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The Bu Di Zhen Kung Fu Master
Gao Yen Tao

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Editors Note

Welcome to the second edition of The Journal of The College of Chinese Martial Arts. The first edition was very well received so in this months journal we will be continuing in a similar format.

We shine a light on Master Gao Yen Tao and have a look at The Way of Moving in Chinese martial arts and also study another ancient Chinese martial arts text.

We hope you find these articles interesting and beneficial for you martial arts development.

The College of Chinese Martial Arts provides information for practitioners of all styles so that all students can benefit.

Good luck in your training

Paul Brecher

Founder & Chief Instructor of The College of Chinese Martial Arts

Gao Yen Tao - Master of Bu Di Zhen Kung Fu by Paul Brecher

This article originally appeared in 2005 in the book,
A Martial Arts Journey Part 2



Paul Brecher with Master Gao Yen Tao

I was travelling around China searching out and training with great martial artists and was very fortunate to have as my guide the excellent travel writer David Leffman, a fluent Chinese speaker and good friend.

He has been training on and off with Master Gao Yen Tao for many years. Master Gao who is over 80 years old lives and teaches in Yang Shuo in Guangxi Province with his twin sons, Peter and George who are now both over 50. They all look 20 years younger than they are.



Yang Shuo is a beautiful area because of its many limestone outcrops, which are like miniature mountains in the tropical landscape.

Master Gao Yen Tao has combined the Shaolin Chuan that he had learnt from his father with the Wutang Shan Chuan that he had learnt from his grand father to make his own Wudang / Shaolin Combination Style.

He calls his style Bu Di Zhen Kung Fu and he and his sons have a large training hall in Lotus Lane in Yang Shuo, it is called

The International Bu Di Zhen Kung Fu School.

The Gao family have been invited to travel abroad to teach and are well known internationally and also many people come to Yang Shuo to train with them.

Master Gao is known as “ The Monkey King of China” because he played this famous character in

the Peking Opera for over twenty years. This enabled him to continue to practice martial arts during the Cultural Revolution, a time during which they were illegal. Anyone caught practicing was given three years in a re-education camp. Master Gao can still perform many of the acrobatic feats, various characters and martial arts of the Peking Opera.

Master Gao sons, Peter and George have been training all their lives. The martial arts and chi kung training that they have all done has resulted in them having increadable skills and abilities. For example we where chatting with George at the enterance to the martial arts training hall and as he was talking he casually placed his foot into the top corner of the door frame. He continued to remain with his torso upright and talk whilst in this vertical splits position.

Master Gao and his sons know a huge amount of both empty hand and weapons forms and their martial arts training hall in Yang Shuo has a whole wall covered with weapons.

The Gao's are very welcoming and friendly, however there is no time wasted, training is constant throughout the day.

Master Gao's son George demonstrated The Bu Di Zhen Kung Fu Empty Hand Form, he did it with incredible power, flexibility, precision and speed.



George Gao

He said he had begun his training with his father as a young child and that for the first few years the emphasis was on the Chi Kung and then later the forms. He said now his favourite form was drunken style.

Master Gao said that his son Peter was very good at demonstrating the Nine Ring Giant Broadsword Form and Walking Stick Form. Master Gao Yen Tao happily

demonstrated the Gao Family Chi Kung and Gao Family Empty Hand Forms, the Three Section Rice Flail Form and the Steel Trident Form and the Coiling Dragon Six Foot Steel Long Pole Form and the Wooden Dragon Long Pole Form as well as Hung Chuan and Southern Fist and The Phoenix Long Straight Sword Form.

Whilst he was spinning and striking and chopping with the various weapons he was explaining many martial arts principals and fighting strategies.

One amazing martial skill which Master Gao could demonstrate with almost any weapon was the ability to get it to coil around his body without touching it. It was as if the weapon was alive.



Master Gao Yen Tao

On my website www.taiji.net I have a movie of Master Gao performing many forms and demonstrating this skill.

After demonstrating all these forms he was still full of energy and not at all out of breath.

The Gao are living proof of the effectiveness of their family style and the benefits of combining Shaolin and Wutang Kung Fu.

An Explanation of The Way of Moving in Chinese Martial Arts

by Paul Brecher 2010

This information is from The College of Chinese Martial Arts Training Manual.

All Chinese Internal Martial Arts can be practiced in three different ways.

First is the **Chi (energy) Way of Moving**. This is slow with the whole body moving as a single unit, all the separate parts of the body moving in phase with each other, with attention on posture, structure and basic body mechanics and is how the Chinese internal martial arts are used for healing.

The general alignment for the chi way is, the nose is over the navel the shoulders are over the hips.

The elbows are over the knees and the hands are on the centreline. With this way of moving it is usual to have some of the power coming from the legs pushing against the ground and for this force to be transferred into the hands.



Also with this way of moving the idea of having a strong connection

to the earth is emphasised, which is sometimes called rooting or grounding. A form when practiced this way would be like a long slow sequence of chi kung healing movements.



Second is the **Jin (internal force) Way of Moving**. This is faster and more flowing, the body looks elastic, each part of the body is out of phase with each other, we move in a loose and heavy way with a noticeable time delay in the flow of power through the body, each segment of the body is moved by the previous segment like a snake, or a heavy chain that is used as a

whip. This is how the Chinese internal martial arts are used for fighting. With the jin way of moving the power comes from the rotation of the hips and the whole body has a coiling and spiraling type of power.

Third is the **Fa jin (explosive release of internal force) Way of Moving**. This is fast and furious with explosive movements of great power for acupuncture point strikes. In old martial arts manuals to try and convey the sudden and powerful nature of these strikes, they are compared to a cannon being fired, or thunder and lightning or a crossbow bolt being released.

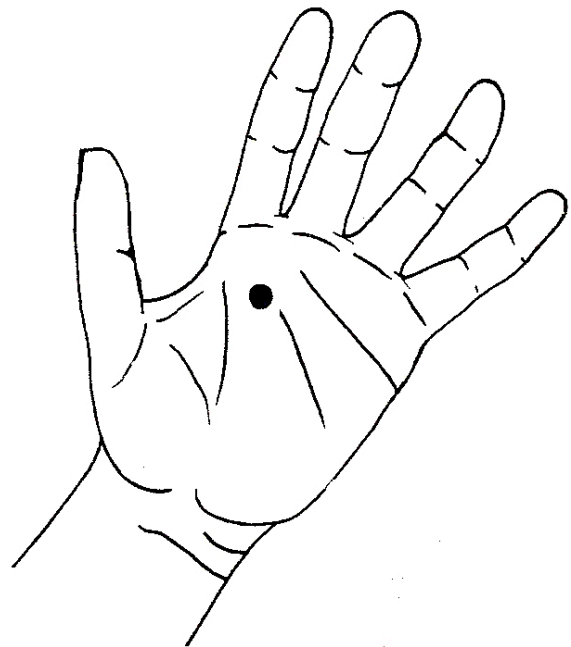
Fa jin means an explosive release of internal force. The easiest way to generate and release this power is by turning the hips left – right – left or right – left – right. If we

make sure that the elbow movement is a result of the hip movement then we can be sure that the power developed by the hip turn is successfully delivered into the hands.

At an advanced level the movement is initiated by releasing the chi energy from the lower tan tien energy centre in the lower belly just below and behind the navel at acupuncture point conception vessel 3 and 4, (CV 3 and CV 4) and also from the spine at governing vessel 4, (GV 4).

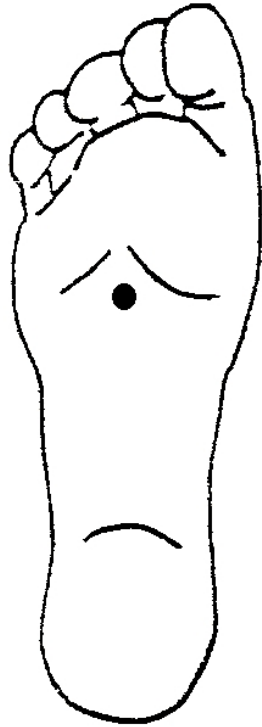
With fa jin the whole body shakes just like when a dog is shaking water off its fur, a sudden loose heavy rotating movement with great centrifugal force.

It is traditionally said that the chi flows from lower belly and lumbar vertebrae out to the hand at pericardium 8 (P 8) for hand strikes.



Pericardium 8 (P 8)

For kicks it is traditionally said that the chi flows from the lower belly and lumbar vertebrae out to the foot at kidney 1 (K 1)



Kidney 1 (K 1)

Before full fa jin is practiced it is possible to do the movements of fa jin but without full force, this is called soft fa jin. It is to ensure everything is correctly placed for a fa jin to happen but without the

full amount of force being sent into the strikes. The hip turn is less dramatic so the resultant energy flow to the hands is less.

Once a move has been practiced as soft fa jin then full fa jin will happen naturally, once the energy has built sufficiently, true fa jin will happen of itself without effort, this is the natural way.

The part of the body that we are striking with could be the fist, elbow, shoulder, knee, head or foot but the origin of the power for these strikes will always be the same, the rotation of the hips.

Some people mistakenly try and use the chi way of moving which is based on the healing principles of chi kung for fighting, this does not work. The jin or fa jin way has to be trained if one want to be able

to use the Chinese internal martial arts for fighting. This idea of the chi, jin and fa jin ways of moving apply to all of the Chinese internal martial arts.

The strikes of the three martial arts that I teach are all delivered with fa jin so to use them correctly first one must learn the jin way of moving. You cannot fa jin if you only know the chi way of moving.

To explain the progression from the chi, to the jin, to the fa jin way of moving, imagine a whip.

A slow movement of the handle is the chi way of moving a faster movement of the handle is the jin way; an even faster way is the soft fa jin; and the fastest and most sudden movement of the handle is the full fa jin way.

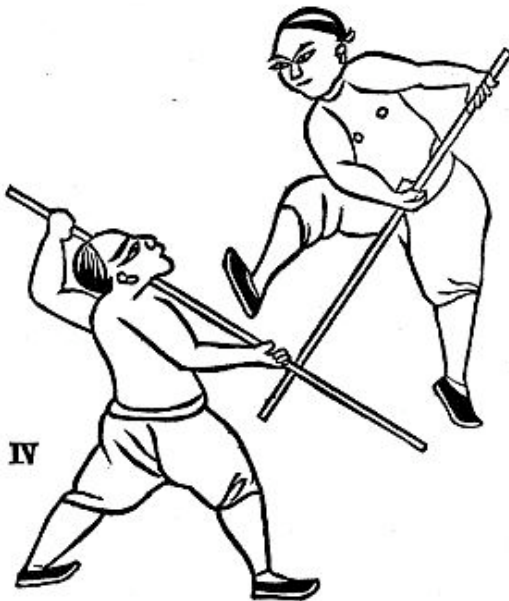
This sudden dramatic fast movement of the handle results in the tip of the whip cracking. This is full fa jin, the handle of the whip is the hips/spine and the tip of the whip is the hand. If the handle was only moved slowly and carefully and gently (the chi way of moving), the tip of the whip would not crack no fa jin.

With the chi way of moving one's attention is on posture and structure. It is easy to add other chi kung principles such as opening and closing and the chi wave, both vertical and horizontal. With the chi way of moving, each part of the body is in phase with each other.

Some students want to use the forms as big chi kung healing movements, for them the chi way of moving is emphasised. Also some beginners without previous

martial experience cannot grasp the jin way of moving so they are taught the chi way first.

With the jin way of moving one's attention is on elastic, loose heavy continuous flow and the out of phase way of moving. With the jin way of moving it is easy to add the other martial skills of acupuncture point striking and fa jin.



The chi way of moving will build up the chi, which is energy, while the jin way of moving will build up the jin which is internal force.

When you have jin you can fa jin, which means an explosive release of internal force.

A list of the main Principles of The Chi Way of Moving

Sung

Earth Chi and Leg Power

Rooting

Yin - Yang and Chi

Bone Breathing

Spine Power

Abdominal Breathing

Opening and Closing the Kwa

Chi Wave, vertical and horizontal

Lower and Upper Body Integrated Movement

Nose over navel,
shoulders over hips,
elbows over knees,
hands on centre line.

Whole Body in Phase Power

A list of the main Principles of The The Jin Way of Moving

Loose Heavy Power

Hip and Ribcage Rotation and
Torque Force

Scapular Spring Force

Tendon Jin Elastic Force

Joint Sinew Jin Force

Intention Force

Connection Flowing Power

Smooth Circular Spiralling Power

Centrifugal and Centrepetal Hip
Rotation Power

Yin Yang Palm Power

Squeezing Jin Power

'C' Back Power

Whole Body out of Phase Power

Counter Torque Power

Intention Force and

Martial Mind Power

If a student was dedicated to their training and wanted to learn in the traditional way, then they would not only learn the forms and

training systems of the style they had chosen, in the correct order but would also learn the ways of moving in the correct order .

At The College of Chinese Martial Arts students are free to learn any form from any style in any order with any way of moving they choose.

However I will list here the traditional order of the ways of moving and explain the reasons for them.

Chi Way of Moving

Jin Way of Moving

Soft Fa Jin Way of Moving

Full Fa Jin Way of Moving

First the student learns the chi way of moving, this is so they can have correct structure and correct basic coordinated whole body movement. Also it is going to

enable them to build up their chi energy.

Next they would learn the jin way of moving, this would result in them flowing more smoothly and create a body that was elastic and vibrant with loose heavy power.



The next level would be the soft fa jin way of moving, this would give them the ability to practice the feeling of fa jin without doing it at full power.

Last of all would be the full fa jin way of moving, which is the

ultimate martial way of moving. One's whole body comes alive as the rippling electric shock like force of fa jin flows through the body and is released.

There are a few additional considerations about the different ways of moving that must be taken into consideration. If a person's energy is getting low then one should practice the chi way to build one's energy up again.

A person's energy could be low because they are old or recovering from illness or injury, it could be due to insufficient nutrition in their diet or because of some aspect of their lifestyle. Not enough deep sleep at the right time too much stress or insufficient access to nature and its healing energy.

People whose energy levels are too low should not practice the fa jin

way as this is all about releasing one's energy; they should be conserving their chi. They should practice the chi way to build up their energy, and once their chi energy is up to a good level then they can once again practice the fa jin way.



It is possible to check if one's chi levels are full by practicing the soft fa jin way and if, very quickly, the movements quite naturally all by themselves start becoming full fa jin movements then your chi level is definitely up.

In contrast if you can only manage to move the chi way and find it hard to even move the jin way let alone the soft fa jin way then your chi level is down.

There are two final observations to make, firstly there is a training method that we use whereby we only imply a movement but do not actually do it.

We imagine we are doing it and send the full amount of chi through our bodies to perform this move fully but we do not actually fully physically perform the strike. This results in the unused energy of the move staying in the body and so we have more energy in the body.

It is a technique for building up the chi. However this method should only be practiced in the chi way of moving and never in the jin, soft fa jin or full fa jin ways of moving.

The reason for this is that if we generate the force for a movement whilst flowing in the elastic dynamic faster jin way but do not release that force all the way through the body and out through the finger tips, then we are creating an energy block in the body. This obstruction will be uncomfortable and not beneficial.

If one tries to not fully express the strike when moving in the soft fa jin way or, more seriously, in the full fa jin way, then not only is it uncomfortable but could even result in pulled muscles and a feeling of disharmony within oneself.

The final observation is that we should only do full fa jin strikes from the jin or soft fa jin way of moving.

It is wrong to try and suddenly do a full fa jin move when you have only been moving in the chi way.

This is because they are at the opposite ends of the scale of movement: the chi way of moving is slow and the full fa jin way is explosively fast. The chi way sedates the mind and body but the full fa jin way is like lightning, dramatic and sudden.

To go from a very passive, non aggressive, meditative, calm, fully relaxed almost self hypnotic way of moving into a fast, furious explosive way of moving is going to damage the body because it is mentally and physically unprepared.

However, if a person is running through a form in the jin or soft fa jin way, then the body is warmed up. It is flowing at a faster pace and its elasticity is being trained,

so to do full fa jin movements is easy, comfortable and natural.

These three main ways of moving that I have been explaining, chi, jin and fa jin, I consider to be the core principles of the Chinese internal martial arts.

The chi way could be described as yin and the jin and fa jin ways as yang. In one's martial arts training one should have both Yin and Yang for balance.



The chi way is to use the principles of chi kung in our martial arts forms, which leads us to contemplate chi kung.

By describing the areas that we strike on the opponent by the acupuncture points that are closest to them leads us into contemplating acupuncture.

Using Dit Da Jou (Fall Hit Wine) to heal our injuries and for Iron Palm and Iron Body training encourages us to contemplate Chinese Herbal Medicine as well.

So we are training martial arts for fighting but they make us aware of Chi Kung, Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine which are outstanding healing systems.

Some martial artists contemplate healing but take no action however they would benefit from finding out more. I have trained in these healing areas and now practice and teach them as well as the martial arts and feel more balanced within myself.

I have three martial arts systems for fighting (Wutang Shan Nei Jia Chuan, Tai Chi Chuan and Pa Kua Chang) and I have three healing systems (Chi Kung, Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine). So now I feel that I am living a balanced life, Yang Martial and Yin Healing complementing each other.

I recommend all practitioners of Chinese Martial Arts to also learn the Chinese Healing Arts as a way to have a more balanced and healthy life.

Now to return to the jin and fa jin way of moving, as once these have been understood then the strategy and tactics of the martial applications of the movements will work.

Without fa jin, or at least jin, in the strikes, the Chinese internal martial arts do not work for fighting, just like an arrow (fist) does not work unless it is fired from a bow.



In ancient China the bow and arrow was a weapon of immense power. It is therefore appropriate to use it as a metaphor for the

power of the Chinese internal martial arts. The bow is the spine, the string is the tendons, the arrow is the arm, the arrowhead is the hand and the sharpness of the arrow point is our intention.



Different types of arrowheads where used to punch through different types of targets, flesh, bone, armour piercing etc and we have different hand shapes for different targets, blade hand, knife hand, cobra strike, immortals finger, tiger claw etc.

Any form of any style can be

practiced in the three ways of moving that I have described, or any combination of them.

Yes, even the external martial arts styles can incorporate these ideas. It should be remembered that a form is just a framework that one can use to express a wide variety of different principles. Some people think that if a form comes from a particular style it must be practiced the chi way but a form from another style can only be practiced the jin way or the fa jin way.

This is not true, any form from any style can be practiced in any of these three ways.

Another mistake that is often made is that people think that one style has a high stance and another a low stance, or that one style has large circles but another has small

circles, or that one style has a straight spine, another a leaning spine and another a C shaped spine.

The truth is that any style can be done high or low, fast or slow, big or small, slow the chi way for healing, or fast the jin or fa jin way for fighting. With a straight vertical back for healing, or a C shaped back with an occasional lean for fighting.

A punch or a kick can be done high or low, kept short or extended long, a movement could be implied but not expressed to cause the chi to stay internal to heal the body or it could be expressed to develop striking skill for martial power; a movement could have a wide variety of different applications for both fighting and healing.

Beginners have to be shown a basic way so that they can get the foundations of their training correct but at an advanced level there are no limits. The true spirit of the martial arts is unlimited.



A martial arts practitioner should not be thinking how a style should be practiced but rather, why are they training ?

If you are training to develop martial skill, then doing it the chi way will not help you achieve your goal.

And of course if you were in weak health and tried to practice everything as fa jin it would exhaust you and so would be counter-productive.



A person must first know themselves who they are and what they want and what they actually need.

Then one will know how to train, it is we who choose our own path; each person will be different and have their own path to follow, as we are each on different paths to the top of different mountains.

The training is also a Way to find yourself and to know and understand yourself.

Even if you are not sure exactly in which direction you should be going the Chinese Internal Martial Arts can help to strengthen your body and mind and so you can make your decisions from a place of calm stability.

So if you know what to do, then practice the Chinese Internal Martial Arts and if you do not know what to do, then, practice Chinese Internal Martial Arts !

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Chinese Martial Arts Historical Texts by Paul Brecher in 2010

This information is from The College of Chinese Martial Arts Training Manual.

On Nourishing Central Chi and Martial References Published in 1781 by Chang Nai Chou (1728-1783).

This second text is much longer and more detailed than the one discussed in the first issue of The Journal of The College of Chinese Martial Arts and is also a wonderful example of how martial arts, traditional Chinese medicine and Taoism were combined together.

If practitioners of Chinese martial arts today were to study TCM and Taoism then the width of their knowledge and the depth of their understanding would increase.

The following pictures from On Nourishing Central Chi and Martial References by Chang Nai Chou show movements that are also in tai chi chuan.



In the Old Yang Style
Tai Chi Long Form this is
Movement 21, Lift Hands



In the Old Yang Style
Tai Chi Long Form this is
Movement 112, Fists Over Knee



In the Old Yang Style
Tai Chi Long Form this is
Movement 245,
Step Up Form Seven Stars



In the Old Yang Style
Tai Chi Long Form this is
Movement 113,
Wind Through Ears,

Chang Nai Chou (1728-1783) was a military leader within the Ching Dynasty. His style included empty hand and weapons training, and pre-dates both Chen and Yang Family Styles of Tai Chi Chuan.

It also pre-dates the birth of Tung Hai Chuan (1797-1882), the creator of Pa Kua Chang.

The books of Chang Nai Chou have been found in the Chen

Family manuscripts, a strong indicator that Chen Tai Chi Chuan is at least partly derived from them as well.

One of Chang Nai Chou's books is about Pau Chui, Cannon Fist Boxing, a style also practiced by the Chen family. We have a Pao Chui Form in the Old Yang Style of Tai Chi as well.

Chang Nai Chou also wrote a book on the Double Sword Form which we practice in Pa Kua Chang.

Within these two books written by Chang Nai Chou are some profound and important ideas and martial concepts.

Their relevance to Tai Chi Chuan, Pa Kua Chang and Wutang Shan Nei Jia Chuan cannot be emphasised enough.

The study of this text is sure to improve your martial arts, whatever your style. I have added my comments in brackets.



On Nourishing Central Chi and Martial References
Published in 1781 by Chang Nai Chou (1728-1783).

Too much softness will disperse the chi,
Too much hardness will block the chi.

Softness is for mobilizing the chi,
Hardness is for striking.

Lead the chi from GV 4 to the hands, feet and head,

When (you) fa jin, hit the acupuncture points with force/intention.

Lean left and right, backwards and forwards, flexible and natural,
internally vertical, spirit centered, chi circulates naturally.

Spiritual cultivation of chi to form inner elixir,
Martial training of chi to form external elixir.

Internal and external elixir complement each other,
Movement and stillness complement each other.

Body training is for unification of the body,
Chi training is for the internal quality.

Outward body as martial weapon like iron,
Internally golden elixir immortal spirit returns to original state.

Training the body is through understanding yin and yang,
Bending forwards flex the governing vessel, back the conception.

Body left and right, turning, rolling, twisting, flowing all in balance,
If back then forwards, if first contraction, then extension.

In form all is balance, high and low, rotate and twist, front and side,
Yin and Yang in sequence naturally results in hand mind coordination.
(The yin / yang hand is in both tai chi chuan, wutang shan chuan and pa kua chang).

For martial power

Open and Close the arms and back.

(Opening and closing the horizontal bow of the arms in conjunction with the vertical bow of the spine is in both tai chi chuan, wutang shan chuan and pa kua chang)

Shake the hips like a horizontal wheel,

Rotate continuously yin and yang are expressed.

(The shaking power of fa jin comes from the vigorous hip rotation and is expressed through the yin / yang hand)

Some postures externally lean and bend side to side, back and forward,

Other postures always vertical (from) Kidney 1 to Governing Vessel 20.

The Tao of heaven and earth are yin and yang,

Movement and stillness are yin and yang.

Smoothness and fluidity enables yin and yang chi to transform,
Heaven and earth are within us enabling life to go on forever.

Outwardly variations of movement, inwardly there is one commander,
Chi is raised by movement and centered by stillness, like a mountain.

Attack the opponent's points, be strong as iron or steel,
Whole body power with agility and speed land on the points.

We are a fierce fighter with spirit and chi filling us,
Strong contact defeats the opponent we strike his points.

Strike your body to make it hard as stone,
First with palm, then fist, then bag of rocks and wooden pole.
(This is a reference to Iron body training methods).

Use fierceness at the point of contact, attack the empty and unprepared,
Ambush the unaware opponent, control his chi and he is trapped.

When he moves I move immediately,
As the opponent's chi approaches I strike and smash him.
(This means to intercept the opponent's attack as it begins, this is sometimes called catching them on the half beat or half step).

With ease I stick and connect,
I strike like thunder and lightning.

(Stick and connect means knowing his movement, moving as he moves without giving him an opportunity to counter. To strike like thunder and lightning is a reference to the speed and power of fa jin).

To win get in close,
Fa jin like a cannon.

(Cannons have been a weapon of war in China for the last 800 years).

Concentrate your chi before combat,
Fa jin like a crossbow bolt.

(Crossbows have been a weapon of war in China for the last 2500 years).

Go straight ahead,
Strike with sudden impact.

Close with the opponent launch the first blow,
Follow up and stick.

(If we can get the first strike in we win because before the opponent can recover they can be hit again and then again, this is what is meant by follow up. Stick means to be so close to the opponent hitting them from such close range and relentlessly pressing your advantage that they are unable to retaliate and are defeated).

Stay on the outside of the opponent's lead leg,
(and) Attack with force.

(If you are on the outside of the opponent's lead leg you can attack across their stance and are in a superior position to attack their attacks and to attack

their weakest areas. It is also best to be on the outside of their lead arm, this makes it harder for them to hit you with their rear hand and also gives you access to vulnerable areas on the side of their head, GB 3, Bl 10 and ST 9).

Do not tense the hand that is not active,
Attack the opponent where they are inactive.

Strike with the forward hand,
(use the) Rear hand when natural.
(This means strike the opponent on the part of them that is closest to you with the part of you that is closest to them)

Feet in stillness like heavy stone's, in movement like oars,
Feet change full and empty (and) each foot itself goes full and empty.

Martial stance back heel out front toes in,
Stable and protect the groin.
(This is our fighting stance, which is different from our chi kung healing stances. It is important not to get the two confused).

Do not distort the postures to go against the chi,
Move the chi with softness, land with hardness.

Fist is clenched, third joint of index finger pinched with tip of thumb,
Mobilize mind chi and spirit in killing postures.
(This fist shape we call the hammer hand, it is in all three styles that I teach. Like all other martial arts styles the thumb is out of the way, however when

it is placed as described the point of the thumb joint is now prominent and so can be used as a weapon to strike the opponent).

Borrow opponent's chi to strike opponent,

Strike second but land first.

(To borrow chi means to rebound of their attacking limb into their torso, face or head or neck with your counterstrike. Strike second but land first means that we are waiting for them to open themselves up by launching an attack. If they do not launch an attack we have to overwhelm them with force or use a deception to draw them out, we throw a strike to make them counter and then use this opening up movement of theirs to create an opportunity for us to counterstrike).

Close applications are superior to distant,

Ease seen on the outside, spirit on the inside.

Appear soft (but) fight like tiger,

Defeat one hundred.

Ward off and stamp (and) Golden Cock stands on one leg,

Techniques like these cannot be stopped.

(What these two techniques have in common is that they are delivering a high and a low attack at the same time, this is hard to counter)

Advance unstoppable,

Retreat like coiling dragon.

(One idea contained in the phrase, to retreat like a coiling dragon is the retreat is a deception to draw them into a counterstrike. The appearance of retreating is actually like a coiling dragon about to uncoil, or like the drawing of a bowstring about to release an arrow. Also the Coiling Dragon is the final posture in the sequence so it is implying that we should finish by storing our energy in the lower tan tien energy centre in the lower belly, just below and behind the navel. Like a dragon hording its treasure in its cave).

Chopping is a knife splitting sinew,
Evading is to one side.

(This means the hands are as dangerous as knives and can damage the opponent's sinew as if it was stabbed by a knife. Evading is always done on an angle, never straight. We call movement forwards and to the side "V stepping" in tai chi chuan and wutang shan nei jia chuan, in pa kua chang it is called circle walking).

Smashing posture is a cannon,
Wounding posture is ferocious.

Pulling posture is like a rope,
Sticking is no loss of contact.

(If we make a short sharp pull of their wrist using fa jin shock power we can dislocate their shoulder and give them whiplash on the neck, this is what is ment by pulling posture is like a rope).

Following is like a shooting star,
Connecting is like the lotus root.

(Following means pressing your advantage, if you have hit them once you should hit them again very quickly, before they can recover from the first blow. The roots are below, this means to not only attack with the hands up above but also with the feet down below at the same time. The opponent will find it hard to counter both).

Legs close together hips can rotate easily,
Mind like fire, chi arrives like crossbow bolt.

(If the legs/feet are far apart in a wide stance it is harder to generate the sudden hip turn that is necessary to create the fa jin strike power. So training in a long low stance will make the legs strong and create a lower centre of gravity but will not help in the development of fa jin).

Seven star posture strike privates and throat,
Rhinoceros gazing at moon posture one hand yin the other yang.

(In the Zhou Dynasty three thousand years ago the Chinese army used rhinoceros skin as part of their armor and archaeologists have found a two thousand year old bronze rhinoceros figure from the Western Han period of China, so clearly this animal was widely known to the Chinese for many generations. The rhinoceros has now become extinct in China but can still be found nearby in Nepal and India. Having one hand yin and the other hand yang is not just on fixed postures but a flowing transformation as one hand changes from yin to yang the other changes from yang to yin. The Rhinoceros gazing at moon posture is in the Pa Kua Chang Combined Animals Circle Form).

In Immortal points the way posture (the) hands cross,
Crane flies to heaven like a Taoist observing the stars, eyes look up.
(When practicing Crane flies to heaven in training we briefly look at P 6 as the hand reaches the highest point of its rising movement. In Tai Chi Chuan the posture is called Pigeon Flies to heaven, in Pa Kua Chang it is called Sparrow Hawk Pierces the Sky).

Monkey offers cup strike the face,
Purple clouds at bottom of the sea, penetration punch to strike crotch.
(Monkey offers cup is called Monkey offers fruit in Pa Kua Chang).

Hurricane kick is followed by single whip,
Single whip strike the throat.

Penetration punch both hands smash skull strike gallbladder three,
Wage war with first one hand then the other.
(This is called wind through ears posture in Tai Chi Chuan, in which one hand lands a fraction of a second before the other. This principle is in almost every movement of all three of the martial arts that I teach. There are a few reasons for the time delay between strikes.

First the strikes are a result of the hip turn left, right, left or right, left, right so the rotation will cause one hand to arrive just before the other. There is also another reason relating to the way the body responds to impact.

If we hit the opponent's arm on P 6 or TW 5, as they throw their punch, then just for a moment their attention will go to their arm. Where the mind goes

the chi and blood goes, so in this moment the head and neck are left slightly more vulnerable, which is why they are hit next after a fraction of a second time delay.

The same principle is used for strikes to the torso head and neck. In this wind through ears posture we hit GB 3 on one side first, the body will send the blood and chi to this side to try and heal it, so the GB 3 point on the other side is now more vulnerable, so after a fraction of a second we then hit it. The concept is the same for striking either side of the vulnerable area in the occipital cavity, BL 10 and GB 20, or if we were striking the apex of the lungs ST 15, ST 16 and Lu 1).

Rub the forehead,

Calm the mind.

(This movement is in the tenth Wutang Form, it has a chi kung healing effect because of the gentle reducing effect of the pressure on GB 14. It also has a martial application, we are pulling them onto a head butt).

When you attack head on, pound the opponent's head,

Tiger claw to attack the wrist.

(The reason to tiger claw the wrist is to not only cause damage locally on the wrist but also a fa jin sudden shock yanking movement on the wrist will dislocate the shoulder and also cause whip lash to the neck. If we can make the whip lash effect very sudden and extreme then it is possible to cause such a severe compression of the cervical vertebrae of the neck onto the nerves that knock out occurs).

Sweep then run,
Or stamp on their sternum.

Snake head attacked tail respond (and) tail attacked head respond,
Centre attacked tail and head respond this is how we fight.

Loose and relaxed for fast techniques like charging battle horses,
Seem like an old sick man then suddenly strike like spring lightning.

Secret of fighting opponent not move I not move,
Opponent about to move I move first.
(This statement is reproduced in the Tai Chi Classics revealing their true origin).

Sink as release power, express your power (but) preserve your chi,
Blood and chi circulate freely by practice one thousand times.
(Sink as you release power means to drop your centre of gravity as you connect with the opponent so you are adding your body weight to the strike).

Large circles practiced first, eventually small circles,
The circles of the master are invisible (and now are) only with his mind.
(At the beginning the hands have large big circular and spiralling movements which involve a certain amount of energy. Students practice this way for a few years, then gradually the movements are changed into smaller circles and spirals but these smaller circles contain the same amount of energy that the larger circles and spirals had. This is now the advanced level where we have a big spring in a small box.

So it is necessary to practice for a few years to build the large spring, the big amount of energy. Then the movements become smaller, the small box, so we have a big spring in a small box. This is a huge amount of potential energy, which can be felt pulsing through the body wanting to expand.

If people begin with small circle movements at the start of their training then they are building a small spring in a small box and so they will not have the potential difference which creates the power.

An extra principle of the big spring in the small box idea is taking an externally visible way of moving the body, chi and jin and making it so internal that it is no longer externally visible.

So the deeper meaning is that all principles should eventually be internalised until they are just part of who and how and what you are. At this level your martial skill is great but people cannot understand how because everything has been internalised and is no longer visible to an external observer.

The only people who can see which principles you are using are those who have reached the same level and internalised those same principles themselves).

Elixir eternal spring,

Hands on belly.

(When we finish a form or any training we always put our hands on our bellies over the lower tan tien so the mind will go there, so the chi will go there, so we can store the chi in the belly and accumulate it to enhance our health).

Strengthen body eliminate illness achieve longevity,

Martial hero sage upright sober reserved.

(At the College of Chinese Martial Arts these are the qualities that are encouraged because even if you are the best fighter or martial artist in the world if you do not have respect, honor, sincerity and truthfulness, then you have nothing).

Search with sincerity,

(and you will) Find many teachers.

Body to chi,

Chi to spirit.

Spirit to void,

Immortal.

I strongly recommend all students who wish to take their training to a higher level to study these words of Chang Nai Chou. Whether you are training in Tai Chi Chuan, Pa Kua Chang or Wutang Shan Nei Jia Chuan (or any other style) all his advice is relevant and useful. Chang Nai Chou learnt many

different styles during his life and has included within his writings the sayings of his teachers and his own observations and discoveries.

We can clearly see from these texts that many of the postures and applications and principles that are in Tai Chi Chuan and Pa Kua Chang are already fully formed in this style which predates both of them.

The Wutang Shan Nei Jia Chuan is several hundreds of years older than this style and could be one of its source system. We cannot say this is the case with one hundred percent accuracy but it is very possible.

So we can draw the following conclusions from this text

1. The reality of the history of the Chinese martial arts is probably different from the simple stories that are often told.
2. Having an open mind to new information will help you to make progress in your martial arts training.
3. Learn what you can from what you know, but know that you have much to learn from what you do not yet know.

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End Note

I hope you found the second edition of The Journal of The College of Chinese Martial Arts interesting and I hope you are enjoying your martial arts training.

Whether you are training for health, self defence or self development I wish you great success and hope that this journal can contribute information that will be helpful to you on your martial arts journey.

In the next edition there will be more interviews, articles, analysis of ancient texts, discussions about various styles and principles that are common to all styles.

Good luck in your training

Paul Brecher

Founder & Chief Instructor of The College of Chinese Martial Arts

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