this legend of taijiquan in China.

Write to Fu Zhongwen in Chinese if possible to;

No# 14 31 Lane off Luguan Rd Wu Chang Rd Shanghai China.

Or you may write to his son in English to arrange training.

Fu Sheng-yuan
120 Brandon St
Kensington WA 6151

An Interview With Chang Yiu Chun (1896-1986)

Written by Mr Hu
Edited by Erle Montague

The First Yang Style

This is the first part of an interview that one Mr Hu from China Wushu had with Mr Chang Yiu-Chun back in the mid to late seventies. Chang was a student of the not so famous Yang Shou-Hou.

Q. How long have you been practicing the t'ai chi ch'uan

A. Since 1911.

Q. Who was your first teacher and how long did you study with him.

A. My teacher was *Yeung Shou-hu* the grandson of the founder of the Yeung style, *Yeung Lu-sum*. (Yang Lu-Ch'an). I was with Yeung from 1911 until his death in 1930.

Q. Many people have commented upon the sometimes brutal nature of Yeung Shou-hu's teaching methods.

A. Yes, quite often we would finish a training period with blood on our vests and many bruises. Sometimes a bone would be broken, Yeung did not have many students.

Q. What are your views on this type of training?

A. It was good for me because I was very undisciplined in my younger days. I always wanted to fight and so with Yeung I got plenty of fighting. It taught us that if we did not do t'ai chi ch'uan correctly then we were hurt. Most of us did it correctly eventually or we left.

Q. Most people in the West would look upon this type of t'ai chi ch'uan training as being quite brutal. The style of Yang style t'ai chi ch'uan today in the West is not brutal at all.

A. I do not know about what they do in the West. But what they do in China is a modified form of t'ai chi ch'uan invented by Yeung

Shou-hu's brother Yeung Cheng-po. This style is Yeung Cheng-po's own invention so that many older and sick people can do t'ai chi ch'uan.

Q. What you are telling me is that there are actually two different types of Yeung style?

A. Yes, the one that was founded by Yeung Lu-sum is not like the Yeung Cheng-po type.

Q. What are the differences?

A. When my teacher used to do his t'ai chi ch'uan, we would often say that he was like a canon shot one second and like the great river in the next second. He was very energetic. The Yeung Cheng-po style is all soft and flowing with no canon shots.

Q. I have never heard of this and I find it quite interesting. Why is it that no-one knows that there are two Yeung types of t'ai chi ch'uan. Did Yeung Cheng-po do the original t'ai chi ch'uan?

A. In the early days before Yeung Cheng-po, we would only teach t'ai chi ch'uan to family members and very close friends, friends who were almost like family members. I am a family member, a second cousin to the Yeung Shou-hu family. Yeung Cheng-po was the first one to teach everyone and he became very famous all over China. So this is why we only ever hear about this style. Yes, Yeung Cheng-po did the original Yeung style of his grandfather before about 1915, then he changed it. Many people watched him practise the original style and he even taught a few people. But when he invented his own style and changed it over a few years, all of his students forgot about the original style.

Q. From what you know about him, was Yeung Cheng-po as good at self defence as we are told today?

A. Yes, he was very good at self defence. He was quite large and strong and he could also be quite brutal in his pushing hands but he learnt the original style first.

Q. Other t'ai ch ch'uan styles sometimes say that the Yeung (Yang) style is no good for self defence, why is this?

A. If we talk about the Yeung Cheng-Po style then perhaps it takes a lot longer to be good at it and not too many have this time. But if you mean the Yeung lu-sum style then it is very good for self defence. No-one outside of the family knows the Yeung Lu-sum style and so everyone thinks that the Yeung style is useless.

Q. How good then is the original Yeung style of t'ai chi ch'uan?

A. ... it is the best.

Q. Why and how is it used for self defence.

A. We use t'ai chi ch'uan in two ways. The first I can tell you about because many people know this way today. This way we take the movements and use them for self defence. we move out of the way of an oncoming force and give our own attack as he passes. We lock his bones, we break his legs and arms. This is the first level of t'ai chi ch'uan self defence. The second way is too sinister and evil for me to talk about.

Q. Why?

A. I am sorry, I have taken an oath not to tell about this way of self defence.

Q. Does pushing hands play an important part in your t'ai chi ch'uan?

A. Today it does but in the early days it did not. We used to place more importance upon the fight-

ing but as we learnt more, we used pushing hands to teach us about balance and the theory of yin and yang.

Q. What do you mean by "fighting".

A. By that I mean the shan-shou. But there are also today two versions of the shan-shou. The one version by the Yeung Cheng-po family is softer and less brutal while the older version is quite brutal.

Q. Brutal, why.

A. We do the shan-shou in three ways. The first way is to learn the movements of attack and defence. The second way is to do these movements faster and with much more power, this is where we get some bruises. The third way is when we try to strike each other for real and try to get each other off balance by doing the movements in the wrong sequence.

Q. If Yeung Lu-sum were to be alive today, what would he say about his t'ai chi ch'uan.

A. Firstly he would not recognise the name because it was not called t'ai chi ch'uan until fairly recently. He would even recognise what is being taught in his name today. Unless he saw the Yeung Shou-hu style. Although I am sure that over the years this too has changed as everything does. But not as much as the *Yeung Cheng-po style*.

Q. Many people in the West have changed the Yeung Cheng-po style even more. Even in China we now have people changing the styles trying to integrate the three styles. (the beginning of the Peking styles... Editor). What is the future of t'ai chi ch'uan.

A. I do not want to say anything about the way in which our Government is changing the styles and I do not care what is happening in the West. But if t'ai chi ch'uan changes any more and no more people begin to teach the

original Yeung style then where we used to have a goat, now we have a duck.

The interview will continue in the next issue.

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FU ZHONGWEN YANG STYLE LEADER

By Miles Henderson

Fu is a large amiable old man in his late eighties. He has spent well over seventy years of his life training in Taijiquan. As the last surviving disciple of Yang Chengfu, he is a living source of first hand knowledge of Yang and his teachings.

He is the founder of the famous Yong Nian Society, and has spent much of his life travelling over China promoting the complete Yang style including all the weapons.

In 1987 I was fortunate enough to spend two weeks intensive training with him. Two weeks in which new dimensions on Taiji and Chinese culture were shown to me. His insights into training were too many to record, but the main points he continually emphasised are included in this article.

Fu was born in Yongnian village, Henan province, home of the Yang style. He showed me photos of this village. It is a dry dusty place. He would casually say "this was Yang's house, this is Yang Luchan's tomb, here is Chengfu's tomb that was wrecked in the cultural revolution, this is where they used to train." It had me wondering would Yong Nian ever become a mecca for Taiji stylists as Chenjiagou has become.

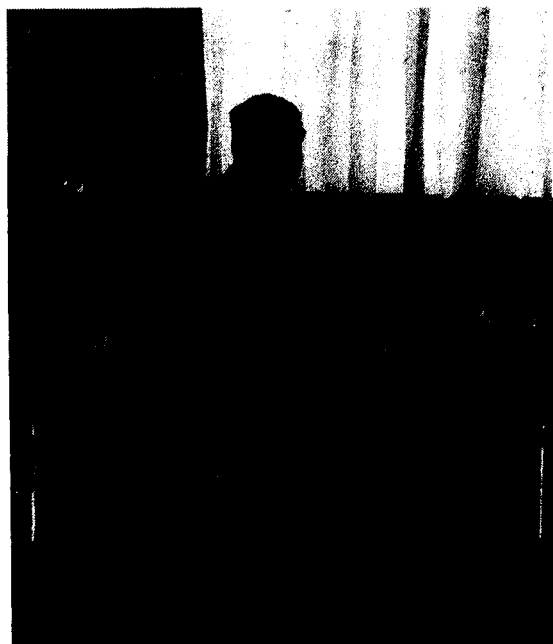
At the age of nine Fu began to receive special tuition from Yang Chengfu in Yong Nian. Fu trained with him till the age of fifteen when he joined a cotton company and had to move to Shanghai. In 1929, Yang also moved to Shanghai and an overjoyed Fu moved into Yang's house and stayed with him for several years, mastering all aspects of the Yang style.

Fu recalls that Yang's teaching method was casual and open but extremely pedantic. At classes or in the courtyard outside his house he would stand silently to one side inspecting his students, stopping their training to correct the most minute of errors. Students

were made to practise single postures or sets of postures for as many days/weeks as it took to get them right. Fu maintains that if the marvellous curative benefits and the wonderful inner happiness (the ultimate results of Taiji) are to be attained; correctness of posture is the most important goal in one's training. He said as each persons' internal experience and joy are different, correct posture was the only constant.

With his uncompromising attitude to form it is not surprising that Fu becomes quite melancholy when he discusses the proliferation of debased modifications of Yang's form since his death in 1936. Most contain superfluous and unnecessary movements that have no practical use and only impede progress.

These modifications have turned a



FU ZHONGWEN

martial art with unique health benefits into a useless dance. The parks in China are full of bad Taiji being taught by ignorant and boastful instructors. He showed me many examples of this. It amazed me that in a park full of people

doing Taiji only a few had chosen to practice with a genuine Yang style master. Most seemed content with doing a real mishmash of trendy modified Taiji.

Fu points out that clues for performing the form properly can be obtained by remembering Taiji is a martial art. In support of this he quotes "perform with martial spirit". If a practitioner feels he would never be able to apply a movement because his stance is weak, or he feels awkward, then his back is not straight, his posture is incorrect and his gains from Taiji will be superficial.

One's form must have "gong fu"; a strength and a solidity in order to achieve correct expression. He reminds his students that a simple way to achieve this is to "sit on your leg" in stances weighted on the rear leg and in transitional movements.

One of Fu's pet hates are the so-called "Qigong masters". When initially asked if qigong was an integral part of one's Taiji training, he became quite distressed. I asked what was the problem with just standing/sitting and breathing. "Oh that sort" was his reply. "That's okay, I sometimes practice "quiet sitting" myself." He went on to tell me of the recent qigong fad that had swept China. Fakes set themselves up everywhere claiming their style was the best and they'd cure any illness by the emission of qi from their palms. People paid a lot of money to learn these styles and to be "cured" but now no one practiced them. Fu told me how he went and visited one of these masters. He laughingly said that he had sat under this fellows hand for fifteen minutes and had felt no qi. This fellow then announced that he had cured Fu. Fu was incredulous "cured

me of what." He advises watch out for these fakes.

Although he made a distinction between taiji and qigong, in an effort to make me understand the internal training in taiji, he said, "Taiji is the best kind of qigong."

FU ON PUSH HANDS

Fu stressed mastery of push hands was vital for not only strengthening the body, but it was the only way of developing true self-defence ability; which is the ability to spontaneously react at the moment of attack. For this reason Fu does not believe in the two man fighting sets of Taiji, regarding them as contrived and unrealistic.

Initially student must practice single applications from the form in order to teach the body to move in different ways, as an artist learns a limited number of brush strokes before he can paint a picture of anything.

Pushing hands takes these "strokes" and moulds them into the ability to spontaneously react with anything one might confront in the mess of limbs that is a brawl. He told me "only if you practice and practice to the point of hardship will you gain this ability." He warns martial artists must be wary of learning too many techniques. An artist with a very limited amount of brush strokes can portray anything he chooses. A martial artist must do likewise.

Yang Chengfu was famous for his matchless mastery of push hands. When practicing with Fu, Yang would continuously use fa-jing causing Fu to stumble against the nearest wall. The long training sessions were often so intense that, although Yang never used excessive force, the continual jamming against the wall would leave Fu's back bloody and swollen. This hard training stood Fu in good stead when he had the honour of accompanying Yang to Guangzhou in 1932 to demonstrate the Yang style. There he accepted many challenges on Yang's behalf, never being defeated once.

Today Fu even in his late eighties can still effortlessly uproot an opponent. Years of sensitivity training allow him to find any weakness or stiffness in his opponent to exploit. When he used

"rollback" on me it was like being sucked helplessly into a vortex from where you could be spat out at will. When he used "an", and that was ever so gently, it was if my feet were on ice slithering on a frictionless surface. Such is a skill to aspire to. I found out later that old Fu is famous in the martial arts community for his push hands expertise.

Fu is a practical minded person. He never uses any mysticism when discussing the power behind or the benefits of Taiji. People always ask him about "qi". "Qi is everywhere," he grinned, "its even in the weather" (tianqi is chinese for weather). He reminded me on numerous occasions that Taiji is an art based on the innate laws of physics, not mysterious energies. Yang Luchan was a great master capable of seemingly superhuman feats, and in all the challenges that were part of any boxers existence at that time he was never defeated. This earned him the nickname "no rival" Yang. Fu explains that this was the result of eighteen years extremely hard and self denying training, first in a local boxing style and then in the Chen style before he even developed his own style. All the Yangs, Fu says, were uneducated but they trained in a fanatical single minded way that allowed them to achieve more than others.

Fu's influence on the Taiji world is widespread. Many among the thousands of his students have been champions, are instructors at Wushu institutes, or are teachers of therapeutic exercises at respected hospitals. He is perhaps proudest of those many students that have ridded themselves of disease or difficulty by the regular practice of the exercises he taught them. Fu's ultimate hope is that more and more people will train in the Yang style of Taiji because, as the motto of the Yong Nian Society he founded says, it promotes health, happiness and longevity.

Fu's son, a master in his own right is now teaching in Perth with the Yong Nian Yang shi Taijiquan association.

CHUN SHEN TAIJI BOXING SCHOOL

Miles Henderson is the Chief instructor for the Chun Shen Taiji Boxing School in The Australian Capital Territory. All aspects of The Yang Style taught. Self Defence is their specialty.

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Steve Hurst

Steve Hurst is the representative of the World Taiji Boxing Association in Great Britain.

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The Yang Nian Yang Shi Taijiquan Association

Fu Sheng-yuan is the son of Fu Zhongwen. He now lives and teaches in Perth Western Australia.

The Original Yang Cheng-fu style of t'ai chi ch'uan is taught specialising in pushing hands. Fu Zhongwen is sometimes called 'Mr Push Hands' because of his excellent centredness and internal power in push hands. He has passed this knowledge on to his son.

Write to Fu Sheng-yuan at:
120 Brandon St
Kensington WA 6151
Australia

T'ai Chi Ch'uan Beginnings And Endings

By Stuart Le Marseny

As with most important events in one's life, my becoming fully involved in T'ai Chi Ch'uan just happened.

I had been interested in and studied the martial arts for ten years. But owing to a variety of personal and business commitments I could not spend as much time and energy as I would like to have.

A radical change in personal circumstances which resulted in my becoming a single parent with an eight year old daughter to raise gave me the opportunity to re-access our future. I remembered the lines from the Robert Frost poem, 'Stopping by the woods on a snowy evening'. "Two roads diverged in a wood and I took the one less travelled by, And it has made all the difference".

Taking this opportunity, I decided to abandon my profitable but time consuming career as a building contractor and take .. the road less travelled by.. I decided to put all of my energy and time into raising my child and pursuing my martial arts training on a full time basis. Shortly after this I began training with Master Erle Montague in T'ai Chi Ch'uan. I had heard about Erle and had read some of his articles in various publications and was very impressed.

I had studied a variety of the external martial arts, Japanese, Filipino, and Korean. However, I realized that with this training and philosophy which relied heavily upon skeletal strength and muscular development, the students tended to become hard in both the training environment and everyday situations. Interacting with the people around them and in their lives in a manner which did not engender harmony.

I, like the majority of martial artists, remained unaware of the internal arts ability to influence one's everyday life.

No longer are we, the practitioners of the martial arts, professional soldiers, sleeping with one's eyes open. Neither are we samurai warriors with lives likened to the Cherry blossoms... Short but glorious. We are family orientated people with lovers, friends and children. We are striving to lead interesting peaceful lives. This is what we are aiming to protect and foster with our martial arts.

The martial training and warrior arts we practice today should as it was orig-

inally intended, be suitable for the time, place and circumstances in which it is to be used.

Today we are not troubled by roving bands of outlaws on horse back, or life threatening situations at every turn. Police intervention is no longer a two day walk away.

We are faced today with a multitude of problems not for an instant envisaged by the founders and early practitioners of any of the martial art systems.

The most widely practised style of t'ai chi ch'uan, the Yang Cheng-fu style evolved from what is now known as 'The Original Yang Style' in the 1920's. This occurred in the recognition of changing times and circumstances. I believe that t'ai chi ch'uan has become the most suitable style for today.

I do not for a moment suggest that the traditional movements and techniques be ignored. Their reasons for coming into being, their background and their original use should be learnt and understood. They are invaluable as training aids and in some cases may be geared to current day situations.

Nowadays we may be called upon to use our martial skills perhaps half a dozen times in our entire life, if that! However, the softer aspects of internal training give the practitioner the ability and the skills required to deal with the very stressful problems and situations encountered on a daily or indeed on an hourly basis in our modern lifestyles.

This is where the very many facets of comprehensive T'ai Chi Ch'uan training come into the fore. Previously, many of these aspects have remained hidden from the student until after a lengthy period of training. However, some publications, this one in particular are now attempting to change this is order to reveal a glimpse of the wealth of beneficial information that awaits the student/practitioner of t'ai chi ch'uan.

At the commencement of training, the form and basic qigong are used to regulate and correct breathing and posture. They improve and eventually correct posture after possibly years of neglect. Coordination and balance are improved and a general feeling of wellbeing is nurtured.

As the student progresses, he/she will notice the subtle process of self healing developing. With the correct instruction and application, this will be further enhanced.

As the student's training advances past the basic aspects of the form and more into the martial applications, an entire world of knowledge and what to do with it opens up.. The study of anatomy, acupuncture and acupressure points is fully explored in both the healing and martial attack sense. The latter being the little known but greatly misunderstood Dim-Mak.

A concerted effort is now being made by a few masters to correct this misunderstanding. Articles in the current Australasian Fighting Arts by Erle Montague bear this out.

It is only when all the aspects of t'ai chi ch'uan are recognized and brought into the training area that it truly becomes the great martial art that it is. Art being the operative word.

T'ai chi ch'uan exercises your mentally, physically and spiritually. The slow meditative self healing form provides a means of alleviating stress. The shan-shou and pauchui gives a brilliant and single and double martial training. The single and double push hands movements not only exercise the cardiovascular and muscular/skeletal system, but provide a non threatening means of training all your techniques.

As one progresses, kicks are included in this method of training. Further progress to the highest level, a level attainable by all but only aspired to by the very few, give a means of healing others.

In conclusion, the reasons I started t'ai chi ch'uan are many and varied. But the reason I continue it are to learn and develop the art and myself. And have a great time doing it. Life looks different when you are doing what you choose.

Stuart Le Marseny

Stuart Le Marseny teaches in the Northern Rivers districts of Northern NSW Australia.

For Class Times Phone
(066)721469

SOFT T'AI CHI?

From The New Zealand T'ai Chi And Ch'an Association

On March 3rd 1990, Erle Montaigue arrived in new Zealand to conduct a three day seminar and workshop for the New Zealand contingent of The World Taiji Boxing Association, The New Zealand T'ai Chi And Ch'an Assoc.

The sessions were structured so as to cover in great detail the varied requirements of the many students attending. There is in New Zealand a great interest in T'ai Chi and in particular the Original Yang's Style as taught by Master Erle Montaigue.

The Chief instructor of the Association, Peter Boston was also tested for 4th degree. This is the equivalent to 4th dan black belt.

For those students privileged to watch this normally closed door grading, the fallacy that T'ai Chi is a soft martial art was shattered. Master Montaigue says that the difference between 4th degree and other grades is that this is where the instructor has to get serious about his or her ability in the self defence area and has to prove it. No more fiddling around with forms or pushing hands, it's defend or be knocked down. The student must prove courage in the face of extreme adversity. 4th degree is literally the crunch in one's t'ai chi training.

What Happened.

One part of the grading is where the person being graded (Peter Boston in this case), has to perform the slow t'ai chi form maintaining complete concentration meditation and a smooth flow of movement while being harassed with contact strikes to various parts of the body. The gradee's ability to absorb this energy is important to the development of the internal martial artist. T'ai Chi is a close in fighting art and as such one must be able to receive force and neutralize it. The internal practice strengthens the internal organs of the body. However, it must be trained in correctly as internal damage can sometimes occur and it must be learnt from a competent teacher.

After demonstrating pushing hands there came a gruelling 20 minute session of attack and defence sparring where Peter had to defend himself against all types of street type attacks,

and a few others! These attacks were non stop and tested Peter's ability at street wise self defence using the t'ai chi ch'uan principles. After Peter was softened up, some of the other graded students took over the attacking to mop up what was left of Peter. Following this was a two minute break with Peter lying out on the ground when he had to perform the fast form of pauchui and the two person Shan-Shou.

Erle Montaigue was pleased with his student's progress and courage and awarded him 4th degree. Nothing formal, just "Oh by the way, Peter, you're now 4th degree".

Some Other Observations.

Joanne George, 1st degree graded student commented; I always knew that t'ai chi was a martial art, one that was effective but I hadn't realized how effective the inner or secret advanced application of the postures is. These beautiful flowing movements of the slow form took on a new sinister meaning when they were subjected to realism. It was very good also for the advanced students to actually see master Montaigue having to get in there himself and fight!

Peter Boston's Comments.

For some time I have been somewhat perplexed when reading accounts of the old masters such as Yang Lu-Ch'an, the founder of the Only Original Yang style and my teacher's direct lineage, who would take on all comers in unrestricted no holds barred challenge fights. Not just pushing hands competitions where a nice gentle push or uprooting technique decides the winner. Real fighting. So what happened! Looking at these old masters and how sanguinary their attitudes to fighting were, I found it hard to correlate **their** attitude to that of most contemporary teacher's way of teaching t'ai chi as a fighting art. Which usually amounts to espousing the classics and bathing in the past glory of old masters long since gone while assuring the impressionable devotee that eventually in say 30 years! After continually practicing soft graceful movements, they will be able to gently brush aside some hairy gorilla (such as Erle Montaigue), in a

back street or bar, hell bent on damaging vital parts of one's body. Learning the real T'ai Chi from a master well versed in the street applications of t'ai chi has convinced me that many modern teachers of t'ai chi have lost the grasp upon reality.

At this point I would like to say that I realize that the majority of students attending our classes in New Zealand will only ever wish to reach the advanced stage of meditation and great good health. This is fine for those people. I personally am totally absorbed with the whole system of t'ai chi, not only the martial but I feel that as an instructor offering all aspects that I have the responsibility as do all t'ai chi instructors everywhere to develop their student's ability to a point where they are able to defend themselves in real life situations.

Peter first learnt t'ai chi from Mr Khoo K.H. in Auckland and studied with him for 5 years. Then he travelled to Australia to meet with Erle in 1983 when, after a few hours of being 'shown' t'ai chi and not much talking decided to ask for permission to study with Erle. After some years, Peter was given permission to represent Erle Montaigue in New Zealand. At that time Peter only had one school with a handful of students, he now runs the most successful schools in new Zealand with literally hundreds of students all over both islands.

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Healing With T'ai Chi Qigong

By Paul S Grandi
Phuket Thailand

A supreme enlightenment being proclaimed: Mind is chief, mind made are our experiences. A well directed mind brings peace and happiness. The power one gains with the practice of Taiji too is mind-made, here respectively with the use of the body but fortified by mind.

The Qi, that vital energy in each living creature can be benefited from, not only for fighting but also for healing. Healing all sorts of illnesses but with the power of the mind.

I came to know of this healing power of the Qi, or Qigong as it is called by pure accident. Some seven years ago, I noticed one of my German Shepherd dogs limping, the result of some wild jumping about. Feeling sorry for it's pain, I gently stroked its foot and giving him reassuring talk when, all of a sudden, he jumps up and runs away as if nothing ever happened to him. Being happy to see him well it still seemed rather unusual so I just put the experience into my memory file. This happened again, to the second dog this time, and while applying my hand to the spot, the same thing happened again after three minutes. I was then convinced that some extraordinary energy was emitting from my hands. By further experimentation on friends that were suffering from grave migraine headaches, year long suffering of back pains, post operative wounds, stomach aches etc., it was eliminating these illnesses within 5 to 20 minutes. The healing also was not only for a day or two but so far for good.

My Search

Through an article in *TIME MAGAZINE*, it finally became known to me that this was nothing unusual, but that this healing power is called QIGONG, an ancient Chinese healing therapy. A visit to a famous Qigong Master in Beijing China became instrumental in increasing the healing power of Qi.

In the search for further literature on Qigong, I came across a book published by Mr *Erle Montague*, who, upon visiting him for further training exposed

me to Taiji which helped tremendously in furthering the flow of the Qi with which it is now possible for me to heal illnesses for which patients had visited physicians for years but could not get any relief.

Anybody can develop this healing power of Qigong through the practice of Taiji. Its primary purpose is to keep oneself healthy ie., each person, through their own bodily and mental conditions, can mobilize their physiological and mental (spiritual) functions, regulate and cultivate them for keeping healthy. And if the development of the Qi is perfected, to heal with this power oneself and others.

Such are the great benefits of Taiji for defending and fighting. But I find its greatest benefit in keeping oneself healthy, and in some instances as in my own, to heal and help our fellow travelers from young age to old age, and yes, on the way to the next existence.

PAUL SILVIO GRANDI

Paul S grandi is a Psychic Healer who lives on Phuket Island in Thailand. His feats of healing are well documented.

Paul also runs the "KATA DELIGHT HOTEL" a unique quiet getaway for those looking for something different for their holiday.

Write to Paul S grandi at:

P/O Box 124
Phuket
Thailand

JOHN McMAHON SIFU

John McMahon holds black belt 3rd degree in the World Taiji Boxing Association and has been a student of *Erle Montague* for many years. He is a founding member of the *Australasian Therapeutic Movement Association* and teaches all aspects of t'ai chi, internal weapons and also karate.

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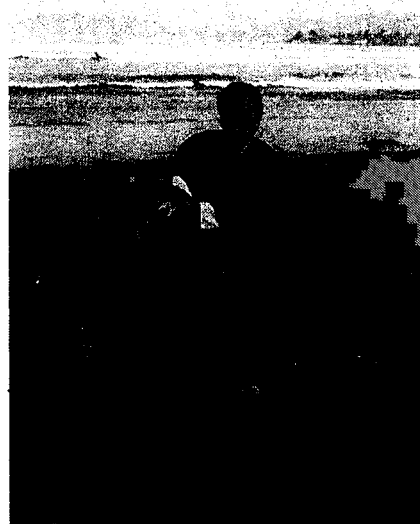
T'ai Chi Ch'uan The Realistic Approach

Two Articles , one by Michael Babin, Ontario Canada and one by Edward Hiles Star, Fresno CA

In this section we will be featuring articles and letters from all styles of martial arts teachers, those who present a more realistic approach rather than the mystical approach.

The first item is from Edward Hiles Star who teaches in Fresno CA. Ed is a member of the WTBA and teaches a variety of martial arts including T'ai Chi Ch'uan, H'sin-I Pa-Kua Chang, Aikido and weapons. Ed calls his school, the Crane, Hand Martial Arts School.

I realize that it isn't easy to take a non-traditional approach or to instill some fundamental reality to things overly metaphysical. I believe that the opposition, (people who oppose the idea that one's qi will not protect you as you also have to know how to fight!) just have not come across the mugger to whom they will lose everything if they make push hands their main protection. (I refer here to many martial artist of the internal systems who believe that pushing hands should only be used as a tool to teach one something and not as a martial art or way of self defence in itself).



Edward Hiles Star

I have spent a lot of time getting into trouble as a kid and occasionally getting

the shit kicked out of me. I've watched a Hell's Angel person deliver an upper cut and lift the other poor fool over a pick up truck. I've watched people on runs where their combination of drugs, LSD, Amphetamines, tranos and cheap wine ingested at the same time would give them perpetual sensitivity that would take an internalist 100 years to gain, plus they had a calm mind and near complete insensitivity to pain. They can react before you can act!

I know that ex-cons who mug will make up any excuse to get close to their victim, then break their knee cap with an eighth inch steel bar, move in with elbows and leave a person for dog meat. And the victim didn't even realize he or she was in trouble. And if they could sense that kind of danger, they shouldn't have been there in the first place. If you push someone who is truly violent and cold blooded against a wall or 6 - 10 feet away, he won't be in awe of your ability, nor that badly hurt (as some would suggest when they say that they would use pushing hands to slam their attacker up against a wall!) but he will be more intense than before.

Because T'ai Chi is perceived by many Americans as Holistic rather than as a martial art we tend to get less than aggressive students who would be bummed out if we became *too negative* talking about street reality. I even know some teachers who have modified their forms to make them both more rounded, smaller, shorter and at the same time greatly reduced or completely eliminated defence applications. They feel that if the flow is greater and the form is prettier, they will generate such qi that they will just motion their hands to send their attackers flying.

As a *sufi mershid*, experienced *Deva Guru* and *internal martial artist*, I am a strong believer in *qi* but people like those already mentioned who write articles about miracles etc, Give me a break!

I tell my students that the main course of taiji is to make such important postures as grasp Bird's Tail (Roll Back) internalized, then the body and *NOT* the mind understands taiji and can

act and re-act and they can use it defensively quite soon. Not in 5 to ten years.

I also tell them that mastery of the subtle changes of taiji will take 20-30 years at which time a 15 year old kid with good reflexes and 18" biceps might still kick their butt. Hopefully they will be able to defeat him by out thinking him rather than out fighting him.

This next article comes from Michael Babin who's advertisement for his school appears in this Magazine.

Michael babin is a writer and a martial artist living in Ontario Canada. His articles have been published internationally and he is known for his straight forward approach to t'ai chi. He is also a family man and a nice approachable chap.

My personal feeling is that such comments as pushing hands cannot be used for self defence etc, outrage many people because those most vocal of defenders of pushing suspect deep down that their mystification of taiji ch'uan wouldn't hold up outside the narrow Universe of their classes. Very few instructors of taiji seem willing (at least as far as I have seen here in Ottawa) to train with each other, *especially* in front of their students.

I just hope that the classical pushers never have to defend themselves or their families in real life.

T'AI CHI FORM OR FUNCTION: SHOULD YOU CHOSE?

By Michael Babin

T'ai Chi form strengthens and stretches the body and promotes the development of a variety of physical attributes which help to restore the body to a more natural posture, allowing relaxed, yet efficient movement. Doing form can provide meditation in the sense of allowing mental *quietness* and restoring the natural sense of *awareness* that becomes deadened by the mind

constantly being in a frenzy of movement and analysis. Form also teaches the importance of mentally being in the *present*, especially when you are first learning the moves.

When doing the form you become increasingly aware of your physical/mental/emotional self as it moves and changes as well as your relationship to your immediate environment and the objects/living things within it. Such moving meditation is choreography only in the sense that you are repeating a pre-arranged sequence of movements. However, each time you do form, it should be with the same freshness as if you were doing the sequence for the first time.

Form study should not create a blind introspective trance -- t'ai chi ch'uan is about awareness of interaction (working with a partner) as much as it is about looking into yourself. Both are necessary, but over-emphasizing either will be contrary to the interplay of yin/yang which lies at the theoretical heart of t'ai chi ch'uan.

After doing form, you should feel both tired and refreshed. If you only feel one way, you're not practicing with enough feeling. After years of regularly doing form, you should notice subtle or overt differences in how your physical / mental posture and energy expenditure as well as an expansion in your ability to know yourself and your environment. You should find it easier to physically / mentally express yourself -- to be clam when calm is appropriate, to be emotional when emotion is necessary.

Similarly, a study of the functions of the form's postures provides a valid *beginning* to the study of self defence.

Being able to apply the postures appropriately gives competency in what is perhaps the most difficult, and most neglected, aspect of applying t'ai chi ch'uan principles to combat -- bridging the space between the attacker and the defender and ending the conflict as quickly as possible.

Street fights, unlike movies and sporting events between young, well conditioned participants, tend to be short and nasty. If you cannot react spontaneously and effectively to the first few attacks -- you are almost certain to be defeated.

The skills built through pushing hands, da-lu and san-shou: sticking; the ability to change; and, prolonged attack-counterattack exchanges at slow or medium speed are useful in learning to maintain

physical/mental calm while under pressure and are essential if you ever want to express yourself through t'ai chi ch'uan. *HOWEVER*, they have limitations in terms of self defence because they are done *with rules*.

Only a complete study of the function side of t'ai chi ch'uan teaches you to

Only a balanced approach to training can teach you to relax in the face of force and interact in an appropriate and *effective* manner. As you learn the interactive aspects of t'ai chi ch'uan, you learn the answers to some important questions: Do you tense up and become rigid if attacked in a determined man-



Michael Babin in Black uses ward off and pullback in defence

apply the physical/mental quiet that you've learned through form to *real life* in terms of interacting with people, either for practice (health) or for real (combat). After all, if your t'ai chi ch'uan only works when you are alone or with someone who is practicing co-operatively, can it have real mental or physical value or are you just going through the motions?

ner? what happens to you physically and mentally when you are subjected to hostility? Do you consciously or subconsciously express hostility through your training with another student? do you want to be the victor, no matter what the moral cost?

While too much form tends to make introspective people even more so; doing nothing but the martial arts tends

to make a tense, aggressive person even more so and does nothing to relax and *quieten* him or her. However, doing only function can easily degenerate into crude kung-fu unless the instructor and the students are diligent and perceptive of the underlying principles of t'ai chi ch'uan. Balance in training should be the aim.

Prolonged study of form and of function should, in time, bring clarity (you see yourself and surroundings more as they *are* rather than how you fear they are or how you would like them to be) and economy (you react physically and mentally in an appropriate manner to situations and, perhaps more importantly, you *see* immediately and spontaneously what the appropriate reaction should be).

In conclusion, the combined study of form and function provide the basics which lead to being able to apply t'ai chi ch'uan as an overall art. Both aspects can be studied in isolation but when combined as one, become greater than the sum of the two parts.

TAKAPUNA T'AI CHI SCHOOL

Annie Blackman is a student of Erle Montague and a member of the WTBA. She holds Black belt or 8th degree in the National grading system.

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If you are interested in buying this book contact

David Crook
83 Lindrum Crescent
Holt A.C.T. 2615
Australia

Or Phone him on Canberra, 545698 Australia

The White Crane Association

Edward Hiles Star teaches the three internal styles of martial art at his club in Fresno California as well as Aikido and weapons.

He is a founding member of the WTBA

To Join Ed's club write to him at:

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