

COMBAT & HEALING

THE MAGAZINE OF THE WORLD TAIJI BOXING ASSOC



September 1993 NUMBER 14

COMBAT & HEALING

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POSTAL ADDRESS:

Taiji Publications, P/O Box 792 Murwillumbah NSW
2484 Australia (066)797145.

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Our eternal thanks to **Kevin Brennan, Editor supreme of Australasian Fighting Arts Magazine** for his valuable help and ideas.

printed by 'THE PRINT SPOT' Murwillumbah NSW Australia



ABOUT THE COVER

Great Grandmaster, Ou Ran-utan. He used to be quite normal until he took up taiji! Now, he is usually called "The Duck Of Death". This photo was taken during a training session with him in Borneo. He was saying something like; "No, move your left hand like this".

His movements were the best taht I have ever come across in the Taiji area.

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Using Your Natural Weapons

By Erle Montaigne

The difference between the so called "hard styles" and the so called "soft styles" is not in the execution of the techniques nor in the difference between the techniques but rather in the "way" we do things in the internal. It's what is happening in the mind that is the most important area in the internal martial arts. And if that "way" is not there then one is never able to turn their martial art into a fighting or self defence art.

To know if a style is effective, and to say that one knows his or her martial art, they must be ready to prove this at any time. We do not prove for instance, the effectiveness of Taiji (T'ai Chi Ch'uan) by showing how good we are at push hands,

To know if a style is effective, and to say that one knows his or her martial art, they must be ready to prove this at any time. We do not prove for instance, the effectiveness of Taiji (T'ai Chi Ch'uan) by showing how good we are at push hands, nor do we prove how good we or the style is by showing how the postures work. You know, the old, "he throws a punch and I use such and such a technique etc". The very instant that a martial art becomes technique orientated, it becomes useless in the street against real fighters. As soon as I say that the way that Taiji works is by using this technique or this posture against a

certain attack then it is useless and is only good for exercise. I must be able to say to anyone from any style to attack with full force at any time and if my martial art has been able to teach me street defence then I should have no problems defending myself. This is what a martial arts instructor has to be able to do, and something that I have had to do time and time again with all of my travel around the world teaching people that I do not know. To show how a style works, you ask people to attack you! Simple as that. And if you are decked, then you do not know your art. You put your arse on the line for your art.

To show how a style works, you ask people to attack you! Simple as that. And if you are decked, then you do not know your art. You put your arse on the line for your art.

I have had people come wanting to prove how good they are at Taiji for instance. They ask to do push hands with me. My reply every time is, "OK, we'll do push hands and if you beat me, then we fight". Push hands is no ruler of one's ability in fighting or self defence. It is only there as a training aid and should never be taken as a ruler of one's ability at self defence. The internal martial arts, just like their counterpart, the external martial arts have only one way to prove if either the system works or that the instructor knows his stuff, in the self defence area. And by that, I do not mean in the ring or in a sparring

match in a dojo. That is not fighting but playing. I mean that one is actually attacked with brute force as one would be in the street by a raving lunatic. Then, if I use things like "snake creeps down" or "fair lady works shuttles" or any other silly names of postures, then I will be defeated. But if I react instantly and sub-consciously, returning that brute force with even more brute animal power, then I will defeat my attacker, and I will not have used any technique, in fact I will not even know how I defeated him. That's how quickly attacks in the street happen, you have not the time to think of any techniques.

We do the forms, katas or training methods like push hands to give us the physical and internal ability to handle such street attacks not to say that we use these techniques when attacked.

So many overseas magazines (barring Fighting Arts International and Australasian Fighting Arts [Now also an overseas magazine as well]), have this attitude that the martial arts is about what martial art is the best or who could beat who etc.

To show how a style works, you ask people to attack you! Simple as that. And if you are decked, then you do not know your art. You put your arse on the line for your art.

So many are now solely concentrating upon tournament results and rankings! What's that! Nothing,

nothing at all to do with martial arts. It used to be for self defence, now it would seem, judging by overseas magazines mainly from the U.S.A. that self defence is no longer important, but rather who is doing well on the tournament circuit! The founders of all styles of martial art would be turning over in their graves knowing what is being presented as martial arts today.

Street survival does not happen the way it happens in the ring in a so called full contact match. I say 'so called' because there are no full contact matches, at least, legal ones.

When I was young, I looked up to martial artists because they could defend themselves and their families against attack. Nowadays, kids that I know, scoff at film star martial artists because they are now beginning to realise that they know nothing, they can pick the film tricks, and are beginning to know that this is not the way it happens in the street.

Animals are not in control, they react to what is happening to them, they do not use techniques, their whole body is involved in the survival, every muscle and ligament is being used

There are of course those who have plodded along with their martial art, really trying to find out what it is all about, with the basic idea that it should be for defence and not for seeing who is the better tournament fighter. It's about 'ways of living', it's about learning about ourselves and learning to help one another, not wishing to be world champ! Or so that our egos will be satisfied etc.

Those martial artists who have taken from the orient and added the aussie or pommie or yankie flavour and who have not tried to actually 'be' Japanese or Chinese, have, for the most part taken martial arts to a higher level than others who haven't. Unfortunately though, many who are not willing to do the work and who want instant success with a few high kicks and two or three years training, some with only six months training and a good physique, are bringing the martial arts down to a very low level.

We should be distinguishing between those who wish to do 'boxing in the ring' and those who do the martial arts.

We should be distinguishing between those who wish to do 'boxing in the ring' and those who do the martial arts. Perhaps those sports people need their own magazine so that the real martial artists are not mistaken for them or for what they are doing. I have read in horror as stalwarts of the martial arts magazine industry such as Black Belt and Inside Kung-Fu have lowered themselves to this 'who is better' attitude or what style is better. They are not doing the martial arts any service and I wish that they would change their names to something that more represents what their content is and leave the real martial arts to magazines like A.F.A. or Fighting Arts International.

People Can't Fight, Animals Survive.

Street survival does not happen the way it happens in the ring in a so called full contact match. I say 'so called' because there are no full contact matches, at least, legal ones. We

have to look at the reason people fight. Mostly because of ego or wanting to win money or a trophy or because it's part of their grading. This is not survival. We have to look at why animals fight and how they fight in order for ourselves to survive in the street.

Animals are not in control, they react to what is happening to them, they do not use techniques, their whole body is involved in the survival, every muscle and ligament is being used, not just a paw or a mouth, but the



whole body and energy that seems to come from nowhere is being used to give that animal an aggression that



even scares the largest human being. This is how we are taught to fight to survive in the internal martial arts.

We are told certain 'classic sayings', which when implemented turn us into a raving animal. What we are told to do in 'bagwazhang' (Pa-Kua Chang) for instance is to spread the fingers tightly with the palm being concave. This is not so that the palm can be used more effectively as a weapon, but rather, the physical positioning of the palm enables us to summon this animal aggression, which is called 'raising the qi up the back' from the classics. This, way of



holding the palm seems to turn a normally placid human being into a raving lunatic! So that when we are attacked, the palms are used in this way, not to fight with, although we do use this configuration, but rather to give us this extreme 'yang' energy to re-attack.

Taiji has a different way of gaining this extreme yang energy.

Taiji has a different way of gaining this extreme yang energy. This is a little more complicated and is called a 'C' back. The same back that all animals have when they are in a survival mode. Look at a cat, a dog, even a chicken, they all do things with their backbones when attacked to give them this survival energy. Even sharks do this with their back, gorillas naturally have this 'C' shaped

back but humans have to gain it as we have an 'S' shaped back.

No techniques, just natural weapons, like when someone attacks you or strikes out with something towards your face, you cover up as in *photo No.1*. So we are taught in the internal arts, to use this position as our survival position but rather than going backwards in a 'yin' mode we use certain body positioning to bring



out that yang attack energy to cause us to not only put up our hands, but also to attack with those same hands into only three targets as in *Photo No.*



2. to the eyes. The three targets are, eyes, under the nose at a point called GV26, which is a dim-mak death point, and the neck comprising of two points, to the side of the neck

called 'stomach 9' and CV22 in the pit of the neck.

When one is startled in just the same way that an animal is startled, there is extreme energy squirted into the body from the kidneys. The kidneys store this energy for when it is needed. The animals however, have never lost the sub-conscious way of converting this energy into attack energy. we, however, because of our living styles etc, when we are startled, we become 'yin' and tend to cover up to try and not be hit. The internal arts teach us to make use of this human phenomenon and reverse the yin energy to yang attack energy so that when we are attacked, the attacker is not confronted by a docile human, but a raving lunatic. We take this human thing of being startled and combine it with the internal arts body posturing like the 'C' back and the 'bagwa palm' and this enables us to be like the animals when attacked.

With a little more training, we are able to use simple natural techniques which give us the best possible change in a street survival situation and these techniques all come from the natural human position of covering up upon being startled. For instance, rather than just bringing your palms forward into his eyes with extreme yang energy, we might turn slightly and strike into the carotid artery area of St 9. This will cause instant KO as well as death if done with enough power. *Photo No.3*. Or we could use the GV 26 point just under the nose with basically that same technique as in *Photo No.4*. Or, again, to CV22 as in *photo No.5*.

These natural techniques give us the best possible chance in the street without having to learn a whole martial art for twenty years. And this is what martial arts should be about. We learn forms, katas, two person exercises etc. to give us the balance, and timing necessary for street survival, then we use natural body positioning to defend ourselves with the animal inside, and we all have one there somewhere.

WHAT IS A "READY" STANCE

by Michael Babin

Contrary to popular opinion, in the grand old days of the internal and internal martial arts, all training was done solely for health purposes. In fact, if your skills/style were of a low calibre, your health was likely to go into a sudden (sometimes permanent) decline at the hands of whichever fighter decided to test you!

Under such conditions, each system had its own trademark posture used as a "ready" stance. In friendly matches, each fighter would assume his stance as a way of showing knowledgeable bystanders as well as his opponent the style in which he trained.

In friendly matches, each fighter would assume his stance as a way of showing knowledgeable bystanders as well as his opponent the style in which he trained.

This was done partly out of pride ("MY skills will show this upstart and everyone present that MY style is supreme!"); partly out of intimidation ("Hah, Pig-dog, Beware! I am a master of Slaving Beast Boxing. Better lock away the family jewels!"); and partly because you had trained to use the particular posture as an effective means of neutralizing/countering or entering/attacking.

A few styles used no recognizably unique fighting stance and most practitioners, no matter what their style, learned with time and experience that "ready stances" are useless in self-defense terms. After all, why let your opponent know that

In combat terms, you are normally better off without either the static stances of the internal stances or, even worse, the flamboyant flailing demonstrations of skill that pass as a "ready" stance in many external



James, (left) mis-using "Ward-Off" as a ready stance.

he's picking on someone who has skill — until you are ready to use it.

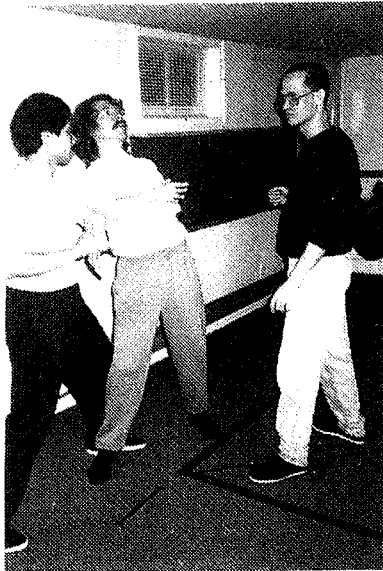
In combat terms, you are normally better off without either the static stances of the internal stances or, even worse, the flamboyant flailing demonstrations of skill that pass as a "ready" stance in many external styles.

styles.

Your display of rooting (or flailing) won't impress someone with a lot fighting experience and may well goad them into attacking. Some brawlers like a challenge and an angry drunk won't be able to focus clearly enough to see anything except the target.

In internal arts, the most commonly seen "ready stances" are variations of Hands Strum the Lute or Ward-off in Yang T'ai Chi; the Double Dragon Palm in Pa-kua and San-t'i in Hsing-I.

In friendly matches, using your particular variation of the “ready stance” has some validity — even today — for the same reasons noted earlier. However, in terms of self-defense, the worst thing you can do is waste time getting into a ready stance!



control of the torso centre-line as well as the neck/face points.

Similar “ready stances” are used in modern variations of Wing Chun and other combat-oriented systems.

Without taking away from the practicality of such modern fighting stan-

used. YOU ARE ABOUT TO RESPOND TO A SUBSEQUENT ATTACKER — BUT NOT NECESSARILY WITH THE SAME TECHNIQUE. In this way, any posture from your internal art can be a “ready” stance in combat terms.

So, keep formal ready stances for demonstrating your art or when training with friendly martial artists of other styles. However, in martial terms, the best “ready stance” is held only when all the attackers have been disposed of or encouraged to take their aggression elsewhere.



The proper use of a ready stance

A brawler/mugger probably hasn't had any classical training and can't tell a “Dragon Palm” from a “judo chop”. Nor is he likely to waste time circling you politely so you can assume your ready stance. Real fights are usually launched with a sudden attack of some kind and are over with the first few techniques.

When you consider that the originators of the internal arts trained with the possibility of multiple attackers always in mind; then it makes more sense to interpret the “ready” stance in the following way.

The “ready” stance which Erle Montague has been advocating of late is more useful in threatening situations as it has the benefit of not being obviously aggressive, hence escalating the tension. This stance also provides

ces, I would like to offer my own interpretation of the value of the traditional “ready” stances.

When you consider that the originators of the internal arts trained with the possibility of multiple attackers always in mind; then it makes more sense to interpret the “ready” stance in the following way.

A “ready” stance, like any posture, is really only its final movement frozen-in-time! Only the preceding actions and the proper use of internal principles make that stance martially valid.

This interpretation implies that when we see you for the first-time in your “ready” stance that you have already responded intuitively to the first attacker and disposed of him.

Consequently, the first attacker is out-of-commission and you are left, for a split-second, frozen at the end of the posture that you have just

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His best selling book,

“T'ai Chi, The Martial Side”

is available from;

Paladin Press, P/O Box 1307 Boulder CO 80306 U.S.A. PH:303-4437250, Visa & Mastercard accepted.

We, at the WTBA can recommend Mike's classes without hesitation.

Michael may be contacted about classes on;

613-739 7805

T'ai Chi And Taoism

By Rolly Brown, PA U.S.A.

Taoism is a Chinese philosophical system which has had a profound effect on oriental thought and action for thousands of years. On a simple level, it may be described as follows: What was originally chaotic (wu chi, the one) became divided into two energies; earth energies, which sank downward (yin) and heavenly energies, which rose upward (yang). Thus, the one became two. Into this world comes man, and for man to find his place of balance here, he must walk a pathway between heavenly energies and earthly energies.

"Tao" means "way", and implies "harmonious way". Hence, to be a taoist, one must walk the harmonious pathway between heaven and earth energies.

"Tao" means "way", and implies "harmonious way". Hence, to be a taoist, one must walk the harmonious pathway between heaven and earth energies. A simplistic view of the universe? No, just a simplistic explanation. The fact that yin and yang occur in an infinite number of different ratios in different objects means that this philosophy can encompass all events in the natural world. Thus, the three (heaven, earth and man) give birth to the 10,000 things.

Using the taoist world view and the concept of yin/yang as a framework,

oriental culture developed more sophisticated paradigms (the I Ching and Phases) of the universe and this world view became the basis for Chinese systems of herbal medicine, acupuncture, and exercise.

In addition to yin/yang, the Tao Te Ching places great emphasis upon the superiority of the characteristics of water. "Highest good is like water."

In addition to yin/yang, the Tao Te Ching places great emphasis upon the superiority of the characteristics of water. "Highest good is like water. Because water excels in benefiting the myriad creatures without contending with them and settles where none would like to be, it comes close to the way... It is because it does not contend that it is never at fault.:

Because water can adjust to any situation and flow around obstacles without losing its unique qualities, it is often seen as the ultimate taoist analogy for harmony.

Before discussing t'ai chi ch'uan, let's talk a bit more about the qualities of yin and yang. While yang has the qualities of fire (hot, rising, light, expanding, empty), yin has the qualities of water (cool, sinking, heavy, contracting, solid). The yin/yang relationship is defined by these five principles:

- 1) All things have a yin aspect and a yang aspect.
- 2) Any yin or yang aspect can be further divided into yin & yang.
- 3) Yin and yang mutually created each other. (Definition by opposites.)
- 4) Yin and yang control each other.
- 5) Yin & yang transform into each other. (Natural cycle of change.)

T'ai chi ch'uan is a Chinese system of exercise for health, meditation, and self defence. "T'ai Chi" means "supreme ultimate". and is essentially a proper noun describing the taoist philosophy of yin/yang. (The T'ai Chi symbol is a yin/yang sign surrounded by eight trigrams depicting various balances and combinations of yin and yang by use of broken (- -) or complete (___) lines. "Ch'uan" means "fist" or "boxing".

So, besides being a boxing system, t'ai chi is also a form of "qigong" or energy cultivation.

So, "T'ai Chi Ch'uan" is yin/yang boxing, a fighting system based on the taoist philosophy of yin/yang. The taoists would believe, though that fighting alone would be an unbalanced pursuit, totally yang, so t'ai chi ch'uan (hereafter shortened to "t'ai chi") has a yin aspect; the meditative cultivation of energy. As is said of Chang San-feng, the legendary thirteenth century taoist monk credited as the founder of t'ai chi, "He desired the whole world to at-