

# Internal Gung-fu



Volume One, Qi

Erle Montague

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Nowadays, there are literally hundreds of different martial arts systems. With the proliferation of martial arts movies, people are now familiar with those martial arts such as karate, gung-fu (kung fu) aikido and Taijiquan. And although we are able to break for instance, karate up into many different styles and gung-fu also into many different styles, there are still basically only two major systems into which all martial arts can be categorised.

The most widely spread categorisation of martial arts in the West would have to be the 'so-called' *hard styles* into which would fall the arts such as karate, taekwondo and many of the 'hard style' gung-fu systems of China. These would include those such as wing chun, choy lae fut, hung gar and Shaolin Temple boxing. It is said that all of the hard systems have come from this one source, the Shaolin Temple. Meaning *Little Forest*, the Shaolin Temple is hundreds of years old and has been re-built some three times with the most recent incarnation being around five hundred years ago. Nowadays, for most serious martial artists, this 'modern' temple is a bit of a joke, with the original essence of the martial arts taught there being lost a long time ago. Now, it is really a tourist destination and a place for television programs to shoot some filler, some quirky spot for their programming, for some pretty or handsome interviewer to go ga ga over some young lad having bricks broken over his head etc.

In China however, the most widely spread and practised martial arts are those that fall into the *soft* category, or the *internal styles*. Martial arts such as Taijiquan (t'ai chi) which is the most widely practised martial art in the world with millions of people practising each morning in China, and Baguazhang, the lesser known and even lesser known, H'sin-I, are classified as being of the internal variety. Although Taijiquan is practised by more people than any other martial system, not many, in fact, probably only a very small percentage actually practice this once great martial art as a martial art, or self defence system. Most people even in China practice only for the great healing benefits that this art can give. In modern times, Taijiquan, meaning "supreme ultimate boxing", has become very popular with its introduction to the USA and the West in general. And although only a relatively small number of people practice Taijiquan in the West, it can still lay claim to the most popular 'martial art' because of the huge number of people practising the art in China.

Taijiquan is said to be the 'Mother' of all the internal martial arts systems with Baguazhang being the daughter or sister and H'sin-I being the son or brother. Most experts agree that, out of Taijiquan was born the other two arts. All have the same internal movement of energy (Qi), with only the external movements distinguishing the three as separate martial systems.

In China even today, not many will take on all three of the internal systems as it is said that it would take three lifetimes to learn all three. So most tend to learn Taijiquan as their main system, and then specialise in either Baguazhang or H'sin-I. So Taijiquan is always learnt as the primary martial art, with Baguazhang or H'sin-I being learnt at some later stage. Although there are many schools that only teach only one of the three, it is always much easier to learn Baguazhang or H'sin-I ch'uan after one has learnt Taijiquan. The reason is that it is relatively easier to learn the difficult parts of the internal systems by learning Taijiquan first. And as all aspects of both Baguazhang and H'sin-I ch'uan are found in Taijiquan, the student is half way there when he or she begins their bagwa of H'sin-I training. However, it does not work the other way around. It is not easier to learn Taijiquan once having learnt bagwa or H'sin-I as both have taken certain aspects of Taijiquan and specialised in those, rather than taking the whole Taijiquan. Unfortunately, most modern Taijiquan schools would disagree and onlookers would also disagree, as modern Taijiquan contains little of its former glory in the martial arts area. It is difficult to see for instance, where the explosive movements of H'sin-I fall in, and also the powerful twisting movements of bagwa. In modern Taijiquan, these powerful movements are non-existent.

So, we must look towards the older styles of Taijiquan to see where the other two internal systems have come from. The Taijiquan system known as the 'pinnacle' of all martial arts systems back in China some two or three centuries ago, is now called, the 'old Yang style', or the 'original Yang style' or the 'Yang Lu-ch'an' style of Taijiquan, named after its founder. Back then, however, it was not even called Taijiquan, as this term is only a relatively modern name. Back then it was simply called 'H'ao Ch'uan', or, 'loose boxing'.

All of the elements of a real fighting system and healing system are inherent in the 'old Yang style' of Taijiquan. When practitioners of both Baguazhang and H'sin-I ch'uan see this form performed for the first time, they then know where their systems came from, as they can see elements of both within this system.

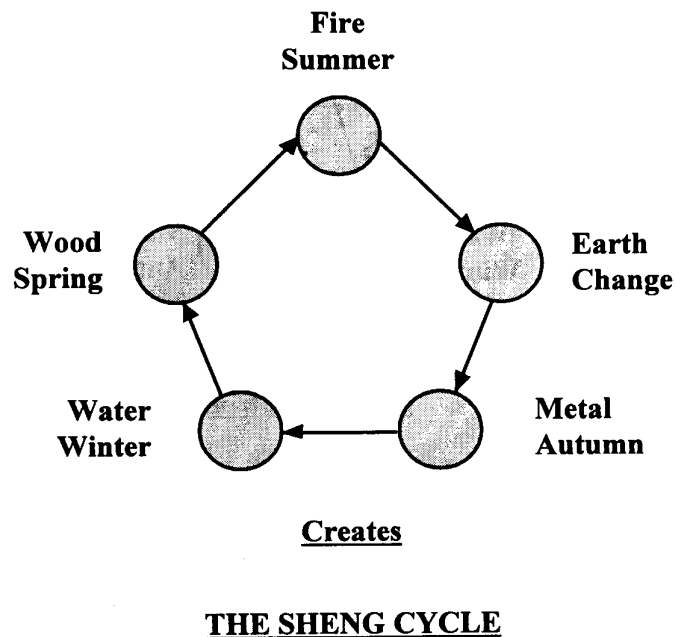
Taijiquan means "Supreme Ultimate Boxing" while Baguazhang means "Eight Diagram Palm" and H'sin-I ch'uan means 'Body, Mind Boxing'. Supreme ultimate boxing is self explanatory, *body/mind boxing* means that we use the body as well as the mind, to defend ourselves while *eight diagram palm* means that this art of Baguazhang is based upon the *Chinese Book of Changes*, or the *I-ching*. The I-ching is a Chinese book of prophesy and is used as a kind of fortune telling device, a bit like opening pages at random of our Bible and reading what is said as our 'thought of the day'. It is a little more complicated than that however. This book uses a series of eight 'trigrams', three lines either broken or not broken, which when dou-

bled up, put on top of each other, we have a total of sixty four (8 X 8) different 'hexagrams' that represent all of the possible changes that can happen in the Universe. Bagwazhang is based upon this book and only makes use of the palm in defence and attack. It is explosive and twisting, and is excellent for good health and self defence. This art is relatively difficult to learn however than the other two internal systems. There are eight palms that one uses and when we use one of these palm shapes in each hand, this gives a total of 64 different ways to use the palms.

H'sin-I on the other hand uses less palm attacks and more fist attacks, although it does have elements of bagwa within its framework as does bagwa have elements of H'sin-I. H'sin-I is based upon the Chinese theory of the 'five elements' and the 'destructive cycle' that comes from this theory. Mainly used in traditional Chinese medicine, the 'cycle of destruction' is used to denote which disease states affect which organs, which organs will affect other organs, and what treatments will affect other organs etc.

Basically, and without writing a whole book on just the five-element theory, it goes something like the following. (Taken from my book "The Erle Montaigne Encyclopaedia Of Dim-Mak", from the Wally Simpson chapter which introduces Chinese Medicine.) Wally Simpson is the resident Traditional Chinese Medicine Doctor for the World Taiji Boxing Association.

## The 5 Element Points Cycle of Creation or Sheng Cycle

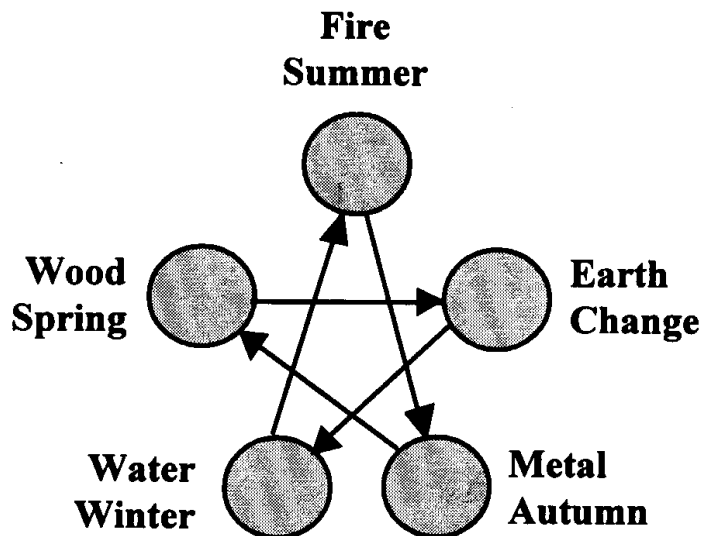


The **SHENG** / Creation or Nourishing Cycle is where each element nourishes or creates the next cycle (element) e.g. Fire creates Earth. The sequence can be rationalised as follows

- WOOD creates FIRE (the wood is burnt to create the fire). FIRE creates EARTH (Fire expands it's self and what is left is ashes which become Earth).
- EARTH creates METAL (the element Metal is found by digging in the Earth)
- METAL creates WATER (by melting— solid metals melt to form a liquid). Metal also corresponds to AIR (in Western astrology) and air condenses to form a liquid.
- WATER creates WOOD (by nourishing growth)

If each element is fed and strengthened it will feed the next element in the cycle like a mother feeds a son or daughter, thus it is termed the cycle of creation and it gives birth to the Mother / son theory used in treatment of disharmonies.

### **The Ko / Controlling Cycle**



### **Rules / Controls**

The **KO** / inhibiting / repressive or controlling cycle is where each element inhibits or controls the element two steps ahead in the sequence e.g.. WOOD controls EARTH. This is like a Grandparent exerting control over a Grandchild, in T.C.M. called Grandmother / Grandson cycle. It works as follows—

- FIRE controls METAL (by melting it).
- METAL controls WOOD (by cutting it).
- WOOD controls EARTH (by covering it).
- EARTH controls WATER (by damming it).
- WATER controls FIRE by extinguishing it).

Organ element relationship.

ST = STOMACH, HT = HEART, LV = LIVER, BL = BLADDER, KD = KIDNEYS, CO = COLON OR LARGE INTESTINE, PC = PERICARDIUM, TH = TRIPLE HEATER, LU = LUNGS, SP = SPLEEN, SI = SMALL INTESTINE, GB = GALL BLADDER.

<i>ELEMENT</i>	<i>STATE</i>	<i>ORGAN</i>	<i>STATE</i>	<i>ORGAN</i>
EARTH	YANG	ST	YIN	SP
METAL	YANG	CO	YIN	LU
WATER	YANG	BL	YIN	KD
WOOD	YANG	GB	YIN	LV
FIRE	YANG	SI & TH	YIN	HT & PC

The harmonious balance of the SHENG and KO cycles represents the mutual support and control of the 5 elements. The SHENG (creative) Cycle ensures that there is continual growth and generation. The KO Cycle ensures that there is growth within limits, that growth does not continue unchecked. Thus the two cycles represent the balance of the 5 elements. Both cycles are natural and positive, unless an imbalance or blockage occurs in the flow resulting in the generation of a destructive cycle.



The SHENG Cycle is predominant during the day and the KO Cycle is predominant during the night. Each element has its corresponding colour, smell, body organ / channel, etc. that can form the basis of diagnosis. If any concordance tends to predominate or is lacking, a practitioner will be able to diagnose which part of the sequence is disturbed and treat the energies accordingly to open the natural flows.

Another way of using this system is as follows:

An inflammatory condition occurring in an organ or tissue can be seen as a FIRE type symptom (feels hot and will cause irritation, etc.) so using the WATER Pt to reduce this FIRE (inflammation) can have a dramatic and immediate effect on the inflammation. If the inflammation is not completely relieved by the WATER PT then add a METAL PT to nourish the WATER and increase the affect of the action of WATER.

As a Martial Artist one could do a primary strike on the EARTH Pt of the Pericardium Channel and then do the next strike on the Front MU Pt of the HEART (PC 7 & CV 14), t increase the damaging effect of the strike to the HEART MU Pt. This is using the SHENG Cycle's Mother Son theory where the Son is used to drain Qi from the Mother. The HEART is the YIN or half the YIN of the Fire element (PERICARDIUM is the other half of the YIN of the Fire element. The PERICARDIUM is also seen as the protector of the HEART so damage here could increase damage to the HEART.

Using an example from the KO cycle, one could strike to the Metal Pt of the PERICARDIUM Channel (PC 5), then follow with a strike to Front MU Pt of the LIVER (LIV 14). Here Metal is acting to control the Wood and the further strike to a major Pt affecting the YIN organ of the YIN Element adds insult to injury and results in dramatic results (perhaps LIVER shut down). These are just examples of how these cycles might be used martially; there are lots of different combinations that could be used.

There is also a cycle called the reverse KO Cycle (or counteracting or rebellious cycle), this is where one element rebels against its natural controller. This is an abnormal cycle and is a symbolic of defiance. The format follows ———

- Wood counteracts Metal (by blunting it).
- Metal counteracts Fire (by extinguishing it—cutting off its supply of oxygen)
- Fire counteracts Water (by boiling it away if the Fire is too vigorous).

- Water counteracts Earth (by washing it away if the Water is dammed to excess).
- Earth counteracts Wood (by providing no foundation for its roots).
- It may well be that at death the reverse KO cycle comes into play.

Healing is the art of building / moving and balancing the body's Qi while Martial Arts is the art of stagnating, depleting and scattering the body's Qi.

If you are going to learn to destroy then also learn to build.

## Differences between 'hard' styles and 'soft' styles.

Probably the main difference between the hard, or 'external' and soft or 'internal' systems is the use of *Qi*, pronounced, "chee" or sometimes spelled "ch'i" or 'Ki' in the Japanese system of Aikido. I will cover this topic in greater detail in its own chapter later in this volume. For now it is sufficient to say that 'Qi' literally means *breath*. But to a western mind, *breath* is breath and Qi means much more than its direct translation.

Unfortunately, many Chinese words have no particular direct translation into English so we must often use phrases and ideas to express these words, especially those inherent in the Chinese martial arts. More importantly when translating Chinese martial arts terminology, the translator must have not a small knowledge of the Chinese martial arts. I have had, for instance, whole books on the more esoteric aspects of some martial arts systems translated by very knowledgeable people, like heads of the Chinese/English language in Chinese Universities, and what I received back was almost unusable!

Qi means, energy other than pure physical force derived solely from the muscles using external tension. More correctly, this word could be translated as 'electricity'. It is electricity that causes our whole body to work, without it we die. Without Qi we also die. We are told that Qi circulates throughout the body via the meridians or channels, bathing every organ in life giving energy. When this 'flow' is impeded, disease is allowed to creep in. So all disease states can be linked to either an impeded Qi flow or an unbalanced flow of Qi. More 'yang' Qi than 'yin' Qi and we have a 'yang' disorder and visa-versa.

Qi is often called *intrinsic energy*. Intrinsic literally means. “Belonging to or arising from the true or fundamental nature of a thing”. Or, “essential”, “inherent”. So this does not give a good explanation as to what Qi is, but everyone sprouts this phrase when asked what Qi is! ‘Essential’, well yes, without it we die, so it is definitely ‘essential’. To me, the one word that explains Qi, is ‘life force’. We need Qi to live, to protect us from disease, to move our body, to think, to make love, to make children, to protect ourselves physically. Every movement we make has to use Qi, it’s what causes or muscles to move, directed by the brain, but the brain even, must rely upon Qi to operate. So, in effect, even the so-called ‘hard styles’ of martial art must use Qi, otherwise the practitioners would not be able to move! But the difference is, that the internal systems make better use of the body, moving is such a way as to promote the flow of and to build up Qi. If for instance, we were to allow a steam engine to run dry, without replacing its power source (water, Qi), then it would very soon run out of energy and stop working. It is the same with us, if we continually use Qi throughout the day and do not replace it naturally, then we run out of Qi, with the only recourse being to sleep. Sleep is where we re-charge our batteries, or Qi.

So, in the martial arts, if we are defending ourselves, we must be able to dispatch of the enemy very quickly if we are using an external system of self-defence as we use Qi but do not allow it to replace itself. In other words, the Qi is not being recycled through the attacker and back to you. In the internal systems, we learn to ‘recycle’ Qi. We begin with one ‘lump’ or Qi and continually recycle that same lump rather than keep dipping into the ‘Qi pot’ or kidneys for more Qi. So I like to think of the internal systems as being ‘green’.

It’s the same in healing. If we were to only massage someone using purely physical movements of the hands, we would become tired quickly. This is the complaint that I hear from many massage and healing people in general, that they are only able to treat a small number of patients in a day, as they feel drained. If a ‘healer’ learns to recycle his or her Qi, then the patient is healed quicker and at a higher level, and the ‘doctor’ is able to treat more people. In most cases, then a healing is completed; the practitioner feels energised and wants to treat more and more. It is exactly the same with the martial arts, a person who is able to recycle and transmit Qi, actually wants to carry on fighting, as it feels good to recycle Qi. In fact, I often have trouble in my classes, and must warn all of my advanced students of this phenomenon, as there is the chance of them actually hitting each other!

The simple explanation of Qi is that it is electricity, it is not occult, and it is as natural and necessary to life as is your heart of your kidneys. I receive so many letters from Christians, worry that if they begin an internal martial

art, that they will be practising some form of evil occult! This has come about because many people link the internal martial arts to Lao Tse, a man who wrote the I ching, or “book of changes”. Lao Tse can be likened to as Jesus is to Christianity. Jesus really does not have much at all to do with Christianity; He was not a Christian! By the same token, Lao Tse was Not a Taoist! Taoism was invented due to his writings in just the same way that Christianity was invented based upon what Jesus taught. Linking a wonderful philosophy of life, to the martial arts seems incongruous to me, and it is my belief that no internal martial art is based upon Taoism. The Taoist priests who came after Lao Tse did not wish to fight anyone, they only wanted to live in peace and harmony. If we read what Lao Tse said, and then read what Jesus is reported to have said, we see that there is not much difference. In fact, some passages of the I ching are as if the same people who wrote the New Testament have written them! Nothing occult, nothing evil, just god living habits, caring for one-an-other with knowledge of God and family. Extremist Christian groups have written books about how evil the martial arts in general are, including such philosophies as Buddhism, Hinduism, and yoga! I had whole passages in one book published here in Australia saying how evil I was, even plagiarising passages from my books and articles. Not once did the author bother to contact me to see if I was really as evil as he has written! Words like ‘self esteem’ and yoga and self-realisation were all listed in a list of evil words. However, at the back of this book in particular, there was a passage saying something like, “Mr, so and so and his wife have one of the most successful Christian teaching organizations in Australia”. Now, isn’t that ‘self esteem’? But had these people bothered to read what Buddha, Lao Tse and Krishna have said, they would realise that they, along with Jesus Christ are one and the same! The life and times of Krishna parallels that of Jesus! He did the old 40 day fast and was tempted many times in just the same way that Jesus was.

Qi is a natural thing essential to live, it is not supernatural, and cannot be used for show in demonstrations of so-called Qi power. I will include a whole chapter on exposing the ‘Qi charlatans’, one of my life-long quests. Qi is a wonderful natural thing which when used correctly can SEEM supernatural in the healing area only. It cannot be used to move people without touching them. It cannot be used to move inanimate objects, In fact, Yang Lu-ch’an, the founder of the greatest system of Taijiquan, once said when asked if there were any men that he could not defeat; “I cannot defeat men of stone, men of bronze or men of wood”. Meaning that he could not use internal energy against objects. It can only be used against human beings of the flesh and blood variety. And even then, Qi cannot be used to knock people down without touching them! It can only be used to affect the attacker’s or the patient’s Qi, thus either defeating him or healing him. Qi power cannot be used to show off, as some people are now doing in demonstrations all around the world. Notice that these people will

NEVER do it to anyone from the audience (those who are not 'plants'!) They will only ever use their own students, those who play the game and who do not wish to make a complete idiot of their teacher. But they should, as that teacher has absolutely no respect for their students, expecting them to make idiots of themselves. Any intelligent person is able to see right through these ridiculous demonstrations.

Books have been written about the so-called 'empty force' and include photos of so-called masters knocking people down from a distance. In one such the authors state that it is impossible to actually prove 'empty force'. Sorry chaps, it is possible. All you have to do is to move me even one inch and it will be proven scientifically. In fact, I have a standing challenge to anyone who is able to move me so much as one inch. I will publicly acknowledge he or she as the ultimate master of the internal arts. Thankfully, after 30 years of looking and disproving, I have not come across one person who was able to move me, or even have me feel anything coming from them! They do it to their students of course, but never to someone who simply does not play the game, and it is a game!

My 'Qi disruption methods have been proven scientifically simply by myself doing them on people that I have not met before. In one such experiment, I blindfolded a scientist and did not tell him what I was about to do. I then simply blew air across his face causing him to believe that I had done something with my hands. The 'Qi disruption' did not work because I had not done it! He thought that he had made a fool of me and apologised. I then did the Qi disruption to him for real this time and he was completely drained of power to his amazement. However, please do not go around saying that Erle Montaigne can do miraculous things as it is not miraculous it is only natural and scientific.

Qi disruption uses the natural magnetic fields around the body and anyone is able to do them provided they have some small amount of training. Some of the more difficult ones require more training than normal though. Experiments have been done involving scientists using minute electrical currents flowing adversely to the natural flow of current for instance over the head. This works in exactly the same way that Qi disruption does and actually puts people to sleep.

Another aspect of these ridiculous claims is that anyone with any intelligence at all and some small amount of knowledge of physics, is able to see that it would take an enormous amount of force to actually knock someone down or send them flying some 30 feet away, or in some cases lift them off their feet! The person receiving such force would be killed! It amounts to the same kind of force generated by a shotgun blast! So it is obvious that the recipients of such so-called empty force are simply doing it themselves. And when one films the whole charade, one is able to play it

back in slow motion to see that in all instances, they are pushing themselves backwards using their own leg power.

I once asked a so-called master who was throwing his students all over the place without touching them, and then controlling their Qi causing them to become paralyzed etc, if he would do it to me. He declined saying that his Qi would kill me! I then asked why it didn't kill his students and he replied that one has to train for five years with him in his methods before it would even work! So I then said that if someone came to his class, he could not affect their Qi, but after 5 years he could! You mean that the five-year student was weaker than when he first began? I have also asked these people to do what they do again to their students after I would place a blind-fold over the student's eyes, every one declined to do this saying that it would 'upset the Qi', whatever that meant! Others do so-called miraculous feats by sticking swords into their necks and pushing on them. (Photo No. A). When I perform this trick, and it is a trick of physics, even after I have told onlookers how it is done, they still do not believe me. I can stick a sharp sword into anyone's neck and push on it causing it to bend under the pressure. It is not supernatural it is pure physics. I am also able to burn cotton wool at ten paces and break river stones with two fingers. All tricks! You can buy 'tricks' from Taiwan where you have a piece of treated wood. It has been treated with a wax that has a low melting point. Under the wax is a phosphorous coating which when exposed to air will burn! All the charlatan has to do is to rub the wood with his hands pretending that it is his Qi that is doing the burning. The wax slowly melts and the phosphorous burns the wood. There are even more sophisticated tricks available.

Qi can be transmitted, but only in a healing way. God made us thus that we were not able to use such powers for destruction, only for healing. Some people have 'magnetic' personalities such that when they even enter a room or when their students arrive, they all feel well and happy. This is the ultimate Qi transference. There is an old Chinese saying: "If your patient is not healed from the time it takes to walk from your door to your desk, then you are not a healer". I have been practising Qigong now for around 30 years (1997) and have only ever been able to use it to heal from a distance. Sure one is able to put adverse Qi into certain dim-mak points to cause energy imbalances and even death, but the point must be actually touched or struck. Or as in the Qi disruptive katas, the hand must come as close to the body as to not actually touch the skin.

The student respects the teacher, but the reciprocal is not happening with these charlatans. And notice that these 'teachers' almost always use 'gwa-laws' or western people, hardly ever make idiots of their own race! I have spent the best part of my life debunking these charlatans, travelling the world to do so. I am still open-minded and hoping that some day, I will find that one person who is able to demonstrate some super-natural

power, but thus far, after 30 years I have not come across anyone, and I have seen the very best. It is a lifetime job of ever vigilance, and as soon as I debunk some charlatan, another one moves into his place. I am unable to travel worldwide nowadays, so I depend upon my senior students to get up there, even though they do not wish to be impolite, and expose these harmful charlatans. Recently at a demonstration in Newcastle in the North of England a demonstration was held. Some God-like Chinese ‘master’ was going to show his Qi power by knocking people down from a distance. They would run at him, and about 3 feet from him would throw themselves down as if he had some kind of protective barrier of Qi around him etc. So two of my senior students got up at the end and very respectfully (something that I would not have been), asked this person to do the same to them. So the ‘master’ said that he would. Peter stood there waiting for the ‘master’s’ Qi to throw him several metres backwards, so the ‘master’ punched my student, Peter in the stomach! This had only a slight effect upon Peter as he is trained in ‘iron shirt’. He then said that that was not what the ‘master’ was doing to his students, and that he wanted him to do exactly that. So the ‘master’ literally waved his arms around and said, “do you feel the Qi?” “No” said both Peter and Carl and walked out. My advice is, always ask them to do it to you! And never mind about making an idiot of the ‘master’ as he has already made an idiot out of himself and has tried to make one out of you.

The internal martial arts are incredible enough without having to resort to trickery. People who do these circus tricks only denigrate the internal martial arts, causing other martial artists of the ‘hard’ styles to deride once great fighting systems such as Taijiquan. It has been my quest also, to show Taijiquan and the internal martial arts in general for what they really are, great fighting and self defence systems and self-healing and medical systems. Qi can be used to cause someone to become weak prior to a major dim-mak strike, it can be used to heal others, and it can be used magnetically to affect another’s electrical system. But it cannot be used to knock people down without touching them.

I will include a whole chapter on ‘Qi disruption’. This area could be mistaken for something supernatural, but it isn’t. This area makes use of totally natural body and electrical physics using magnetic and electrical phenomenon to upset the patient’s or the attacker’s energy. When I demonstrate this phenomenon, I always preface by saying that nothing that I am doing is super-natural and that anyone, given the correct training is able to also do the same. Even then, onlookers who witness these Qi disruptive demonstrations on complete and strong, strangers, have a difficult time believing that it is not some kind of super-natural force. Many think that I am using my own students, so I always ask them to come up and have me do it to them. As I have already stated, I have even blindfolded people so that people cannot say that it is autosuggestion, or that they sim-

ply do not wish to make a fool of me. So I make as if I have done the Qi disruption by literally blowing air across their face for instance, causing them to think that I have used my hand across their face. Then, when I try to do the test they are still strong, it hasn't worked! Then I do the real Qi disruption and it works. Nothing special about myself here as it is pure physics that does the disruption, only a lot of internal training is involved.

In the next chapter I will introduce briefly the three internal systems of Taijiquan, Baguazhang and H'sin-I ch'uan.





# Chapter One

## Taijiquan

I begin with a brief introduction to Taijiquan as it is considered the ‘Mother’ of all of the internal martial arts. There was a time when Taijiquan was considered the pinnacle of Chinese philosophy and self defence. Sadly, nowadays, this once great art has been relegated to the backwaters of the martial arts systems. This is because not many teachers know how to use Taijiquan for self-defence. Self defence seems to have been lost in a quagmire of mystical mumbo-jumbo somewhere around the late 1960s to the mid 1970s when the ‘new age’ movement adopted Taijiquan as its mascot, turning it into a woozy little dance that was supposed to cause one to see God. It also helped to have smoked a couple of joints of the best Lebanese hash. In these cases, the Taijiquan really did not make much difference, but hell, they needed something to do with their hands and feet.

The word ‘Qi’ as used in conjunction with Taijiquan, also received a battering from the new age movement in that it became the super mystical word that far surpassed God or Jesus or even Krishna in some instances. In addition, this is where the unfounded idea that Qi is some somewhat occult has come from. Let’s face it, the orthodox clergy really didn’t like it when naked people would roll around in the mud having free sex while saying evil words like Qi and Taijiquan. So, although the new age movement was a great era of learning and throwing off the shackles of post war western world, it also did some damage to the internal martial arts.

## History

In order to understand what Taijiquan is, it is important to know a little of the history of how it was founded as it has changed so much since then. This is by no means a comprehensive history as I have covered this area in

other books and there are so many different theories on the history, that it would take a whole book just to document it all. Therefore, I will concentrate mainly upon my own lineage, as I know this quite well. I will only briefly cover the other styles of Wu, Sun and Chen.

The names Taijiquan or 't'ai chi ch'uan', or simply t'ai chi all mean the same thing. Many people think that Taijiquan means the martial part while Taiji means the 'mystical part. This is incorrect, as the name 'Taiji' is simply a shortened name for Taijiquan, or in the old spelling, t'ai chi is no different to t'ai chi ch'uan.

Meaning literally *supreme ultimate fist*, the name, 'Taijiquan' did not come into being until around the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is believed that the name *Taijiquan* was coined by one of the *Wu* family of Taijiquan founders. Back then, Taijiquan really deserved its rather lofty name, especially around the time of a man called *Yang Lu-ch'an* who invented the *Yang* style of Taijiquan. In fact, it was said that Taijiquan was at its pinnacle when Yang formulated his own system.

Back in feudal China, the masters, family members and students of Taijiquan did not practise Taijiquan in order to help them open car doors (as cars had not been invented). Nor did they use it to help with lifting things, to have a good day, to help with job interviews, to lose weight, or to be popular at parties. People would learn Taijiquan because it would help in saving their lives! Literally, people had to have a means of defending themselves against serious attack. Unlike nowadays when we can call a police officer or buy a gun, they had only themselves to depend upon. In addition, attacks were frequent, for money, possessions, women or simply that a person was rich and famous and others were jealous of he or she. The amount of violence in the world today is kid's stuff compared to what went on in feudal China. So, how did Taijiquan get to where it is today?

There are a number of different theories as to the beginning of Taijiquan. However, all one has to do is to look at what Taijiquan is at a very advanced stage, in order to choose which history you will believe. The history is inextricably linked with performing Taijiquan at an advanced stage. One cannot judge Taijiquan history if one has been only practising for around ten to fifteen years as a high level of expertise will not have been reached.

One theory is that a man called Chang San-feng saw a fight between a stork and a snake and formulated the whole thing upon that! A rather fanciful and romantic idea but not true.

There are two separate histories given as to the invention of Taijiquan. A modern theory is that a family called the Chen family in China invented their form of Taijiquan from which came all other forms of Taijiquan. If we look at both the *Chen style of Taijiquan* and the *Yang style*, we see that the Yang system could not have come out of the Chen style. They are so

different both in physical movement and in internal movement. The idea and use of Qi is also a contributing factor in my disbelief of this history. The *Classics* of Taijiquan are very definite as to how we should practise and all one has to do is to follow these lessons left to us by the masters of old. It can easily be seen that the *Yang* style of Taijiquan has come from no other 'hard' system. It is its own system, whereas it is easy to see that the *Chen* style has its roots in the Shaolin martial arts, mainly *Chang ch'uan* or *Long boxing*. No hard style martial art is like Yang style Taijiquan, but one can see many hard styles within the framework of the Chen style. This is only my own idea while many still believe that all Taijiquan came from the Chen style. It is interesting to note however, that not one "Chen style" master was ever invited to any of the great meetings of Taijiquan masters and styles at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Several masters have told me that they considered *Chen style* to be not even Taijiquan. Nowadays, the Chen style is regarded as one of the great Taiji systems. Whether one believes that all Taiji came from it or not, does not take away from the fact that it is a great system of martial art.

What Fu Sheng-yuan (the son of the famous Master Fu Zhongwen, nephew of Yang Cheng-fu) has to say about the Chen style and Zhiang Fa in the Chen Village.

In a handout freely handed out by the son of Fu Zhongwen, he writes; *...one often reads about the four major styles of t'ai chi ch'uan.... Viz.: Chen, Yang, Wu and sun. However, there is only one supreme Ultimate fist that conforms to natural forces and principles.*

*.... It is worthy to note that Chen style is not t'ai chi Ch'uan. Historically Chen Shi has it's origins in Shaolin Ch'uan and was actually known as Pao Choi (Pauchui) or cannon fist. A hard external form does not comply with t'ai chi ch'uan principles.... At the time when Yang Lu-ch'an was employed in the household of the Chen master, a great boxer called Zhiang Fa came to the Chen village. Zhiang Fa was the greatest exponent of t'ai chi ch'uan of his time. The Chen master was so impressed with Zhiang fa's skills that he invited him to stay and teach t'ai chi ch'uan to his household. Thus it was that Zhiang fa taught t'ai chi to Yang Lu-ch'an....*

## Chang San-feng

It is my belief that Chan San-feng was the founder of Taijiquan, even though the name was not invented back then. One of the main reasons that the Chen family put down the idea of Chang San-feng is that nowhere at the gravesite of Chang is the word Taijiquan written. There is definitely a Cheng San-feng tomb with many people journeying to this site each year to pay homage. Nevertheless, not once is the word Taijiquan written on the grave. The reason of course is that that name was not used back then. Before the name 'Taijiquan' it was called 'H'ao ch'uan' or *Loose boxing*, a

name more in keeping with the way that Taijiquan is performed at a high level. Before that, it was simply called *Dim-mak* or 'death point striking'.

Chang was born around 1270 AD. This also is open to conjecture, as there are no definite records. So it is only a guess as to when Chang began to invent his system of dim-mak, around 1300.

Chang was a famous acupuncturist in China and was well versed in the Shaolin system of martial art. He and two other friends were obsessed with the martial arts and wanted to invent to most deadly form of self-defence. They knew that certain points on the human body caused certain electrical and physical effects due to their acupuncture, so they set about finding out whether these same points could also be used to adversely affect the Qi flow.

The story goes that Chang paid money to the local gaolers (jailers for those who use American spelling) to let them experiment on the inmates! Therefore, over a period of trial and error, Chang and his two friends worked out what points would kill, which ones would maim and which ones would affect the Qi (energy) system of the body. They even discovered that certain points would cause great harm or death some time after the strike. Hence, the old 'delayed death touch'. Nowadays, we are able to see why certain points on the human body work the way they do, and indeed, 'delayed death touch' is not just a myth, it is actually upheld in modern western medicine.



Photo number 1

Everyone back then in China, was looking for the most deadly fighting system so Chang became paranoid that others might steal his invention and use it against he and his family. So he had to have a way of teaching it to his family members, a way whereby if someone was looking, they would not be able to work out what was going on. In addition, what Chang invented, was the very beginning of modern Taijiquan form.



Photo number 2

Chang did not just leave it there however; he also wanted to invent a total martial art in keeping with the holistic approach of Traditional Chinese Medicine. So he not only invented physical movement to indicate the martial and dim-mak applications, he also invented movements that would heal the body mind and spirit. He took it one step further in that he had to have a set of movements that could be used to treat others and not only oneself. Hence nowadays we have a totally integrated martial art, one that is used for a deadly self defence method, a self healing method and a method of healing physical, mental and spiritual disease in others.

Chang knew that the whole body worked on a combination of brain, muscle, tendon, blood and Qi (electricity). He knew that in order to move anything in the human body, electricity had to be present, and the more electricity (Qi), the more powerful the movement would be. He also knew that in order to cause any part of the body to move, be it a finger or a leg, the Qi had to come from somewhere and go somewhere. The storage place

for the Qi is in the kidneys or a place called the *tantien*, an electrical place situated about 3 inches below the navel roughly corresponding to the point on the *conceptor vessel* (meridian/channel) called CV 4. In order for the Qi to go from tantien to anywhere, it must flow or be *activated* along a sort of electrical conductor. This happens in just the same way that a current will flow over a given path in for instance, your electrical lighting in your house. We do not of course have electrical wires running all over the place in our body, but we do have conductors of a liquid type, not unlike the cells of a battery. The current that flows is continually flowing, if it stopped, we would die. Many people think that the Qi *flows* to certain parts of the body but this is only a more easily understood term that we use to denote *Qi activation* along the meridian. When we need Qi at a certain part of our body, more 'current' is sent along the meridian to the point so that the muscles and tendons will be able to do their work. This theory is upheld in modern science in the fact that almost all measuring devices in medicine measure voltage or current or magnetic fields caused by those currents. Our very cells that we are made of are held together with electricity and when that flow stops, the cells break down and we die. The Qi becomes *activated* along a meridian once for two hours for each of the 12 main meridians. It becomes activated by the meridian having a slightly higher resistance at its particular 2-hour period. This causes an increased EMF (electromotive force) or voltage across this resistance hence causing more voltage to cause an increase in current along the path. We do not know the mechanism that causes this to happen, but it is part of the automatic system of the brain.

So Chang knew that to move an arm, the Qi had to be activated along a certain meridian, and thus through a certain organ thus bathing this organ in life giving Qi. Such was the genius of the man that he set about inventing a set of movements that when executed would emulate the Qi activation cycle throughout the 24 hour period along the 12 main meridians. Not only once, but also during the whole Taiji form, we actually emulate the meridian activation three times. Moreover, even more amazing is that fact that when we finish the Taiji form (if it is an original form and done correctly), our Qi activation will be where it should be in the 24 hour cycle. So our energy flow/activation is not put out of wack because we activated each meridian three times in a short period. It normally takes 24 hours for each meridian to be activated, one meridian for each two hour period.

Each movement from our Taiji form or kata activates the Qi in a different meridian and organ. So when we perform the postures known as *brush knee and twist step*, (**Photo No. 1**), in order for the Qi to get to where it should be and to perform that kind of work as denoted by the advanced martial application of the posture, it has to be activated through the *heart meridian*. Therefore, this posture will help to heal anything wrong with the heart. In addition, the posture known as *single whip*, (**Photo No. 2**) will heal things wrong with the joints or digestion because of the same reason. In fact, every posture from the Taiji form will help in the healing of a different organ or disease state.

Taijiquan is a bunch of different postures all linked together as one long slow and explosive moving form. When Taiji is performed at an advanced level, there is only one movement from beginning to end.

## Wang Tsung Yeuh

Wang was a direct lineage student of Chang San-feng and it is said that Wang was the first of the lineage to write anything down. Before this, the art was passed on by word of mouth for fear that other rival clans would gain this knowledge. As in any family, old letters, notes and bits of paper get stored away somewhere, you know, those old papers from the great grandfather? So this treatise became 'lost' for a few centuries until either one of the Chen family, or Yang Lu-ch'an (it is unclear as to who actually discovered it again) found it lying on either a baker's or a butcher's floor!

## Zhiang Fa

A man called Zhiang Fa came into the Chen Village at around the same time that Yang Lu-ch'an was living and learning there. Zhiang Fa is said to be a direct student of Chang San-fen via Wang Tsung-yeuh. His fighting style was so good that the Chen family invited him to teach them his system, which he did. He also became friendly with Yang Lu-ch'an and began teaching him. This is all very vague as records are scarce, and the ones we do have, cannot be relied upon for accuracy.

## The Yang Family

Yang Lu-ch'an (1799-1872) tried to be accepted into the Chen Village to learn their system, but failed on many occasions. Finally, he acted like a mad-man, lying in the freezing snow outside the village until someone took pity on him and invited him to live there and become he janitor. It is said that Yang took every opportunity to learn secretly from the Chen's even to the point of peeping through holes in doors etc. Therefore, when Zhiang Fa arrived at the village, Yang was pleased that he was able to learn from him.

Yang became so good at the 'new' system that he eventually left to form his own style called the Yang Style. One story is that Yang also discovered that original treatise written by Wang Tsung-yeuh which helped him to formulate what we now know as the 'Yang Lu-ch'an' style of Taijiquan or the 'Old Yang Style'. This history is only one of many, but is the one that I prefer to believe. However, it really doesn't matter what history one believes as all we have to do is to look at what has been left to us in the form

of old writings by the masters and to look at all styles of Taijiquan especially the 'Old Yang Style' and we can easily see that this system is indeed the 'supreme ultimate'. In addition, even if Yang DID learn everything he knew from the Chen's, he certainly improved on that system in the formulation of the Old Yang Style. I call it that because nowadays there are many different systems calling themselves Yang style. However, there is only one true Original Yang Style, that which was founded by Yang Lu-ch'an. Modern Taijiquan owes its invention to Yang's grandson, Yang Cheng-fu but it is very different from the original form.

## The Family

Yang Lu-ch'an had six sons and two daughters who were all well versed in the Yang style. The story goes that four of the sons were murdered along with Yang Lu-ch'an in a battle with a rival clan. The two remaining sons were Yang Kin-hou (1839-1917) and Yang Ban-hou. (1837-1892). Apparently, Ban-hou went slightly insane at seeing his whole family almost, murdered, while Kin-hou joined a Buddhist monastery.

Yang Ban-hou had few students because he was quite brutal in his training while Yang Kin-hou proliferated the art to his two main sons, Yang Cheng-fu (1883-1936) and Yang Shou-hou (1862-1929).

## Yang Cheng-fu

Yang Cheng-fu is said to be the modern father of Taijiquan. He changed his father's form three times before he died in 1936. Out of these three changes, came three distinct styles of Yang style. We can see these changes in the different versions by; Chen Wei-ming, Tung Ying-chieh and Choy Hok-peng, all main students of Cheng-fu and having learnt respectively the different styles as Yang changed the original.

Yang Cheng-fu learnt his father's form as did Yang Shou-hou, but Cheng-fu had an urgency to help the Chinese race back to health. So he set about changing his father's form to a more public form, one that everyone, young and old, sick or healthy could gain from. It is said that this form was the most that the original could be changed without losing any of the essence of his father's creation. Others came after Yang Cheng-fu and changed the form even more thus setting the way for the complete destruction of what was once the greatest fighting system ever invented. Nowadays, Taijiquan of the 'Yang system' is no more than a bunch of movements with nothing left of the original internal essence. Being faced with a good karate or street fighter, most modern day 'masters' of Taijiquan would run a mile or be totally defeated in any confrontation. Their excuse for this is that they only teach the 'other side' of Taijiquan,



the mystical of healing side. How little they know. We can never take the martial away from the healing or the yin away from the yang. When there is yang in the absence of any yin or visa-versa, we have nothing! Moreover, I am afraid that is what most modern Yang style Taijiquan systems are.

## Yang Shou-hou

Thank God, that Yang Shou-hou did not change his father's system. He only had, as far as I have been told, three main students as he too was quite brutal. One of those was Chang Yiu-chun, who in his older remaining years became my main teacher.

## Yang Sau-chung

Yang Sau-chung was the eldest of four sons of Yang Cheng-fu. After Yang died, Sau-chung became the leader of the family and in 1949 left for Hong Kong where he lived until his death in 1985 (May). He was born in 1909. I had the pleasure of meeting him in Hong Kong when I went there to train in 1981. He also corrected some of my form via an interpreter. Then, I was training with Chu King-hung one of three disciples of Yang Sau-chung so Chu met me in Hong Kong and introduced me to Yang. Chu wanted me to represent the Yang family in Australasia and put this to Yang. When I heard the amount that I would have to pay for this privilege, I decided not to play that game and went out on my own. Luckily, I met Chang Yiu-chun.

If one counts every posture in the classical Yang Taijiquan form or kata, we see that there are around 300. However, many of these postures are repeated and it is generally accepted that the so-called 'long Yang form' (as opposed to the newer short forms that I do not even recognise) has around 108 postures. But if we only take the very basic postures that have names then that number comes down to only around 37. Those repeated postures are those that the founders of 'H'ao ch'uan' or Taijiquan knew to be very important either to the healing benefits or to the martial applications. Inventors of later, new forms of Yang Taiji saw these important postures as being redundant, so they simply changed a great form invented by people of genius and left out these postures, rendering the form almost useless!

## Qi in Taijiquan.

The word 'Qi' is not the 'ji' or chi as in the second word in t'ai chi ch'uan or Taijiquan. This 'ch'i' means a peak (ultimate) and its Chinese character looks like a mountaintop. Qi as in the internal means breath or energy.



Photo number 3

Qi is the most important aspect of one's Taijiquan training without which we would all die. Qi is given to us at birth and is our life force, the very thing that holds our molecules together, an electrical force. Now it stands to reason that if we have little of this force then we are not too healthy, or if the flow of Qi is impeded, then likewise. Therefore, we first have to build up some of this stuff so that our internal organs are literally bathed in life giving Qi. However, if we then wish to use this stuff to heal others then we must turn it into a useable form called 'jing'.

Jing can be likened to, as water is to steam. We gain much 'water' from our Taijiquan and Qigong practise and then we turn it into 'steam' so that we are able to make it work for us. In any given day, our Qi flows around our body twice through the twelve main, and eight extra acupuncture meridians or channels. These are like electrical conductors that travel around the main organs in the body. During our Taiji practise we cause this flow to increase to three extra times around the body for each set or form that we perform.



Photo number 4

Every Taijiquan posture causes the Qi to flow through its corresponding organ and so the whole Taijiquan form is made up of these postures perfectly positioned to cause this flow. The reason that this healing art was based upon the 'wushu' or war arts is because the history of China is steeped in the war arts and their whole culture is based upon pugilism. I suppose if Taijiquan were invented in the U.S., we would have movements like basketball or baseball to follow to give us the appropriate flow of Qi.

Each posture represents a certain martial art defensive or attacking movement. This enables us to visualise the actual martial movement which causes the Qi from the tantien, (an electrical point about 3" below the navel) to the appropriate attacking portion of one's body. Because of the nature of the movements, the Qi is forced to flow through the main organs in order to perform this work and so we have a healing art from a war art.



Photo number 5



Photo number 6

For those who wish to take Taijiquan on to its secondary stage of a self-defence art, and a damned good one, there are other exercises and forms, faster and more explosive which teach us this aspect.

Taijiquan is a moving Qigong. There are two thousand different types of Qigong broken into three main areas. The most advanced area and one's final goal in Taijiquan is to be able to heal others using the built up Qi. First we must gain some extra Qi ourselves, and to do this we use the basic Qigong stance.



Photo number 7

Qigong means 'internal work' and involves standing in certain postures using certain breathing techniques described in the coming chapters. Using the method we are able to build upon or 'given or prenatal' Qi and then make it flow using the Taijiquan form. **Photo No. 3** shows the basic 3-circle Qigong stance.

## The Martial Art

No one is able to use the slow moving Taijiquan form for self-defence as it is. To do so would bring certain defeat. Many people make the big mistake of if because the postures were derived from martial applications then that is the way to use this art for self-defence.



Photo number 8

The slow moving form from Taijiquan gives us the three main prerequisites essential for any fighting art. Perfect balance, co-ordination and above all, timing. Once one has gained these prerequisites, one is able to go on to the more advanced techniques of pauchui form (cannon fist) push hands, da-lu, san-sau and dragon prawn boxing. We learn forms in order to give up all forms when we gain an understanding of the martial arts. In other words, we use the forms to get back to the natural instinct of the child. Only then will we be able to react instinctively instead of unnaturally, but it takes much work to arrive at this level. For each posture in the taijiquan form, there is a basic and a 'hidden' or secret fighting application, or many of both. For instance, if we take the very first application called 'arn left', we can see that this simple posture has several fighting applications. The basic one that is taught to beginners is as follows. **Photo No. 4** for the posture.

You are perhaps attacked with a straight left attack. Exactly as you would perform this posture when doing form practise, you would raise both arms making contact firstly with your left 'p'eng' arm. (**Photo No. 5**). You then carry that attack (very quickly of course) over to your left as your right palm now assists in the breaking of the elbow. (**Photo No. 6**). This is the very basic application. However, if we look at that same posture in a different light, we see that it also has some very deadly applications.



Photo number 9

This time, your attacker will attack using the most common of all 'street' attacks, the old haymaker, or hook punch. The same posture now becomes a little more difficult to see in this advanced or dim-mak application. You swivel on your heels to your left throwing your left wrist in a centrifugal manner out to your left as your right palm is thrust out in a pumping type action. The movement must come solely from what the body is doing and not because you have used your arm muscles to cause your arms to move. Your left palm makes contact at a deadly 'set up' point on the inside of his wrist called 'neigwan' or 'pericardium 8' point. This is the best all round set up point for any dim-mak shot as it will drain Qi (energy) from the



Photo number 10



Photo number 11



Photo number 12

body, causing the recipient to feel really ill. In Chinese medicine, it is used for many different disease states, one of which is to combat

### Sono arrivato qua

dim-mak, will be able to control an attacker's whole body by applying the correct 'internal' pressure to this point and 'pulling' it



Photo number 13

away from the person's body while digging the fingers in. Your right knife edge palm will also, a split second later (no two dim-ma points are ever struck at exactly the same time unless they are so close together that one palm will attack to both points), strike to a point on the attacker's neck called 'stomach 9' point, (ST 9). ST 9 is one of the most deadly points as are many on the stomach meridian as it has an electrical effect (Qi) as well as a purely physiological effect. Anyone is able to learn to strike to this point to cause a knock out instantly, either by striking the point as I have just shown. **(Photo No. 7)**. Alternatively, as in the case of a 'sleeper hold' or choke hold. **(Photo No. 8)**. ST 9 lies laterally to the carotid cartilage and just underneath the sternocleidomastoid muscle that runs up the sides of your neck. Inside the inner branch of the carotid artery is a small node called a baroreceptor (the carotid sinus) which measures your blood pressure. When struck, this node registers that you have extremely high blood pressure and so shuts down the heart or slows it dramatically in order to bring the blood pressure back down. However, because you do not really have high blood pressure, the pressure goes too low and you faint. This is an extremely dangerous technique and should NEVER be tried out just to see if it works. Go and ask your local doctor about this point and if he or she knows their stuff, they will tell you that even doctors will only ever tweak the carotid sinus in an emergency of very high blood pressure. Any method that is capable of stopping the heart is very dangerous so do not try it out!

Another hidden application of this first posture is as follows. This is one of the more dangerous techniques involving an 'irretrievable death point strike' where you will not be able to bring the recipient back using C.P.R.

The opponent attacks with a straight right. You immediately step forward and to your left. The fighting way of Taijiquan is such that we never ever step backwards, unless the opponent also does. In other words, in keeping with the 'Taijiquan classics', we do exactly what the opponent does, he does not like this as all seasoned fighters work on switches in that same way that all animals do. In addition, his switches tell him that you should react in a certain way when he attacks you. Nevertheless, you do not react

in this way; you do the opposite and thus put his timing right off. Therefore, if he moves forward, so do you, if he moves back, so do you, if he moves up so do you and if he moves down, so do you. Your left palm firstly makes contact with his right elbow as your right palm is already moving upward using the centrifugal force of the body, inside of your left forearm. **(Photo No. 9).**



Photo number 14

Using the force generated by your waist, your right palm attacks in a direction that is from his back to his front, to a deadly point behind the ear called 'Triple Warmer 17'. See my Encyclopaedia of Dim-Mak for point locations. **(Photo No. 10).** You do not have to know the correct direction or the correct power as you learn this sub-consciously when you learn the posture.

The third application is also an advanced application and would be difficult to see in the posture if you were not told about it. A straight left this time sees you attack his left wrist with your left 'p'eng' hand. (P'eng is one of the most important areas of one's Taijiquan training. Literally means 'to ward off slantingly upwards'.) **(Photo No. 11).** Almost at the same time but not quite, your right palm also moves upwards to be on top of his left wrist. **(Photo No. 12).** You now swivel on your heels to your right using the power of your waist to fling his left arm violently over to your right as your left palm utilises that same power to attack violently to his right ST 9 point on his neck. **(Photo No. 13).**



Photo number 15

The whole Taijiquan form, each posture from it, has these very deadly, hidden applications. However, the beginner is only ever taught, if he is taught at all, the very basic applications. Therefore, when someone from another martial art asks that student how he uses Taijiquan for fighting, he sees nothing different to what he has been taught. But as many forward thinking karateka are now discovering, Taijiquan has something much more than just relaxation and balance, they are discovering that there is a whole new world out there, a new way of doing things. Things that they can upload into their own martial systems. A few are again seeing Taijiquan for what it is; the Supreme Ultimate.

## The Reptile Brain

When I was learning Taijiquan, I was simply told that I must 'become' an animal in order to fight using Taijiquan. At first, I thought that this simply meant acting like an animal or doing the movements of an animal. This is impossible of course, as we are not animals and do not have the physical attributes such as claws and sharp teeth etc. However, we do have what is called the 'reptile brain' which we are able to call upon at any time. Animals call upon this part of their brain naturally, whereas we humans have for the most part lost this ability and must re-learn it.



Photo number 16

We actually have three brains. The reptile brain is the one that was first given to the reptiles. Then came the old mammalian brain, the one that most animals have. Then we humans were given the Mammalian brain. However, the other two brains were not discarded, they were added to. The reptile part of our brain is our survival brain.

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.



Photo number 17

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 'Baguazhang' (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. 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.



Photo number 18

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.14**). 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. 15**). 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 the 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 style etc, when we are startled, we become 'yin' and tend to cover up to try and not to 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.16**). Alternatively, we could use the GV 26 point just under the nose with that same technique as in (**Photo No.17**). On the other hand, again, to CV22 as in (**Photo No.18**).

These natural techniques give us the best possible chance in the street without having to learn a whole martial art for twenty years. In addition, 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.

## Dim-Mak

Nowadays, people tend to separate the art of dim-mak and Taijiquan. This because, as I have stated earlier, of the fact that most teachers now teach Taijiquan for health only and not many, if any, even know that Taijiquan is in fact dim-mak or death point striking. In Japanese the word is 'tuite' and means roughly the same thing. The Japanese version however, is very limited. However, nowadays many karate people are adopting the Chinese methods of dim-mak. Sadly though, many of these Sensei only ever search for the purely physical attacks from dim-mak. So when they learn about what such and such a point does, from the Chinese methods, they actually try it out and when it does not work, they say that it is incorrect and leave it out. However, the reason that certain points will not work in the purely physical systems, is that these people simply have not done the internal training necessary to perform the advanced dim-mak strikes. They do not

have the knowledge. In addition, this comes from their systems, which usually completely negate the internal part of their training. I have actually had so called Masters who have been studying for all of twenty years, read one of my books, and immediately try out one of my more advanced methods. Of course it does not work, or at the very best only works at about 25% capacity. Therefore, they say that Erle Montaigue's methods do not work! They do not know about fa-jing (explosive energy), they do not know about H'ao ch'uan (loose boxing) and they do not know about dim-mak! So how are they supposed to make my methods work if they do not even know the basics? Fa-jing is the engine of dim-mak so without an engine, they have little hope of every making any but the very basic physical dim-mak strikes work.

## THE FORM

The Taijiquan form or kata (a series of martial movements) is the foundation of one's Taijiquan training. Without form, we would only ever rise to a very basic level of both self-defence and healing. All martial arts are great when we first begin training at usually a younger age. However, when one reaches 40 and has been practising his or her martial art for 20 or 30 years, we expect more than just "kick/punch"! Sadly, by that time it is almost too late and many who would be good at the higher levels of the martial arts, give it up completely. I know of many, who for the first time see a good internal martial arts instructor and break down weeping because they have wasted the better part of their life practising a purely physical martial art. When one's body begins not to work so well because of age, we have to have something else to rely upon to maintain our health and self-defence. I have so many so called hard stylists come to me after having trained for many years, saying that they are now getting on a bit and can no longer do the rolls, or tournaments or punching of hard objects. Or that they have permanently damaged ligaments and muscles etc. They are proud that they have stayed so long in their chosen martial art but now need to have something a bit softer! So at age 40 or 45 they turn to taijiquan as second choice! Why they did not take taijiquan up in the first place is that they, like many others, have the incorrect idea of taijiquan being some old person's self defence art, or something that one does when one is past it! Alternatively, that it is a health dance or just for relaxation etc. When they find out what taijiquan is all about, they are mind blown.



## General Rules for Practise

1/. The head should not turn to one side; let your eyes do the looking, keep your nose in your centre line. Even when you have to look for instance, to the front while you turn your waist to the side, look out of the corner of your eye so that your centres stay in line.

2/. The head should not bob up and down when taking steps. By keeping your knees bent, you should be able to achieve this. Be sure that you are well weighted on your standing leg before you lift the other leg.

3/. Keep the knees bent but never allow them to come past the level of the toes. When looking down at your toes, there is a slight parallax error so be sure to keep the knees just over the front of the toes.

4/. Begin with a lower posture if you are young and do not feel at all as if you are doing damage to your muscles and ligaments. If you are older, begin with a slightly higher stance until you are able to get down lower in your stance. At an advanced stage, the stance will come back up again to a slightly higher level and the length of your step will decrease. Many think that they are doing well to be able to get down low. This is OK in the beginning as it is building up strength in the legs. However, in order to have the Qi do what it has to do, the stance must come back up to a more normal stance.

5/. The shoulders are relaxed at all times and the elbows drop below the shoulders. By keeping the elbows relaxed, the shoulders will be relaxed and this is one of the most difficult aspect for westerners to achieve.

6/. The eyes look straight ahead and the palms are relaxed and natural holding the 'tile palm hand'. (The general photos of the form show this hand shape).

7/. The backbone should be over-all straight and vertical and only very rarely leans slightly forwards. Remember that technically, the backbone can never be perfectly straight as it has an 'S' shape. This is natural. The spine should be vertical (plumb and erect) at all times, never leaning back and forth, or side to side. This point is quite important. I have experimented with this particular aspect and have found it most beneficial in both healing and medical and self-defence. I have a treatise on Taijiquan that comes from the purest source. It is in 3 parts and after having it slowly translated as it is in 'old Chinese', I have found that there are no less than ten references to the vertical backbone in the first four pages! Never hunch the back. However, there should be a slight rounding of the back both vertically and horizontally. This gives the "double bow" effect, which is important for releasing energy for healing and for fa-jing.

8/. Walk like a cat, carefully and softly, so that if there is danger you are able to take that foot back. Step forwards on the heel and backwards on the toe.

9/. Never have equal weight on both feet. Be aware of which leg is yang and which is yin. Never have equal strength in your palms, as this is double weighting. Only at the very beginning and at the end should the weight be evenly distributed. There must of course be a time when there is double weighted when you change your weight from one leg to the other but it is only momentary as the weight changes.

10/. Maintain equilibrium (earth); never commit yourself fully - always have in mind the retreat if you attack or the attack as you retreat.

11/. In pushing forwards breathe out, in pulling backwards breathe in. In lifting upward breathe in and in pushing or stepping downward breathe out.

12/. The Qi, (ch'i) is stored in the tantien, goes to feet (bubbling well point Kidney one point), springs from the feet, is directed by the waist and is manifested in the fingers. Although this is true, the Qi really comes firstly from the tantien then travels down to the bubbling well point called kidney 1 at the base of the foot.

13/. Your head should be held as if suspended from above by string. This will pull your backbone upward and sink the Qi to the tantien.

14/. Practise the form three times - once for the bones, muscles and sinews, once for the mind and once for the spirit. The first time should be done in about 10 or 15 minutes, the second in about 20 to 30 minutes and the last in about 40 minutes.

## Classical Times for Practise Were:

- **Dawn:** When you are coming out of yin and entering yang.
- **Midday:** When you in extreme yang.
- **Dusk:** When you are coming out of yang and entering yin.
- **Midnight:** When you are in extreme yin.

These times give you a completely balanced practise structure, but most of us can only manage dawn and dusk.

True Taijiquan is subconscious, the body and mind are in a state of alpha, not asleep and not awake. Allow your computer (brain) to do all the work for you and you can achieve anything. It takes many years to achieve a



Photo number 19

high level of Taijiquan but on the way you will come across wondrous things and lessons in life; you must invest in loss.

## Balance in Taijiquan

Without true balance your Qi will never be able to be used to heal others or in the self-defence area. Balance is the singularly most important aspect of your Taijiquan training. Once you have established 'balance' and more importantly, understood it, your training will do for you what it is supposed to do.



Photo number 20

It's difficult getting out of the habit of thinking of each posture as a set of movements, where we have a place and a time to put our hands, a place and time to put our feet, legs, waist, head and so on. We tend to think of each posture in the way that we learnt it, although we may have been practising for 30 years or more. Herein lies the danger in teaching Taijiquan the way that we do, in bits. However, nowadays, we who have not the time to be full time training, following the master each day, learning the form as a whole identity, just doing it rather than learning postures, have no other way. We must learn Taijiquan in bits. So it is important that we have some way of getting to the way that we *would* have learnt Taijiquan internally, had we learnt it in the classical way. Well, there is not, hence this paper.

Taijiquan **is** balance itself. Think of the whole form as **balance**. Imagine that your tantien point, (about 3 inches below the navel near CV 4), as being a pivotal point around which everything else is pivoting. Each portion of your body is equally weighted (Qi wise), and when a yang part moves one way, a yin part moves in the reciprocal. No longer think of the movements as separate movements, think of each posture as a whole, where the whole body moves as a unit, the feet moving in perfect harmony with the hands, while the knees move in perfect harmony with the elbows, the hips are in harmony with the shoulders and the top of the head moves in perfect harmony with tantien and the movement originates with the waist.

It has always been said (in the classics) that the waist is the ruler. All movement comes from the waist, whether that is a hand movement or a step. You must get into the good habit of causing each movement to come from the waist, **make** the waist cause each movement. This will seem awkward at first, and you will only be able to manage large movements. However, as you progress in this way of training, you will notice the movements becoming smaller and smaller and smaller until there is no movement at all. The waist will cause the movement from within.



Photo number 21

The first area to look at is that of the feet and hands. These two are those that we have to get into complete balance before the rest of the body *pairs*, will fall into balance.

Firstly, make sure that when you are changing weight (moving from the rear foot to the front and visa-versa), that there is **always** a corresponding hand movement. This rule can **never** be broken. Needless to say that this corresponding hand movement must be a *changing Qi* movement. I.e., it must be either changing from yang to yin for the whole stroke of the weight change or it must be changing from yin to yang for the whole stroke of the weight change. I have seen, even masters who have been practising for 40 years make the big mistake of doing *dead* movements where the palm is made to be a yang hand before the movement even begins! For instance, should you be performing the posture of *brush knee twist step* and you have your right palm ready to do the strike forward, it should be a yin shape (limp) not a yang shape (flexed). (**Photo No.19**). If it **is** a yang shape, then you have already done the movement (Qi wise) and have no reason to do this movement because you have already used the yang Qi that is held in the yin shaped palm. The same applies for the reciprocal.

So, your palms and your feet must move in balance, in fact, take a look at your form and if there is ever a time when you are moving your feet and your palm(s) are not moving, and more importantly, moving from yin to yang or visa versa, then you should adjust this so that they are. The same applies to when you are lifting your foot, as in the posture of *lift hands*, or *play the guitar*. (**Photo No. 20**). At the very instant your foot leaves the ground, there should be an *empty* feeling in your palm which should then emulate the exact movement what your foot is doing.

There is a beginning, a middle and an ending bit to all of the postures. This is very important to know when one is just beginning to understand *movement and energy*. Once we have learnt the Taiji form at its basic level, we progress to other levels until eventually; we arrive at an internal movement that is in complete harmony with the external movement. This is impossible when we are first learning the form. This will cause your external movements to become very small. (Like the internal movement of Qi). We learn the *yin/yang* or *opening and closing* way of performing the form where we close down on a final yang (or attacking) movement and open up on a yin (or receiving) movement. This will be evident in the form of a large (in the beginning only) and then a small shake of the waist and shoulders. Many people ask me why they do not see these movements when I perform the form any more. I teach them the *open/closed* form and then do not do it myself! The fact is, that I am doing the open closed movements, only now they have become internal and no longer actually show externally, only a very well trained eye will see these internal movements that only slightly show externally. This is because the points of change between yin and yang and yang and yin (the shakes) have become *empty*. This is the beginning or end of each movement. You should actually feel



Photo number 22



Photo number 23



Photo number 24

this emptiness at the end of each move and just before you begin the next move. So that the empty movements are both yin and yang and change into each other depending upon what part of the movement you are doing. So for instance, if you are doing the posture of slant flying (**Photo No. 21**), where there is normally a yin/yang shake (opening and closing) movement at the end and just before you go into the next posture, this shake will become an *empty* movement and will not show hardly at all physically. It's like as if your whole body is a sine wave, and when it changes from the upper part to the lower part (under the centre line), there is an empty movement that is not expressed physically. In addition, this will happen when the sine wave moves from both of its peaks either yin or yang. Now here is the rub, this will only ever manifest if you are doing the form correctly by making all movements come from the backbone (waist). Therefore, we have a beginning (empty), a middle (working), and an end (empty). It is difficult to try to express this phenomenon in writing so I will also put out a videotape on this subject, as it is much easier to express physically.

### Balancing the feet and hands.

The balancing begins at the very first movement. Eventually, everything you do will be in a state of balance both externally and internally. This will in turn lead to an increase of your total power, also both internally and externally. You will have power that is more physical as well as a more subtle and greater power that comes from within. You can then use this power to change your circumstances for instance.

### The Postures:

The postures presented in this book will suffice in the teaching of balance for both all styles of Taijiquan, as all four main systems have most of the postures presented in the old and new Yang styles. It is not the posture that is important but rather the way, in which we step and use the hands that is. So, should you be learning the 'Old Yang Style' this book will also hold true even though I am not presenting all of the postures from that style, same applies to the Wu, Chen and Sun styles. It is the balance, that we are looking for and using the Yang Cheng-fu form I am presenting the way to get the balance for all styles.

It is only necessary to present the group of postures known as "Grasping Swallow's Tail", as this group is the epitome of



Photo number 25



Photo number 26



Photo number 27

Taijiquan, and indeed at one time was all we had of ‘Taijiquan’ or ‘loose boxing’.

### Preparation:

When you raise and lower your hands, they must begin yang shaped, slowly change to fully yin shaped (at the apex of the movement) and then slowly change back again to yang shaped at the nadir of the movement. (**Photos 22 and 23**). However, this is not quite correct as the hands have performed a *double weighted* movement where both hands have done the same movement and both hands have changed from yang to yin and back at the same time! Therefore, the hands must do a yin/yang movement. The left palm will slightly lead the right palm. If you were to be able to draw the line that the palms made, you would see that they do not just go up and down, but rather scribe an arc, out to the right side, then to the front, then to the left and back, left leading right. Moreover, left changing states slightly before the right. It is the movement of the weight that causes the hands to scribe an arc and a circle.

So, where is the foot movement? The feet simply change where the weight is placed so that there is a circle made by the changing weight. The very instant that you begin the palm movement, the waist begins to turn slightly to the right thus causing the palms to move in that direction (although they haven’t really moved by themselves to the right, all they do is to raise up, it is the body that causes all movement). At the same time, the weight also moves over to the right foot and begins to move slightly forward. (**Photo No. 24**). Balancing the hand movement, the left palm will be  $\frac{1}{4}$  the way up its stroke when the weight is onto the right foot and in the middle of the foot. When the hand movement is at its apex, the weight will be moving back to the left foot (equally weighted, but not static) on both feet and at the balls of the feet. As the hands come back down to the beginning position, the weight will go over to the left foot when the left hand is  $\frac{1}{4}$  the way down, and then as the hands come back to the beginning position, the weight will be back onto the heels of both feet. And you only thought that this movement was a simple one! In fact, this is why it is said that within this opening movement, lies the whole essence of Taijiquan. All of the above movement is of course then balanced with the breath. Inhalation on the lifting up part and exhalation on the lowering part.

### Arm Left: (Photo No. 25)

This posture is almost the same as the opening posture and movement. The feet do exactly the same circular changing of weight, out to the right, to the



Photo number 28



Photo number 29



Photo number 30

front to the left and back to the heels. The hands however, move a little more to the right and to the left with the left hand leading a little more. Make the body move the hands over to the right in an upwards arc, (**Photo No. 26**), and then over to the left like a backwards letter 'C' in harmony with what the feet are doing to end like in photo No. 25.

It is important to note that, because some of the foot movements are very small as in both of the above moves, the hand movements also will become very small. So no longer will you be able to lift your palms up to where they would normally have gone in the basic form up to your shoulder height, in fact you will be only able to lift your palms to about CV 14 height. Because this second movement moves slightly faster than the opening movement, it is able to move a little higher because of the centrifugal movement derived from the movement of the waist.

You should inhale when your palms move out to your right and upwards and exhale when the left palm moves downward at the end of this move and at the beginning of the next move.

#### **Block Right: (Photo No. 27)**

The movement of both palms over to the right should be in balance with what the feet are doing. The weight should sink down onto the left heel as your left palm begins to move downwards. As your weight moves over to your right foot which is turning out by 45 degrees, the weight also moves slightly towards the balls of the feet in an arc as you pass centre, then back onto the heel of the right foot as you come into posture. Your palms will move in balance with the changing of yin and yang of the feet in that the left palm, as it is lowered will change to fully yang shaped while the right palm stays yin shaped. As your weight is passed to the right foot, the left hand will slowly change over the whole stroke to a yin shaped hand. The right palm will stay in its relative position and only change the palm to a slightly yang shaped palm. It is interesting to note that they eyes have not changed their position. I.e., they have gazed to the front (north) for the whole of all of these three moves.) The head has moved around the eyes causing the eyes actually to move from corner to corner of the eye. Do you understand this? If you were to turn your body to the right (and also your head which does not move from its position for the whole form, the nose points to where the coccyx is pointing for the whole form. the head does not deviate left or right, the eyes do the looking for you), and leave your eyes to the front. In effect, you have turned your eyes to look out of the corner of the eyes without actually moving your eyes; you have moved your head around your eyes. Then, as you move your head and body back to the front, and leave your eyes as they were, the head will again catch up to where the eyes were looking. This is all part of Taijiquan's way of toning up the hypothalamus part of the brain, a little pea sized thing in behind the eyes on both side that control many areas of body movement etc. One of



Photo number 31



Photo number 32



Photo number 33

the things that this area of the brain also controls is reflex and the above movements of the head and eyes are part of the way in which we can cause the hypothalamus to tone up the reflexes. In fact, many sports institutes around the world are only now discovering that these eye movements will cause faster reflexes.

**P'eng: (Photo No. 28)**

Many people get the balance of this movement wrong. It is important that the main movement of the palms does not begin until the left heel is placed. However, in keeping with the fact that there is never any hand movement without foot movement, there must be a slight hand movement as the left foot is placed forward to the north in a straight line from where it was, retaining the shoulder width between the feet. As the left foot picks up and steps, the waist turns slightly to the right you inhale and change the state of both hands so that the right palm is now yin shaped, and the left is now yang shaped. **(Photo No. 29)**. By this time, your left heel is touching the ground in front. Your eyes are still looking out of the left corner to the north. As your weight changes to your left foot, you exhale and both palms begin to change state again. The left palm is lifted up with wrist in centre (as it was in the previous posture, it has not changed, it is the body turning that causes the left palm to only **look** as if it is moving laterally away from the centre) and the whole body is now turning to the north. The fingers of the left palm (as your weight is half way to the left foot) all pass the point on the other palm known as "Dragon Mouth" or CV 4 between your thumb and forefinger. As your weight moves forward, your left palm moves into position at chest height while your right palm moves downwards so that the fingers of that palm if palms were brought together, would just touch the palm of the left hand. In other words, most beginners bring the right palm back towards the right hip too far. Because of the martial application, the right palm should move downwards and not particularly backwards. Your head is now in line with where your eyes are looking, to the North. You must balance the upwards and downwards movements of your palms and the turning of your waist and hips with the movement of the weight from rear to front foot perfectly so that all movement will be finished when all weight change is finished.

In all of Taijiquan, there must **never** be a time when the hands are still moving after the weight has finished changing, to do this, would cause the movement to be a *hard style* movement only using the muscles of the arm and not the power of the whole body.

**Block left: (Photo No. 30)**



Photo number 34





Photo number 35



Photo number 36



Photo number 37

This movement is the same as its reciprocal. The only difference is that we have different foot position. You pick up your right heel to step to your right (East), keeping your footing so that when you do place the weight onto your right foot, there will still be that shoulder width between your feet. If you should lift your right foot and place it down so that it moves over to your left slightly, then you will not have shoulder width any more, so you must place the heel down where it was. An important part for the movement of Qi in the 'stomach' meridian (ground/earth) from whence we gain much of our internal power, is that when dragging the rear foot from the North to the N.E. (As we do as we come into this posture and many others rather than pushing the heel back), the whole foot must remain flat on the ground and not be lifted up onto its side. In other words, the small toe part of your foot must not lift up, but rather stay on the ground as you drag.

#### **Double P'eng: (Photo No. 31)**

As you lift your right heel, your waist turns slightly to your left as both hands change state (left is now yang and right is yin) and you inhale. **(Photo No. 32)**. The right palm is moved slightly forward so that it is now directly underneath the left palm. Notice that the eyes are now looking out of the right corners to your right as far as they can go, while the head is still in line with the coccyx (Northeast). As your right foot is lifted off the ground, your palms again change shape so that the left is yin and right is yang. **(Photo No. 33)**. Place the right heel and as you move your weight onto it, your waist now turns slowly to the front (E) and your palms again change state as they are lifted so that the right palm is directly in front of the left as if holding a small ball. Notice again, that the hands have not actually moved off centre, it is the body that causes them to move laterally to the East while all you have done is lifted the right hand in particular upwards vertically. This forward movement of the weight should be in perfect balance with the movement of the hands as you exhale.

Your head has moved to catch up with your eyes.

#### **Roll back: (Photo No. 34)**



Photo number 38



Photo number 39



Photo number 40

From the previous posture, all that your hands and arms will do is to simply lower to about waist height. The hands will roll over so that the right is palm facing down while the left will be facing upwards. The hands will be such that the fingers of the left will be pointing to the side of the index finger of the right and if you brought them together, they would touch each other at 90 degrees. Your arms and hands look as if they are doing much more work than they really are. They look as if they are moving when all the time it is only the lowering of the arms. Your waist will perform the most part of the movement.

As you begin to roll both hands over, you must also begin the downward movement, as there must be no movement of the hands without vertical movement. As you begin to move your arms down, your waist will turn slightly to your right bringing your both hands over your right knee in an arc. **(Photo No. 35)**. Continuing, your waist now turns back to the left bringing your both hands over to your left hip. **(Photo No. 34)** above). You will begin inhaling when your hands are over your right knee. Your eyes are still looking to the front (E) out of the corner of your eyes. Your head has moved around your eyes. You must sink your weight both physically and internally into your rear heel for this movement.

#### **Squeeze: (Photo No. 36)**

Most people call this movement “Press” but this is incorrect, as there has, along the road been a mistranslation of this posture. If we look at the character for this posture, it is translated as “to squeeze”, which tells of the very nature of this posture. From the previous posture, your both hands will join, as there is a very slight body movement to the rear just before you begin to move forward again. You turn your right palm so that it is facing towards you while your left palm will roll over so that it touches the top of your right wrist (thumb side) at the wrist. **(Photo No. 37)**. Notice that the states of both palms have not changed yet. Most people change the states from yin to yang as they do this movement thus losing the effectiveness of this movement as you have already wasted the yin and yang Qi. Only as you begin to move your weight forward should you begin to change the state of your palms. The right palm will change to yin while the left will change to yang thus making for a most powerful internal attacking movement. You exhale as you do this. See photo No. 36 above.

#### **Sit Back Ready: (Photo No. 38)**

Brush gently the top of your right palm with your left palm as you push your weight a little further forward. Most people make the mistake of beginning the backward movement as they do this rubbing but this causes the application of the posture to be negated. **(Photo No. 39)**. This is still part of

the exhalation of the previous movement. As you sit back onto your left foot, turn your waist slightly to your left, as both hands become yin. As you sit fully back, turn your body back to the front as raise your elbows slightly. The left palm will be slightly yang. **(Photo No.38)**. Inhale.

**Press: (Photo No. 40)**

This posture is usually called, incorrectly, “push”. However, the character for this posture indicates to ‘press’. As you begin to bring your weight forward, your waist will turn slightly to the left and your right palm will begin to become yang as your left becomes yin. Your right elbow squeezes inwards as your right palm turns in an arc clockwise to attack. Just before the completion of the movement, your waist will turn back to the right bringing your left palm yang exactly the opposite of what your right palm just did. (Photo No. 40 as above).

The above is sufficient for the average martial artist to get an idea as to what Taijiquan is all about. The whole sequence is called “Grasping Swallow’s Tail” and is what is called an “Internal Learning Qi” exercise. There are a group of several of the postures or groups of postures within the whole Taijiquan form which when seen performed by someone who is well advanced in his or her training, will impart internal knowledge at a subconscious level. This knowledge will then work internally to literally teach the student from within. The whole routine can performed as a Qigong exercise by firstly performing it on the right side (as above) then again on the left side ten times on each side. It is also good for the disease state of constipation as it works up on the colon. Let’s face it, if you can’t ‘get the shit out’ you cannot do anything! Any good factory boss knows this fact. Therefore, Taijiquan literally works in the healing area from the bum upwards.

# Articles

In this next section, I will include some of the hundreds of articles that I have written over the years in the hope that they will help in your understanding of Taijiquan.

## THE SECRETS OF TAIJIQUAN FROM THE ERLE MONTAIGUE RESEARCH CENTRE

### MOVE THE CENTRE

Understanding comes from Experience. And experience comes from doing.

One can only experience the different levels of Taijiquan when one has practised for long enough. I once had a student ask me how many times I practised the Taijiquan form each day.

So I told him that I used to practise at least four times per day but now it is more like only once or twice. His next question was, would he get to my level in half the time if he practised double the amount of times per day that I practised. The answer is of course, no.

One must practise of course and without doing the forms; you will get nowhere fast. But it is not so much the amount of times you do the form as this, in the beginning is really to hone your physical skills, which is an important prerequisite for understanding the 'internal'.

Really, the amount of years you have been practising correctly is the most important thing. Once you have the correct physical skills, Taijiquan will teach you no matter how many times you do the form each day. In addition, it will only let out that amount of information to you when you need it and are able to understand it at that particular time. It's like a fail safe mechanism, all of the information is there right in front of your face, every bit of it, but you will not see it until you are ready to see it. Moreover, if you look for it, you will never see it. And if you do not practise the form at least once per day, you will never see it, as this is the only way that "God" has to teach us what is meant to be learnt through the form.

Sometimes there comes a time when the Taiji form must be not done. This time period

can be anything from three days up to months but not years. It is like a computer backing up information, you cannot do any more work until the previous information is backed up, and this is the waiting time. For some unknown reason, one morning there will be this urge to practise, and when you do, a new understanding will take place, the next chunk of information will go into your conscious brain and you will understand a little bit more about life. Should you go against these urges, things will go wrong, you will feel out of sorts and you will become irritable etc., until you do the form again to go to the next level. Having done the form, again after this waiting period and having taken in the next level, you will again feel calm, relaxed and at ease with yourself, you can again 'smell the roses'.

The 'secrets' are all there for all to discover, do not look for them as they will never

manifest, just 'feel' what it is that you have to do. Look for meanings in everything you do and try to learn something from everything you do. In our everyday life, obstacles are placed before us to cause us to react and to learn. If we complain and get angry, taking it out on our loved ones etc., we will never learn what it is that is trying to be given. All you have to do is to do your Taijiquan form and you will learn. Everything that is told to us in the "classics" is a secret of Taijiquan. But it means nothing if you just read it and think you understand it. It must be earned and learned. When a 'classic' is taken in at one of the times for learning, it will be like the heavens have opened up and spoken to you, like a light from above, and you will marvel at what you have just learnt. Simple things that you thought you knew, take on a totally different meaning and seem to expand into huge proportions of meaning.

It is the job of the 'master instructor' to find ways of communicating these meanings to the student, so that they will become easier to understand once the learning begins. "MOVE THE CENTRE" is one classic saying that I now believe is the most important area of one's training. Alternatively, "THE MOVEMENT COMES FROM THE CENTRE". Once you understand this, and have experienced it, your Taijiquan will never be the same again. You will finally have found the way with everything you ever read about Taijiquan finally coming to fruition.

There is a catch though. To move the centre, correctly, you must firstly have mastered all of the other physical areas of movement, as the centre moving is the highest level of movement. Therefore, I will try to communicate to you my experience of this highest level of movement so that when it comes, it will really come.

Think of your centre as being your lower backbone in the beginning. As you progress, your centre will be the whole backbone.

"The Movement comes From the Centre". All of your movement must originate from the backbone! See how much your body moves when you

simply turn your backbone. Only an eighth of an inch will cause your hands to move some inches, if your hands and arm, shoulders are all in line. (The closest one word translation of 'sung' is to relax, but this is not correct. More correctly, "we move without feeling the movement").

When we firstly learn Taijiquan our brain puts each movement into either an upper body movement (hands, shoulders, elbows etc.) or a lower body movement, (feet, legs hips etc.)

We are taught to put our hand somewhere, and that is how it stays in our mind until we learn about 'moving the centre'. In order to understand this concept we must get right away from individual body part movement. You must perform each posture from the Taijiquan form (no matter what style you do, but the "Old Yang Style" of Yang Lu-ch'an lends itself to this area better than all others) looking at where the movement for the hands is coming from. This cannot be done if you are controlling the movements so that they are all slow and constant as in the Yang Cheng-fu form for instance. So this form and others like it must be modified for quicker or slower movements throughout the form. But these quicker or slower movements must not be done just for the sake of doing faster movements, they must be done purely to cause the hands to move from the centre and not from the shoulders or hands themselves. So if you are doing a movement like "Slant Flying", loosen your arms (they should already be

loosened) and make the arms move into the posture by moving your backbone only. You of course must hold the arms and hands in the posture for a brief time in order to get into the next movement, but the 'getting into' movements must only come from the centre. It is as if you are throwing your arms and hands into the posture. Only in this way will you ever understand fully, fa-jing, as this is where fa-jing comes from, from the centre.

People often ask me how I am able to perform the Yang Lu-ch'an form with the 'shakes' as if they are coming automatically. It is because I am simply doing exactly what I have described above, moving the arms and hands from the centre. The movements do not have to be fa-jing to begin with; they can be done at a slower pace in order to experience moving from the centre. The whole Yang Lu-ch'an form, when done at this pace, learning to move from the centre should only take around fifteen minutes to perform. However, once done, your whole body will feel energised, the backbone will feel strong and your whole outlook will be brighter and more positive. In fact, this article has come as a direct consequence of practising Yang Lu-ch'an's form from the centre. I usually find some area of release for the tremendous amount of Qi that is generated by this form, and today's was to write this article. It is as if an explosion of positive Qi energises your whole body into action when you do the form in this way.

So you have to look at every tiny movement and make it come from the centre only, this will give your hands a rubber doll type of action that will not look like traditional Taijiquan at all, it will not look 'pretty'. When I

first saw Chang Yiu-chun performing Taijiquan, I thought that it looked quite sloppy, as if he were a rag doll. My own Taijiquan at that time was controlled; beautiful, low, but was not Taijiquan. I have since seen only a handful of other Masters performing Taijiquan in this way and because it does not look pretty; they do not have many students. One master I saw in a park in Beijing had no students at all, but his Taijiquan was just superb, he called his style “waving boxing”, which can be translated as “Loose Boxing” or “Hao ch’uan”.

Upon every movement from the centre, which will end in a small shake, you must also ‘sink’ the Qi to the ground. Keep the backbone vertical at all times, and allow the Qi to sink straight down the backbone, through the legs and into the ground exhaling as you do this.

Even if it is only a finger movement, try to get it to happen by what the centre is doing and not just because you have caused the correct muscles to contract to cause the movement.

Allow you fingers and palms to be so relaxed that any slight movement from the centre will cause a great movement at the fingertips.

The health and martial areas of Taijiquan will be greatly enhanced performing Taiji from the centre. You will feel your backbone cracking into place as you perform, your elbows will crack, your shoulders will also, hips and waist will fall into place, setting you up nicely for the day’s work. In fact, everything that you have read about Taijiquan and probably the reason that you took it up in the first place will be fully realised doing Taijiquan from the centre. A simply ‘classic saying’ that holds so much.

I will be making a videotape on the above subject as well as including the above in my next book, “You Have The Power, Use It”. Research into what we already know, will continue here on “Horse’s Head” and I will try to communicate the enlightenment as they happen.

## Instalment Number Two

### **How to Know: And What to Feel: How To Know: And What To Feel:**

It is difficult to put down into words what one feels inside, one's experience and understanding of a certain thing. I have for years been trying and experimenting with ways to give to my own students, that which I have experienced.

When one practises Taijiquan, you cannot actually think about what it is you are feeling, as this would stop the flow and feeling that you were feeling! So, there had to be a way of my doing the form and still knowing what it was that I was experiencing. We go into a sort of 'alpha' state when we perform Taijiquan, that area not asleep but not quite awake. So I experienced with different levels of energy and found that I could still perform the Taijiquan form correctly and also keep a conscious mind upon what it was that I was experiencing, by keeping my consciousness just a tad above that alpha state.

To this end, years ago, I had a friend place electrodes all around my head and attach me to a bio-feedback machine which would let me know exactly what state my brain was in while practising Taijiquan. I could then learn to lift the consciousness a bit so that I could be totally aware of what I was feeling. The following is what I have been able to come up with.

- 1/. You will feel totally relaxed or in a state of 'sung', and will feel each change of yin and yang within the body. Not only those changes that happen physically when you simply know that your front leg has the weight on it and the rear leg does not, but a much deeper understanding of the feeling of yin and yang. As you move, you will feel each side of your body changing from yin to yang then back again, you will feel your two palms changing from yin to yang and back again, one being yin while the other is yang and visa-versa. Even the different parts of your brain will feel changes from yin to yang. It feels like a sort of wave moving all over your body as you move, from up to down and front to back, from side to side and down to up.

You must not mistake this feeling of yin and yang for what you already know about yin and yang from reading about it etc. It will be a totally different feeling, like your whole inside is full of moving honey? Well that's my explanation and I'm sticking to it!

- 2/. There will be very little physical movement. Remember, that when you practise alone, you only have yourself to impress, no one is watching, so you do not have to 'show' that you are doing Taijiquan. Once you 'get into the cog' of Taijiquan, the movements will really become small and you will simply not wish to do big postures with a lot of movement. You will be forced to do smaller movements.



When we first begin training in Taijiquan, the physical movements are all that we are concerned with. Therefore, those movements and postures are done quite large because there is not much connection to the internal movement of Qi. As your training increases, there will be a greater connection between external movement and internal movement of Qi. As the movement of Qi is very small, this causes our external movement to become also small. So at the highest level, there is very little external movement at all.

- 3/. Your wrists in particular will feel quite electric. As if there is some current flowing through the wrists and palms. This ‘flow’ which will probably be felt as some kind of tingling sensation will linger form some time after you cease practising.
- 4/. Your body should feel heavy because you are not using any extraneous muscles to hold your body up, only those which are necessary. This is usually a new feeling to most people because we usually hold more muscles than are necessary. When those muscles become relaxed, we feel more weight upon our backbone, so we feel heavy.
- 5/. Your palms will feel like they are glowing, or inflated like a balloon. This is because of the increases blood and Qi that is sent to the palms. Your palms will look red and perhaps blotchy with blood.
- 6/. After practise, you will not be able to make sudden movements, or rather you will not wish to. Your Qi and body movements are in harmony; you will feel like you are walking under water for some minutes after practise.
- 7/. You will feel a great hunger for food. Do not eat for at least one hour after practise. The longer you leave it, the more benefit you gain, as that Qi that is usually used for digestion, is used within the body to heal and energise. The moment you begin eating, that energising will cease until the food is digested. Do not have sex after training, although you will feel like this, especially if you are young! Sex is the largest user of Qi and can be damaging if performed after training. Sex without love is a base way to release Qi.
- 8/. Your whole body feels like it is breathing, not just your lungs, but your legs, toes, fingers, face all feel like they are breathing. I guess this gets down to the area of energising, as that feels like the body is breathing.
- 9/. The body feels like it is ‘locked’, like under water. It is as if every joint is in its correct place, locked there, so that if you move only one part of your body, the whole body must move.

- 10/. You feel as if you are floating but heavy, this is the sensation of feeling true yin and yang. From the base of your skull right down to your coccyx, you will feel like it is floating and sinking at the same time. This causes your eyes to use 'eagle vision' or peripheral vision.
- 11/. You feel like it is not actually you doing the form, it's like someone else has entered your body and is doing the form along with you, causing your limbs to move in the correct way automatically. Perhaps someone is inside of you. I do not know, or perhaps it is just the Qi flowing perfectly that causes your body to move automatically. I need to research this area more. I have always had dreams where the same old Chinese gentleman is there teaching me things. I wake and try it all out and it is usually very good so I keep it and teach it to my students. Maybe it is just myself telling me things or perhaps it could actually be a guide or some angel telling me things.
- 12/. A warm feeling covers the whole body while and after practise, although it might be bitterly cold, you do not feel it. Some quite well respected masters have the idea that one should lock the Qi inside by having clothing that is pulled in at the wrists and ankles! It is my own belief that this is rubbish, if anything you should allow your Qi to flow around your body on the outside as well as the inside. So the least amount of clothing the better and the least restrictive, the better, Let the air get on your skin, but do not allow the wind to blow on your skin. We can do Taijiquan in any weather bar wind. A slight cooling breeze in fine, snow is fine, rain and sun (not too much direct sun though). However, keep out of the wind as it tends to scatter the Qi and your form will not feel good to do anyway.

### **The Energy Flows of the Body**

I learnt long ago to write everything down after practise. I would experience certain things that I would wish to teach to others so that they too would gain what I have experienced. However, I soon found that if I waited too long, it would be lost into my internal network. It has been my experience that we only need experience things physically and consciously once, then it is gone, and the feelings that you have directly after practise, will never return physically again as you only need experience them once. They happen of course, but you do not actually recognise it physically. So much of what follows and in all of my research papers has come from these experiences of form practise at a high level, and from my writing them down immediately after practise.

We all know that we have meridians or channels through the body through which flows Qi or energy keeping the body alive and strong. Until I knew about the other flows of Qi throughout the body, I always wondered what happens to the rest of the body where there are no channels?

There are eight major areas of Qi flow in the body. Moreover, we must address all of these flows in order to maintain a balanced healthy body and mind. There are other flows of Qi of course, but it is these eight main flows that we are concerned with when practising Taijiquan.

When we are first born, all Qi flows are healthy and strong but as we grow, human tension and especially twentieth century living tends to cause these flows to be impeded causing physical disease, mental disease and diseases that are caused by not having a strong enough connection with the spirit.

Although all of the different streams of Qi throughout the body are connected and all together will help to maintain health, each individual flow of Qi has a specific job to do.

### **The Twelve Main Meridian Flow:**

Most of us know about the Qi that flows through the 12 main meridians. This is the Qi that will maintain a healthy body by keeping the internal organs healthy. The flow through these meridians is activated each two hours in a different part of the meridian. Depending up which organ that part of the flow represents; it is given the name of that organ, so we have the heart meridian or the liver meridian etc. But it is all one flow of Qi, at certain times of the day, the Qi is simply activated at the correct area of flow, so the Qi is activated in the heart meridian between the hours of 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., and so on throughout the whole of this meridian system.

### **The Eight Extra Meridian Flow:**

The eight extra meridians, the Qi flow of which (notice that I have not said Qi flows, as there is only one flow of Qi throughout the different channel systems, it is just that at different times the Qi is activated at different parts of that flow at different times of the day. The flow in the eight extra meridians is active at all times. This is why these meridians are so important for good health. Many people dismiss these channels, concentrating only upon the main 12 channels. Balance is the singularly most important aspect of a healthy body mind and spirit and it is the job of these eight extra meridians to keep all three areas in a state of balance. These meridians bind the other 12 meridians, keeping them taught or relaxed as the situation arises. I like to liken these meridians to the carotid sinus which keeps the blood pressure at a constant level, so too do the 8 extra meridians keep the other meridians at a constant level.

### **The Body/Spirit Flow:**

The Body/Spirit flow is one of the most important flows of Qi in that this is where we keep the spirit of each organ healthy. That esoteric part other than simply muscle and tissue etc., that keeps the organ alive, I guess you could call it the God aspect of the organs. This flow travels through the whole body from ground to fingertips. It flows in from K 1 (ground) and

upwards through the thighs, the whole torso (there is no direct channel) and then joins the six main meridians of the hand (yin and yang) at either the upper chest or at the shoulders and flows directly out of the finger tips, and presumably joins with God? Hence the tingling sensation in the finger tips when one practises Taijiquan for instance. There is also a branch of this Qi travel that goes from CV 1 straight up the backbone and out of the top of the head. This flow is continuous, but can be impeded by tension in particular, not having enough sleep, over work etc.

You must not wear any electricity impeding shoes especially during this way of practise. Bare feet are best. You will also notice that they form it-self will speed up during the middle bits and slow down beginning and end, this is the natural flow of yin and yang. I believe it is better that people find out where their particular parts of the form begin to speed up and slow down rather than my trying to tell you.

Your tongue will feel particularly strange like as if it is empty at point of contact with your upper palate. Your hands must not touch any part of your body even in the postures where you must place your fist onto the side of your thigh.

This form is also particularly good for enhancing the flow of Qi through the internal organs because of the extra flow out of the finger tips, which should feel damp at the finish of practise, even to the point of dripping.

It is very difficult to explain the feeling one gets from this way of practise, it is sort of like not being there, or as one of my teachers said being awake but asleep.

### **The Practical Flow:**

Another flow is called the practical or working (doing work) flow of Qi. This flow begins directly at the tantien and flows upwards and joins the PC meridian to leave the body at PC 8 (Laogung). This flow of Qi can be exhausted and must be continually replaced in the tantien. This flow is the Qi that we use for work, like when we are healing someone and we wish to transfer Qi into someone else to help their ailing Qi supply, it comes from PC 8. Alternatively, when we wish to hurt someone, as in self-defence using the martial arts, the adverse Qi comes from PC 8 into the attacker, thus damaging his internal Qi flow. Things like Qigong will help to replenish this store of Qi. It is also replenished during sleep and only requires around two hours of good sleep to do this, but sadly more and more westerners in particular are only receiving mediocre sleep. In addition, when we only get mediocre (quality) sleep, we need more and more of it. A person who receives good quality regenerating sleep, only needs two hours of it each night, the rest is only there to rest the muscles and joints etc.

### **The Wei Qi Flow:**

The Wei Qi, is a flow of Qi that travels the surface of the body keeping it clear of external pathogens that will invade the body causing disease. This flow, like the 12 main meridian flow, can also be termed as a physical affecting flow. Many believe that this flow is there purely as a result of the magnetic fields set up by the 12 main meridian flow which is the strongest flow of Qi, hence its causing many magnetic fields from the flux it creates.

### **The Fa Jing Flow:**

The Fa Jing flow of Qi can also be regarded as a flow, although it only flows explosively when needed. I liken this flow to that of a steam iron where you have that little button that delivers a shot of steam. The other flows of Qi are happily flowing around through and from the tantien (the water container), and then you press the button delivering an explosive shot of steam. This flow comes directly from the tantien and is then drawn back into the body, if the correct method of fa jing is used. One can deplete one's body of main Qi if the fa jing is not done correctly so that it not only goes out, but also comes back in. This has to do with full and empty when one practises for instance one's Old Yang Taijiquan. When we use fa jing Qi in a self defence situation, in order not to become tired ourselves, we must also take back the Qi that is sent out into the attacker's body, so that we are continually rejuvenated by not only our own Qi but also that of the attacker. In other words, we rob the attacker of Qi making use of it for ourselves. We use one lot of Qi for many different types of attack, we do not stop the flow of Qi after the first attack, then build up another lot of Qi for the next attack etc., But rather we take one big lot of fa jing Qi and throw it into the attacker, this Qi does its work in adversely affecting the attacker's Qi, then comes back to us bringing with it some of his yang Qi, the Qi that he has used to attack us, but now it is softened by our own Qi. Therefore, we can use this Qi to build up our own reserves of fa jing Qi for further attack.

### **Awaking Qi:**

This flow of Qi runs from the front of the head to the back on the centre line and is different to the GV meridian part of the flow. This flow of Qi is responsible for either waking us up or putting us to sleep. In the martial arts we can use this flow, disrupting it by stroking it in the opposite direction when a person is awake, in order to upset their awaking Qi, thus in effect putting them to sleep. Practising your Taijiquan forms does not affect this flow in any way no matter how you do the form.

## **Life Force Qi Flow**

This is a flow of sort that never changes. It is situated in the tantien area and can be larger or smaller at given times. It is like a ball around which Qi flows in all different directions. From this, lines of Qi are sent out automatically to all parts of the body especially when the body needs some extra help. As we grow older and we dip into this pot of Qi, it becomes depleted and we die. There are many practises that advocate the replenishing of this Qi, but one would have to be a saint in order to do this. It is my belief that this is a natural occurrence and the cause of our dying of old age. We can prolong life to a certain degree by practising things like Taijiquan, yoga, meditation etc., but to prolong life indefinitely I believe is impossible. However, I m open to suggestion on this.

## **Enhancing The Different Flows Using Taijiquan:**

Please note: All of the above Qi flows can be enhanced or kept at their maximum by practising the different ways that we practise either the New Yang Style Taijiquan (Yang Cheng-fu) or the Old Yang Style (Yang Lu-ch an). However, it is only the Yang Lu ch'an's form in which we are able to enhance the fa jing Qi flow.

All of the ways that we perform our Taijiquan will enhance all of the eight flows of Qi to a certain degree (other than the fa jing flow), hence the fact that all Taijiquan is good for your health. However, certain ways of performing our Taijiquan will work better than other ways in enhancing certain flows of Qi. Therefore, I will present those different ways of performing the Taijiquan form that will greatly enhance certain flows.

## **To Enhance the Body/Spirit Flow:**

This is one of the major flows of Qi and can he enhanced by performing Taijiquan in the hands not moving way. This involves never closing your palms (as in a fist), leaving your palms open at all times during practise. This must of course only be performed once one has become sufficiently advanced at Taijiquan. In the beginning we must close the fist and bring the fingers together for instance in single whip . This form is performed at the medium pace or even a little quicker, however, this is not important as it can also be done quite slowly. The hands never touch, even in postures such as grasp swallow's tail they just brush by each other not quite touching. A fist is never made, nor are the fingers brought together for single whip. The palms hardly move at all, even in movements where there is presumably a palm strike, the wrist stays in line with the arm in the shape of the beautiful hand , or tile palm hand .

Practising in this way you will feel the most that you will feel during practise. Your fingers will be tingling at the end and your whole body will feel enervated.

You can also bring in to this practise the Backbone Shaking Method . I have experimented with this and although I was never taught to do it Yang Cheng-fu's form, it works quite well here. It is also important to hold the waist open a little more than normal, so the armpits are held open.

You must feel the full and empty parts of each posture and be in a total state of balance with each part of each movement in its correct place and in harmony with the body parts balance. I.e., head and tantien, knees and elbows, hips and shoulders, hands and feet. These are the eight things that must be in perfect balance in all Taijiquan practise.

### **Enhancing the Fa jing Flow:**

To enable one to use fa jing we simply perform the Yang Lu-ch'an's form at one of its more advanced levels. All levels will enhance fa jing, however, the upper levels of this form do more in developing fa jing than the beginner's forms. You can also perform the Pauchui form at its normal or advanced levels if you do fa jing movements during this practise.

### **Enhancing the 12 Main Meridian Flow:**

This flow is enhanced no matter what type of Taijiquan you are doing if it is correct of course. This flow is basic to life and health of the main internal organs. You must be doing Taijiquan with balanced movements and be sticking to the premise that all body parts must begin and end at the same time and where there is no weight change, there is no movement etc. No double weighted movements in hand or foot, no palms arriving at exactly the same time (at their point of attack).

### **Enhancing the Eight Extra Flow:**

This flow is enhanced no matter what Taijiquan way you are performing. However, this flow is enhanced by really concentrating upon sinking your Qi into the ground. This will happen subconsciously anyway, but make an even greater effort to do this and you will find something different happening.

You will, as I have done, learn increasingly about your Taijiquan and the different ways to perform it as you practise more. It will become so that you will have to rush back from practise and write it all down so that you do not forget what you have experienced each day. You will go through each different way of performing Taijiquan naturally when you are ready, then as you progress you will find that all the different ways will melt into each other so that all of the different internal Qi flows are enhanced simply by doing your Taijiquan. It is my belief that you must however, experience and feel the different ways and their effects before this total form is able to be practised. You will even come to the point where you are able to also enhance the fa jing flow by not doing physical fa jing, but rather have it happen internally. This is the kind of Qi transference that we look for when healing, it is fa jing, but on a healing level and not fighting.

## Taijiquan, The Vital Signs Taijiquan, The Vital Signs

How do you know when your training is finally beginning to reach an advanced level, or that some of the things that should happen with your training are actually happening. Dedicated students who wish to have some kind of sign as to their progress always ask me these questions.

Well, there are certain physical and internal signs that one is able to look for provided they are told about them. In just the same way that the body lets you know what it wants in the way of healing, provided that you are in tune with your body, Taijiquan lets you know how you are progressing by having certain physiological signs appear in or on your body. These signs begin the moment you begin your Taijiquan and Qigong training.

### **The Shakes**

The shakes will begin about 3 minutes into your first Qigong session. The reason for this is that the Qi is already trying to flow more freely and is finding resistance in the form of tension. During Qigong, the Qi needs to be at full strength or flow so that more Qi can flow freely to all parts of the body. The Qi 'springs' from the *bubbling well* point or 'K 1' (Kidney 1 point, the first point on the kidney meridian). But first of all, the Qi must flow downwards from tantien, an electrical point about 3 inches below the navel, to K 1 so that it can then flow to all parts of the body, healing as it goes. The Qi will flow downwards OK, but when it tries to move upwards from K 1, it encounters tension in the thigh muscles. So this Qi flow is like a wave hitting against a wall until so much Qi is built up that it MUST break through in big bits rather than an uninterrupted even flow, hence the shakes. Often when I have obviously strong men come to my classes and I ask them to stand in their first Qigong position, they often have a look of "come on, is this all there is to it". However, after only a few minutes they,



more than anyone else, are shaking like leaves in the breeze. They just cannot understand why, as they are so strong, they are unable to do this simple exercise. What they do not understand is that it has nothing to do with how strong their muscles are, but rather that their Qi flow is impeded because of their huge muscles and more-so, tension caused by exercising in the incorrect way.

After some time, around perhaps 4 to 6 weeks of training in the basic Qigong stance, the shakes lessen to a mild vibration and it becomes quite pleasant standing there. This is your best indication of an increased Qi flow and that finally something is beginning to happen. If you do not get the initial shakes, there is something wrong with your stance. Perhaps you have slowly stood up and not even noticed it, this is usually the problem. Everyone, no matter whom gets the shakes.

### **Pain:**

Pain is also an indication that either you are performing Qigong in correctly or that you are performing it correctly! Your instructor, if he or she knows, will instruct you as to why there is pain and correct the stance accordingly, or not correct the stance accordingly.

While in a Qigong stance, we are in the most natural position for the body to try to put itself back into alignment. You will find that bones will crack and pop just standing there. However, if bones and tendons are out of alignment and have been for some time, and tension is the cause, then this may take some time and there will be some slight pain when the body tries to get the bones back into position. So this pain is OK. All that your instructor has to do it to check that your stance is absolutely correct, then he will know that this is good pain. If however, there is pain and you are standing incorrectly, this is bad pain and must be corrected.

### **Heaviness**

Qi is heavy, or rather, it gives the feeling of heaviness as Qi does not have physical weight of course. When you have advanced enough in your training, you will notice that your arms feel heavy when you raise them, this is the first sign that something is happening. Slowly, your whole body will have that 'heavy' feeling causing you to feel as if you are moving in water or oil. The reason is that when your Qi is finally unblocked and a normal amount begins to flow again, it becomes a little more difficult to bend the joints because of this flow. It is not an unpleasant feeling however like for instance arthritis! It is more like a relaxed controlled feeling where the joints all move at the same pace with no jerky movements.

Your whole body will feel heavy especially when performing the form, you will feel your own weight under your feet and you will actually think about what is under your feet. A pleasant ‘sinking’ feeling will happen, joining you to the earth like as if you are putting down roots into the ground. And indeed you are, energy roots that is.

This ‘heaviness’ will enable you to do exactly what your mind tells your body to do without any imbalances, and although you feel heavy, you will be able to move quickly and lightly because of your increased mobility and control that you now have over your movements and balance.

### **Fingers Buzzing**

This is a sign that you are really getting somewhere and not simply entering old age! Your fingers and palms will begin to vibrate lightly at the end of each Yang movement, lie at the end of the posture known as “brush knee, twist step”. There will be this uncontrollable vibration of the hand that is doing the attacking movement. Do not however, TRY to do this, as it will just happen naturally. In addition, if you try to do it, it will be seen to be false and ‘put on’. This is a sign that the Qi is streaming out of your fingertips due to there being no tension in your arms and torso which causes blockages etc. Eventually, this vibration will extend into any weapons forms that you perform, depending of course upon the rigidity of the weapon. For instance, a hard stick will not have much vibration at the tip, but it will be there, whereas a sword will have a seeable amount of vibration at the tip.

### **Fingers Perspiring**

This is one of the areas where you can really see that you are finally getting somewhere. We are told in western medicine and science that the whole body perspires because of thermo-regulatory factors, but that the palms, fingers and soles of the feet do not perspire because of this reason. They perspire because of emotional reasons, hence the saying that “he has sweaty palms” etc. In the Chinese martial arts, we say that this occurs because of “internal reasons”. In other words, the Qi is circulating right down to the peripherals of the body, thus causing perspiration at the fingertips.

This will be more evident when you practise your form at the ‘lung’ time of between 3 am and 5 am. This is the time when the lungs kick in and the Qi is activated in that particular meridian to get us going for the day. The lungs are our power source and so at that time in the morning, we need a power kick to get us started. When we practise form at this time, the feeling is amazing with all of the things that we read about that should happen, happening. Moreover, the fingertips will perspire profusely.

I am getting into the habit of rising at around three am and practising my form at around 3.30 or 4 am. I go back to bed and to sleep afterwards and have had some of the most enjoyable sleeps during this time.

## **Qigong**

There is a certain way to perform the “four different palms” during three-circle Qigong. The palms are; the normal palms facing toward you (mother) yin, away from you, (father or yang), the daughter palm, facing downwards or ‘little yin’ and the son palm, facing towards each other with the thumbs pointing upwards or ‘little yang’.

The times for each of these palms are as follows. You perform the two major yang and yin palms exactly half of the total time spent with the palms in the upper position. You perform the two lesser yin and yang palms exactly half of the time that you would normally hold the palms in the lower position. Therefore, you would do the two major palms while standing in the upper hand position and the two lesser palms with the palms in the lower position.

## **The Correct Sequence of Learning Taijiquan**

When we first begin to learn Taijiquan, many expect instant miracles. Nevertheless, it takes time for Taijiquan even to begin to have any appreciable effect upon your immediate physical health and your mental health. The reason for this is that Taijiquan is indeed the supreme form of Qigong. However, it takes time for a new student to be doing Taijiquan as opposed to learning it. And there is a big difference.

When one learns Taijiquan, he or she is in complete physical and conscious mode. I.e., you will be thinking about every movement just trying to get the physical movement correct. This is not doing Taijiquan. It is said (by masters of past) that to think is to block the Qi. In fact, conscious thought is the same as physical tension and physical tension blocks or impedes the normal flow of Qi. This is why we are told that we must attain a state of sung while doing Taijiquan.

Sung is that state that one gets into just before sleep, not quite awake and not asleep. Some call this an alpha state. Alternatively, I like to express sung as being when we cannot feel the body moving (when doing Taijiquan). This state is difficult for the beginner (under at least six years training) to attain just learning Taijiquan alone. So, in order to gain the great benefits that this ultimate of all Qigongs has to offer while we are still learning it, we have basic or standing Qigong.

This form of Qigong will give you the benefits of Taijiquan at a basic level while you are still learning and not perhaps getting all you should from your practise as yet. Once you have attained a high level of Taijiquan practise and are able to perform the form without any conscious thought of where to put the hands and feet, how to step, where to step to etc, then you can begin to lessen the time spent doing basic standing Qigong. This should take anywhere from six to ten years and even now that I have been practising Taijiquan for over 30 years, I still perform my standing three circle basic Qigong daily. Not for so long nowadays, but I still feel that I need it in some small way.

The three circle basic standing Qigong is the Qigong that all beginners should begin with. No matter how difficult it may seem at first, you should simply stand there. When I first began my training, I was told nothing, just stood in the position and the master then walked out. I dare not move from this position as I was in the master's house. I did not know until later when I became one of his closest followers that he was watching from a secreted room upstairs to make sure that I did not move. If I had moved my arms down or had taken a break, he would not have taken me as his personal student, only one of the others.

You will get the shakes. This means that you are doing it correctly, it will feel like shit and you will perspire profusely, especially from the fingertips. Every time the master walks over to you, you will be praying that he now stops you from this torture, but he will not! Not at least until you have shown that you are worthy of such torture! In addition, that your Qi is activated so that you are not doing this for nothing. He might feel your fingers, or stroke your arm, or back. This is his way of seeing how your level of Qi is going. Only when it is sufficient and you are shaking like a leaf, will he motion you to stop. Then he sends you home!

Well, you all know that I am not such a taskmaster, and I feel for my students, however, every now and again, I will just test you out to see how your level of Qi is going.

### **Advanced Qigong**

There are many other Qigong methods that will only be given when the student has attained a high level of basic Qigong. The basic Qigong should be practised for at least three years before going on to the advanced Qigong, and only when the teacher is satisfied that the student is up to the more advanced methods. The reason for this is that these methods are not only physically more demanding but also can do you any damage if done incorrectly, whereas the basic Qigong cannot harm you in any way, unless it is done very incorrectly. The advanced Qigongs usually involve the one legged stances so it is important to have an instructor who knows what to look for in order to not cause any harm.

## **Push Hands**

It was customary for the beginning student not to begin push hands before he or she had reached the end of the form training. However, I now believe that it is beneficial for one's training to begin learning push hands at the end of the first third of the form, so that the push hands will form a backdrop for your form training. In this way, your push hands will enhance your form and visa-versa. Only the beginning student should try the basic single push hands, as there is no value in going on to any of the advanced methods too soon. Advanced push hands, either single or double should only be learnt and practised after the student has reached a high enough level in his or her form practise.

In the beginning, we train in push hands at a purely physical level to attain a high degree of upper body tone. Remember, that the old masters and students in China had already good body tone from working hard in the fields from early morning, whereas we in the west tend not to. It is the push hands at the physical level that gives us this level of body tone which then enables us to go on to the more sensitive levels or listening with the skin. Again, one should stick with basic single push hands for as long as it takes, and not go on too soon as to do so would keep you in the realms of the physical for ever more, never entering the wonderful world of the internal.

## **Small San-Sau**

This wonderful exercise should be learnt after one has learnt the physical movements of the third third of the Yang Cheng-fu form. This exercise is one of the best that I know of for developing what is known as fa jing, the motor of dim-mak. Small san-sau teaches us many of the prerequisites of any internal martial art such as timing, balance, and power. The timing allows us to not think about where to strike, it just happens when it needs to happen for any given self-defence moment. Balance is what we get physically as well as internally. Without balance, we would never be able to defend ourselves physically and without internal balance, we would never be able to defend ourselves against pathogenic attack. Without real power, we would have to rely upon huge muscles where the strongest physical person wins. With internal power, it does not matter how small one is as we rely upon an internal power generated from the tantien through the practise of Taijiquan.

As one's small san-sau level increases so too does one's Taijiquan level and so on.

## **The Old Yang Style Of Yang Lu-ch'an**

It is at this stage that one begins one's training in the Old Yang Style. This is the first Yang style of Taijiquan invented by Yang Lu-ch'an. Originally, it took around 6 years just to learn the physical part of this form, then further time to take it internally. Now, when one learns the Yang Cheng-fu form, it takes around two to 3 years to learn the physical movements of both forms. Yang Cheng-fu (the first form that one learns) changed his father's form so that all could take the great benefits from Taijiquan and not lose the original essence. Unfortunately, others took it upon themselves to change this form even more, thus losing the essence of Taijiquan.

Once one has begun learning this form, it is also time to begin double push hands, which takes you even further into the prerequisites of internal martial arts.

### **Large San-Sau**

This form done as a solo exercise as well as a two person set it is pinnacle of the training methods from Taijiquan. It teaches us at a basic level, how to deal with physical attacks from all kinds of directions and with all kinds of weapons. At its most advanced level, this form is the greatest of all for learning about life and how to deal with any confrontation. It will give you total balance as well as total timing and power.

This exercise should be given when one is through learning the Yang Lu-ch'an form and knows it physically well without having to think about the movements.

### **Da-Lu (The Great Repulse**

This exercise is the greatest for teaching us about the Four Corners. Whereas push hands teaches us about the four major directions, this teaches us about the corner directions and how to defend against attacks from these directions.

This exercise should be taught when one has reached an acceptable level of physical double push hands.\

## **Qi Disruption**

I was once of the opinion that it is important to have at least studied the Yang Cheng-fu form before embarking on learning these original internal martial arts forms of which there are nine.

Of course, the beginner will never understand what there are about especially the fa jing part and the advanced Qigong that one must know. Nevertheless, at a purely physical level, these forms will enhance one's training in general and to a certain degree one's health when done at a basic level. ONLY at a basic level. The more advanced methods of these forms should NEVER be attempted for at least 6 years.

These are the original forms from whence all other internal systems came. You cannot get any more original than these. You can see elements of all three major internal styles within these nine brief but very complicated katas or forms.

## **Baguazhang (Pa-Kua-Chang)**

Baguazhang or bagwa as it is called is my second internal art. It is said, in China, that a student is only ever able to study two of the internal arts. Most usually, study Taijiquan and either Baguazhang or h'sin-i ch'uan. It is said that it is just too difficult to study all three internal arts and take them to their internal levels. Sure, anyone who is good at copying movement is able to learn all of the physical movements of all three. However, it is 'only the fool' who believes that he is able to really study all three and learn the intricacies of the internal parts of all three. There was a time in my youth when I romanced learning all three, but now I am so glad that I did not as I have found that it takes a lifetime of hard work to understand only two. In addition, as I have only been studying for half a lifetime, I too am not there yet! However, I do know something of Taijiquan and Baguazhang so I have presented these two arts in as much detail as possible in this brief introduction volume. I have a very good friend and one of the leading and most innovative H'sin-I experts in the world, Robin Whitewood who will be presenting the H'sin-I part of this volume.

## Chapter Two

### Introduction to Baguazhang

People, especially those, who practice the martial arts, are always looking for miracles, or some supernatural feats of strength. They revere masters of their arts, kow-tow to them, spend huge amounts of money on them, put them up in palatial mansions when they visit. The miracles are all around you, you are a miracle. Even when I was a young child, I would ask myself, when looking at some animal, or water, or anything, “why” and “how”. So what if some master is able to push you with one hand, seeming to have such great power, all this becomes so puny when we look at ‘life’ itself. How do we walk? How do we exist? We know the technical things responsible for life, like the fact that we are able to turn food, air and water into energy, but why? How does this make us move? No one knows this; it is an absolute miracle. It is like not being able to see the wood for the trees. We are surrounded by miracles and we keep looking for them. Feel some water! How can one not be amazed at this substance? And we pollute it, we use it more than any other substance on earth, we take it for granted. How does water exist? It is a miracle. What makes a person move? How do we move? We are able to understand an internal combustion engine, but we just move!

We have enough miracles all around us without trying to search for new ones.

Baguazhang , or Pa-Kua Chang, 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 Buddhism or Taoism fighting arts. Its 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 Baguazhang form or kata. Invented by one man, 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 co-ordinated in legs, waist and upper body. Bagwa is said to have the fastest footwork of any martial art.

Throughout this book, I will be making mention of “dim-mak” or death point striking and some points used in this art. Baguazhang is a dim-mak art. I have many self-teaching video programs devoted to dim-mak and an encyclopaedia set on the subject.

Dim-Mak literally means “Death Point Striking” whereby the practitioner is taught to strike to either one, or multiples of dim-mak points in the human body. These strikes will cause effects that range from a simple knock out to maiming and death, or even effects that manifest many years from when the strike was felt.

Every movement in Baguazhang has a meaning and is aimed at the dim-mak points. Bagwa is often referred to as “the art of overkill”.

## 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.

The second method is mainly for smaller people. From the very basics of the eight palm changes or Bagwa Cheng Chung, (Orthodox Eight Diagram), the practitioner is able to go on to the highest level of Bagwa 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, having got there by using the unique Bagwa stepping method. This method is mainly for smaller people who do not have the physical strength of the larger person and particular attention must be given to training the waist to gain more power and flexibility as this is where almost all of the power for Bagwa 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:

Although Baguazhang is not as sophisticated as its mother art of Taijiquan, it is one of the greatest healing arts. The healing side of bagwa is not as well documented as Taijiquan. But if we look at the relative ages of when the old bagwa masters died, (excluding those who died in battles etc.,) then we get an idea of how good this form is for health as most of them lived to very old and healthy ages.

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. Bagwa is closely related to acupuncture whereby one is constantly twisting the acupuncture meridians to work upon each organ in turn thereby sending life giving Qi (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 which is inter-woven and co-ordinated with each other.

### **This is how the 'Dragon Form' was given its name.**

Blocking is always done in a circular manner thus minimising the attacker's power and at the same time always on the move, into the centre. Never is an attack met full on using brute force. The waist generates the movement 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 and 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, and then the next step is begun. In this way the feet are able to 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 Bagwa 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 thus keeping the centrifugal force at a minimum, we are able to keep the centre still 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 attacker.

Baguazhang is a 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.

## History

The true history of Baguazhang is vague. This is due to a person called Tung Hai Ch'uan (1796-1880) who was wary of telling anyone about his martial art's origins. Some people, including I believe that it was Tung himself who founded the internal system known as Baguazhang but was afraid to tell anyone of his 'invention' for fear of losing face. It was and always has been popular to tell people that one's art has been learnt from some ancient monk on top of some mystical mountain and that the art is thousands of years old rather than admitting that it was invented by oneself.

Tung Hai Ch'uan lived in Wen An district in Ho Pei Province about three centuries ago during the beginning of the Ching dynasty. The style came to be noticed in Beijing when a eunuch, Tung Hai Ch'uan, gave demonstrations (of the art) to the court of the imperial prince where he lived. At one time, the Prince held a very large banquet for many guests causing the lesser-experienced waiters not to cope too well. The Prince and other high officials noticed the young eunuch, Tung bobbing and weaving in and out like a butterfly. Tung was asked why he was so nimble and it was found that he was a practitioner of wushu, or war arts. Tung was then asked to demonstrate his art and the ensuing exposition thrilled the court no end. When asked what style of wushu he was practising, Tung would always say that it was a combination of the very best of the Shaolin, (a place in China translated as 'The Little Forest' where a very famous temple once existed. The monks of this temple were taught the original Chinese martial arts all grouped together and called 'Shaolin Temple Boxing'), and the Wudang (named after a sacred mountain in China, Wudang Shan where the internal martial arts were said to have emanated) or Buddhism and Taoist martial arts.

## TUNG THE FUGITIVE

Many people believe that Tung Hai Ch'uan was a fugitive from the law, which is the reason for his not telling from whom he learnt his art. It is told that Tung escaped being captured by seeking refuge in the Buddhist monastery. Because of his inherent nature, he soon breached the rules of sexual abstinence and was asked to leave. He

then performed his own operation (or so we're expected to believe), of cutting out the old crown jewels causing him to become an eunuch so that he could lose himself in the court as said eunuch. I think I would have preferred capture! Some sources say that Tung learnt the art from Pi Teng-Hsia.

Tung was apparently once heard to say to a master swordsman called Tsung Wei-I that his teacher and Tsung's teacher were fellow students and that teacher was Pi Teng-Hsia.

Another master called Jen Chi-cheng believed that Tung learnt the art from Tung Meng-Lin as Jen's teacher also learnt from him and there was a great similarity in the two arts. Tung died in the sixth year of the Emperor Kwong Hsu at the age of 84 and was buried a mile from the East gate of Beijing.

Tung's disciples spread the art. 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 Baguazhang 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 almost to kill another human being to gain students then he would rather not. He disappeared for many years preferring to refine his art. He wrote four books on Taiji, Pa-Kua, and H'sing-I and one called "The Esoteric Way Of The Martial Arts". Until now no-one has been able to translate because Tung tried to put onto paper what his inner mind knew about martial arts and of course only he knew what he was trying to say.

Yin Fu (1842-1911) was another of Tung's students. Tung only accepted him after many months of Yin Fu trying to sell him cakes! Yin Fu popularised the style of Bagwa known as 'Ox Tongue Palm'. He was also the first to use the 64 palm changes, as we know them today.

Fu Chen-sung either learned the art from Sun Luc-Tang or from Cheng Ting-Hwa. Sun's daughter, Sun Jianyun is now very old (1997) and still gives demonstrations of her father's Sun style taiji and Baguazhang .

Chang Chao-tung learned the art from Tung Hai-Ch'uan and passed it on to Chiang Jung-chiao (1890-?). Chiang Jung-chiao taught Master Ho Ho-choy and that is where my lineage comes from.

Chang Chao-tang was the first to formulate a formal long circular form that flowed from one movement to the next until the whole eight palm changes were performed. Before this as with Sun Luc-Tang we only had separate palm manoeuvres plus the twelve animal forms.

Nowadays we have three forms of Baguazhang . The Animal forms, the Original Form (taught by Chiang Jung Chiao) and the 'Body Swimming For' which is the Chinese Government style taught in the wushu colleges and performed in the many tournaments each year in China. The style that is presented in this book is the 'Original Form' of Chiang Jung-chiao.

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. 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.

## Baguazhang the Future.

With the way that the Chinese government is 'formulating' all of its wushu it's anyone's guess as to what the future is for Baguazhang .

The internal styles are internal because one 'owns' the style. It is not a case of taking some movements and then putting those movements onto one's body. It is 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 do not say that you must use this or that technique. You must simply react with whatever technique or 'non-technique' that your subconscious mind says to use. 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 practising master of the martial arts himself.

## The Healing Benefits of Baguazhang.

The great benefits to health are not as well documented as they are for the mother art of T'ai chi ch'uan but none the less, Bagwa does have great benefits. If we look at the documented ages of many of the Bagwa masters, we have a good indication of the healing benefits of the art.

All of the internal systems of martial art all work in the same way where healing is concerned. They all work upon the acupuncture meridians sending life giving Qi or life force to all of the internal organs. This Qi is an electrical energy that literally holds our very cells together. Qi, it is said, is used in the healing arts as well as in the martial arts but beware! For as long as the martial arts have existed, man has been claiming supernatural feats in the name of Qi, things that defy the laws of nature. Like being able to catch a raindrop and hold it intact! Alternatively, being able to ward off a spear attack to the neck. All of these 'games' are purely circus tricks and should not be taken seriously.

However, Qi is able to help one in the three main areas of martial arts, that of timing, co-ordination and balance and that's a great help in itself. The Qi mends one's body and mind. In doing so simply makes one stronger and able to use one's body to its greatest use, utilising all of one's muscular power rather than just the outer extremities of muscle. We gain relaxation through the practice of Baguazhang , another major pre-requisite for any martial art.

Each movement in the Bagwa form causes the Qi to be routed along a particular organ and thus healing that organ associated with that movement.

The internal arts also work as preventative medicine in that if you have some disease which is in the very early stages then the art tends to bring that disease out in to the open so that we know it's there. For instance, a normal looking businessman came into my school because he had heard that these arts might help him to feel better. I placed this person in the normal standing Qigong stance and told him how to breathe, then left him to it. About five minutes later he



Photo number 41



Photo number 42

had fainted and had turned bright yellow indicating some liver ailment. I suggested that he go to the doctor. Having done that, he was diagnosed as having the very beginning stages of liver cancer. Luckily, they were able to save him as it was discovered so soon.

Everyone who comes to a Bagwa class is not that seriously out of good health but we all of us, through twentieth century living have some small things wrong with us and these can be helped if not cured altogether with Bagwa. Your ailments are literally twisted away, every acupuncture meridian is gently twisted as is every joint, muscle and tendon. The whole body has a thorough work out with no real stress being placed upon the system.

Being a little more rigorous than the modern forms of T'ai chi, the whole body is given an aerobic work out. The fast or linear form of Bagwa is probably the longest of all of the martial arts forms or katas. Combine this with the circular form and you have quite a formidable exercise where at the finish you are not tired but feel greatly enlivened.

Each of the postures from Bagwa treats a particular organ and so if we take some of these postures out of context, we are able to treat certain organs sooner and with greater effect. For instance, the posture of 'Duck lands on water' (**Photo No. 41**), works on the kidneys, or 'Transfer Flower Connect to Wood' (**Photo No. 42**), works upon the stomach meridian.

It is important when a teacher is trying to heal a certain organ that he or she 'knows' his student, as different postures are able to take out much poison from the system and one must know when to stop the therapy. One particular posture when used as Qigong could very well heal the kidneys but it could also have an adverse effect upon the liver etc. If when you start to practice Bagwa and feel a little ill, then stop and wait a while before continuing, to allow whatever it is that is making you feel ill to take its course.

Bagwa is able to enhance your whole life and only takes a few minutes each morning to perform. It is indeed one of the treasures from China.

## Explanation of the Forms.

One's Bagwa training consists of eight different Bagwa manoeuvres which correspond to the eight trigrams of the I-Ching.

It would take a whole book to expound upon the I-Ching so here I will only say that the I-ching is the 'Chinese Book of Changes' which contains a whole lot of good information for good living and good life management. It is also used as an oracle which is based upon building up a set of six lines by either throwing a succession of yarrow stalks or by using the simpler method of throwing three coins and building up the lines that way. How the lines are built can predict things to come or things to do in order to cause things to happen etc. A very good book on the I-ching is by Lee Jung-Young called "I-CHING AND MODERN MAN". The I-ching represents the Universe and all of the changes that can take place in this Universe. Bagwa uses those same changes in its palm changes. There are eight palm changes and when doubled make for 64 palm changes. The I-ching has 8 trigrams and 64 hexagrams.

## Walking the Circle

By walking the circle and performing the 64 changes we bring us a little closer to the Universe and eventually build up an internal energy called Qi. This Qi is to us as the water is to fish. The fish do not actually know that they are living in water until they are taken out of it and life becomes quite difficult. Similarly, if we are deprived of Qi, then life also becomes very difficult for us until we eventually die. The walking is the most important part of one's training and the learning of the form is only to enhance our walking and not the reciprocal.

The Qi can be used for the healing or for the fighting art and its acquisition is the same for both arts. When we learn Bagwa, we learn both fighting and healing.

## The Baguazhang Circular Form.

In the same way that T'ai Chi has its form or kata so too does Bagwa. Unlike T'ai Chi though, this form is performed while walking around the perimeter of a circle and we learn to relate our own centre to the centre of that circle. In this way, we learn to know where our own centre is and more importantly, where the opponent's centre is. We are able to move our centre to avoid being trapped and to make life very difficult for the would-be attacker by not allowing his cen-



tre to escape. One of the most famous training methods in China was to fill an oak barrel with water and then to climb onto this barrel and walk around the rim at the top.

Each day the equivalent of a tablespoon full of water was removed until eventually there was no water in the barrel. The barrel did not tip over however as by that time the centre of gravity was co-ordinated with the centre of the barrel, something like a gyroscope.

By doing the Bagwa form we learn to keep our own centre and not allow daily stresses to upset our centre. We allow the stress to move around the centre rather than meeting it head on.

The mind is kept on an electrical point about three inches below the navel and in the centre of the body called the 'tan tien' (dantian) situated on a point called CV 4 (Conceptor Vessel No. 5), another name for this point is Guanyuan, or 'Gate of Origin'. This concentration of Qi is all important because some of the more difficult postures just do not work unless we are able to have a psychic balance as well as a physical balance.

## Look at the Palm

By looking at the palm that is doing the work for most of the time, (there are exceptions), we are able to bring the Qi right into that palm. We do not look past the palm as in Taiji but right at it, we actually focus on the palm. This peculiar aspect of training is only when we practice the form though and not while fighting.

## Inside & Outside Turns

Once the walking has been achieved with an amount of stability, we go on and learn the 'inside and outside turns'. In Bagwa we never back off from an attack but rather turn to face the opponent. One always assumes that there is more than one attacker and hence the forms may seem a little strange. The direction changes involve swivelling upon the heels to face the other direction and if the balance is not there, then this turning can be very difficult.

## The Form



Photo number 43



Photo number 44

The Bagwa form consists of eight different parts with 64 palm changes being executed. All of the animal forms are dealt with in the classical form but three of them are only dealt with briefly.

While practising the form, there is no thought of martial application, although the postures are quite martial and can have an application placed upon them. The form is there to cause our body to move in a certain way, twisting and turning, loosening up and becoming strong. If we are able to perform these strange, often difficult movements, then the more natural ones become easy. The applications are learnt later in the linear or fighting form.

While practising the form, one should pay particular attention to the names of the postures as these give the attitude in performing them. For instance, the posture of 'Flower Hides Under Leaf', (**Photo No. 43**), is performed quite gently in keeping with its name, while the posture of 'Flock of Wild Geese Bursts Out' (**Photo No. 44**), is done with much energy in a gently flowing motion.

The form is practised quite slowly at first, paying attention to intent, attitude and balance. In the famous karate book by Richard Kim, he stated that it was his Bagwa training that gave him his tremendous balance. After some time, the form speeds up and the circle becomes smaller until the inside palm does not move but only rotates.

## Baguazhang Push Hands

There are two types of push hands from Bagwa. The first is not unlike the Taiji push hands but is somewhat less in application, so I tend to give my students the more advanced Taiji push hands regardless of whether they practice Bagwa or not.

The second type of push hands is more like a controlled sparring match and is an excellent way to introduce beginners to fighting. The two players walk the circle with wrists lightly touching. All of the regular attacks can be executed and defended against from this position.

This is probably the most important part in learning Bagwa as a self defence art.

## Self Defence & the Martial Art Are Not the Same

So far, I have referred to Bagwa not only as a martial art but also as a self defence art. The reason for this is that, just that someone learns a martial art does not mean that that person is able to defend him/herself or use it to fight. The martial art should only be used as a tool to gain certain things for either good health or peace of mind or as a tool to help us to defend ourselves. Once we have learned the martial art we then have to learn how to use it to fight out there in the mean streets and that's a whole lot different than fighting in the dawgwan or dojo. In order to train us in street fighting, Bagwa has certain 'training methods' built in to achieve this goal. They are the techniques to gain no technique and only when one has gained the 'no technique' standard will he or she be able to say that he knows how to use the art for self defence.

The martial art teaches us how to kick or punch but all of the bag training in the world will not teach us when to kick or punch.

This crucial timing is only gained through the specific training methods and from experience. I would rate timing as the one most important aspect of anyone's fighting training. Not necessarily of their martial arts training but for street fighting, your life can depend upon your timing.

## What the Masters Say (The Classics)

Although we are not left with much to go on in the way of documented drawings of the postures, we are left with some of the classic sayings by some of the greatest Baguazhang masters. This is all we have to lead us through what is generally a maze of evolved information. From the classics, we are able to see somewhat right back into time and know what the old masters were thinking when they invented these arts.

These classics were written sometimes in ancient Chinese. So often, the translation into English leaves something to be desired. For the most part though, they are well straight forward and they do give us a flavour of what Bagwa is supposed to be all about. Unlike Taiji, Bagwa has only a few diagrams left to us by Sun Luc-tang. The forms as we know them have been handed down through the generations and all we have is the spoken word and movement of body leaving us with only the classics to go by, thus allow us to find the right path to Baguazhang .

Where it is necessary, I have added a commentary on the below classics. Some of them are self explanatory, but others are not.

## Sun Luc-tang's Eight Essentials

- 1/. The waist lifts up so that the coccyx lifts to join the 'Du Mei' (An important acupuncture meridian of the eight extra family which runs up the back bone and over the head to the roof of the mouth from the coccyx).
- 2/. Hollow the chest so that the 'yin Qi' descends the 'Ren Mei', (an extra acupuncture meridian that runs from the back of the tongue to the coccyx or 'CV 1' point between the anus and the sex organs).
- 3/. The rectum is lifted internally and the tongue touches the hard palate just above the top tooth line on the hard ridge so as to join the Du Mei with the Ren Mei.
- 4/. The elbows fold inward as if holding a tray overhead.
- 5/. Relax the shoulders with no protuberances.
- 6/. When the hands turn over from palm up to palm down, leave the elbows down. I.e.; The palms scoop leaving the elbows stationary.
- 7/. The shoulders contract inward. IE. the clavicle is poking out.
- 8/. Distinguish clearly between; rise, fall, drill and overturn, they should be connected without breaks.

## Sun Luc-tang's Four Virtues

- 1/. The whole body should flow like the great river. The hands and the feet should extend naturally relaxed.
- 2/. The Qi should be gathered internally with no internal tension.
- 3/. The Qi is centred without shifting.
- 4/. Allow the post and pre-natal breath to be mixed together and use the correct breath.

## Sun Luc-tang's Eight Abilities

- 1/. Pulling or throwing down. (Self explanatory)
- 2/. To block without holding. (To block and stick to rather than to hold on to. This allows for more flexibility in one's next move).
- 3/. To intercept and to catch. (To intercept the oncoming attack and to catch it in order to use a locking device).
- 4/. Locking. (Self explanatory; used in conjunction with No. 3)
- 5/. Pushing. (To push and be able to knock someone out with the push requires great technique).
- 6/. Lifting up. (Either lifting up the peripheral that is attacking or lifting up the whole body, the technique is the same.).
- 7/. Pull back. (Take his arm off with pull back, a sharp jerking motion, which at the very least will put the neck out.).
- 8/. Leading with a shaking movement to upset the balance. (Shaking, a most important technique from the internal arts. Not just a shake of the palm or arm but a shake that comes from the whole body. The opponent finds that he is trying to hold onto the weight of your whole body shaking)

## Sun Luc-tang's Three Harmful Things

- 1/. Forcing the breath. When the breath is forced unnaturally, it will cause a Qi blockage. However, if the breath is forceful as opposed to 'being forced' as in the natural fa-jing explosive movements inherent in Bagwa, this is OK.
- 2/. Using strength derived from the bones and not the sinews. Means using the strength issued from the muscles moving the bones only and not from the Qi going into the sinews. When we issue power using the whole body, the Qi is strong. When we use only muscular strength, the Qi is weak.
- 3/. Arching the chest backwards.

## The Classics of Chiang Jung-chiao

- 1/. Straighten the neck, lift the crown, tuck in the buttocks and hold the anus sphincter lightly closed.

Do not look up or down. Do not lean right or left. When the head lifts, the chin should tuck in. The buttocks contract inward. The tail bone does not stick out the width of even one hair.

- 2/. Relax the shoulders, sink the elbows, strengthen the belly and open the chest:

When practising, the shoulders should not be lifted. The elbows embrace and are bent into the half moon shape.

The abdomen is the place for the nurturing of the Qi. You must allow inhalation and exhalation to move deep within, right down to the abdomen. This will make the abdomen completely filled with the pulsating Qi. Thus, there is a common saying, “When the Qi sinks to the abdomen internally there is a vibration”.

If the chest is pushed up and out it will affect the breath, however if the chest is held in, it will obstruct the flow of blood. So simply, relax and open the chest do not lift or depress it.

- 3/. Rolling, drilling, pressing and wrapping. Opposite forces, the hidden and the obvious, the internal and the external arise together:

All of this refers to the different kinds of energy that one encounters during practice. Rolling is the circular coiling of an arm as in the No. 8 palm. Drilling is both circular and spiralling forward as in the No. 3 (straight palm) change. Pressing means pressing apart and wrapping means to embrace within.

These four types of movement contract the muscles to generate strength. They are completely circular without linear aspects. However, for the strength to be at its greatest, there must be some internal contradiction.

Within rolling there must be drilling, two contrary types of energy. The forward moving and the outward moving are brought together. This is to move like a propeller or screw. There must also be wrapping within pressing. Here there is resistance between contraction and expansion. The energy for Bagwa comes from natural opposition of these forces, like when I was a mere lad we used to ride around on old B.S.A. Bantams with around a 70c.c. engine. In order

to get up the steep hills we had to put our foot on the rear heel in order to gain more torque. It is the same in Bagwa; we use opposing forces to gain torque.

- 4/. Dragon form, monkey appearance, tiger sitting, eagle overturning:

This refers to four important points in one's practice. Walking, looking, sitting and overturning.

The stepping should be flowing, circular with out a break like water flowing. Then you will look like the wandering dragon and our posture will be stable.

When circling or changing the palms the eyes should always pay attention to the palm. Hand and eye follow each other. The gaze manifests the inner spirit of the sprightly monkey, either as he is startled or as he takes his food. The monkey's spirit is told in his eyes.

While circling or changing the palms, the legs never straighten completely. Make sure that you "sit the kua". This type of squatting will make you look like a tiger ready to pounce. In your sinking, you will have strength.

When you turn the body, have the swift attitude of the eagle as it circles and spirals through the void as it overturns and gracefully descends to attack.

- 5/. Twist in a spiral as you circle, press the foot and scrape the calves:

This refers to the waist and the peculiar movements of the feet when circling. The waist should twist, i.e.; the hips should be positioned so that they are pointing along the circumference of the circle while the waist should turn slightly in towards the centre making the shoulders twist in to the centre. The elbows should twist:

As if the inner palm is expanding while the outer palm is contracting. (Inner and outer with reference to the centre). The neck should twist:

It is turned inward so that there is a straight line between the nose and the inner forefinger.

- 6/. The palms should twist:

The palms are turned outward slightly and not with the fingers pointing straight upward. The torque from all of this twisting should give one this spiralling energy. The front foot should advance

slightly just before the next step as if slipping on the mud or ice with no weight placed onto it until the other one steps. This causes the step to be widened slightly just before each step. The rear foot should have a pressing energy, to give the power of the step. As you take the step, the shin bones should gently rub as the one foot passes the other. Do not lift the feet too high or too wide. Try to lift the rear foot to step without taking the heel off the ground and place it in the same way with the toes and heel touching together. The feet should be as if the toes are clutching the ground, slightly concave.

- 7/. Bend the legs, treading mud step:

The toes are arched and the front foot slips forward as you step. See No. 5 also.

- 8/. Lift the foot levelly; let it fall as if locking onto the ground:

Your crosswise stepping should be continuous. The idea does not break, the energy does not break, and the movement does not break. All is connected by one Qi.

- 9/. The waist is the axle; the hands are like the revolving wheel:

In Baguazhang, the waist is the axis for all movement. For the hands to move the body must move first. For the body to move, the waist must move first. While changing the palms, the hand turns like a wheel. Your movement will thus be agile and continuous.

- 10/. The fingers are separated:

The palm is concave. The forearm is fixed forward towards the centre, the shoulders are level.

- 11/. Rooted like the mountains and hills; steps like water:

Rootedness refers to the tranquil nature of the movements. You should be firm and stable like a mountain. No force can push you away. Your stepping is lively and quick like flowing water. In pa-kua, your stepping should be neither heavy nor inert or floating and wild.

- 12/. Fire above, water below:

Fire is light, water is heavy. The heart belongs to fire. The kidneys belong to water. Make the belly substantial and the chest light.



- 13/. The intention is like a waving flag or a bright light:

In ancient times, the banner and the light of the lamp guided the troops. Similarly in Bagwa, the mind guides the movements.

- 14/. The abdomen is the root of the Qi.

The chi is like floating clouds. The breath should move slowly, do not force it.

- 15/. The attention is clear and alert:

Qi moves through every pore.

- 16/. Whether opening and discharging or closing and contracting, the movement and tranquillity should compliment each other.

- 17/. Spirit, breath intention and force. (Shen, Qi, I, Li)

Are harmoniously co-ordinated. The hands and feet are in harmony, the shoulders and the kua are in harmony, and the elbows and the knees are in harmony. The spirit and intention are in harmony, inner and outer are in harmony. The true principles of Baguazhang are in the above. For those who search them out, the world is yours. Here I (Chiang Jung-Chiao) have elucidated the real art and principles of the real art. If you do not follow them, you will only learn an empty shell.

## Other Classics by Unknown Writers:

Move like the dragon; turn like the monkey, change forms like the eagle. Imagine being hung from the sky, this is the key to speed. The postures are like snowflakes. In the beginning, make the postures empty, the mind empty and tranquil, walk a large circle at first with small accurate steps. After a while you will naturally move faster. The eyes look over the index finger, hands in tiger mouth form.

## The Eight Palms & Their Meaning

The eight separate palms are the most important part of one's training apart from the actual walking. These palms can be used as Qigong stances to heal certain organs as each palm is associated with a different organ or group of organs.

Unlike T'ai chi, the palm is held with a slightly tense feel.



Photo number 45

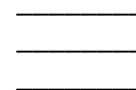
The fingers are separated and the palm is slightly concave to resemble a dragon's palm. The forearm has a small amount of inner tension but not so much that the muscles of the forearm are like iron. You should hold both of your palms by your side and stand with slightly bent knees; the toes are tucked under. The back is straight with the chin tucked in while the tongue is placed onto the hard palate. The breathing is deep but not forced. Do not breathe with the chest but rather the lower abdomen. As the palm is pushed outward, imagine that your breath is moving out along the arms and out of the palms. On the in breath do the opposite. Hold each of the postures for five minutes or if you are unable to do this because of sickness or just plain old out of condition, at least perform each palm's Qigong for the same amount of time. See **(Photo No. 45)** for the 'Dragon Palm'. The fingers are held in this position for all of the palm positions.



Photo number 46

**No. ONE PALM:**

Means heaven and has the physical ability to heal the head. Its trigram from the I-Ching is:



The palm faces up as in **(Photo No. 46)**.

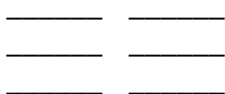
Each of the palms has a break from a wrist grab. No. 1 palm breaks a grab from the opposite arm of an attacker and pokes straight towards his eyes as in **(Photo No. 47)**. Note that the particular Bagwa dragon palm must be kept in order for these breaks to work against very strong holds. The instant that the attacker grabs your hand, you must execute the technique not giving him a chance to think about what is happening to him. Not many people expect these peculiar Bagwa types of breaks. This break could be followed by attacking with the elbow as in **(Photo No. 48)**.



Photo number 47

**No. TWO PALM:**

Means earth and has the physical ability to heal the mid-abdomen and all organs in that region. Its trigram is:



The palm faces down as in **(Photo No. 49)**. The number two palm breaks an opposite hold as



Photo number 48



Photo number 49



Photo number 50



Photo number 51



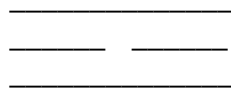
Photo number 52

well only this time the attacker grabs your arm from below. You still thrust your palm straight towards his eyes as in **(Photo No. 50)**. This could be followed up with an elbow to the side of the head or face, either to a deadly dim-mak point called GB 3 (temple) or to a point called ST 5. **(Photo No. 51)**.



Photo number 53

**No. THREE PALM:**



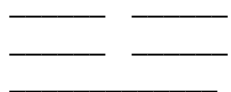
This is the main fighting palm from the Bagwa form and represents fire with the ability to heal the eyes. Its trigram is:

The palm faces outward as in **(Photo No. 52)**. This palm breaks an opposite hand grab by opening up around the attacker's wrist as in **(Photo No. 53)**. Then with your centre in line with your wrist, you turn the body away from the attacker thus twisting his wrist in the direction of most pain laterally. A back fist could follow this to the face. **(Photo No. 54)**.



Photo number 54

**No. Four Palm**



This palm represents 'thunder' and has the ability to heal the left side of the abdomen and all organs associated with that area. Its trigram is:

See **(Photo No. 55)**. No. four palm breaks an opposite palm grab by simply turning one's centre in to the palm and turning the body



Photo number 55



Photo number 56



Photo number 57

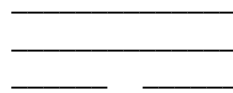


Photo number 58



Photo number 59

away, thus breaking against the thumb. See (**Photo No. 56**). This could be followed with a back palm strike to the lower abdomen area to dim-mak point GB 24, while controlling the attacker's arm. (**Photo No. 57**).



**PALM NO. FIVE:**

This palm represents the wind and has the ability to heal the first seven vertebra. Its trigram is:

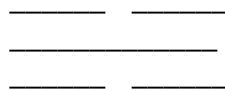
See (**Photo No. 58**). No. 5 breaks a same hand grab by turning the palm as in (**Photo No. 59**), and then thrusting the fingers towards the heart. This could be followed with a single pounding palm to the chest while the previously trapped palm controls the attacker's arm. (**Photo No. 60**).



Photo number 60

**PALM NO. SIX:**

This palm represents water and has the ability to heal the kidneys. Its trigram is:



See (**Photo No. 61**).

No. 6 palm breaks a same hand grab by rotating the palm to the No. 6 palm and then by using the power of the waist turns so that the opponent is pulled over. (**Photo No. 62**). Slapping hard down onto the grabbing arm to



Photo number 61



Photo number 62



Photo number 63



Photo number 64



Photo number 65



Photo number 66



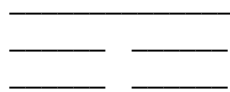
Photo number 67



Photo number 68

further break the hold and when the held palm is free bring it up into the face could follow this. (**Photo No. 63**).

**PALM NO. SEVEN:**

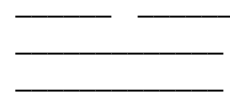


This palm represents the mountain and has the ability to heal the neck. Its trigram is:

**(Photo No. 64).**

No. 7 breaks a same hand hold in much the same way that No. 5 five does but this time the knife edge of the palm cuts downward to break out. (**Photo No. 65**). This could be followed up by a double palm attack. (**Photo No. 66**).

**PALM NO. EIGHT:**



This palm represents the clouds and has the ability to heal the right side of the abdomen and all organs in that area. Its trigram is:

(**Photo No. 67**). No. 8 Palm breaks an opposite hand grab by turning and jabbing the fingers towards the eyes, (**Photo No. 68**). Grabbing the attacker's palm to hold it onto yours and twisting around to break the arm could follow this. (**Photo No. 69**).



Photo number 69



Photo number 70

## WALKING THE CIRCLE:

This is the main area of Baguazhang . The whole of the art is based upon this particular walking method. This is not to say that in the self-defence area we must walk in this strange way. The walking was found to be the best way to train one's body to be able to bob and weave out of all situations. The walking trains your body to observe certain criteria when attacked. The mind must be centred on the tan-tien while all of the criteria set down in the classics are observed. Walk a larger circle at first, about eight feet in diameter. After some period of practice the circle becomes smaller so that the inner palm does not move, it just rotates.



Photo number 71

## THE METHOD:

Stand on the circumference of the circle, which should be drawn on the floor. A tin of bright red house paint on one's shag pile carpet will do. The heels are together and the toes are at 90 degrees to each other with the circumference of the circle passing through the both heels. **(Photo No. 70).**

Bend your knees until they come in line with the tips of the toes and take a shoulder width step forward with your left foot.



Photo number 72

The toes and the heel should touch the ground together. The toes are pointing in towards the centre at about 45 degrees. Now take the left palm and using a No. 3 palm turn the waist only, NOT THE HIPS, slightly into the centre with the left palm facing the centre. The upper body also faces the centre. There should be a straight line between the nose and the tip of the left index finger. The other palm is also placed in a No. 3 palm just near your left forearm and facing slightly in to the forearm. The palms should feel as if they are squeezing outward and they should be turned in slightly in contradiction to each other. **(Photo No. 71).** This is called the 'TOE OUT STANCE'.

Now, before you take the step you must 'mud step'. All this involves is slipping the front foot forward about 3 inches before the step is taken. There must not be any weight placed upon the front foot at this stage, you must be able to lift the foot off the ground. The body lowers slightly. **(Photo No. 72).**



Photo number 73

Take a very quickstep so there is hardly any time when the weight is on the left foot and brush the right ankle past the left ankle and moving the foot into the centre of the circle in a sort of arc. SEE THE DIAGRAM ON THE PHOTO. The foot arcs out until the toes are on the circumference and the feet are almost parallel. (**Photo No. 73**). The toes are concave. This is known as the 'TOE IN STEP'.

Perform another 'mud step' by slipping the right foot forward about 3 inches with no weight placed on it. Take another step this time with the left foot and as before brush the ankles together and do a small arc so that the heel of the left foot is now on the circumference of the circle and the knees are almost touching. (**Photo No. 74**). This is known as the 'scissors step'.



Photo number 74

This walking continues in this way until the balance is attained and you no longer need to look at the circumference. You must of course walk in the other direction as well.

## CHANGING DIRECTION USING THE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE TURNS:

In Bagwa we never back off from an opponent, we turn to meet him. To do this we have the inside and outside changes.



Photo number 75

### THE OUTSIDE TURN:

If you are in a 'toe out step' as in (**Photo No. 71**), you must turn on your heels with both toes spinning around to the rear in an outside arc out of the circle. As you do this, the right palm (or left if going the other way), the palm closest to you will rub the upper forearm of the left arm and spin around centrifugal manner by 360 degrees to end up in the opposite position that you started in. SEE (**Photo No. 75**) with the arc drawn. This must be performed so that the wind is heard as your right arm is thrown out. This exercise trains the entire 'back turning' attacks whether they be palms or feet, the technique is the same. Great power is generated using this method.



Photo number 76

### THE INSIDE TURN:

If your feet are in the 'TOE IN STANCE' as in (**Photo No. 73**), you must perform the inside turn. This involves simply swivelling on the heels so that the toes turn back in the opposite direction. The right palm is thrust outward over the left forearm to strike with great force into the centre as the left palm is now the 'back up' palm. (**Photo No. 76**). Exhale as both of these turns are executed. After you do the inside or outside changes, the front foot must 'mud step' in order to get it back in the right place before beginning to walk again.

## USING THE EIGHT AND SIXTY FOUR PALMS IN THE WALKING:

So far, we have only mentioned the No. 3 palm while walking the circle. However, we are able to use all eight palms as we walk. We change to the new palm as we change direction using either the inside or outside change as discussed above. As you perform either of the turns, brush the arms together keeping the current palm shape and as you come back into the centre, change to the new palm.

A tape recorder is a great help here. By putting random numbers from 1 to 8 on the tape, we are able to change very quickly to the number of that particular palm as we hear it, using the inside or outside turns. At a more advanced level, we are able to put two numbers on the tape recorder. As the two numbers are heard, we spin around and the palm closest to the centre becomes the first number heard while the palm closest you becomes the second number between one and eight. So we now are able to walk the circle changing at will using 64 different palm changes. These palm changes are all included in the classical Baguazhang form but for now, this is an easy way to learn them.



## Chapter Three

### XINGYI

I asked my good friend Robin Whitewood to write this chapter as my own knowledge of H'sing-I is limited. Rob is the most knowledgeable person that I know in the art of H'sing-I.

Rob teaches in Australia in the State of New South Wales on the Central Coast and in Sydney. I have known him for many years. He is the H'sing-I authority for the W.T.B.A. His book, of the same title as this chapter will be published hopefully in 1998 as will a video production. For information you could phone Rob on: (From Overseas) +61 2 4976 1499. Local: 02-4976 1499. Or you could contact us at the W.T.B.A.

**Since writing this part for this book, Robb Whitewood has had his book on Xingyi published by Paladin Press in the USA.**

### HSING-I, THE GENTLE KNOCKDOWN ART

**H**sing-I is famous for its raw power or hitting force. Yet in a strange way it is still very subtle in its application. One of the most interesting things about Hsing-I is the calming effect produced through practice of the hand techniques. My teachers of Chinese medicine tell me that each technique stimulates a pair of organs in the body. This stimulation brings about harmony and health. These same teachers have told me that Hsing-I is the most effective way to bring about this stimulation. It is difficult to comment on this, as there is no empirical way of measuring it against anything else. I am of the opinion that if it works for you, do it! My hope is that this article will be of interest to those who have never been exposed to Hsing-I before and will assist those people who are just starting out down the Hsing-I path.

To understand better the underlying concepts of Hsing-I, we can begin by looking at the meaning of the name. Roughly translated the word Hsing means Form and I means of the mind, of ideas. Hence we know it is a system that incorporates the mind as well as the body. I like to think of it as the body being used to express the thoughts. This form of the mind can be thought of as a martial system that considers how a human being learns.

The intent of training in Hsing-I is to reach a point where the conscious mind is blank. There is no real thought, just a sense of peace. All the information is stored in the sub-conscious mind, waiting for the right moment to be released. At the appropriate time, the line, strategies and manoeuvres just happens as if by themselves.

Within the Internal Martial Arts Academy the aim is to look beyond the traditional explanations of the technique. In looking beyond the traditional practices, it is then possible to know why things were taught the way they were. It is also possible to change tradition if it has become so formalised that it has lost its relevance. To this end we have changed some of the animal forms to suit this more pragmatic approach to the internal arts. In addition we teach personal development, concepts of traditional Chinese medicine, massage and meditation, as these are all part of the process.

Another factor to consider is the relationship that Hsing-I has with other systems. It can be described as the son of Tai Chi and the brother of Pa Kua.

Tai Chi is the mother of Chinese systems and philosophies. Tai Chi is a symbol of the building blocks of the universe.

Pau Kua is a physical expression of the I Ching, the book of change. It relates to heaven and to the future and describes the system of divination.

Hsing-I is the physical expression of the Wu Hsing, the five elements, which describes the workings of earth and are the foundations of Chinese Medicine.

All three systems are closely related; to study one is in part to study the other two.

## Where did Hsing-I develop?

Hsing-I's history can be traced back to the Sung Dynasty (960-1279 A.D.) in Mainland China. General Yu Fei, who had formerly trained in Shaolin Temple Boxing and Tai Chi, developed it. He trained his own men through a system that was a marriage of these two disciplines. It was said of Yu Fei's fighting forces that it was Easier to move the mountain than his men.

There are two schools of Hsing-I today, the school of the five elements and the school of the twelve animal forms. In this and following articles we will deal with the school of the five elements.

### **Much of what follows is a concise version of what I now teach.**

If Tai Chi is the ultimate martial system and philosophy, why study Hsing-I? There are several reasons:

To the beginner Tai Chi can be overwhelming in its complexity. Hsing-I has less movements or variations and, as such, Hsing-I is a good stepping stone to Tai Chi.

### **Hsing-I maintains all of the internal qualities of Tai Chi.**

In the west, people are more goal orientated, where as in the east people are more process orientated. Hsing-I is very goal orientated with a grading system and an organised system of step. Tai Chi relates to the process as a whole.

We have mentioned that Hsing-I is an internal martial art. What is internal and how does it differ from external?

The key differences are the level of relaxation and consequently, the levels of muscle activity, In an internal system the level of relaxation is much greater than in an external system such as Karate. Muscle performance becomes more efficient when the muscles start from a state of relaxation as opposed to tension. It is easier for a muscle to go from relaxed to contracted, than from contracted to relaxed to contracted again. Energy consumption is also lower in the internal arts for the same reason.

Differences between internal and external are indicated by muscle physiology and also by neurology. As we train the body, and more specifically, the muscles to do only what we want them to do and nothing

more, the body works more effectively and a lot faster. Since there are fewer choices to be made, there are fewer decisions and consequently reaction times are shorter.

## General Basics of Hsing-I

### **Certain beliefs and values are vital to the learning of Hsing-I.**

The beliefs that are necessary for any for of learning are:

- If it is possible for another person to do it, then it is possible for me.
- I may have to practise, pick up some new believes and drop some old ones along the way.
- The process of learning new skills must be valued as much as the goal of acquisition of the new skill.

### **The General physical basics can be summed up in the following list:**

- Head up, as if suspended by the top of the head;
- Tongue on the roof of the mouth;
- Palms open, facing forward, fingers together;
- Shoulders relaxed;
- Elbows relaxed and low;
- Jaw is closed and relaxed;
- Feet and palms relaxed;
- Shoulders are slightly rounded forward;
- The thumb is held away from the body of the hand;
- The knees, elbows and wrist are bent;
- The neck and back are held as straight as possible;
- Dual hand movements;

- Each movement is to be fluid;
- Every movement involves every part of the body;
- There are no block hit type motions. All actions are both a hit and a block at the same time.

Hand work of the five elements.

**Metal:**

**Mechanics:**

Both hands descending. Leading hand deflects down, following hand hits to the head or the chest.

**Application:**

Used against a straight strike to the chest , stomach or front kick.

Classically fire is used against another person attacking with Wood.

See **Photos A1, A2, A3, A4** Below.



A1



A2



A3



A4

**Water:**

**Mechanics:**

One hand descending, one hand rising. Leading hand deflects down, Second hand strikes up to the face or throat.

**Application:**

Used against a straight strike to the chest or stomach.

Classically water is used against another person attacking with Fire.

See **Photos B1, B2,B3,and B4**



B1



B2



B3



B4

**Wood:**

**Mechanics:**

One hand descending, one hand pushes forward. Leading hand deflects down, Second hand strikes to the lower abdomen.

**Application:**

Used against a straight strike to the chest or stomach or crossing attacks from one side of the body to the other.

Classically wood is used against another person attacking with Earth.

See **Photos C1, C2, C3, and C4**



C1



C2



C3



C4

**Fire:**

**Mechanics:**

Both hands rising. Leading hand deflects up, following hand hits to the heart or throat.

**Application:**

Used against a downward strike to the head. The upper hand is more of a deflection than a block.

Classically fire is used against another person attacking with Metal.

See Photos D1, D2, D3, and D4



D1



D2



D3



D5



E1



E2



E3



E4



E5



E6

### Earth:

#### **Mechanics:**

Both hands crossing. Leading hand deflects across centre line of body, followed by the lower hand. hand hits to the side of the head or the torso of the body.

#### **Application:**

Used against a straight strike to the head or face.

Classically Earth is used against another person attacking with Water.

**See Photos E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, and E6**





F1



F2



F3



F4

## Foot work:

### **General information about foot-work.:**

Every hand movement involves foot-work. The footwork is to be considered as the establishment a platform that a strike can then be executed from. The

transition from one position to another is to be done as smoothly as possible. The head is to stay on the same plain, with as little sideways motion as possible. At no time do you have stepping that you cannot hit from. Each step is to flow automatically into the next step.

### **The Lunge:**

#### **Mechanics:**

The lunge is used to close the gap between oneself and the attacker. The attacker will have calculated the distance between you and him. By lunging in, you force the attacker to redefine distance and choice of attack in mid-attack. Very few people are skilled enough to do this without reverting to a brawl ! The hands support each other and the body is straight. It is not really a strike, as such. It is more like making yourself into a spear, the heel of the spear is thrust into the ground that the attacker then impales himself upon the pointy end.

#### **Weighting of feet:**

Approximately 50%-50%:

#### **Application:**

On the initial attack. If the attacker has survived the first lunge, it is unlikely that the subsequent advances will have the same force or intensity. Having been on the receiving end of such a lunge in my early days of training, I can vouch for its effectiveness. Both my feet came off the ground, and I landed flat on my back. The teacher at the time was being



G1



G2



G3

nice to me and used an open palm to the chest, as compared to a closed fist to the throat or jaw, which is the usual practice.

**Photos F1, F2, Photo F3, and F4**

**Feet 1 Photo G1**

**Front stamp:**

**Mechanics:**

Using the mass of the leg as it travels towards the ground generates the hit. The front of the leg, the abdomen and the chest all contract a fraction of a second before the foot hits the ground. The idea is to transfer the downward force of the leg into the arms.

**Weighting of feet:**

Starts at front foot 5% - back foot 95%, Finishes at front foot 5% - back foot 95%:

**Centre of balance is stationary.**

**Application:**

At any time when the force of a strike is to be maximised. This is a very easy way to increase hitting potential dramatically. The force that can be generated is very impressive especially when you realise that this force can be generated in a distance of a few centimetres.

**Feet 2 Photo G2**

**Feet 3 Photo G3**

**Feet 4:**

**Back stamp:**

**Mechanics:**

From a long stance to a short a stance in on step. The rear foot is lifted quickly and placed down directly under the centre of balance.



H1

**Weighting of feet**

Starts at 50% - 50%, Finishes at front foot 5%- back foot 95%, Centre of balance stays in the same spot.

**Application**

This action prepares the practitioner for a lunge, Front stamp or side step. It can also be used as a hitting platform as well.

**Photo H1 Photo H2**



H2

**Feet 5:**

**Side step.:**

**Mechanics &Weighting of feet:**

Step 1 Weighting is 95% right foot -5% left foot. then there is a shift of the left foot to the left with a 45-degree turn to the centre line of the body. Weighting is 50% right foot -50% left foot. Centre of balance moves from the right foot to between the two feet. (When done at speed this is a transition from right foot to the left foot).

**Photo I1:**



I1



I2

**Feet 6:**

Step 2. The right foot slides to a parallel to the left. 100% of the weight is on the left foot. Centre of balance moves from between the feet to the left foot.

**Photo I2**



I3

### **Feet 7:**

Step 3. The right foot pushes forward as the strike is performed. Weighting is 95% Left foot -5% right foot. Centre of balance stays in the same spot.

### **Photo I3:**

### **Feet 8:**

### **Application:**

This is to be applied were the power of the incoming charge is too great to be handled easily. The side step allows the practitioner to step off the line of power and at the same time maintain the optimum line for striking.

The idea of course is that in the end you can do any hand technique in conjunction with any foot technique. This also means same hand as foot or opposite foot to hand. This may sound tricky but with a bit of practise it's easy.

Remember that this is only the basic of the physical component of Hsing-I. There are the animal forms, strategy, the breathing and meditation to be included to make up the complete system of Hsing-I. Of course when you get through all that there is still the personal development, concepts of traditional Chinese medicine, massage and philosophy. I have found that the study in these areas becomes a life long journey of learning about myself and my relationship with the world and others.

It is now been 29 years since I first stepped into the martial arts, I am still learning. A senior student asked me a few years ago, "Knowing what you know now, if you had your time over, would you have spent as much time on Hsing-I and study". The answer was an immediate yes, and then after thinking a bit longer the answer change to no, I would have spent even more.

## Chapter Four

### Transferring and Issuing Qi

**Q**i is electricity in one form or another. We are affected by electricity every day of our lives. Even when we did not rely upon electricity for our daily needs, we still lived in a constant and natural electrical environment of around 40,000 volts so I am told by the experts. I know this to be true from experience. I once worked in a large building in London, one of my many jobs that I had to do to survive. Whenever I entered this building, I noticed that my heart rate increased dramatically as did my blood pressure. I could not understand why this was so. Therefore, I began investigating as discovered that this particular building was built with much iron reinforcement around each building compartment. Apparently because of the damage done in the war. Having received some electrical training as part of one of my occupations, I knew that this iron shielding would shield people from our natural electrical environment. I had to leave this particular job because my health was suffering, as was the health of many of those also working in the building.

We all work on electricity, we communicate using it, we affect the way others perceive us using electricity and we are affected by other's electrical forces. This is Qi in daily life. We naturally issue Qi to others as part of our daily lives; we transfer our own Qi to other people every second that we live. However, this is a sub-conscious event, something that we have no control over, as our heart beat or digestion or other internal workings. We in the martial arts and healing arts would like to have some control over the transference of Qi in order to heal or to defend ourselves using something other than purely physical force. And we can.

You cannot knock anyone down using Qi from a distance but you can affect the way someone else's Qi works, so much so that you can cause them to fall down or become well etc. However, you must actually touch the person in order for this to happen. The electrical system of our

body is a very low voltage, something that we need very sensitive instruments even to pick up. Things like heart measuring devices actually measure electrical activity in the heart; it is the same for the brain etc. So when we are issuing Qi, we are issuing minute amounts of electricity (Qi) and we need to be either touching the person's skin or so very close to it so that this small electrical current is able to work. Anyone who knows anything about electricity knows that if you place another voltage or current near or on top of a current or voltage, you will affect that electricity in some way. Moreover, this is what we do when we issue and transfer Qi. We are able to either issue Qi that is sympathetic to the other person's Qi thus helping to heal that person of some disease state, or we are able to affect that person's Qi adversely as in the case of the martial arts and self defence. It has been said that the greatest healing that one person can give to another is simply to touch that person. And this is so true, as you are not just touching; you are issuing Qi every time you simply touch someone. Quite often, this is enough to heal simple illnesses without any special training or concentration of Qi. In the case of a practitioner whose job it is to heal people, or a martial artist whose job it is to protect people or to teach others to protect themselves from physical attack, we must learn how to concentrate the Qi and then to direct it. However, this direction and concentration must never be a physical conscious act, as all physical thought will cause blockages. So you see some so called healers placing their hands upon others, saying some chanting or some noise or quite obviously trying to physically direct their Qi into the sick person. This will not work as they are trying to do it and this will only block the Qi. This is where Taijiquan comes in.

With Taijiquan and all of the internal martial arts, we have ways to direct and concentrate the Qi without actually doing anything, or more importantly, not having to think about doing this. All we have to do is the training, that is all. We learn about how to do certain things in our Taijiquan. For instance, we might learn how to perform fa-jing (explosive energy) in order to knock someone's head off. Actually, we are learning internally, how to issue Qi, not to knock someone's head off, although we can do this very well. In learning how to fight using Qi, we learn how to heal and this is why it is very important for people to learn about the self-defence side of Taijiquan in particular. I say 'in particular' because Taijiquan is known to many as purely some kind of dance of relaxation etc, whereas the other two internal systems have a good reputation as being martial arts.

We are taught to do certain movements, and cause the body to move in certain ways, to compress this side or to expand this side etc. We learn to do these things because we are learning a martial art. We THINK that we are doing certain movements to be able to defend ourselves when all the while we are learning about much higher aspects of living and heal-

ing. However, if we were to go straight in and learn about healing and issuing/transferring qi, we would be blocking the very thing we were trying to do. So we are told to do things for martial reasons so that we learn the healing. And in learning the healing sub-consciously, we are then taking our martial arts a step higher as well. Until we eventually almost leave the physical level of self defence altogether. Many people try to teach students of the healing benefits of Taijiquan from the beginning and although their intentions might be correct, they are actually impeding their student's progress!



Photo number 77

In order to understand about issuing and transferring Qi, it is important that you find someone who knows about and is able to demonstrate 'fa-jing'. This is no mean task though, as not many really know what fa-jing is. Or rather they have heard about it and know what it means, but cannot really do it. Fa-jing is not just some physical quick way of punching or attacking. You cannot simply see someone doing fa-jing and then try to emulate those movements and hope for the best. It takes some practice and an understanding of what is known as 'yin force'. When the hard style experts practice fa-jing, it is purely physical or 'yang'. What they do has no balance or 'yin'. True fa-jing also has an equal amount of yin. If someone places some hydrochloric acid onto your arm, it will burn. This is yin. If you now place some caustic soda onto your arm, which is 'yang' or alkaline, it will also burn with just as much power as the acid. You do not know which one is acid or which is caustic soda, but they are opposites. The yin has just as much power as the yang and it is the same with fa-jing, not to do the yin part of fa-jing is not to do fa-jing at all.



Photo number 78

We gain 'yin force' the very moment we touch someone, or when they make contact with us. This why it is said in the internal martial arts, that the 'enemy' is defeated the moment he touches us. His centre has gone, he feels as if he has no balance or 'earth'. The yin is the loading while the yang is the issuing. Look at what happens to the backbone when someone even makes contact. If I simply stand there and nothing happens as in **(Photo No.77)**, I am not using 'yin force'. Now look at the backbone as in **(Photo No.78)** and you will see that it has changed, it has compressed slightly. We sometimes call this the reptile brain mode, or the 'C' back mode. When someone touches someone who knows about 'yin force', they immediately feel as if they have 'lost their centre' (centre), they comment that they feel out of balance or that they could be pushed off balance easily and this is before any pushing or attacking has even begun. The reason for this is that when we 'load', we 'gather' the Qi, and in doing so we also take in his (the attacker's Qi), thus causing his whole energy system to rise which will cause imbalance. Of course

if we were now to issue Qi in the form of an attack, knowing exactly where the attacker's centre is, and attacking across that centre, we require only a minute amount of Qi to have a great effect. Many comment that they did not even feel anything and claim some supernatural happening. However, the force was there, they just did not feel it as it was yin force.

It works like this. When one is in tune with what the attacker is doing, you are able literally to give any attacking energy straight back to the attacker. But if you block your own Qi by tension or fear or any of a myriad of other negatives in fighting, you are unable to firstly give that attacking energy back, nor add any of your own Qi to the issuing force. Therefore, you are continually allowing the attacker's Qi to have something at attack against. When you wish to re-attack, you must begin from scratch and build up your own attacking force. In the internal martial arts, we are in tune with the attacking person's Qi or energy and whatever he or she does to us; we also do the same. So when an attack is being felt, this is the attacker's yang energy, but there is an equal and opposite energy within us ready to take in this attacking force, it is called 'yin force'. It is like a sine wave where the attacker's Qi is the top part of the sine wave and our yin force is the bottom part. While the attacker's Qi is strong (at the top of the wave), so too is our equal and opposite force, (at the bottom part of the wave on the other side of the borderline). As he attacks, our yin force will easily neutralise his yang force because it is equal to it. However, his yang energy now re-routes through our own body, becoming yin and then instantly becomes yang because it is being changed by our own mind sub-consciously. So we are able to actually give back his own yang energy which is why he feels as if he has no centre when he makes contact. If we are then to add some of our own yang force to his own yang force, he is repulsed or attacked in some way with an even more devastating force. It feels to him as if we have not used any force because we are unable to feel our own force coming back onto us. Therefore, what he feels is only the small amounts or force that we added to his force. It seems as if it is miraculous!

The backbone gives you your first inkling as to how Qi is transmitted or issued. What is the most important thing that your internal arts instructor has told you and keeps telling you? It is to relax. Actually, to 'relax' is not a good translation and is actually quite wrong. However, there is no translation for 'sung', it requires a sentence or two to describe this word. That is what your instructor means when telling you to relax. When we go into a state of 'sung' every muscle, sinew, bone and joint in the body is connected rather than when tension is present and every part of the body is a separate identity. Therefore, when one part of the body moves, it will cause the whole body to move. This is especially true of the vertebra where there is a special significance for Qi transference and





Photo number 79



Photo number 80

issuing of Qi. You must become aware of every vertebra in your backbone, every sinew in your body, every muscle. Then you must take those into a state of sung using what is known as ‘Qigong’. Another way to describe ‘sung’ as told to me by one of my teachers is as follows: You take your cake out of the oven and it has risen nicely. You place the cake onto the table and look around to get a knife to cut it and when you look back, it has flopped. So you did not see the cake flopping, it moved without your seeing it. Sung means that we must move without feeling the movement. So when you do a movement like the posture of ‘wave hands like clouds’, (**Photo No.79**) & (**Photo No.80**) you firstly must perform the movements of the hands and wrists so sensitively that you do not feel them moving. In other words, the movement must be so perfectly rounded and balanced that it is continuous with out breaks. The ‘classics’ (a bunch of old writings by important past masters of the internal martial arts), tell us that the movement must be ‘connected without breaks’. Most people treat this classic saying too simplistically and do the movements without breaks, or so they think. However, what this particular classic means is that every sinew, bone, joint and muscle must be connect internally with Qi. This is not an easy task for those who have not studied the internal martial arts.

‘Sung’ is the first area of Qi transference and without it, forget about the internal martial arts. There are in fact five areas that one must address and understand physically in order to issue or transfer Qi. I will cover those later. The posture mentioned above ‘wave hands like clouds’ from Taijiquan is the first group of postures where one will actually feel ‘sung’. This group of postures is formalised in Taijiquan but it is also inherent in many of the other internal systems in other less formal ways. Like in the eighth ‘Qi disruptive’ form called the ‘Earth Form’ which works upon the ‘stomach’ or the ground, we have the way of doing wave hands like clouds performed many different times and in many different ways. This is in fact the source for this group of postures in Taijiquan. It was never called ‘wave hands like clouds’ in the beginning when the initial ‘Taijiquan’ forms were invented, (those forms or katas from whence all other internal forms came), it was the Taijiquan or H’ao ch’uan people who liked to give the postures names so that we could have some way of knowing how to perform the postures. Therefore, what better way than to give us a name that meant something. Who can not gather an idea of what the posture means and how it is performed when told that the name is ‘wave hands like clouds’. Baguazhang takes this idea a step further so that the names of the postures become very important as they tell us exactly how to perform them, how much weight to use, how much force is necessary and what direction etc.



Photo number 81

Sung is a way of compressing every vertebra in the backbone, and eventually every part of the body, connecting together every minute part of the body so that the stored power of every cell is able to be used as a whole. Like if you have only a few grains of gunpowder, it does not have much effect when ignited. However, if you have millions of grains of gunpowder, the effect of the whole lot being ignited is far greater. It is the same with our Qi. If we only issue the Qi force from one part of the body, like the arm or leg, we only have access to the power from one portion of the body. Because we have to use much more physical power (muscle power tension), we actually in turn block the flow of what little Qi we are trying to use. So we not only do not have much power, we also waste our own power and become tired easily. Hence the saying that in the 'external' martial arts, we use a great amount of energy but gain little effect, and in the internal martial arts we use little energy but gain a great effect

We must learn connectivity at a very base physical level before we can learn it at an energy level. For this, I have a simple training method that I have found to be helpful to my own students.

Stand opposite your partner and place your right palm onto his or her left shoulder. (**Photo No.81**). If I tell you to push his shoulder to your left, most people in the beginning will push as in (**Photo No.82**). Doing it this way you are only using shoulder power and blocking your own energy. You will find that it takes a great amount of energy to get your partner moving and even then, he only moves a short distance. All of the Qi is blocked at your shoulder. You must think about your waist and then join that power to your right arm. Use the power in your waist (which is quite considerable) to move your partner. Say to yourself that when your waist moves, so too will your arm because it is connected to your waist. Whatever your waist does, so too will your right arm. You must have all of your centres aligned though. So, turn your body so that your right wrist is in line with your centre. Now, when you turn your waist, your right palm will move instantly. However, if you notice that your centre has slipped away from your wrist, then you are again using shoulder power only. Doing this exercise correctly, you will notice that you will now be using much less power (energy) and gaining a greater effect.



Photo number 82

'Sinking' is a word that is used much in Taijiquan but that is little understood. This word is also to do with 'sung'. It is relatively easy to sink the body, to have a feeling of sinking into the ground, but this is only part of 'sinking'. To 'sink' means that we must also sink and join every bit of power held in the backbone so that we are able to issue it in healing or in the martial arts.

The backbone is the place where the energy is stored; it is often called the tantien, an imaginary place 3 inches below the navel where the psychic centre of the body is supposed to be housed. I believe however that the tantien is the whole of the backbone. We are told that we have several 'tantiens' or psychic centres, and all are located along the backbone or along the centreline of the body. However, I believe that we have only one tantien and that is the spine. It is from the spine that we issue Qi for healing or for hurting. One of my teachers once told me that the spine and its vertebra was like having many cells (batteries) in the backbone and that we are able to join those cells to form a big battery to issue greater amounts of Qi. Looking at the vertebra you can see that each one looks like a capacitor, with its two poles and electrolyte substance in between. We are told in the Chinese martial arts, that the backbone stores the Qi and then issues it when needed. When we compress the backbone like as if the backbone is a chain inside of a plastic pipe and it cannot fall in a heap on the ground because of the pipe so each link of the chain gently falls down on top of each other and stays there, we link all of our vertebra together psychically. We link and join all of the individual powers of each vertebra causing a much greater whole. Once we have 'joined' each vertebra, the individual parts of the whole body will then be joined and as we release the stored Qi, the whole body releases its Qi rather than just one part like a hand or arm, leg etc.

## Qigong

The way that we learn how to connect each vertebra and eventually every cell in the body is in the practice of Qigong. Qigong has become the new catch phrase of the 'new age' movement taking over almost from Taijiquan as the exercise we all practice in order to see God! Ten easy lessons and everyone is able to become a Qigong expert. We now have 'flying duck Qigong, 'sitting goose Qigong, 'pooing bat Qigong, etc. We have 20-year-old 'masters' of Qigong charging huge amounts of money to teach this mystical practice. However, this is only the beginning point to learning about issuing Qi.

Qigong is a relatively simply physical exercise combined with certain breathing methods. However, if the mind part is not correct, then you will never gain Qigong. In addition, as with Taijiquan, Qigong is difficult, it will always be difficult, no matter how hard or how long you train. If Qigong is not difficult, then it is not Qigong. The same goes for Taijiquan, it never gets easy. And this is where many drop off as they expect the training to become easy as they progress.

For a beginner, Qigong is perhaps one of the most difficult things that he or she will ever have to do. However, if you persist, the gains will be immense. The hardest thing about basic Qigong is that you have to do nothing! This is when all of the modern methods of Qigong have come about. Modern Qigong gives us something to do, some set of exercises to perform. However, Qigong is not a physical exercise, it is a mind exercise. At an advanced stage, one is able to perform Qigong while moving as in the practice of all of the internal martial arts. However, in the beginning we must simply stand there in a certain position doing nothing, no thought, only breathing. And this is the most difficult of all.

There are around 200 different types of Qigong, but these are grouped into three different areas as follows.

The “Self Healing” area allows us to go into a state of ‘sung’ in order for our own Qi to have a better chance of healing us. This is the first area that we learn, and it is the easiest.

The “Martial Qigong” gives us more power for the martial arts, for self defence. We gain the ability to issue Qi using this area of Qigong. Although all three areas will allow us to issue Qi. We must however learn the self-healing area before going on to the martial or the next one.

The “Medical Qigong” will teach us to issue Qi for the healing of others as in ‘Medical Taijiquan’ which will be the subject of a future volume of this series.

All Qigongs within the different area of Qigong all do the same things, so it is not necessary to learn every Qigong there is available. We have many different types to enable each individual to choose the one that suits he or she best. I always give my students the basic “Three Circle Standing Qigong” as their first lesson as this is the foundation. This Qigong is the King of Qigongs and will teach you more about you and the issuing of Qi than any other Qigong. Taijiquan is the top level of Qigong; it is a moving Qigong and is considered the best self-healing Qigong of them all. But it is very difficult for the beginner to take the movements of Taijiquan to this Qigong level as he or she is still thinking about where to put the hands and feet and simply to get the form correct. In the ensuing time, we have basic Qigong to tide us over until we are able to take Taijiquan to its highest levels. We practice basic Qigong for at least the first six years of our training in Taijiquan, and I still practice it every day after over 30 years of practice.

## The Method



Photo number 83

Stand as in **(Photo No.83)** & **(Photo No.84)**. Your knees are bent so that they do not protrude beyond your toes. Remember though that in looking down, there is a parallax error, so you should actually see that your knees are a little further than your toes. Alternatively, to be sure, place a straight edge vertically, touching your large toe, your knee should also be touching the stick if it is vertical to the ground. The tailbone should be tucked under, but not forced. In fact it should naturally fall under when you are in a state of sung. The tailbone (sacrum) is that last area of the body that will become ‘sung’ (relaxed), so you will probably have difficulty in attaining the vertical tailbone at this stage. Stand up against a wall, and see if you can push your hand though the lower back area. If you can, then you still have a way to go. Alternatively, lie down on the floor with your knees raised, like as if you are in the standing position.

You should be able to have your whole lower back flat on the floor. In fact, for older people or those convalescing, this is a regular Qigong position, only with the hands in the particular position as in the above photos. You can also do this Qigong sitting on a kitchen chair with a straight back.



Photo number 84

The hands are held at about upper chest height, elbows hanging below the wrists as if hugging a tree. The palms are held slightly pointing away from you as if saying, “want something?” There should be a straight line of skin but not tensed between the thumb and forefinger. Move your thumb around and see that many lines of skin will appear, but only one line will appear in the correct position. The top of the edge of the forefingers should be held at about the height of just under your nose. Your fingers should be held in the “tile palm hand” position. I.e., the fingers are not held tense, but naturally layered, like the tiles on a roof. The small fingers should be slightly closer to you than for instance, the forefingers. The feet should be placed about shoulder width apart and the feet should be parallel on the inside of the feet. The chin should be pulled in lightly but not tense, while the eyes should look straight-ahead not staring. The tongue is placed onto the hard palate like saying the letter ‘L’. This joins up the yang (du mai) and the yin (ren mai) meridians so that we will have a complete flow in the upper heavenly circulation.

The feet are slightly scrunched under so that the base of the foot is slightly concave. The toes should not go white; this is an indication that the toes are scrunched under too much. Also, do not roll the feet out onto their outsides. The reason for this is that when we concave the feet, this causes the bottom of the feet at a point called “Kidney One” (K 1) to become yin while the outsides of the feet are relatively yang. The Qi is said

to 'spring' from the 'bubbling well point', or K 1. All Qi is held in the tantien and it must firstly get down to K 1 before we are able to use it for anything such as healing or for the martial arts. Hence making K 1 yin in order to attract its opposite, yang Qi.

The breathing is done through the nose only in the Qigong. However, there are times when we would wish to breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth and visa-versa. This is when we are for instance convalescing and wish to have a 'tonic breath'; we would in this case breath in through the mouth and out through the nose. In the case of wishing to cleanse the body and mind, like when we are fasting for instance, we would breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. You should breathe naturally, not forcing the breath. Breathe deeply as far as you can without forcing. Hold the breath for a short time, about three seconds and then breathe out.

There are four types of breathing that we learn in Qigong. These should be practised three years apart. I.e., you become at ease with the first, then go on to the next etc. The first breathing method is called the "natural breath". This is as it says, natural, so that when you inhale, your abdomen below your diaphragm is expanded. In other words, your lungs fill with air. Do not at any time expand your upper chest, this indicates tension. In fact, you can inhale fully and still lift up your chest not taking in any more air. There is very little lung area in the upper chest; it is all down below the diaphragm. When you exhale, your lower abdomen should contract. This is natural breathing.

Tension will creep in without your even knowing it. So be aware and always on guard for this. Watch your upper chest, your neck in particular and shoulders, they will become tense, do not allow this to happen. Only use the correct amount of muscle power to hold your arms in that position and no more. Be aware of your whole body in fact. Begin at your head, and work your way down the whole body, relaxing each part. After some period of practice, this will become natural and automatic and all tension will be gone. Remember that tension is the killer of life! Tension, either physical or mental will cause Qi blockages and so begin the downward trend to ill health. Many of today's diseases can be traced back to tension in daily life, especially the mental variety. However, mental and physical go hand in hand, so if you begin to fix your physical tension, then the mental will soon follow.

The second breathing method is the "reverse breath". This is when we inhale, the abdomen is contracted and when we exhale, it is expanded. This should not be attempted in the beginning, as it in itself will create tension. This kind of breathing done at the correct period in your train-

ing will enhance the Qi flow and activation in your own body and allow you to be ready for Qi issuing and transference.

The third type of breathing is called “pre-natal breath”. We have two areas of Qi activation and flow in the abdomen. That which we use before we are born and which is given to us by our mothers, (pre-natal) and that which we gain for ourselves after we are born, (post natal). After we are born, we are in a human conscious state and we are using post-natal Qi. However, our pre-natal Qi is still there, giving us life force and must also be nurtured and used at a natural rate. If it is not (as in the case of most human beings), then we must get more Qi from somewhere and add it to the pre-natal Qi. There is a way to do this by taking some “outer Qi” and adding to the “inner Qi”. We use pre-natal and tortoise (the next type of breath) to do this.

When we breathe naturally or with reverse breathing, there are two flows of Qi in the abdomen. When we breathe in for instance, there is a flow that begins at the diaphragm (the border between pre and post natal Qi) in the back of the body and goes upwards if we use natural breathing in the upper part of the body. I.e., the upper part of the abdomen is expanded as we breathe in. Now, if we were to also use natural breathing with the lower abdomen, the Qi flow would be the same, upwards from CV 1 (a point where three main acupuncture meridians meet between the anus and sex organs), to the diaphragm. Therefore, the activation points of both flows of Qi will never meet. Both go up, both go down. However, if we now use reverse breathing where the upper abdomen is expanded on inhalation, and natural breathing in the lower abdomen upon inhalation, where the lower abdomen is drawn in, both activation points of each flow is now reversed. Therefore, when we breathe in, the lower Qi activation point will now meet with the upper flow’s activation point. When we exhale, the lower Qi flow (pre-natal) will take a little of the ‘external Qi’ (gained from the air, food, water) with it to enhance the pre-natal Qi. So the abdomen, when doing pre-natal Qi breathing, looks like a kind of wave.

This is a difficult type of breathing to master and should not be attempted until the first two ways have been thoroughly mastered. You could get into difficulty to do so too early. So, please be warned!

The last type of breathing is called “tortoise breath”. It is the same as pre-natal breathing; the only difference is that upon the inhalation, we hold that breath in, for a count of seven seconds. This simply mixes the inner and outer Qi more thoroughly. There is no waiting or holding the breath upon the exhalation, only upon the inhalation.



Photo number 85

Please note, that the above breathing methods of ‘reverse’, ‘pre-natal’ and ‘tortoise’ breathing can cause tension if done incorrectly or too soon in one’s training. Even now, after having trained since 1967, I always begin my Qigong sessions with natural breathing and work my way up to the other methods.

You should hold the 3-circle Qigong position with hands in the upper position for two thirds of the total time spent. So if you intend standing there for 15 minutes, then do 10 in the upper position, then move your palms downwards slowly, not losing the meditative state that you have gained, into the lower position. **(Photo No.85)**. Hold this position for a further five minutes, then finish off by slowly raising your palms, **(Photo No.86)** while inhaling using natural breathing, bring them across to in front of you and push downwards as you exhale and straighten your legs.

Do not make any sudden movements after Qigong, nor have anything cold to drink, do not even sit down, and just walk around slowly for about five minutes. You can be doing things while you do this though.

There are many different Qigong positions, some very powerful, some that do nothing! I will not be giving those very powerful ones in this book, as I do not wish to be the cause of people getting into trouble mentally or physically. Those Qigongs presented in this book are those that will give you a great amount of Qi and also give you the tools to be able to issue and transfer Qi without doing any harm what-so-ever to your mind or body.

## Things to Look Out For While Performing Qigong



Photo number 86

While standing in a Qigong posture, you will experience a natural and mild shaking that begins in your legs and works up through your body. This is natural and should happen. I stress the word ‘mild’. Many make the big mistake in placing some weight onto the ball of the foot (K 1). This is incorrect as it causes something called ‘adverse cyclic Qi’. This is when the body is unable to have a continuous flow of ground Qi up through K 1 because of the tension placed onto K 1. The Qi MUST flow up through the ground, so it builds up to such a degree that it bursts through the tension causing a violent shaking of the body in the form of a kind of waving movement. The body gyrates from side to side and up and down. This can cause brain damage as too much Qi is being taken into the head area which will cause something akin to heat stroke. The



heels are the areas for natural activation of K 1, so when weight is placed onto this area, it causes a natural enhancement of ground Qi into the body. It is OK however, to place weight onto the balls of the feet for moments at a time as in the Taijiquan form where we for instance, perform a spinning turn on the ball of the foot. However, never any longer than 7 seconds.

The correct position of the weight during Qigong is right in the centre of the foot near where the foot joins the leg at the front. So if you were to run a vertical line down from the crown, straight down to the ground, that point where the line hits the ground would be right in the centre of the foot just forward of the front of the ankle. It can be further back, but no further forward.

Be careful that the chin does not stick out; pull it in gently to ‘raise the back’. One of the most important ‘classic sayings’ from the old masters is that we always keep a vertical backbone, never swaying from left to right or from front to rear.

## Qi Transference Qigong



Photo number 87

Several Qigong methods are particularly good in developing Qi issuing and transference. The best of these is one that I give to my students when they are ready for this phase in their training. It is simply called “Qi giving Qigong”. This is one of those Qigong methods that are of the ‘martial’ variety.

Stand with one foot slightly in front of the other with feet almost parallel but not quite. (**Photo No.87**). This is a one legged Qigong, and although you will still have both feet on the ground, there is absolutely no weight placed upon the front foot, it is only there for balance. The arms are held so that they are relatively so, in the same positions as the feet. You should have a ‘kua’ or bridge under your arms; they are rounded with the wrists just hanging there, no tension.

When you inhale, your rear hand should slightly tense internally while the front palm is totally in a state of sung. Imagine that something is being drawn up into your left palm at a point called “laugung” or PC 8 (pericardium point No. 8). This is located in the centre of your palms where your longest finger touches the palm when you make a fist. As this happens, all your weight should be placed onto your rear heel. AS you exhale, you should move a slight amount of weight onto your front

heel, no more than 20 percent though. Your rear palm now is in a state of sung totally as your front palm now tenses slightly. You should imagine that something is flowing out of your front palm at lunging into the ground. You should use a natural breath through your nose only. The tongue should be placed onto your upper palate. As you breathe in again, your total weight moves back onto your rear heel. So you will have a slight rocking back and forth as you inhale and exhale.



Photo number 88

You must perform this until you feel the ‘three signs’. There are three signs that we must look for when performing the one legged Qigongs. Firstly you will feel like as if there is a red hot needle sticking into your thigh around the point called GB 31 (gall bladder point NO. 31). This is where your longest finger points to when your arm hangs by your side. Next, you will feel this heat dissipate around your thigh. The third feeling is that you will begin to shake mildly. Now it is time to change legs. If you do not feel the three signs, then you are not doing the Qigong correctly. Perhaps you have not bent your knees enough. As I write this section of this book it is the middle of the night and I am listening to a Lyle Lovett album called Lyle Lovett, the song is “Simple Song”. He sure writes some beautiful songs, and being an old rock and roller with several hit songs to my credit in the late sixties and early seventies, I know a good song! I go between playing guitar and writing; I HAVE to, to remain sane!

So, back to the book. Be careful to really listen and feel for the three signs otherwise you could do yourself damage.



Photo number 89

Turn your front foot out by 45 degrees and step forward with your rear foot, which will now become your front foot. Inhale as your rear hand lifts upward as you step and crosses your other wrist. So both wrists are now crossed. **(Photo No.88)**. Place your front foot into exactly the same position that your previous front foot was. You have inhaled. As you exhale violently through your mouth saying a fa-jing sound like “pah”, you throw both of your arms downwards violently but not so much as to do damage! **(Photo No.89)**. Allow your arms to naturally swing until they come to a stand still, raising your front palm into a position that is exactly the opposite of the previous posture. **(Photo No.90)**. Now do exactly the same breathing and rocking as you did on the previous side and feel the three signs. You can do this re-



Photo number 90

peatedly but be sure to give each leg equal time. You will find that as the Qi begins to move and activate, if you only could manage say, 3 minutes the first time, you will be able to do longer with you change legs as the Qi is now moving freely. However, resist this temptation, only work with the three signs. Give each leg the same work out.

See the section on “how the mind works” further in this book as it will explain why it is important initially to use your imagination to get things happening. I give some simple exercises to get your imagination going to enhance everything you do from this series of books. In fact, all great martial arts make use of how the brain works in order to teach how to fight and to defend ourselves when we never really get the real practice at it. This is the reason that we have kata and forms in the martial arts.

This is one of the best Qigong methods that I know of to enhance the issuing of Qi. Combine it with the three circle standing Qigong and you will reap the benefits in your healing and martial arts training. I have spoken to people in the body work industry who have tried these methods and they all say that their healing ability has increased dramatically.

I have a series of videotapes that cover the above Qigong methods. The “Internal Gung-fu” series covers most of this. In addition, my tape MTG10 and MTG16 covers respectively, basic and advanced Qigong methods.

## The Hands and Qi Issuing

Before getting on to the five main areas of Qi transference, I will cover another excellent way of training to help with this area, and it comes from the mother of all internal gung-fu, Taijiquan.

Every movement we make in Taijiquan involves in some way the hands. The hands are the mirrors of what is happening internally. In other words, the palms show what your Qi is doing. So if your palms are manifesting stiff, jerky movement, then that is what your state of Qi is doing and eventually your state of health! It is said that the Qi manifests in the palms and nothing is more true. So few Taijiquan teachers actually teach what the palms are doing internally. Sure they tell you where to put the hands and how to move them to there etc. But this is the mother of all internal systems and you should know exactly what is happening with yin and yang and magnetism and electricity when your palms are moving, passing each other, bouncing off of each other, issu-



Photo number 91



Photo number 92



Photo number 93

ing Qi etc. Now, I cannot cover all of the moves from the Taijiquan form, so I will show a couple of the major movements where it is quite evident as to this interaction between the both palms. Later as you advance (if you are practising Taijiquan), you will also notice that there is an interaction between the two feet, legs, knees, elbows, shoulders and these will also interact between each other.

Notice that each movement in Taijiquan has the palms changing from yin to yang as they either attack or get ready to attack. This is how we issue Qi. Not once in the taiji form do both hands attack while they are either yang or yin. Although it might seem that way to the untrained eye. If we take the movement called “double p’eng”. (**Photo No.91**). You will see that the right palm is yin shaped so it is full of yang Qi. It can only issue yang Qi. The left palm is yang shaped so it can only issue yin Qi, it is full of yin Qi. But they got into this position by changing their state from their opposite states. In other words, the left palm was yin while the right was yang. (**Photo No.92**). In order for both palms to get into the final position, they have to pass each other while changing state. So there is a time when both palms are the same! Therefore, if you think of the two palms as being two magnets, we have two magnets of the same polarity for a short time. It’s like the rear hand is pushing the front hand away, a build up of Qi in the palms which explodes forth as they come into posture. This is what you must imagine when performing this particular posture. In fact, this is true for every posture and movement in the whole taiji form. This is one of the biggest secrets to successfully learning Taijiquan or any internal art. Eventually it will become sub-conscious and you will no longer have to think about it, the Qi will just emanate from your palms automatically. I have covered this aspect on one of my “Moments Of Magic” series of videotapes. Those postures when one hand is behind the other are obvious and relatively easy to get this happening, but when we get into those moves when the palms are for instance far apart, it becomes a little more difficult. Therefore, I recommend that you begin with the above posture and work with it until you literally feel the different polarities between each palm. Even if you are doing another martial art, even karate, you will benefit from this training as all martial arts have palms that move past each other.

Those postures or techniques when one hand is being used such as the final stage of the posture known as ‘tan-pien’ or ‘single whip’, are a little more difficult to understand where yin and yang are concerned. Here, we use the difference between the front hand and the front foot. (**Photo No.93**). One of the ‘classic sayings’ that is attributed to Chang San-feng is, “squeeze the Qi”. This means exactly what I have just been writing about. Every posture from your martial arts kata or form has an area of yin and yang parts of the body where we are able to ‘squeeze’ or

‘load’ the Qi ready for issue. If you watch someone who is at such a level that they are able to demonstrate the yin and yang movements from the forms, you will notice that never does the attacking hand simply move in a straight line. And here lies the secret to ‘squeeze the Qi’. As the front hand for instance in the posture of single whip moves forward because of the action of the body changing weight, you will notice that the hand actually moves as if it is a sine wave, be-it all so subtle. The front hand, when it is moving downwards, is actually ‘squeezing’ or ‘loading’ the Qi. Then when it moves slightly upwards (on the upward or positive path of the sine wave), it is releasing the Qi. The Qi is ‘squeezed’ between the front hand and the front foot. It goes on like this throughout the whole Taijiquan form, loading and releasing. Sometimes we have a ‘small release’ of Qi as in the postures when both hands are close together, while sometimes we have a ‘big release’ of Qi as in the one handed postures.

When one becomes well practised at Taijiquan, there comes a time when ‘things’ begin to happen. I have always told my students that once they have learnt all that there is to learn physically, Taijiquan then becomes your only teacher. Without thinking about it, you will just discover things. In addition, these things will be quite odd in that they will be difficult to explain or to teach. This is the difficult task that I face in trying to teach things that are difficult to explain in words. One of those little ‘learnings’ is like this. Everyone has his or her own ‘space’ into which fits the hand movements. It is like there is a pre-defined route, or tunnel through which your hands will travel. And they can only travel along that particular path which is determined by your own frame of mind when you practice, by your ‘sung’, by your own body shape and what if any visualisations you are doing at time of practice. Eventually, you begin to see these ‘tunnels’ more clearly until you simply cannot, even if you try, move your palms along any other path. After many years of this training, you will no longer have to think about the path, it will be there automatically and your palms will be guided automatically along the correct way. Now this is very important in using Taijiquan for fighting, as we never use pre-defined techniques in any internal martial arts system. We MUST act automatically with the correct method of attack/defence and it is this level of Taijiquan form training that will give you this level of defence. You will automatically ‘see’ the correct path to take for any given attack situation instantly and you will take it sub-consciously. It is 4 a.m. on a cold winter’s morning and I have just completed my morning training. I write this section because the ‘tunnels’ were extremely clear this morning. It’s like you are driving in automatic mode, not having to steer, not having to put on the brakes or accelerate, not even having to look at where you are going, you are stuck to the pathway. Moreover, after this type of training, you feel lifted, like as if you could take on the world.

I cannot emphasize enough this type of training in issuing and transferring Qi. It really does get back to how you perform your basics, your form. Many people dismiss kata or form and go straight to the technique sections of their arts. Sadly, they are missing the absolute main part of their training. The internal forms teach you, they are really all you will need in the end. Absolutely everything that has ever been said by any great master about Taijiquan or any internal martial system is held within its form. How do you get there? Practice! I can remember my very first lessons as clear as if they were yesterday. I can remember when I first performed the whole form right through uninterrupted by having to think about what I was doing. I used to practice sometimes eight hours per day with at least one hour of Qigong morning and evening. I can remember practising push hands with my students, we would look at the clock and notice that we had been doing it for hours and not even stopping for food. That's how much practice you must put in to begin with. You cannot get there if you do not know the way!

## Internal Pressure or Tension

We cannot live with either high or low blood pressure. Many experts in China believe that the blood flow is the physical expression or 'opposite' to the Qi flow. We must also maintain a balanced level of internal pressure where Qi is concerned. The biggest mistake that most instructors make is to take the literal translation of *sung* and then 'relax so much that they lose any internal tension, mistaking it for external tension. If we have too little blood pressure we become ill and eventually die, same for high blood pressure. It is the same with the level of Qi pressure in the body. We must maintain a balance of this pressure. We can attain this by the practising of our forms. Another reason why the forms are so important. External martial artists take this idea too far and only use external tension while the 'mystical' variety of Taijiquan people take it the other way with no internal tension, both are incorrect.

You must 'feel' something in your hands. It is only a feeling that lets you know that internal tension or pressure is present. It does NOT manifest as physical tension. It is as if your hands are filling with something. Then as your mind sends the Qi out from your palms (PC 8, Pericardium 8 point or Laugung), you will feel something actually flowing out to infinity from your palms.

One way that the ancients had to learn about internal tension was to place rings over their wrists. Nowadays many martial arts instructors

mistake this for simply trying to build up big muscles! This was not the reason because, actually, weighted arms when used too much will eventually build up all of the wrong muscles for attacking. We do not attack by lifting the arms straight up! And this is what happens when we weight the arms. No, the reason was so that we could understand about internal tension. Do NOT use weighted arms to excess, only once per week is enough to learn what it has to teach you. This practice alerts your mind to the fact that you have internal tension, in other words, it places your mind onto your hands and the heaviness of your arms. It will cause you to have very small movements and to move in harmony with what your weight is doing. You must always make your hand movements to be in harmony with the weight changes. And sometimes, there are very subtle weight changes, which cause very small hand movements. Many of the movements for instance from the Taijiquan form seem to be missing from the form of a master. It is just that they have become so small and internal that they only seem to be not there.

One thing that I have found to be of help in the absence of the rings is simply to wear a heavy coat or jacket when practising your form. This of course is difficult in mid-summer, but in winter it works quite well. The jacket will alert your mind to your arms and hands and cause you to move more slowly. Many of the ancient masters said that we should wear long sleeves when practising our taiji. Some of the modern masters translated this as that we wear long sleeves so that the Qi will not escape! What a load of old cobblers! We simply wear long sleeves to put the mind onto the arms. Once you have this idea and internal tension comes naturally, you do not have to have any weight on your arms, as the internal tension will be there always. I usually demonstrate this by having someone place his or her hand onto my forearm. Then I show them what changes take place by feel when I have no internal tension, I again show physically and through feel what my arm feels like when I have too much tension thus over spilling to cause external tension. I finish by showing by feel what it feels like when I have a balanced internal tension. They can always feel something different, but it does not have any appreciable physical difference.

When your hands and eventually your whole body has a balanced internal tension, your hands in particular will feel quite heavy but alive, your movements will be small and slow. This in turn causes your fa-jing movements to become VERY small, as this is the only way that fa-jing can ever BE fa-jing. You have actually arrived at “advanced soft fa-jing”, the highest level of fa-jing and Qi transference.

## Whip the hands

When you practice your forms and you have the idea of internal tension, you will feel like a whipping sensation at the end of every movement, especially those of the 'lateral' type such as 'slant flying', the posture from Taijiquan. It will not manifest too much physically as this is ordinary soft fa-jing, but you will feel the Qi 'whipping' out of your palms. This is often known as "double whip" as opposed to the posture known as "single whip". This facet of your training is very important for those in the therapeutic arts such as massage, bone manipulation, acupuncture etc. Once you have internal tension in your hands in particular, you will notice that your patients get well quicker. More importantly, you will be getting well from the true interaction of Qi between you, your patients, and indeed anyone who encounters you.

Take not though, and this comes as a warning, do not make the biggest mistake and mistake physical tension for internal tension as this will impede your progress so much that you will eventually go backwards. This is what happens to most so-called 'hard stylists', they go ahead while their Qi is still quite yang and they are quite young. However, as soon as they begin to grow older, their Qi is changing and they are unable to rely upon their physical yang Qi, so they go backwards and they are unable to practice their martial art. I have seen this so many times in my teaching career. I will go to a school where most have been practising hard styles, and at the end of it, many will come to me saying that they were at the stage where they just were not going anywhere anymore. These people are usually in the 40 plus bracket whose physical strength is beginning to wane. Mostly though, all these people need is the key in the lock, the one that opens the first door to the internal. And if they have not been at a standstill for too long, they can usually 'get it back' and begin advancing both externally and internally again.

## The Hands Tell the Story

We are told that the hands are the expression of what is happening in the whole body. The "Qi manifests in the hands". It is impossible to have for instance good hands while having a body that does not work or visa-versa. If your body is 'in tune' or co-ordinated, then so too must be your hands. If your hands are those that the Chinese masters called "beautiful hands", then the body must also be co-ordinated. In co-ordinating the body, I do not mean only that the hands and feet are co-ordinated, we must also co-ordinate our own energy (Qi) with that of



the attacker or person we are healing. When one is co-ordinated in body and mind, we have no need for pumping iron in order build rippling abdominal muscles or huge biceps and triceps. How long in do we have those rippling abdominal muscles? All of a sudden, we virtually turn around and we see that we can no longer hold that railway sleeper over our heads at arm's length, as I used to do. As we grow older we naturally lose our purely physical strength, this is natural. So how is it that many old Chinese masters that I know can not even lift one hundred pounds over their heads, but they can literally throw a person twice their size across a room and into a wall knocking him out? It is because he has internal power and his whole body is co-ordinated with the energy of his 'attacker'. He is able literally to use the huge amount of Qi within the attacker, against that same attacker. So he does not need his own physical strength, he is able to borrow the power of his attacker. However, he cannot do this with inanimate objects because he would then be relying upon his own strength that is no longer that great. Yang Lu-ch'an said when asked what kind of boxers he could not defeat, that he could not defeat men of wood, men of stone and men of iron. Meaning that his Qi was only good against people.

All one has to do to see if a Taijiquan or internal martial artist is at an advanced stage, is to watch the hands. If they float effortlessly like a cloud or a feather, bending gently with the movement and flowing in harmony with each other, never both yin or both yang at any time, then the person to which those hands belong is probably at an advanced stage. Do not be fooled as most people who are good at movement can cause their hands to 'look' good. You must see that the BODY is causing the hands to move and not that the hands are moving all by themselves. This is the basic co-ordination that all in any martial art must have. If you have the 'beautiful hands', this will cause your whole body to be balanced and when someone touches any part of your body, their Qi (energy/power) will be neutralised through your body to the ground. If we are attacked for instance with great force, the very instant that that attacker touches you, your body goes into neutralise mode. This does not mean what most taiji instructors call to neutralise by simply turning their body or getting out of the way etc. It means that we automatically neutralise that attacking Qi to the ground leaving the attacker feeling as if he has nowhere to go, as if his power is doing nothing, like he is floating and not grounded. At a very advanced stage, you will be able to go into this automatic mode even before you have been touched, as his Qi reaches you. This is the great secret of self-defence using the internal martial arts. There is not a person alive who is able to attack you without firstly extending his Qi or energy/electricity. Any thought causes electricity to be emitted. This can be simply proven by the use of those electrical brain-measuring devices in hospitals etc. They all work by reading electrical activity. The trick is, to get so sensitive to other people's Qi that

we are able to read their energy before they have had time to manifest the physical movement that comes from thought. For our part, we must get to the stage where we are able to move without any conscious thought so that we do not tell when we are about to attack. This is learnt in our push hands practice touched upon in the next section as well as some training exercises from Taijiquan.

Remember that the whole of the Taijiquan form or kata is like an encyclopaedia where every movement or posture teaches us something about internal gung-fu. It's like having a book where every page is a movement from the taiji form. The more basic a movement or technique is, the better it is able to teach us many things. The very first movement from the taiji form teaches us any things, such as what I have just been writing about above. The opening movement called "preparation" teaches us heaps. In fact, it is said that if you learn the very first movement of Taijiquan in less than six months then you have not learnt it! I am talking about the 'simple' movement of raising the hands to shoulder height and then moving them down again. Everything that you are trying to learn in the internal martial arts can be got from this first movement. Some of the areas that you will learn be practising this movement are; fa-jing, total body co-ordination, grounding your own Qi, grounding the attacker's Qi, making him 'float', balance both internally and externally, automatic reflex defence, dim-mak and much more.



Photo number 94

Firstly, it is important that you know how to do this movement. Many THINK they know, but when they learn how complicated this 'simple' movement is, they are astounded. You stand as in (**Photo No.94**). Notice firstly that your palms are not pointing straight ahead, they are turned inwards slightly. However, this does not happen because you turned your palms in ward. Remember that all movement comes from what the body does. So also, notice that there is a rounding of the axilla on both sides to the size of about one fist fitting into your armpits. In doing this body movement, it will cause your palms to be turned inwards. The palms are only held slightly yang shaped and the fingers are layered, not held rigid. Remember that I am teaching the advanced way of performing this movement. I teach it differently to beginners at a basic block level with no body movement or shifting of the weight or turning of the waist. Sadly though, the very basic method is what most instructors call the advanced level, or that they are totally unaware that there ARE any other levels! I will do the photos for this movement exactly as I would do it, so you may not even see some of the minute movements or changes in this movement in the photos.

The body posturing, like where the tongue is etc., is the same as for your three circle standing Qigong. Shoulders relaxed etc. As you inhale, your palms will begin to move upwards, but not at the same time, your left



Photo number 95

palm will slightly lead the right. The left palm will become slowly yin shaped ahead of the right, which will follow behind the left. At the same time, your waist begins to turn slightly to your right and your weight begins to move forward onto the balls of your feet, weight on the right foot. This is OK as you are only placing the weight onto the front of your foot for a short time. **(Photo No.95)**. As your left palm reaches its zenith, your waist is now beginning to turn back to your left; in fact, it is again pointing to the North. (You began facing the North). Your weight is now changing from your right foot to your left, still on the balls. **(Photo No.96)**. You are now beginning to exhale. As your waist turns to your left, your weight begins to move back to the heels and your left hand is moving back to its starting position with the right palm not too far behind. Notice that the palms although they are both yang shaped, one is more so than the other. Also notice that your eyes have stayed looking to the North, so you have moved your head around your eyes, thus activating and exercising the hypothalamus, that pea sized area of your brain near the temple that is responsible for many things, the least of which is sharp reflexes, important for any martial art.

*Hypothalamus: The region of the forebrain in the floor of the third ventricle, linked with the thalamus above and the pituitary gland below. It contains several important centres controlling body temperature, thirst, hunger, and eating, water balance, and sexual function. It is also closely connected with emotional activity, sleep, and functions as a centre for the integration of hormonal and autonomic nervous activity (reflex), through its control of the pituitary secretions. (With kind permission, Oxford University Press, Concise Oxford Medical Dictionary).*



Photo number 96

So you end up at your starting position, your body has actually done a circular movement because of the movement of the weight and the turning of the waist. The body has caused all of this. All your palms have done, is moved up and down, one in front of the other, the body did the rest. And you thought that it was a simple raising of the palms!

What this posture does in the martial sense is much, but one of the main applications is the one that teaches us so much. In the beginning, you will be standing static just to get the feel of how to do the movement when attacked. However, one of the biggest mistakes that anyone can make in any martial art is to move backwards when attacked, better to stand still and much better or best to move forward. The 'Classics' tell us that when the attacker moves up, we move up, then he moves down, we move down. So we are told to do exactly what the attacker does as far as moving backwards or forwards. However, there has been a gross mistranslation of the original Chinese classic here in that most people



Photo number 97

next say that ‘if he moves forward, we should move back’! This is in total contradiction of the laws of self-defence in the internal martial arts. What the classic said originally was that, ‘if he moves forward, so do we, if he moves back so do we’. In moving forward, we put off his timing, he does not want us to do this, he is confused by this action, and we have upset his timing. We are not where he expects us to be; we are in his face, not moving backwards or stationary waiting for him to hit us! You cannot do this of course if you do not have co-ordination or balance, in these cases as in the case of some of the ‘hard styles’ of martial art, we must resort to strength and moving backwards in defence.

All animals work upon switches. We have inherited switches, those that are passed on in our genes; we have learned switches, those that we learn from environment and from other people and parents etc. It is the same for the street fighter, he learns through experience that people will do certain things every time he attacks them or acts in an aggressive manner towards them. He is in his element when all of these ‘switches’ are in tact. However, if we do things that do not turn on his learned switches, he becomes confused and is unable to do what he normally does in these situations. So we now have the upper hand and are able attack at will.



Photo number 98

However, just to learn this application we stand static as our partner attacks us. Later, you will actually move forward to meet your opponent as he attacks.

At this stage, it is important to talk about reflex actions. What do most normal people do when attacked with something towards the face? They automatically cover their face with their hands don’t they. **(Photo No.97)**. This is a reflex action as is the same when in seminar, I walk up to a male person, and put a knee strike into his groin, just pulling it before full contact. He makes a reflex action. These actions happen automatically without any thought. Now if we are able to turn these reflex actions into offensive actions instead of defensive actions as in the above cases, we have a very potent defence/offence martial art. Therefore, through training we are able to turn a simple reflex action into an offensive self-defence action as in **(Photo No.98)**. When I teach law enforcement officers who only wish to know how not to die in a dire situation when they perhaps have not had time to take out their gun, I only teach three weapons and three targets. These are those that are easy to lay over the top of reflex actions and train until they actually become the preferred reflex action. To back up this theory, I will tell you of an incident that happened a few years back. One of my four sons had the habit of arriving at our home very late at night or in the wee small hours. The dogs would not bark because they

knew him and he would be very quiet so as not to disturb us. I was in a deep sleep but woke up sensing that something was amiss outside. Still half asleep, I slowly opened the door where my son was just about to enter, not knowing that he was there. He saw me and for a joke thrust his hands in through the door! I was backlit so I could not see who or what was behind the door. Reflexively, I did not bring my hands to cover my face, but rather thrust both of my hands forwards with great power knocking him out and down onto the ground. His answer? “Oh Dad, you didn’t have to do that just because I came home late”!

The weapons: Fingers which thrust into the target of a deadly dim-mak point called CV 22 (Conceptor Vessel 22) or the pit of the neck or into the eyes or in to the dim-mak point called ST 9 (Stomach point No. 9) which is situated lateral to the thyroid cartilage (Adam’s apple) and just underneath the muscle that runs up each side of your neck called the sternocleidomastoid muscle. The next weapon is the knife-edge of the palm, which attacks the weapons such as ST 9, (neck), or CV 24, just under the nose. The third of the weapons is the heel palm, which attacks to points such as CV 24 or CV 22. All of these points are death points and are covered in detail in all of my dim-mak books published by Paladin Press in Boulder Colorado.

The Targets: Eyes, just under the nose (CV 24) and the neck (ST 9 or CV 22). Using the first movement from the Taijiquan form you can use all of the above weapons and targets.

For this training, we will use a ‘utility’ attacking method from your partner, which is indicative of any type of hand attack. There are not many people who will actually attack with a kick, to do so invites defeat unless you are in a silly tournament situation, which is NOT fighting! Fights happen in your face, there is no such thing as long distance methods, fights happen at very short distance, often in a grappling situation on the ground. However, I tell all of my students that if they are taken down, they have not learnt their martial art very well! See my book by Paladin Press called *How To Fight A Grappler & Win*.

Your partner thrusts his both hands to try to touch you on your shoulders. This is so that you both will not sustain any damage while training. You do not want your partner to stick your eyes! All you are going to do is to raise both hands exactly the same way that you do in the opening movement of your Taijiquan form, no different! Notice that as you raise your palms, they change from the yang shape to the yin shape over the whole range of the movement, and do not all of a sudden change state thus making for a ‘dead’ movement where there is no changing from yin to yang or visa-versa over the movement. This is important in that we never push an attacker, we strike! Striking involves changing the attack-

ing hand from either a yang to a yin or yin to a yang shape upon impact. This is the only way to issue Qi or to transfer bad Qi into the attacker. A dead hand is dead and void of any Qi transference. As he attacks, both hands (for now do it double weighted, i.e., both hands make contact at the same time), lift up and attack him on the inside of his forearms. **(Photo No.99)**. Notice that I have not dragged my hands inward, I have done it exactly as in the form, keeping my hands out away from my body. There is an old Chinese saying; “protect your garden, do not let anyone in”. So if you bring your palms in towards you, your ‘garden’ is smaller and you give yourself less of a chance in defence. You must have a feeling of going forward into the attacker, your mind does this, this will put forth Qi. Your palms are not tense, as this will block the Qi; they are also not dead! They are rather in a state of ‘sung’, alive with in-



Photo number 99

ternal tension only, no external tension, only that which is necessary in lifting your arms. Your body is in a state of sung. To test this, have someone look at the precise moment of contact. If your body moves as well as your opponent’s then you are tense. Only the opponent’s body should be shocked, there should be a quivering in his body when you make contact, but your own body should remain as still as a tree. This will take his Qi and send it straight back to him, hence the quivering in his body. The harder he attacks, the more he gets back, while you remain motionless and unaffected by his attack. Using this method, even a smaller person is able to defend against a big ‘strong’ person. My third son, who is at present 14, is able to stop me with almost full force and my little girl who is only 6 at present is also learning how to kill! People criticise me for this, relatives etc., say how could I teach my little girl such dangerous methods of defence! I tell them to take a look around at the world! Better to know how to kill and be sure rather than to end up in a paddock naked, raped and murdered as a friend of ours was a few years back, and what happens each day in every country of the world. It is a sad sign of the times that we have to teach our children how to kill in order to survive! However, that’s another soapbox and another book.

Once you and your partner have this, or think you have, you can alternate attacker and defender. When this happens and both partners are getting it, one is able to see that both people are moving as one, totally balanced. We can now go on to the next part of this ‘simple’ movement.

From the previous movement, your left palm will strike downwards onto and across the biceps of his right arm. This very painful nerve point strike can send shock waves through the whole body. I stress that this is a strike rather than a push, so there must be almost no movement of his arm downwards. Of course, you are only doing this at a training level so you do not wish to hurt each other. However, when done for real, this

strike would be instant with almost no movement of his arm, but the pain is great. Your other palm will strike in to a point called ST 5 (stomach point No. 5), just near the hinge of the jaw. This is a classical knock out point, the one that the John Wayne character always hits in the movies, it really works. **(Photo No.100)**. In order for these strikes to be strikes and not just pushes, the whole body must cause the movement and must not come from the arms alone. To see whether or not you are doing this movement correctly, begin from the initial position when you have first defended. Move your body to see how you will eventually strike to the biceps and jaw. If you extended your arms, then you have done it incorrectly. If you simply turned your body so that your palms automatically touch the two points, then this is correct. If, when you turn your body, in this case to your left, your right palm does not reach his ST 5 point, then your timing and distancing has been incorrect. But also remember, that in a real situation, you would actually be moving in as he has struck anyway, so your timing should be OK.



Photo number 100

Once you have it this way, you should begin doing this training method correctly by having your partner move in on you from a distance. You should move in to meet him when he is taking his last step towards you. This is akin to the goodies waiting until they see the 'whites of their eyes' before they begin shooting.

Every posture from the Taijiquan form teaches many different aspects of internal gung-fu and to include all of them here would take up several volumes in itself. Learn to work out for yourself what each posture or technique teaches you. Every martial art should have this aspect. Something that seems like a stupid technique may have some hidden training method that it is trying to teach you other than just the application.

### The Five Levels of Qi Transference

I have already covered the first level of learning in issuing or transferring the Qi, that of 'sung'. Without sung you are unable to go on to the other four levels. In fact you cannot learn the next level without having first mastered the previous level. This is in fact a universal mistake, when students learn too quickly. They never learn the advanced stages of their martial art. Although they might know all of the physical movements, they will never advanced internally until they go back and learn their basic forms properly and slowly. So I advise that you do not attempt the next stage in Qi transference before understanding about 'sung', it is one of the most important areas of your internal martial arts training. Practice the movements of 'wave hands like clouds' repeatedly until you are able to perform at least the hand movements without

feeling any movement in the wrists. Once achieved, you are knocking upon the first door of internal gung-fu. Many external martial arts have a set of moves like 'wave hands like clouds'. See my video series "Internal Gung-fu". To try to show this set of moves in photos is only second best, but I will try to give you some idea of how it looks.



Photo number 101



Photo number 102



Photo number 103



Photo number 104

There are also foot movements to be performed, however, they are not important in the understanding of sung, so I will not confuse those who do not know of this set of postures. Stand as in **(Photo No.101)**. Your left hand is yin shaped while your right is yang shaped. Begin to move your left palm downwards as it changes to a yang shape. Your right palm will change to a yin shape as it also moves upwards and both palms will cross. **(Photo No.102)**. Breathe out. Continue this movement until the hands are about six inches apart, then begin turning your waist to your right and begin also changing your weight from your left foot to your right foot. This will carry both palms over to your right. **(Photo No.103)**. Finish as in **(Photo No.104)** with weight on your right foot. The time that you should not feel any movement in your wrists is when they both change state and begin to move downwards and upwards. This movement is then repeated in exact reverse so that you will end up back in your beginning position. You must inhale as you change your hands on the right side so that the right palm will begin to move down while the left will begin to move upwards. Repeat this movement repeatedly until you are able to do it without feeling your palms. It will take some doing and practice but when you have this, you can then begin to take this idea into your other postures from your katas or forms.



## Moving From the Centre.

### **This is the second level of learning about Qi transference.**

*Understanding comes from Experience. And experience comes from doing.*

One can only experience the different levels of Taijiquan when one has practised for long enough. I once had a student ask me how many times I practised the Taijiquan form each day.

So I told him that I used to practice at least four times per day but now it is more like only once or twice. His next question was, would he get to my level in half the time if he practised double the amount of times per day that I practised. The answer is of course, no.

One must practice of course and without doing the forms; you will get no where fast. But it is not so much the amount of times you do the form as this, in the beginning is really to hone your physical skills, which is an important prerequisite for understanding the ‘internal’.

Really, the amount of years you have been practising correctly is the most important thing. Once you have the correct physical skills, Taijiquan will teach you no matter how many times you do the form each day. In addition, it will only let out that amount of information to you when you need it and are able to understand it at that particular time. It’s like a fail safe mechanism, all of the information is there right in front of your face, every bit of it, but you will not see it until you are ready to see it. Moreover, if you look for it, you will never see it. And if you do not practice the form at least once per day, you will also never see it as this is the only way that “God” has to teach us what is meant to be learnt through the form.

Sometimes there comes a time when the taiji form must be not done. This time can be anything from three days up to months but not years. It is like a computer backing up information, you cannot do any more work until the previous information is backed up, and this is the waiting time. For some unknown reason, one morning there will be this urge to practice, and when you do, a new understanding will take place, the next chunk of information will go into your conscious brain and you will understand a little bit more about life. Should you go against these urges, things will go wrong, you will feel out of sorts and you will become irritable etc., until you do the form again to go to the next level. Having done the form, again after this waiting period and having taken in the

next level, you will again feel calm, relaxed and at ease with yourself, you can again ‘smell the roses’.

The ‘secrets’ are all there, for all to discover, do not look for them, as they will never manifest, just ‘feel’ what it is that you have to do. Look for meanings in everything you do and try to learn something from everything you do. In our everyday life, obstacles are placed before us to cause us to react and to learn. If we complain and get angry, taking it out on our loved ones etc., we will never learn what it is that is trying to be given. All you have to do is to do your Taijiquan form and you will learn. Everything that is told to us in the “classics” is a secret of Taijiquan. However, it means nothing if you just read it and think you understand it, it must be earned and learned. When a ‘classic’ is taken in at one of the times for learning, it will be like the heavens have opened up and spoken to you, like a light from above, and you will marvel at what you have just learnt. Simple things that you thought you knew, take on a totally different meaning and seem to expand into huge proportions of meaning.

It is the job of the ‘master instructor’ to find ways of communicating these meanings to the student, so that they will become easier to understand once the learning begins. “MOVE THE CENTRE” is one classic saying that I now believe is the most important area of one’s training. Alternatively, “THE MOVEMENT COMES FROM THE CENTRE”. Once you understand this, and have experienced it, you Taijiquan will never be the same again. You will finally have found the way with everything you ever read about Taijiquan finally coming to fruition.

There is a catch though. To move the centre, correctly, you must firstly have mastered all of the other physical areas of movement, as the centre moving is the highest level of movement. Therefore, I will try to communicate to you my experience of this highest level of movement so that when it comes, it will really come.

Think of your centre as being your lower backbone in the beginning. As you progress, your centre will be the whole backbone. “The Movement comes From the Centre”. All of your movement must originate from the backbone! See how much your body moves when you simply turn your backbone. Only an eighth of an inch will cause your hands to move some inches, if your hands and arm, shoulders are all in line. (The closest one word translation of ‘line’ is to relax, but this is not correct. More correctly, “we move without feeling the movement”).

When we firstly learn Taijiquan our brain puts each movement into either an upper body movement (hands, shoulders, elbows etc.) or a lower body movement, (feet, legs hips etc.)

We are taught to put our hand somewhere, and that is how it stays in our mind until we learn about 'moving the centre'. In order to understand the concept we must get right away from individual body part movement. You must perform each posture from the Taijiquan form (no matter what style you do, but the "Old Yang Style" of Yang Lu-ch'an lends itself to this area better than all others) looking at where the movement for the hands is coming from. This cannot be done if you are controlling the movements so that they are all slow and constant as in the Yang Cheng-fu form for instance. So this form and others like it must be modified for quicker or slower movements throughout the form. But these quicker or slower movements must not be done just for the sake of doing faster movements, they must be done purely to cause the hands to move from the centre and not from the shoulders or hands themselves. So if you are doing a movement like "Slant Flying", loosen your arms (they should already be loosened) and make the arms move into the posture by moving your backbone only. You of course must hold the arms and hands in the posture for a brief time in order to get into the next movement, but the 'getting into' movements must only come from the centre. It is as if you are throwing your arms and hands into the posture. Only in this way will you ever understand fully, fa-jing, as this is where fa-jing comes from, from the centre.

People often ask me how I am able to perform the Yang Lu-ch'an form with the 'shakes' as if they are coming automatically. It is because I am simply doing exactly what I have described above, moving the arms and hands from the centre. The movements do not have to be fa-jing to begin with; they can be done at a slower pace in order to experience moving from the centre. The whole Yang Lu-ch'an form, when done at this pace, learning to move from the centre should only take around fifteen minutes to perform. However, once done, your whole body will feel energised, the backbone will feel strong and your whole outlook will be brighter and more positive. In fact, this article has come as a direct consequence of practising Yang Lu-ch'an's form from the centre. I usually find some area of release for the tremendous amount of Qi that is generated by this form, and today's was to write this article. It is as an explosion of positive Qi energises your whole body into action when you do the form in this way.

So you have to look at every tiny movement and make it come from the centre only, this will give your hands a rubber doll type of action that will not look like traditional Taijiquan at all, it will not look 'pretty'. When I first saw Chang Yiu-chun performing Taijiquan, I thought that it looked quite sloppy, as if he were a rag doll. My own Taijiquan at that time was controlled; beautiful, low, but was not Taijiquan. I have since seen only a handful of other Masters performing Taijiquan in this way and because it does not look pretty; they do not have many students.

One master I saw in a park in Beijing had no students at all, but his Taijiquan was just superb, he called his style “waving boxing”, which can be translated as “Loose Boxing” or “Hao ch’uan”.

Upon every movement from the centre, which will end in a small shake, you must also ‘sink’ the Qi to the ground. Keep the backbone vertical at all times, and allow the Qi to sink straight down the backbone, through the legs and into the ground exhaling as you do this.

Even if it is only a finger movement, try to get it to happen by what the centre is doing and not just because you have caused the correct muscles to contract to cause the movement.

Allow you fingers and palms to be so relaxed that any slight movement from the centre will cause a great movement at the fingertips.

The health and martial areas of Taijiquan will be greatly enhanced performing taiji from the centre. You will feel your backbone cracking into place as you perform, your elbows will crack, your shoulders will also, hips and waist will fall into place, setting you up nicely for the day’s work. In fact, everything that you have read about Taijiquan and probably the reason that you took it up in the first place is now fully realised doing Taijiquan from the centre. A simply ‘classic saying’ that holds so much.

I will be making a videotape on the above subject as well as including the above in my next book, “You Have The Power, Use It”. Research into what we already know, will continue here on “Horse’s Head” and I will try to communicate the enlightenment as it happens.

## How to Know: And What to Feel:

It is difficult to put down into words what one feels inside, one's experience and understanding of a certain thing. I have for years been trying and experimenting with ways to give to my own students, that which I have experienced.

When one practices Taijiquan, you cannot actually think about what it is you are feeling, as this would stop the flow and feeling that you were feeling! So, there had to be a way of my doing the form and still knowing what it was that I was experiencing. We go into a sort of 'alpha' state when we perform Taijiquan, that area not asleep but not quite awake. So I experienced with different levels of energy and found that I could still perform the Taijiquan form correctly and also keep a conscious mind upon what it was that I was experiencing, by keeping my consciousness just a tad above that alpha state.

To this end, years ago, I had a friend place electrodes all around my head and attach me to a bio-feedback machine which would let me know exactly what state my brain was in while practising Taijiquan. I could then learn to lift the consciousness a bit so that I could be totally aware of what I was feeling. The following is what I have been able to come up with.

- 1/. You will feel totally relaxed or in a state of 'sung', and will feel each change of yin and yang within the body. Not only those changes that happen physically when you simply know that your front leg has the weight on it and the rear leg does not, but a much deeper understanding of the feeling of yin and yang. As you move, you will feel each side of your body changing from yin to yang then back again, you will feel your two palms changing from yin to yang and back again, one being yin while the other is yang and visa-versa. Even the different parts of your brain will feel changes from yin to yang. It feels like a sort of wave moving all over your body as you move, from up to down and front to back, from side to side and down to up.

You must not mistake this feeling of yin and yang for what you already know about yin and yang from reading about it etc. It will be a totally different feeling, like your whole inside is full of moving honey. Well that's my explanation and I'm sticking to it!

- 2/. There will be very little physical movement. Remember that when you practice alone, you only have yourself to impress, no one is watching, so you do not have to 'show' that you are doing Taijiquan. Once you 'get into the cog' of Taijiquan, the movements will really become small and you will simply not wish to do big postures with a lot of movement. You will be forced to do smaller movements.

When we first begin training in Taijiquan, the physical movements are all that we are concerned with. Those movements and postures are done quite large because there is not much connection to the internal movement of Qi. As your training increases, there will be a greater connection between external movement and internal movement of Qi. As the movement of Qi is very small, this causes our external movement to become also small. So at the highest level, there is very little external movement at all.

- 3/. Your wrists in particular will feel quite electric. As if there is some current flowing through the wrists and palms. This 'flow' which will probably be felt as some kind of tingling sensation will linger for some time after you cease practising.
- 4/. Your body should feel heavy because you are not using any extraneous muscles to hold your body up, only those which are necessary. This is usually a new feeling to most people because we usually hold more muscles than are necessary. When those muscles become relaxed, we feel more weight upon our backbone, so we feel heavy.
- 5/. Your palms will feel like they are glowing, or fill like a balloon. This is because of the increased blood and Qi that is sent to the palms. Your palms will look red and perhaps blotchy with blood.
- 6/. After practice, you will not be able to make sudden movements, or rather you will not wish to. Your Qi and body movements are in harmony; you will feel like you are walking under water for some minutes after practice.

- 7/. You will feel a great hunger for food. Do not eat for at least one hour after practice. The longer you leave it, the more benefit you gain, as that Qi that is usually used for digestion, is used within the body to heal and energise. The moment you begin eating that energising will cease until the food is digested. Do not have sex after training, although you will feel like this, especially if you are young! Sex is the largest user of Qi and can be damaging if performed after training. Sex without love is a base way to release Qi.
- 8/. Your whole body feels like it is breathing, not just your lungs, but your legs, toes, fingers, face all feel like they are breathing. I guess this gets down to the area of energising, as that feels like the body is breathing.
- 9/. The body feels like it is 'locked', like under water. It is as if every joint is in its correct place, locked there, so that if you move only one part of your body, the whole body must move.
- 10/. You feel as if you are floating but heavy, this is the sensation of feeling true yin and yang. From the base of your skull right down to your coccyx, you will feel like it is floating and sinking at the same time. This causes your eyes to use 'eagle vision' or peripheral vision.
- 11/. You feel like it is not actually you doing the form, it's like someone else has entered your body and is doing the form along with you, causing your limbs to move in the correct way automatically. Perhaps someone is inside of you. I do not know, or perhaps it is just the Qi flowing perfectly that causes your body to move automatically. I need to research this area more. I have always had dreams where the same old Chinese gentleman is there teaching me things. I wake and try it all out and it's usually very good so I keep it and teach it to my students. Maybe it's just myself telling me things or perhaps it could actually be a guide or some angel telling me things.
- 12/. A warm feeling covers the whole body while and after practice, although it might be bitterly cold, you do not feel it. Some quite well respected masters have the idea that one should lock the Qi inside by having clothing that is pulled in at the wrists and ankles! It is my own belief that this is rubbish, if anything you should allow your Qi to flow around your body on the outside as well as the inside. So the

least amount of clothing the better and the least restrictive, the better, Let the air get on your skin, but do not allow the wind to blow on your skin. We can do Taijiquan in any weather bar wind. A slight cooling breeze in fine, snow is fine, rain and sun (not too much direct sun though). However, keep out of the wind as it tends to scatter the Qi and your form will not feel good to do anyway.

## Push Hands

Once we have all of the above down, and more importantly understood and experienced, we can then go on to experiment issuing Qi during our practice of the Taijiquan exercise of 'push hands'. This is an excellent way to test our level of Qi issuing without actually hurting anyone. However, it MUST be Taijiquan push hands and not one of the many other hard styles of 'push hands' that I have seen. It has been said that we must practice 'push hands' (toi sau) as we would during our Qigong practice. This is no easy task as it takes a strong person both physically and mentally to be able completely to give in to an attack during push hands and in the beginning, we must lose in order to win. In other words, we must 'invest in loss'. When we begin our push training

## Other Areas of Qi Development and Use

The most important aspect of one's internal gung-fu training is to learn to listen. I do not mean that we simply use our ears to listen, but rather that we listen to what is trying to be taught to us by our 'guides'. Your physical teacher, such as me is nothing compared to your own 'internal' teacher. Moreover, everyone has one. I am a spec of dust on the floor compared to my internal teacher, my guide. Call it God, call it an angel, call it late for dinner, it's there incessantly trying to teach you. I say 'trying' because I know it must be exasperating trying to teach me things. Sometimes it takes days, weeks, months or years for me to hear what is being taught to me. Once I hear 'it', I then realise how long this 'lesson' has been sitting in front of my eyes waiting to be seen. Often, I will even apologise to my guide for being so bloody stupid in not taking notice of the signs that were being thrust upon me.



How does your 'guide' teach you? It begins small, and gets bigger and bigger as you still do not 'listen'. This could be in the form of a disease, or something that keeps happening to you. How many times have you heard; "why does this keep happening to me"! The reason is that you are not listening! I have a nice little disease, one that my Mother died from and this disease is the cane that my guide uses to teach me. Normally I have my problem in check using diet, Taijiquan and other regimes. But often without notice, it will get worse with one of my many daily tests indicating this. Once, I would just curse a bit and wonder "why me"! However, nowadays, I have learnt to listen to my own body, as this is how my guide teaches me, through what is happening to my own body. This is only one of many ways that your guide has to teach you, you have to learn what your particular guide's methods of teaching are. So that when it is using a particular method, you are aware, that something is trying to be taught. For instance, and just to make a point, you might keep running into a closed door and hurting your head. One day you learn to open the door to stop your head from being hurt. But opening the door is not to stop you from hurting your head anymore, because when you look through the door and see the wonderful things on the other side, you then realise the real reason why you had to open the door! Like when you have a disease, you desperately try to do everything possible to heal it yourself. This might be getting into shape, losing weight, eating correctly etc. Once you begin this new regime, you realise what good health is all about, and you realise what it is to be actually healthy and fit! Therefore, although you began by trying to heal your disease, the other benefits of having this disease are far greater than just fixing the immediate problem. I had a friend who kept getting into debt and had people knocking at his door at all hours trying to re-possess items he had bought etc. He was becoming ill because of this tension but could not see that fixing the root of his problem, i.e., paying off his debts and not taking on any more, would actually fix his health problems. Finally, he became so ill that he had to go into hospital. Upon his release, he began getting in touch with credit companies and talking to them, working out his problems, his ailments miraculously disappeared.

The best time, to find out what it is that is trying to be taught to you, is to rise out of a deep sleep, perhaps around 2 or 3 a.m. Perhaps walk around for a while, turn on the heater, do not make a cup of tea or coffee as these substances will impede your internal learning progress. By the way, decaffeinated tea or coffee is just as bad, even worse for you than the real thing because of harmful chemical residuals left behind after the decaffeinating process. Perhaps practice some of your kata or form, as this is often the best tool that your guide has to use to teach us things. As you are performing your form or kata, something will click in there, and it will be a revelation, you will discover your next lesson.

The lessons that your internal guide has to teach you are not like some schoolroom lesson, they are like whole bits of life being taught to you, they are big! Only one lesson can be taught at one time, as it takes a while for your external learning to catch up with your internal learning. The reason that this time is the best time to learn, is that while we sleep, we not only 'back up' (as in computer language) onto our 'hard drive' all the physical lessons that have been taken in that day, we also re-charge our batteries and learn sub-consciously. Your guide literally tells you stuff as you sleep. These lessons will quite often manifest in the form of a vivid dream, the subject matter having little or nothing at all to do with what is actually being taught because it is your physical conscious mind that is trying to decipher it all when you wake. And we can only decipher at a level of what we know now. This is often too little for what is being learnt sub-consciously. So, when we wake from a deep sleep, and I must stress, that this should only happen when we KNOW that there is something that is trying to be taught to us, we have a greater opportunity to learn physically and consciously as we are closer to the source. Quite often, you will be woken up because of something happening to you while you sleep, like some tingling or itching or some other physical sensation that causes us to wake. Learn to read this and use it to learn. Well, it is now 4 a.m. and I have been up since 3 a.m., learning. Hence my typing away at such a ridiculous hour! My lesson for this time was quite amazing and I will bring it into my lessons with my own students when I see them again. In retrospect, this particular lesson has been trying to 'come through' for about two weeks now and I have had the 'signs' to prove it. Now that I have learnt what was being given, those signs have completely disappeared!

Always the small things teach the most. We think they are small, or simple, but these things have within them so much information. Things that we take for granted like a classic saying that we thought we knew, but when learnt internally, become far greater than just the spoken word. Learn to wait. This is one of the best lessons that I tell my own students. Things that I have learnt physically in the past, things that I thought I knew but which were only learnt from the spoken word, will have a far greater importance many years later when you are ready to really learn internally. It is important of course to be taught by the spoken word, as we would not be aware of what is happening to us when it is time to 'learn'. You might be told about a simple thing like; "the eyes look straight ahead level to the ground". This is one of the classic sayings left to us by the old masters. It seems straightforward and simple to understand and here is the danger. Because most of the 'classics' are simple to relay using the spoken word, we miss what they really mean at an internal level. The above classic has so much to teach us. Because it is simple, most students will take note of it and then forget about actually doing what it says to do. Most people gaze downwards as they perform

their form or kata. This is only natural as we do this in our daily lives when we walk around, not wishing to step in anything. But keeping your gaze level to the ground teaches us so much more, like correct breathing. When you hold your head in the correct position you finally realise what it is like to breathe correctly. Holding your head in this position connects you to the ground so that you gain the power of 'ground Qi', causing you to feel like you are a tree stuck in the ground unable to be toppled. It will cause your hands to move in complete harmony with your body, will cause your whole body to be in the correct alignment. Once this is achieved, everything that is told to you that will happen, happens! It is the same with all of the other 'classics', they seem simple when taught using the spoken or written word, but when learnt internally, take on a completely new meaning. And every 'classic' that is learn internally, takes you further to your final goal, whether that is doing good Taijiquan or karate, or being successful in your job, or becoming a famous writer or whatever. Reaching the internal learning level will enhance your whole life, not only your martial arts training.

# Chapter Five

## The Mind in Internal Gung-fu

In order to understand Internal Gung-fu, it is important also to understand at a basic level how the mind works. In knowing this, we are able to understand why we have to perform forms or katas and why they are so important.

I was alerted to the following by taking a memory course by Kevin Trudeau which, for me had more relevance to the martial arts than merely learning how to remember things! I have also read extensively books such as “Super Memory” and have found that what they contain is relevant to the martial arts. This is one of Kevin Trudeau’s experiments. I would like you to try this right now. As you read this chapter, imagine that you are holding a big yellow juicy lemon in your hand. You must SEE the lemon in your mind’s eye; you must feel the waxy texture and that little lump at the end. Take a big knife, cut the lemon holding one half up to your mouth, and squeeze the juice into your open mouth.

What happened? Your mouth produced saliva didn’t it. You really did not have a lemon; you were only imagining it. Your mind however, still caused your body to do what it would have done had you a real lemon!

It is the same with the martial arts. When we practice our forms or katas, we imagine the opponent in front of us. If you have a good imagination, your sub-conscious mind will be doing all of those self-defence applications as you go through your forms. The good thing is however, that you do not have to imagine the applications every time you practice. Only once or twice do you have to be told what the applications are and only once or twice do you have to go through the whole form imagining that you are performing those applications. After that, those movements go into your ‘long term’ memory and you no longer have to think about them, they will just happen sub-consciously. IT does not take long for a ‘short term’ memory to become long term. I have a way of remembering my pin numbers where I make up a story using those numbers. Every

time I have to use my pin, I remember the story rather than the pin number. However, the amazing thing is, that after a short time, I no longer even remember the story, as it has become sub-conscious or 'long term memory'. Therefore, the pin number just comes without any conscious thought. Doing it this way, there is no chance that you will forget the number after some time of not using it as it has become long term, like your name. No one forgets their name unless they have some memory disease. And it is the same with the martial arts, before long, the self-defence applications go into your long term memory and you no longer have to think about them, they will just happen if you are ever attacked.

This is the beauty of doing form or kata correctly, you do not actually have to go out and fight people in order to learn about self-defence. You have of course to know how to strike hard objects, and you have to have some form of interaction with other people in a self-defence area such as in push hands or in what we in our schools call 'offence/defensive' sparring. I use the word 'sparring' with caution however as most people nowadays know my thoughts on this silly pastime. What most people call sparring is the most damaging area of one's martial arts/self-defence training. Of course, if you are only doing a martial art as opposed to using a martial art as a self-defence tool, then you should do sparring. Sparring is a sport and if you are doing martial arts for sport, then you will have to do sparring in order to win trophies etc. However, do not expect to be able ever to defend yourself using those same movements that you use in the ring against some street-wise attacker. You will be beaten up should you think that you could defend yourself because you have won some trophy in some martial arts tournament! Street fights just do not happen as they do in ANY ring fight no matter how realistic they TRY to make them or call them. You have to do either sports or self-defence; the two can never be mixed.

Offensive/defensive sparring is the only way that my schools teach fighting. We do it this way; the instructor wears all of the protective equipment that he can find so that he is not hurt. We even go so far as to wear large neck equipment so that neck strikes are used without killing the instructor. I say that it is only the instructor with many years of training who I able to act at the attacker because he or she will have the necessary control to be able to pull the attacks should they see that the student is not going to defend against it! This is very important. However, we do not let the student whose time has come for this type of training, know that we will actually pull the attacks when necessary. The student believes that they will be severely struck if they do not successfully defend themselves. This is part of the mind training. In any confrontation, the person with the strongest and most resolute mind will win depending upon relevant training of course. I let the student believe

that he or she will be severely attacked with great force and if they do not successfully defend against me, they will be hurt. I then attack as they would be attacked in the street, totally illogically, without technique like an animal. As soon as I register that the student has struck me in two or three deadly point like the neck, I will stop the attack, as I have been defeated. This kind of training I have found to be the greatest training aid for any self-defence method. The students really feel intimidated as they would in the street. Then they only have their mind to rely upon. They must summon up automatically more yang Qi (energy) than what I am landing upon them, only then will they be assured that their art will suffice in a real scrap.

In one training session of form or kata, we have defended ourselves against an attacker often hundreds of times and these methods become automatic eventually.

However, here is the rub; you must be training in natural movement, that which is in tune with your natural flow of internal energy. Only these movements will ever become sub-conscious reflex actions. Movements that are jerky, stiff, not circular, will ever become a reflex action, as they are moves that we have always to think about. Many karate people around the world now are beginning to realise this and are changing their katas slightly, so that they represent that which was originally kept from them!

Your mind cannot tell the difference between what is imagined and what is real. As an example, my children only ever practice form thus far. But every now and again, I will simply attack them to test out their sub-conscious learning. Without fail, each one of them is able to defend against my attacks relative to their level of growth and strength of course. But the sub-conscious is there, never having any normal sparring. People who say that they only practice what is 'real' and never practice form or kata will never be good at self-defence. We only have to look at some of the great instructors such as Bruce Lee. No one has ever come up to his level. Why? Because people tried to learn what he knew and not HOW he knew. Bruce Lee was well versed in a number of classical martial arts systems including Taijiquan. It would be the same should I try to teach my own students and children what I know and not how I learnt it. Sure it is very hard not to teach what I now know, as it is exciting for me to teach the advanced stuff. However, I must keep teaching basics to beginners, as they will never reach an advanced level if I only teach them how to fight using my system. In learning from the beginning, the classical internal systems, we eventually learn to invent our own system where the art becomes ours; we own the art, it does not own us. However, in order to own the art, it must own you for some time in the beginning.

Bruce Lee was correct in saying in as many words, that one must come across his own system, leaving all systems aside. But in order to do that, we must first learn a system! A baby cannot just get up and run, it must first learn a system of moving. When the baby grows up, it has its own system of moving like no other person. At this time, the baby has become the adult and has mastered the art of moving. It is the same with the martial arts; we must firstly learn a system, preferably a classical proven system. Then we are able to convert that knowledge to our own system. This is the reason that I always tell my students, (at an advanced level), “don’t do it like me, find your own way”. However, in the beginning, they must do it exactly the same way that I do it as these are the basic building blocks of those forms that have been proven to lead you to greater things later. Many systems will not do this for you however, as they are just not physically sound; they do not have natural movement.

When you are first imagining the opponent in front of you and performing the self-defence applications against his attacks, you must have it in your mind as vividly as possible. See what clothing the attacker is wearing. Is he small or large, dark or light coloured hair and complexion? Is he hairy or smooth? Really see that attacker as he attacks you but do not use tension in your forms as this will block the Qi and those movements will never become reflexive! This is what is wrong with the so-called ‘dynamic tension katas’; they block the Qi. Be sure to put yourself into the picture as this really helps with long term memory. This sounds like I am also talking about push hands. And I am. Push hands has all of the above elements and in the idea exercise for gaining reflex self-defensive actions.

One last warning: Always be careful of what you think! Because what you think, your mind is actually doing! This applies to all facets of life and has a direct bearing upon your standard of life. Someone can be on the outside a saint and have a miserable life because what they are thinking on the inside is definitely not saintly! Your mind is the most powerful weapon you have in both self-defence and in your daily life. Use it wisely.

## Chapter Six

### Small Frame Form

Ever since Taijiquan became popular in the West, one area has been talked about as being the highest level of one's Taijiquan training. It holds almost mystical proportions in the minds of those 'masters' who like to sound as if they actually know something. However, ask ten people who say they know this advanced form and you will receive ten different answers. The reason, it is my belief is in the name itself, 'small frame', or 'small circle'. Although I also call this most advanced method of practice 'small circle', I prefer to think of it as simply, the 'internal level', or the 'Qi' level.

What most people call their 'small frame' form is simply a smaller and lower stance form where all of the movements are made equally smaller and the stance is made much lower. I know some 'masters' who charge thousands of dollars to teach this form and it is nothing different from what they have already charged thousands of dollars for, only smaller.

The small frame/circle form goes much deeper than just being smaller; it is a totally different form using the same movements as in the earlier levels of the Taijiquan form. In fact, someone watching would probably not even recognise most of the movements as being the same as in the basic to mid-range forms. Others might see this from performed and think that it looks nothing different to what they have learned at a basic level. This is because they do not see the tiny circular movements that the hands are making. This is why it is most important to have come up through all of the other levels before attempting the small frame form. If, for instance someone was watching a real master performing his Taijiquan in the park and were to then go and copy those movements, all he would be doing would be basic form, with some of the important movements left out! The reason is that he just did not see the small internal movements that were being manifest in the hands and fingers. The internal Qi is emulated in the hands, which cannot be seen by the untrained eye. Moreover, this is what has happened to this great art of



Taijiquan nowadays. I know of many so-called masters who have done exactly that. They have watched great masters in the parks in Hong Kong or China and have simply copied their external movements. They then go on to become well-known masters teaching a very basic and wrong form! When I first began my Taiji training, I always wondered why no one else was doing certain movements; they seemed to leave them out and go on to the next movements. Now, I realise that these people have learned from teachers who have learned from teachers who have learned by simply watching advanced forms performed. However, they have not noticed the small frame movements because they were too small. Had these 'masters' learned Taijiquan from the very beginning from that great master from whom they stole the movements, they would have learnt the basic 'big frame' form. In this way, they would have seen those movements that they did not see in the small frame form. Many years down the track, when they were ready to take in the 'small frame' form, they would know exactly why they were doing certain movements because they would have learnt at a basic level first! After having learnt the big frame form, they would then go on to learn the 'open/close' form which would teach them about basic yin and yang and how it manifest in the body. After this, they would have learnt the 'waving form' which is the pre-runner to the small frame form. In this very advanced form, the body looks as if it has a wave moving from the tantien right up through the body manifesting finally in the fingertips. Again, many have seen this form performed and have tried to emulate the waving movements only to do a very physical and rather silly body movement because they just do not have the internal part of Taijiquan. So all they are doing are physical movements with no real reason for being, there is not internal Qi manifested in the body. Rather, the movements are done purely because the brain is telling the body what to do in just the same way that we learn the basic form.

At a recent annual World Taiji Boxing Association camp that I held here in Australia, I tried something new. I tried teaching the small frame form to the 80 or so attendees. I came across this method of teaching this form while trying to teach my own personal students here on "Horses Head", my Martial Arts/Healing Farm. Normally, the small frame form was not actually taught formally as it was just expected that when someone was ready, it would simply come. However, nowadays, most people do not stay with their instructor for time necessary to get to this level. Therefore, they leave without ever having seen the teacher performing the advanced form. So, when (and if, provided that they have learnt the correct form necessary for advancement) they are ready to learn the small frame form, or rather when their body and mind and internal energy are ready to become balanced, they resist this as they have never seen anyone doing it! So, although their body and mind might be screaming out for them to change, they resist, as they are afraid to do

anything different to what they were taught at a basic level! If they had stayed with their teacher, (provided the teacher actually knew the small frame form and what should happen to them as time progresses), he or she would have told them what to expect. More importantly, he would have shown them what to expect and how the Taijiquan form would change as they progress. I have always told my students this and more importantly, that Taijiquan eventually becomes your teacher and you no longer need a physical teacher provided that he has given you the necessary tools to progress by yourself.

Not all of the students attending Camp97 actually learnt the small frame form, as some were still at a beginner's level. However, those students who had been practising from some time, actually started to get what I was trying to teach. I could see that many finally understood exactly what I meant when I would say, that they had to feel the Qi rather than simply do the movements. Those who were beginners now have an excellent chance of moving on to the advanced ways of performing Taijiquan as they have now seen it performed at its small frame level.

## Yin and Yang

What is the first thing that any great master will tell you when asked, "what is the most important aspect of one's Taijiquan training"? It will be 'the difference between yin and yang'. So you ask he or she what that means and they say, "the difference between yin and yang"! That is all you will get from them. The problem lies in the translation between Chinese and English. Many times, I have found, there are also great differences between even the different Chinese dialects, so much so that what is being said has to be written down in order for the two parties to understand it.

The above is even more important when trying to work out the small frame form as herein lies the secret to this form. I could simply say that 'balance' is the key to small frame but most people's idea of 'balance' is just as wrong as the idea that most have of yin and yang. If we have a seesaw with equal weights at either end, we say that those weights are equal. This is incorrect, we should be saying that these weights are equal and opposite. If they were not opposing forces, the seesaw would not be balanced. Therefore, at either end of the seesaw we have opposing forces. They are opposite each other but are equal in power. And it is the same with yin and yang. In order to maintain health, we must have an equal balance of opposing forces of yin and yang and in order to gain

the maximum amount of power that your body is capable of producing, we must have balanced opposing forces. The small frame form is the form that will give you the maximum power, both internal and external. It will also give you the maximum power for internal healing, both physical and spiritual. This is why it is very important that we have these opposing but equal forces when we perform this form. And this is where we are able to know if we are doing the small frame for correctly as there is only one way that this form can be done still keeping to this rule of equal and opposite yin and yang energy.

We know that the lower part of the body, legs and buttocks etc., is yang because it is strong, holding up the body. The top half of the body is relative yin, softer, flowing, loose etc. You must also remember that yin and yang are only relative to each other and cannot exist alone, as night cannot exist without day etc. So within the top part of the body we also have parts that are relative yin and yang. It is the same with the bottom part of the body. Moreover, these differences play an important part in the small frame form. But to explain why small frame is so different to what most instructors teach it as, we must look at the difference between the yin of the upper body (mainly the hands and arms) and the lower body, (mainly the legs and feet).

The legs and feet are in opposition to the hands and arms but are equal in power in just the same way that female is just as powerful as male where yin and yang is concerned. But of course, they are totally opposite with a little bit of yin within the yang and a little bit of yang within the yin. We all know that male cannot be ALL male (yang) otherwise he would not exist. It is the same for female. Within every man, there is a small part of female and within every woman, there is a small part of male.

Given that the lower part of the body is yang while the upper is yin, these two areas of the body must be opposite. The lower extremities are the most yang, while the upper extremities are the most yin. The waist is the ruler, with no 'state' relative to the extremities. As we move further up the leg, we become less yang. As we move further down the arms to the waist we become less yin until at the waist, we have the 'void' in just the same way that this occurs in the Universe.

The waist tells the legs and the hands what to do; it directs the action of both yin and yang.

The legs are big, using strong muscles, open, with large steps. So the hands must be equal but opposite! The hands must be small, closed, soft, flowing using only the power derived from the waist and not from the muscles. This is the secret to small frame form. The hands are just as small as the feet are large stepping. And in many cases of Taijiquan

movement, the hands are so small that only the trained eye is able to pick up the movement. It has become 'internal'.

There are many 'rulers' which tell us when we are doing small frame correctly. The most important of all is that we must 'feel' the Qi. At this high level of practice, we must be moving totally in accordance with what the Qi is doing internally. We make our external movements move in exactly the same way that our Qi is moving. However, this is not a conscious effort, it should just happen. This is where the saying "the hands must move by themselves" comes from. We become so sensitive that we actually feel the Qi moving within the arms and hands and eventually the whole body. In this way, there is only one way to move and this is small frame. The very second that we begin small frame form there is a 'feeling' that moves up the back (raise the back) and activates at the points known as GB 20 (gallbladder points 20). GB 20 are points that lie on either side of the base of the skull just under that 'lump' as it dips in to the upper neck. It is a very important dim-mak (acupuncture) point in the martial and healing arts. This is what is meant by the classic saying of "the Qi must raise up the back", or the usual incorrect translation of "raise the back". We feel something at these points. This feeling cannot be explained other than there is a feeling when we are getting it right. If I were to try to explain the feeling that I get in words, it may not be the same thing that someone else feels. So they are continually looking for an incorrect feeling. Everyone has some kind of feeling that moves from the mid-tantien (CV 14) or Conceptor Vessel point 14, which is another very important dim-mak point that affects the heart. It is found just below the sternum or xiphoid process. The feeling moves from CV 14 up to both GB 20 points then sinks back down to the tantien (about 3 inches below the navel but inside of the body). Then down into the ground via the heels which are the activation point for one of the most important dim-mak/acupuncture points, KD 1 (kidney point 1), which is situated on the base of the foot (the only point on the sole of the foot), just between the mounts of the big toe and the second toe. This 'feeling' should feel very nice as you are now in a state of 'sung' not feeling any movement in your extremities, like as if you are asleep standing up.

It would be quite impossible to teach small frame form from a book. The closest you will probably ever get is from one of my videotapes on small frame form. I have just finished three volumes (more to come) called "Small Circle Form" where I demonstrate all of the above.

Another ruler as to how to perform small frame form is when the feet change from yin to yang. I.e., when we feel the power coming into the yin leg. For instance, when performing form, I can either sit right back onto my rear leg as in the basic form so that I have 70% weight placed



Photo number 105



Photo number 106



Photo number 107



Photo number 108

onto my rear leg. (**Photo No.105**). In the small frame form, I would not wait until the weight was right back onto the rear leg, I would begin moving back to the front leg as soon as I 'feel the power' in the rear leg. When I feel the power in the rear leg, this is when it has changed from yin (unweighted) to yang. This is when the Qi wants to move, as it has already changed state. However, if we continue to change state physically by moving right back onto the rear leg, we have not moved in accordance with what the qi wants to do. The qi moves so minutely and changes state so subtly, that we must move the body also minutely and subtly. So, when the qi wants to change state, (the instant that it changes from one state to another) it wants to change back again, this is the 'way' of the Universe. In (**Photo No. 106**) you see that same movement when I begin to move forward onto the front leg again. I have not moved back very far at all, only to when I feel the power in the rear leg come into play. The same applies to the front leg. When I feel the power move into the front leg (it becomes yang), this is when I begin to move back again onto the rear leg. So I can perform the movement of 'press' (not push as this is a mistranslation that most people have adopted), by doing basic form and bringing my weight right forward 70%. (**Photo No.107**). Or I can stop when I feel the power in the front leg, which is when the qi wants to move and change again. (**Photo No.108**).

The above is why this form is called 'small frame' or 'small circle' form.

In small frame form, what the mind does is also very important. Remember (see the chapter on 'the mind'), the mind does not know the difference between real and imaginary. So when we do small frame form, what the mind does and what the body does are different. When for instance I perform a small circle posture of 'block right', you see that physically I am hardly doing any movement at all. In fact to the un-



Photo number 109



Photo number 110

trained eye, it looks as if I have only made one large movement. However, in reality, I have made several extremely small movements in accordance with the internal flow of Qi. **(Photo No.109)**. However, the eyes tell the story. The eyes are a mirror of the Qi. And if you look into the eyes of anyone who knows small circle form, you will see them changing with the changing yin and yang states. So the eyes are actually doing what the mind is doing. Therefore, if this movement were to manifest physically, it would look something like as in **(Photo No.110)**.



Photo number 111

The physical application of that small frame movement would be as follows. He attacks with a right low. My left forearm pounds his arm as my right heel palm pound it from above at dim-mak points on the forearm thus draining his Qi. **(Photo No.111)**. In an instant, my right fingers poke into his neck at CV 22 (the pit of the neck), and my left palm strikes to points on his 'girdle meridian', thus causing his upper body to not know what his lower part is doing! These are death point strikes so it is inadvisable to perform them on anyone bar those actually intending doing you physical damage! The reason that the small circle form is so devastating when used in the self-defence area is that the movements are so explosive, small and powerful, that the attacker just does not know what has happened and has no chance to retaliate. You have struck him at several deadly points in a matter of a half of a second.

The small circle form will permeate everything you do in Taijiquan. Even your push hands becomes 'small circle', as does your Qigong practice. When you begin your Qigong in the morning or afternoon, as with your Taijiquan form practice, you must feel the Qi to begin with. If you do not do this, it will take several minutes and lost movements to get into small circle form. You can fake small circle form to others but not to yourself.

Just before you begin any small circle/frame form, Qigong or push hands, you should prepare. Preparing involves standing and sinking into your heels while opening the 'kua'. The 'kua' are 'bridges' or arches caused when you open your armpits and/or your groin. Your elbows move outwards to form the 'kuas' while your knees are pushed out slightly to form the lower 'kua'. After about ten seconds, you should 'feel the Qi' sinking to the tantien aligning your body as it does this. It's a nice feeling and, again, I cannot tell you what feeling it is because everyone feels something different at this point. **(Photo No.112)**. The body position is the same as for basic three circle Qigong with the tongue resting upon the hard palate and the chin lightly pulled in the



Photo number 112

straighten the backbone. The points of 'feeling' will be the upper tantien (third eye) and the lower tantien (sacrum). You should feel this area in particular fall into position naturally tucked under but not forced. This is the 'void' position, or ready position. From here you can do anything in small circle mode. It is a feeling like nothingness, like as if your whole body is a huge sphere, connected at every point. Then that whole sphere is also connected with the Universe. The 'ground Qi' connects you to the earth and the 'air Qi' connects you to the sky. You are as a tree connected to the earth. If you can get this, then small circle form will just happen! And most never want to do Taijiquan or Qigong in any other way, as this is the highest level of being.

At this level you will see and hear things that were always there, but which were being blocked by human tension. Often the things that you will 'see and hear' are too much for our little human brain and we must stop. However, as you progress, you will be able to accept what is being 'given' and conscious thought processes will not impede the progress. I have learnt more about my art by simply being in a 'sung' mode than from any physical teacher. Quite often, when I am at a loss creatively when writing a new book or performing on a new video title, I will just go into a 'sung' posture. After only 30 seconds or so, out come the words streaming onto the page, as if they have come from somewhere else.

Problems in your daily life can also be solved by this method of 'preparation'. The trick is to be rid of all conscious thought and allow your sub-conscious mind to solve the problem for you. And it's relatively easy using this 'small circle' method as all you have to do, is the postures. You are using a physical movement to gain an internal expression. Moreover, that is much easier than trying to do complicated meditations etc.

Although the small circle form works at any time of the day, it seems to be particularly active in the wee small hours, like between 3 a.m. and 5 a.m. This is the time when our power system comes to life after the night's sleep. The lung meridian bursts into action at these hours and the small circle form seems to be very active during this time. You will notice that even in colder climates the fingers will be dripping with perspiration more so than at other times. The reason is that unlike the rest of the body which is dependent upon thermo-regulatory factors for perspiration, the hands and fingers only perspire because of 'emotional' factors. Hence, 'he has sweaty hands'. In Chinese thought these factors are not emotional but are Qi dependent. So when the lungs are coming to life and bursting with Qi during this time, there is much Qi activity especially in the palms as this is where the small circle manifests. The activ-

ity of the whole body manifests in the palms and fingers, hence the dripping fingers.

I am often asked with reference to small frame form and learning about self-defence. If we perform such small movements how do we use these for fighting? The answer is simple. Firstly, the best movements to learn about self-defence are abstract training methods. These will go into the sub-conscious mind as real fighting methods. They will become reflex actions. Logical fighting methods such as 'one step sparring' and simply training in techniques, will never become reflex actions. They will always stay as physical techniques that have to be thought about. And when we think about a self-defence method, it is too late and we have been struck. If we move in accordance with how our Qi is moving, we will act instantly to any given situation. The reason, because the body is directly dependent upon the movement of Qi. The movement comes from the central nervous system (in western medical terms) rather than from the conscious brain. This causes our self-defence actions to be instantaneous rather than delayed. How then can such small movements be used in self-defence? Remember that the body (when trained in this way) does the same as what the Qi does. If we are out in the morning sun performing our Taijiquan, feeling god and calm, the Qi is flowing calmly as it normally does. There is no need for any violent movements. However, if we were to be attacked, the level of Qi instantly increases thus increasing the level of adrenaline and emotional response. Our Qi increases, thus so too does our body movement. Therefore, a movement that can hardly be seen in practice becomes a devastating much larger and violent movement in application. The level of Qi and body action is directly connected to the level of emotion. When we are attacked, the emotion is running very high; it has to be. So the level of Qi activity is also very high and so too is the body response to the attack. That small abstract movement that we train in every day, instantly becomes Mr. Hyde!

In order to have something great; you must invest in loss. In this situation, we invest in hard training in order to gain the benefits of the above. So many take up a martial art expecting to become Bruce Lee in six months! This does not happen, only in the movies does it happen. You must be trained in methods that will change your normal reflexive responses to attack, which are normally passive actions, into defensive/offensive actions.

When we are born, we have very small defensive reflex actions that do not really defend us. As we grow, these defensive actions grow too until as adults we have gained what are called 'learned switches'. We have 'given switches', that which we have at birth, like a twitch to tickling, and we have 'learned switches', those that we learn from experience.





Photo number 113

Our learned switches are those that we wish to change into reflexive actions. Like covering the face with the hands when something comes suddenly into that area. Alternatively, when a man is suddenly kned and covers up using his knee to protect the groin. These learned switches can be changed into defensive/offensive responses. Consequently, the hands covering the face will become a lethal attack to the opponent's eyes or neck. (**Photo No.113**). Here, we have successfully defended ourselves and have simultaneously launched an offensive attack upon the attacker. Alternatively, the knee coming across to protect the groin could become an offensive movement of attacking the attacker's leg. However, there is also something more complicated than even this. The reflexive response to attack is a total Qi response that happens not only in the area of attack, but also in every part of the body. So if we are attacked to the groin, the automatic response would not only be a knee to his leg, but also hand and elbow, head attacks etc. Because the whole body has been put into an offensive state.

The above will not happen if the correct training has not been done. And this involves training in small circle. This does not have to be in Taijiquan only; it can work in any good martial art such as Karate. But sadly, most only ever are taught the big open movements of Karate. I have only ever seen a couple of Karate Sensei performing 'small circle' katas. Keiji Tomiyama is one while Chitose Sensei when he was alive, was another. Both perform their katas like rag dolls, which is the sign of an advanced martial artist.

The Qi must be connected and flowing smoothly in order for any of the above to happen. To get to this level we must invest in many years of internal training such as Qigong, Taijiquan, Baguazhang etc. All of the internal martial arts should teach the internal areas leading finally to the small circle way. Not many though, know about the small circle way nowadays.

## Small Circle Push Hands

There are many ways to practice push hands (toi-sau). There are also many right and wrong ways to practice this training method. I say 'training method' as many have taken this training method to mystical proportions and practice push hands for the sake of doing push hands and not what it was originally intended for. Many have seen push hands as a way of judging how good one's Taijiquan has become and they hold push hands tournaments! They want to find out who can push the best!



Photo number 114



Photo 115



Photo number 116



Photo number 117

Considering what I have already stated, that there ARE no pushes in Taijiquan, this is somewhat silly. Tournaments in push hands are run and attended by those who do not wish to get their hands dirty in the self-defence area. They still want the glory of winning, being better than another human being, but do not wish actually to put themselves on the line in a real fighting tournament. Push hands for the sake of push hands is the most damaging practice to one's training. It teaches you bad habits of non self-defence. It takes your self-defence into regression. Some go to great lengths to avoid being pushed over by leaning backward when pushed, often to almost bending right the way backwards onto the ground! What kind of martial art is that? (**Photo No. 114**) shows this dumb practice. Notice how vulnerable the groin is in this position. Notice the big open stance again taken to avoid being pushed over. We are never attacked while standing in this stance, so why do it in training. Push hands should be done in a much smaller stance, somewhat like that which we would be standing in normally. (**Photo No.115**).

Small circle push hands is the highest level of push hands and teaches us the most about reflex self-defence. The feet are still yang while the hands are still yin as in the small circle form. All of the movements in this type of push hands become so small that it is difficult to see the four main moves of 'p'eng, lu, chee and an'. However, they are still there. Now, they are done so small and explosively, that self-defence comes easy at a reflex level.

We begin learning 'square push hands'. No longer does the arm move around the outside of the attacker's attacking arm, but rather it simply hinges. (**Photo No. 116**) shows normal push hands where the left arm comes right around on the outside of the attacker's right arm while (**Photo No. 117**) shows the left arm hinging to defend against this at-



Photo number 118



Photo number 119



Photo number 120



Photo number 121

tack. This is much quicker and more in the self-defence area. I have many tapes showing this area of push hands, as it is quite complicated. As we 'roll back' the hinged arm swivels to the normal 'roll back' position. (**Photo No.118**). This is NOT a pull on the arm as there are no pulls or pushes in Taijiquan. This movement is actually a devastating strike to the neck. (**Photo No.119**). The only time that we would actually pull the arm is to test our training partner's balance, or if he or she is 'hanging his dead meat on us', as Yang Cheng-fu once said, to stop us from leaning on our partner to keep balance.

In this basic type of push hands (it is still not small circle), we get used to using the 'hinge' arm to defend, rather than the p'eng arm which is used as a 'yin feeler'. When we get to small circle, the yin is able to change instantly and explosively to yang to attack. (**Photo No.120**).

The next phase is 'p'eng/hinge' push hands. This is where both partners use the hinge and p'eng arms in defence and in attack. (**Photo No. 121**) shows me attacking using this method as my partner also uses it to defend. Notice that my right hand has not lifted up to sort of push, but rather the palm is thrust downwards, causing the upper forearm to attack.

Now we are learning about probably the most direct and best method of self-defence, that of p'eng/hinge' self-defence where we are able to defend ourselves against any type of attack, low or high using just this method.

We are now able to take the above method of push hands into small circle push hands. All this involves is not allowing your two palms or wrists to part at any time. We are still doing all of the moves that we



were doing in all of the above. They are so small though, that it is difficult to see them. It is also very difficult to show this method in photos so I will only show the one photo. **(Photo No.122)**. I suggest that you see my series on video called “Taiji Corrections, Push Hands”.

The whole of small circle training is covered in my series, “Small Circle Form” beginning with volume one, MTG159. MTG161 (volume three) covers small circle push hands briefly.

### Small Circle Push Hands and self-defence

Photo number 122

Most students and even instructors never learn small circle push hands. They are forever bogged down in the big, open and very basic type of push hands. They practice this form of push hands often for all of their lives and wonder why they are unable to defend themselves. They are excellent at ‘push hands’ and are able to stop from being pushed over by leaning backwards or by having a huge solid stance. But this is not the stance that one would have in the street when attacked. Nor would you wish to push someone over in a real, life threatening attack. Remember, what you train in is what you will do in a real attack! So you train for years in pushing and pulling and that is what you will do what attacked by some knife-wielding maniac! It is OK to practice basic push hands form years in order to be sure that the foundations are laid. Eventually, the student must move on to the advanced self-defence methods of push hands.

The advanced methods of push hands not only teach reflex self-defence but also how to deal with tense situations in normal daily life and about how to heal you and others. You are continually reacting to another person’s energy, joining to and not letting go, gently bending the situation to perhaps a better way. By meeting a force head on, there can be no winner only losers. There can be no mixing of Qi, so it is impossible to help or defend against someone in this way. You must join with them and then steer them onto a different path. That could mean simply re-directing their force so that you are able to counter-attack, or it could mean re-directing their internal aggression that is perhaps causing a disease state. It is impossible to ‘get in’ to heal someone if his or her door is locked. You must first unlock the door by joining to rather than forcing against it.

In self-defence or healing, you, the healer, or defender must be in control of the situation. This means being in control of the attacker’s or the



Photo number 123



Photo number 124



Photo number 125



Photo number 126

patient's Qi. We learn this control using small circle push hands. In the internal martial arts, what we do in self-defence is also what we will do in healing as self-defence and healing are the same, the outcome is the only difference. Take the following situation. Someone attacks with perhaps a hand attack. Using a so-called hard style defence, I might block his attack as in (**Photo No. 123**). Who is in control in this situation? It might at first seem as if I am in control because I have blocked his attack. But in effect, the attacker is still in control because my block was only that, a block. The attacker is still there, he has not been damaged in any way, his Qi is still strong, and he is still in the same situation that he was in before he attacked and is able to attack again causing me to still be yin or in the defensive mode. I have done two major things wrong here. Firstly, I have made the most major of mistakes in stepping backwards thus maintaining the same initial distance between the attacker and myself. This causes me to have to move forward to counter the attack thus giving him the advantage of me being the aggressor from a distance. I have also blocked his attack without instant re-attack. Look at my right hand, where is it. It is in the typical 'hard style' position on my hip. Why do people do this? By placing my fist on my hip, I am telling to the attacker which hand I am about to use, that I do not have enough power to attack him without drawing my fist back this far and I have given the attacker enough time to counter my attack! I have now to close the distance in order to attack. The attacker is still in control of my Qi at an internal mind level as well as at a physical level.

Now take the next situation against the same attack. This time I use an automatic manifestation of training in small circle push hands. (**Photo No.124**). Notice that I have moved in to the attacker thus putting his timing right off. He expected me to be where I was; otherwise, he would have attacked somewhere else. However, I was not there; I am now in



Photo number 127

his face. There is now no distance at all between me and the attacker allowing me instantaneously to attack him with devastating strikes. I am now in control of his Qi both internally and physically. I am now attacking him at a 45-degree angle, which is the ideal position in which to attack. He now has to step backwards in order to gain the necessary power to attack me again. I can now attack at will, (**Photo No.125**) & (**Photo No.126**). I am now in complete control of the situation.

It is the same when trying to heal someone using some kind of 'hands-on' method. If you only use the power that comes from your hands, the patient will still be in control. Use the power derived from your whole body and you will be in control of the patient's Qi. In this way you will not become ill by allowing the disease to control you and you will be able to help the patient by controlling his or her Qi.

In the above method, I used an automatic manifestation of small circle push hands training called 'p'eng/hinge'. This is perhaps the greatest self-defence method ever as you never have to change your hands to the changing situation. For instance, if he attacks using his left hand, I do not have to change my hands around; I still use the exact same positioning as before. I am still in complete control and able to attack at will. (**Photo No.127**). Now though, I am on the opponent's 'open' side, which is a little more dangerous than being on his 'closed' side. However, I am still not at risk, as my left hand is able to defend against any attack that he might be able to launch in that split second between my defence and my attack.

## Timing

In both self-defence and healing, timing is the most important factor. And we are taught timing in our small circle push hands. When healing someone for instance using massage, acupuncture, or finger pressure etc., we do not just lay the patient down and begin pressing! This is the same as meeting force on force and you will never be in control of his or her Qi. Using small circle push hands we become so sensitive to another person's Qi that we are able to 'feel the frequency' of the disease, or the attack. In order for a disease to exist, it must have a frequency or a wave. A disease just does not hit like a bucket of water; it comes and goes, comes and goes like a wave. And if we do nothing about it, like changing life-style, then the wave becomes bigger and bigger until it kills us. So it insidiously moves into our body and Qi structure minutely at first, de-



Photo number 128



Photo number 129

stroying and weakening our Qi. It is allowed to do this because of our state of ill health caused by external and internal factors of life-style such as eating, thinking, drinking, and smoking.

Therefore, when we begin healing a disease state or defending against physical attack, we must be aware of the highs and lows, where there are troughs and where there are peaks. In just the same way that we would never try to defend against a shot that was in full yang power, but rather wait until it had dissipated in a self defence situation, we also do not try to attack the disease when it is at its full peak wave. In other words, we do not simply go in there and begin the treatment. We wait until the timing is right! So you would not try putting Qi into the patient until the time was right. This will happen over the whole spectrum of your healing methods for the whole time that you have the patient on the table. Your methods will come in waves in accordance with the patient's Qi. In this way, you attack the disease when it is the most vulnerable. We also attack the attacker (physically) when he is at his most vulnerable, when he is in a trough, changing states from either yin to yang or from yang to yin. However, the defensive measure came a lot earlier than that. The attack must happen at the right time also. So we defend against either the patient's disease or against the attacker's attack when the Qi is just rising but not fully changing from yin to yang. I can explain this better using the push hands analogy.

The time for defence is different to the time for attack. This may sound strange coming from me as I always advise that your defence is always your attack. However, there is such a short time between defence and attack that it seems that this is the case. The time between defence and attack is only at a qi level and in most instances is instantaneous. But there is a difference. So in our push hands we must begin to defend when the sub-conscious mind wants to defend and not when we THINK about it. Then it is too late. This gets back to the 'point of co-ordination' mentioned earlier in this book.

Most people think about self-defence in push hands when it is too late. I.e., when they are already performing the attacking moves. However, self-defence happens long before this at the defensive move. Your MIND will recognise sub-consciously the defensive move when the attacker has just begun to attack. I.e. when he is moving from a yin state to a yang state. That is when you will defend yourself. You do not wait until he is fully yang and strong, you get him when he is weak. So, in our small circle push hands we defend when we are in the following position as in **(Photo No.128)**. Now, we are able to defend with a powerful 'hinge' move. **(Photo No.129)**. No matter how big the attacker is, if you have the correct timing, you will defeat him, or the disease. However, if you wait until a short time later and he is very strong, you will be pushed



Photo number 130

backwards, especially by those who use the big open strong stances. The time for defence is just after he has changed from yin to yang. The time for attack is when he is changing from yin to yang when he is neither yin nor yang. Therefore, in the above scenario, the attack time is as in **(Photo No.130)**. Your sub-conscious mind must begin to think about and instantly to react to, the instant the opponent touches you or has begun to attack you in some way. And this involves coming forward. You move when he moves, not after he has acted. And we get this ability through small circle push hands.

## The Amazing Breathing Hands of Taijiquan

The hands are the most important aspect of Taijiquan. If you have the hands right, you cannot have anything else wrong! For to have the hands correct, means that the whole body must be in total balance both internally and externally. This shows in your Taijiquan practise. One of the things that has stuck in my mind more than anything else that I have ever learnt is; “the hands must breathe”. Others also know about this, however, few ever get the translation correct. People try to imagine that their hands have a mouth! They then try to breathe in and out of their hands! They breathe out for instance and imagine that this breath is coming from the centre of the hands. Nothing that is impossible physically can be used as a tool to try to get something happening. So breathing out of your hand is not possible and nothing will happen internally if you think about this.

What is meant by “breathing hands”, is that the hands pulsate yin and yang. Someone watching would be hard pressed to see this happening as, again, it happens internally in small frame form. The effect upon the practitioner though, is great. It is one of those wonderful things about Taijiquan that I would love everyone to have. The Qi centre of your palm, “Laugung” or “Pericardium 8” (PC 8) becomes hot and often red. And although you cannot breathe air from your palm, you can feel something pulsating in and out of those points as your palms change



from yin to yang. If you could do the hand movements at a gross level, you would see the hands expanding and contracting several times during one movement. Usually the hand is yang that expands (stretches) while the yin hand contracts. At this level, it is impossible to close your palm into a fist or for instance into the single whip hook. Another way to put it is as if your hands are inflating and deflating with each yin and yang movement. As you progress, there will be a connection to the ground via the Laugung points of each hand as if you have some physical connection from those points into the ground.

The pulsating hands will eventually permeate your whole body causing you to buzz. This is what I would like you to have. The “keys” are here, come out here to one of our annual camps and get one.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### What is this Qi Stuff?

I asked my good friend and senior instructor for the WTBA and authority on Traditional Chinese Medicine, *Wally Simpson* to write this chapter putting forth the T.C.M. view of what Qi is. Wally has at this time one video production covering Chinese Massage and related topics. You could contact him via the WTBA should you wish to purchase the video. It is well worth a look for anyone seriously interested in T.C.M.

**M**any of the ancient races of the world believed that the body and indeed the Earth itself contain energy fields that surround and permeate them. The Indians talk of Prana, Nadis, Chakras and Kundalini, the Japanese of Ki and the Chinese of Qi, and both Chinese and Japanese speak of Channels and Collaterals and orbs of influence. The idea of Qi is fundamental to the martial arts and Traditional Chinese or Traditional Oriental Medicine in general. So what is Qi?

According to Chang Cai, “Every birth is a condensation (of Qi). Every death is a dispersal (of Qi). Birth is not a gain; Death is not a loss. When condensed, Qi becomes a living thing, when dispersed, it is the substrata of mutation”.

Chang Xu stated “Man is a moment in the universal mutation. Take an embryo just conceived - this is between Heaven and Earth - If it went back immediately to its origin, it would be a still birth. If it survives it would only be for some short years (Life of humans is incredible short when compared to that of the universe). There is little difference between a short life and a long life, we are alive as a result of a mutation, we die because of a mutation.”

Chu Li claimed “Life is like a loan from the universal Qi”

From the Yellow Emperors Classic of Internal Medicine comes a book called the “Su Wen” and it states → “That which was from the beginning

in Heaven is Qi. On Earth it became visible as form - Qi and Form interact giving birth to the myriad of things. Qi activates all processes of the body, the unceasing circulation of blood, the dissemination of fluids in the skin and flesh, joints and bone hollows, the lubrication of the digestive tract, sweating, urination, etc. Thus one is only able to smell if Lung Qi penetrates the nose. One can only distinguish the 5 colours if the Liver Qi penetrates the eyes. One can only taste if the Heart Qi penetrates the tongue, one can only know whether one likes or dislikes food if the Spleen Qi penetrates the mouth. The capabilities of the orifices depend on the penetration of Qi from the 5 solid organs. The channels are the pathways of the transforming action of Qi in the solid and hollow organs. So it would seem that our known Universe, in all its manifestations, is an expression of Universal Qi.”

So we can say that every thing in the Universe, organic or inorganic, is made up of and defined by its Qi. Qi however is not merely the nebular of space that condenses to become matter, nor is it merely vital energy although it is most often translated as such. According to Ted Kaptchuk in his book “The Web that has no Weaver”, Chinese thought does not distinguish between matter and energy, but perhaps views Qi as matter on the verge of becoming energy, or energy on the point of materialising. Neither the Classical nor modern Chinese texts speculate on the nature of Qi, nor do they attempt to conceptualise it. Qi is perceived functionally by what it can do.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) texts tell us that Qi is composed of force plus material (they do this because our western minds need to have some concepts to wrestle with). Material is the structural, Yin aspect, while force is the Yang aspect. Thus Qi can be likened to very fine matter that has material and nonmaterial aspects. The behaviour of Qi is analogous to the behaviour of an electron. The electron consists of a measurable mass and thus is material. However its behaviour is very much like that of energy, it has the power to split the nucleus of an atom; it has the power, because of its nature, to alter the positive and negative polarities of the atom or molecule. Therefore it is composed of material plus force.

At a seminar that I did recently on Monaka Japanese style Acupuncture, Qi was likened to Information. While the information channels remained open and flowing the body worked well, when the information became dysfunctional in any way, warning signs and symptoms appear, if the warning signs and symptoms are not addressed, disease results, if the disease is not addressed then death may occur.

## Origins of Qi

When speaking in general terms about all the Qi of the body, in TCM terms it is called Zheng Qi (Upright Qi) or Zhen Qi (True Qi). This is Qi before it is differentiated into its different forms or associated with specific functions. There are 3 main sources of Zhen Qi according to TCM. When sperm and ovum combine at conception, Jing (Pre-heaven Qi or congenital Qi) is created.

Manfred Porkett in his “Theoretical Foundations of Chinese Medicine”, translates Jing as “refined distilled product”, it is “the structuring potential of the individual. Its functions are to control growth, reproduction and development. It nourishes the internal organs and is the catalyst for many reactions and transformations in the body. It is essential for life”.

The English Journal of Chinese Medicine volume 7 reflects that “The functions of Jing are many. It controls growth and development in children, the growth of bones, teeth and hair, normal brain development and sexual maturation. After puberty, it controls the reproduction function. Jing is in charge of what Western Medicine terms hormonal changes both at puberty and menopause. It also governs fertility, pregnancy, childbirth and lactation. The individual receives a definitive amount of Jing at conception, this is supplemented after birth by the Qi extracted from food, drink and air.” (Jing can be maintained by correct lifestyle, eating, breathing and drinking habits.) But throughout life, the quantity of Jing slowly diminishes until it is completely depleted, here death will occur.

Jing is reflected in the general vitality of an individual. It could be seen as representative of the constitution. Our basic constitution is determined by our parents Jing at conception and may be maintained or depleted after birth by our lifestyle and exposure to or lack of exposure to the environment of our world, including those elements created by nature and man. That old saying, “You are what you eat” is only partly true, “You are what you absorb” is closer to the mark.

So we can maintain Jing by correct lifestyle. One can also improve their constitution by correct lifestyle, just as one can undermine their constitution by incorrect lifestyle. This includes rigidity of thought, emotion and actions, as well as incorrect dietary habits and bad breathing patterns.

The source of Post Heaven Qi, that which is received after birth, is from what we eat, drink and breathe. The Spleen extracts Gu Qi from the food and fluids that enter our Stomach. It is said that the Spleen cooks the food and fluids in the Stomach and extracts the pure essence (nutritive

part, Gu Qi) and sends it up to the Lungs. The impure part is sent down to the Intestines by the descending action of the Stomach for further refining. The extraction of Gu Qi and its journey up to the Lungs is under the control of the Spleen's Transforming and Transporting function. This Gu Qi mixes with Da Qi (Great or Big Qi, present in the air we breath, part of the Cosmic Qi) in the Lungs and creates Zong Qi, Qi of the chest. Zong Qi nourishes the organs of the chest (Heart, Lungs, in Western terms this would include the Thymus as part of the Lung function of defending against invading pathogen), promotes the function of respiration, control speech and the strength of the voice, aids the Heart to nourish the blood vessels and affect the circulation of blood to the extremities. The point Shanzhong Ren 17, located midway between the nipples on a male or young female, or on the midline level with the 4<sup>th</sup> intercostal space, may be used to influence the Zong Qi and its functions in a positive or negative way depending on how it is dealt with, this is also the point that the great apes of Africa tend to pound with their fists as part of their preparation for battle.

Zong Qi is acted upon by Yuan Qi, this is the physiologically active component of Jing Qi, to catalyse its transformation into Zhen Qi or Zheng Qi. From here Zheng Qi divides into Yin and Yang aspects. The Yin aspect now becomes known as Ying Qi (nutritive or nourishing Qi) and is said to flow through the channels moving blood and nourishing the organs. The Yang aspect now called Wei Qi (defensive or protective Qi) flows more superficially than the Ying Qi and is said to protect the body from external pathogenic factors such as excesses of wind, cold, heat, damp, dryness, fire and traumas such as blows etc. Wei Qi regulates the body temperature by controlling the opening and closing of the skin's pores and because of its Yang nature it is warming to tissue, aggressive, fierce and superficial. Wei Qi circulates outside the vessels and is distributed in the skin and muscles. Weakness or deficiency of Wei Qi leads to excessive trauma of tissue (flesh and muscle) from blows etc or easy access for pathogenic factors. Pathogenic invasion of the body can also occur if the Wei Qi is strong, but the pathogen is stronger or very persistent. Zheng Qi in excess of the body needs is stored in the Kidneys as a supplement for Jing Qi and is used as Yuan Qi for catalytic reactions through the body.

Da Qi translates as Big Qi; this is Qi of the Cosmos that animates life in its many forms. When we breath correctly, we bring into our Lungs part of the Da Qi and it is this which joins with the Gu Qi of digestion and the Yuan Qi from the Kidneys to become Zhen Qi (true Qi of the body).

So the 3 main sources of Zhen Qi in the body can be categorised into two types: - Xian Tian Qi (Pre-Heaven Qi) called Jing and stored in the Kidneys after birth, it makes sperm and ovum and is like a reserve bank of Qi for the body to use when other sources are missing. Hou Tian Qi (Post Heaven Qi) derived from Gu Qi (Extracted by the Spleen from food and fluids) and Da Qi that is in the air we breath and extracted by the Lungs. Zhen Qi (True Qi) or Zheng Qi (Upright Qi) divide into Ying Qi (The Yin aspect of Zheng Qi which resides in the meridians and nourishes the internal organs) and Wei Qi (the Yang aspect of Zheng Qi which protects the body from external invasion and trauma).

The general functions of Qi are to Move (transportation), Transform (substances), Hold (in place), Protect (from the outside), Provide Function (of the internal organs and tissue etc) and Warm (a function of the Yang aspect). The Ying Qi while being the Yin aspect of Zheng Qi has a Yin and Yang aspect just as the Wei Qi though it is the Yang aspect of Zheng Qi has a Yin and Yang aspect. All things have a Yin and Yang, it is said that in every bit of Yang there is a little bit of Yin and in every bit of Yin there is a little bit of Yang. These two complimentary opposites are the substrata of creation and cannot exist in isolation (there must always be some of both).

**Yang functions include: -**

- To warm - (the body)
  - ab· To move - (circulates the blood, fluids and substances of the body)
- To protects - (at the exterior of the body where Wei Qi resides, it protects from external Xie Qi (pathogenic or traumatic agents) and in the interior where the organs reside, it protects them from internal Xie Qi (this can be pathogen factors generated from emotions or the deeper penetration of external Xie Qi).)
- To transforms - (all changes in the body are dependant on Yang (heat) energy, e.g., metabolic changes, digestion, absorption and growth)
- To holds - (it is the Yang aspect of Zheng Qi, upright Qi, that holds structure such as organs, veins etc in place. It also provides the organ system with the ability to go about their business, e.g., Bladder and Kidneys with the ability to hold urine and the Spleen with the ability to hold the blood within the vessels, etc.

- Yang Qi can be looked on as the functional aspect of a being.

**Yin functions include: -**

- To cool - (the fluid cool nature of Yin balances the fiery nature of yang to allow the body to maintain an even temperature)
- To provide rest - inactivity -(like the water of a lake, yin can bestow peace and serenity. If the yin is deficient, the yang is unchecked and hyperactivity results. If the Yin is excessive, inactivity predominates and stagnation and accumulation results. A balance of activity and rest enables us to live productive harmonious lives.)
- To nourish - (the yin, especially Ying Qi, blood and body fluids, nourish all levels of the body.)
- Yin Qi can be looked upon as the structural aspect of a being.

It is said that in the beginning there was nothing, no movement, no form, nothing existed, an empty void. Out of this emptiness (Tao, one) came a spark of creativity that travelled in a circular fashion back to where it came from. So was born movement, movement in one direction suggesting movement in the opposite direction. So we have stillness and movement (2), Yin and Yang.

The Yin Qi descended and became earth while the Yang Qi ascended and became Heaven. From Heaven and Earth was created Man / Woman (three). This is the cycle of creation, Heaven created Earth, created Man / Woman. The cycle of existence is of course different, Man / Woman stands / mediate between the Heavens and the Earth and receives Qi from both. The Yang Qi of Heaven and the Yin Qi of Earth are continually interacting and becoming each other and Man / Woman is part of the field where this interaction occurs. Yang Qi enters the body at Baihui

Du 20 and exits via Yongquan Kid 1. Yin Qi enters the body at Yongquan Kid 1 and exits via Baihui Du 20 (there are other entry and exit points for these Qis but these will suffice to impart a concept here). These two forces meet in the centre of the body in the vicinity of Dai Mai (one of the 8 extra channels, the only channel to encircle the body in this fashion) and an result of this meeting, may be harmonised and harnessed for use by the body as part of our Yin and Yang Qi.

This process is what we may enhance by doing Qigong in the correct manner, with our minds on the DanTien (Dai Mai passes through the DanTien and the Kidneys). Qigong in particular, and other meditative practises where the mind is stilled from its endless wandering and held in a one-pointedness state, can open the gates and allow the Da Qi to flow through us in an unimpeded manner so that the blockages we have imposed upon our selves, in our attempts to cope with and fit into our perception of society and those blockages brought on us by environmental influence, are removed and our whole body is nourished. One view of disease is that these blockages are contributing factors to disease and eventual break down of the body structure.

When we practice our Tai Chi in the correct manner we encourage the constant interchange of Yin to Yang and Yang to Yin through our moving from emptiness to fullness. We encourage the Dao of heaven by making our minds empty and the stability and strength of earth by sinking our Qi into DanTien, the foundation of our earthly lives.

From Heaven / Earth / Man (Woman) comes the 4 directions or the 4 seasons which adds another dimension to the equation.

The four seasons can be equated to a day, a week, a month, a year or a life. The morning is Spring and with it comes the birth of many possibilities for growth and development, this is Yang in Yin. The middle of the day is Summer and life, activity is in full swing, our creativity is blooming, this is Yang in Yang. The afternoon is Autumn and activity is winding down, we are past our most productive period and are entering a time for reflection and meditation, this is Yin in Yang. The night is Winter and things become still as activity has ceased, our time in the world has passed and we return from whence we came to be nourished by the stillness of Yin in Yin.

The 4 Seasons / Directions allow us to have an order to our progression through time, an apparent beginning and an apparent end, just like the apparent beginning and end of our Tai Chi form. (Most of us have probably been told many times that you should not play Tai chi, you must be Tai chi (if you haven't then you should hang about Erle more), so this means that our form that we practice in class should be a reflection of the way we conduct our lives).

When we look at the 4 directions we find yet another direction is implied, the centre, from which the directions start. This brings us to the 5 phases or 5 elements of TCM. Each Organ and its channel and function are teamed up in Yin / Yang pairs. The Water element where our life cycle began (Yin in Yin, emptiness harbouring the germ of creation), contains the Kidney (Yin) and the Bladder (Yang) and corresponds to



Winter, coldness and stillness. The Wood element, the time of birth and much growth (Yang in Yin) contains the Liver (Yin) and Gall Bladder (Yang), corresponds to Spring and movement (Wind in TCM because of its ability to move about and ensure the free and easy movement of Qi throughout the body, the gentle rising and dissipation of emotions, thoughts and physical energies). The Fire element, when our efforts during Spring begin to blossom into maturity, (Yang in Yang, summer), contains the Fire Emperor, the Heart (Yin, the ruler of the body) and its adviser the Small Intestine (Yang) said to separate the pure from impure in the physical, mental and emotional substrata absorbed by the body. The Fire element also contains the Fire Minister, the Pericardium (Yin, the protector of the Emperor / Heart) and its partner the San Jiao (Yang, also called Three Heater, said to control water passages and the distribution of Qi to the 3 Jiaos / areas). The Earth element is next in this progression and contains the Spleen (Yin) and the Stomach (Yang), this is the time of ripening (the Spleen and the Stomach are said to be in charge of receiving, rotting and ripening of food by the body and the transformation of the ingested substances into useable material then the transportation of that material to where it is needed for growth. Nourishing the body). The Earth is seen as being neutral in the Yin / Yang polarisation's, the centre of the four directions and is said to be responsible for bonding and boundaries.

The Metal element contains the Lungs (Yin) and the Large Intestine (Yang), this is Autumn, a time of harvest, where we can throw out the old and gather the new (this is Yin in Yang, a winding down of activity in readiness for the stillness of winter where we will lie being nourished by the Dao in readiness for the coming Spring. Winter, the Water element, of course is also death and a return to the source from whence we sprang.

The Qi of these organ systems has specific functions that include the Western concept of an organ function plus an orb of influence that is not found in Western Medicines understanding of the organ's function. Part of these organ functions includes a Spiritual aspect, which relates more to the Zang (Yin) organs than to the Fu (Yang) organs. The Shen (Spirit) is said to be derived from the pure Yang of the universe, think function. The Qing (Po,) body essence is derived from the pure Yin of the universe, think structure. Essence is said to refer to the material aspects of existence and spirit to the nonmaterial. In TCM it is the fusion of the spirit (Shen) with the essence (Qing) that creates life. (Pre-heaven Qi fusing with the Post-heaven Qi) The Shen Qi of an individual is said to live in the Heart during the day and in the Liver at night. During the day it may be seen reflected in the eyes, in health it is a gleam or shining light, best seen in the eyes of a healthy baby or small child as they explore the world. It's there in healthy older people; we have all met some-

one of advanced age who has had the most amazing light reflected in their eyes. Life can cause some to hide it behind a veil (we do this with alcohol, drugs of all kinds and preoccupation with pursuits of the market place) and when we become diseased, it is withdrawn, dull or out of control (Wild), this latter state may be seen in some mentally disturbed conditions. At night it resides in the Liver and can be assessed by ones dreams. Some sources of TCM claim that a contented spirit dose not dream.

Some TCM sources claim that the Shen / spirit in humans, differentiates into: - the Po (Animal Spirit) which resides in the Lungs and is said to direct our physical energies: the Hun (Soul) which lives in the Liver and controls the free flowing quality of conscious and unconscious thinking: The Heart is the residence of the pure spirit and divine consciousness (Shen): the Zhi (also called Chen) pure animal will of the Kidneys and its energies are said to unite the past, present and future in individuals, to the cosmic forces: I (pronounced ee), resides in the Spleen and controls recollection / memories:

It is said that: - Excess thinking / worrying adversely affects the Spleen, this is true anytime but even more so at meal time: Excess Joy or sudden shock adversely affects the Heart, all acute emotions may affect the Heart according to Leon Hammer M.D. in his book “dragon rises red bird flies”. Sudden sadness will cause stagnation, a slowing down of circulation. Joy and anger can cause the Heart to suddenly become full when these emotions are not expressed. Fright will cause the Heart to become empty as it attempts to maintain circulation: Excess fear and sadness adversely affects the Kidney. Fear causes the Qi to descend, sudden fear affecting the Heart via its coupling with the Small Intestine (part of Tai Yang the most external of our meridian system 6 divisional couplings. Tai Yang seen by Dr Hammer as representative of the nervous system of Western Medicine), while chronic fear moves from superficial to deep, damaging first the Bladder (this is the other part of the Tai Yang coupling mentioned above), then damaging the Kidneys, the other half of the Water element. According to Dr Shen (quoted by Dr Leon Hammer in the book mentioned above), “long standing and deep seated sadness or anguish is the other emotion which may affect the Kidney, this is often expressed by the sufferer as a groan: Excess unexpressed grief adversely affects the Lungs and depresses the circulation of Qi and therefore blood (Qi leads the blood through the vessels): Excess anger adversely affects the Liver, sudden anger speeds up the circulation of Qi and blood, the increased speed can create a rapid heating affect on the blood stored in the Liver and so it will expand faster than it can circulate resulting in a blockage of blood in the Liver :”

Shen or divine spirit in its earthly manifestations, has two aspects, a non-material part characterised by the consciousness and a material part which is indicated by its relationship with blood and Qi. Shen when nourished with sufficient Qi and blood as supplied by an adequate diet and exercise, will result in a balanced state of mind, where-as an inadequate diet and a lack of exercise will lead to a deficiency of Qi and blood (or as in the case of a lack of exercise a stagnation of Qi and blood) and a disturbance of consciousness. Thus there must exist a material aspect of the Shen which requires nourishment. A well balanced Shen / consciousness will contribute to the physical well being of the individual and sufficient Qi for life's activities.

The concept of Qi or energy force as the basis for existence / life, seems so easy for many eastern people to accept, yet is quite alien to most westerners. Only a few in the field of psychology have postulated on its existence. Freud with his concepts of libido saw the interplay of sexual energy as integral in mental and physical health or illness. Carl Jung conceived of "the collective unconscious" as a sea of psychic energy, the soul of man. Wilhelm Reich explored the concept of libido postulated by Freud, and expanded them into a therapeutic modality he called Orgone Therapy, like Freud it was based in sexual energy. Later Lowen and Pierrakos took the Orgone theory and expanded it into Bioenergetics, a concept of a cosmic, spiritual and psychic energy force as being omnipresent and at the root of existence. Most western sciences have not been able to accept the existence of a force or forces that can not be measured by chemical or electronic devices. Albert Einstein's theory of relativity or  $E=MC^2$  is probable the closest thing we have to a concept of Qi in western science. Energy = Mass (which is representative of the microcosm) C (Speed of Light) (representative of the macrocosm) squared (that's a big number you come up with when you square the speed of light). So we could see man / woman as the macrocosm and the atomic structure and chemical make up of our bodies as the microcosm. When we take food substances into our bodies, it is the energy that is the by product of the chemical reactions within the body during the breakdown of these food substances and by various oxidation processes that occur within us, which results in the function of our being (Sounds like the combination of Da Qi (in the air we breath) with Gu Qi (pure essence extracted from food and fluids that is sent up to the Lungs by the Spleen) using the catalyse of Yuan Qi (the physiologically active component of Jing / our hereditary energy) to become Zhen Qi (True Qi) . Man / woman is of course the microcosm when compared to the planet, just as the planet is part of the microcosm when compared to the universe or cosmos.

So Qi is much more than just energy, it is the building blocks and the animation of those blocks that compose our world and its inhabitants.

Esoteric philosophy says that one must transmute jing into Qi, Qi into Shen and Shen into emptiness. It is like the concept of Zhen Buddhism that talks about the sound of one hand clapping. Sounds impossible until someone like Erle teaches you how to do it. He calls it Fa-jing!

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