

Brennan Translation

ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT TAIJI (TAIJI DA WEN)

Posted on October 27, 2012 by Paul Brennan

—
太極答問
附單式練法

ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT TAIJI
Including SINGLE POSTURE PRACTICE METHODS

陳微明
by Chen Weiming
[1929]

[translation by Paul Brennan, Oct, 2012]

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太極答問
Answering Questions About Taiji
附單式練法
including "Single Posture Practice Methods"
– [calligraphy by Chen Weiming]

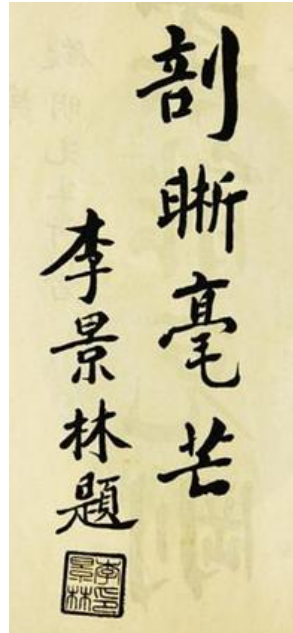
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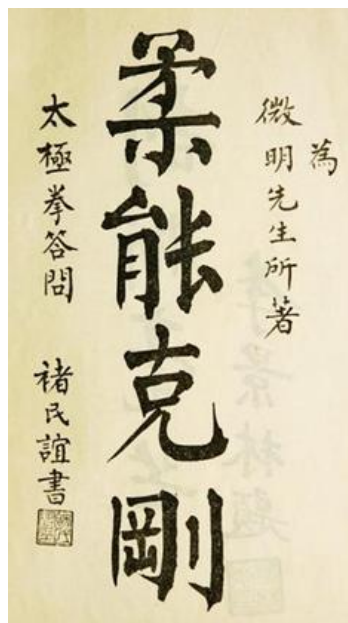


剖晰毫芒

"Analyze and make clear the smallest details."

李景林題

– calligraphy by Li Jinglin



柔能克剛

“Softness can overcome hardness.”

為微明先生所著

for Chen Weiming’s book

太極拳答問

Answering Questions About Taiji Boxing

褚民誼書

– calligraphy by Chu Minyi

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楊少侯先生

Yang Shaohou

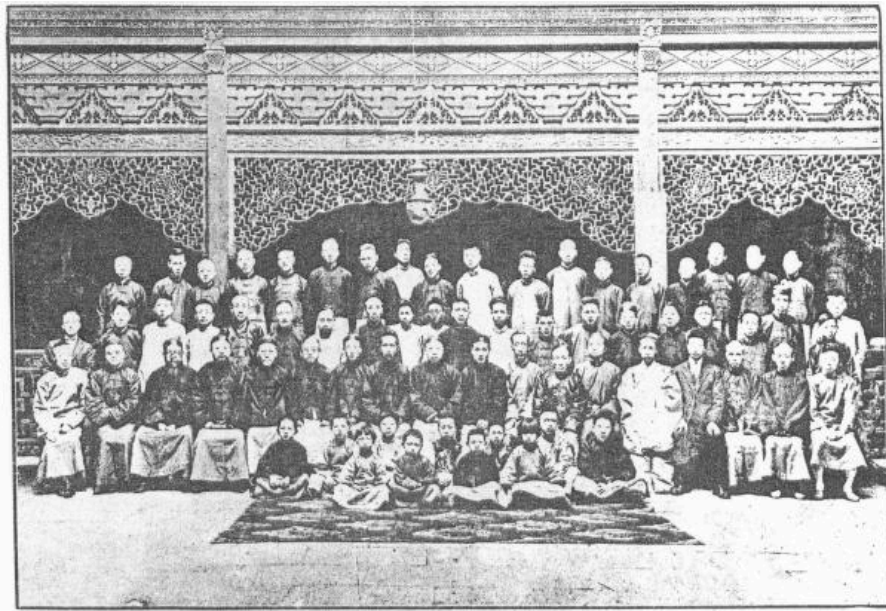
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楊澄甫先生
Yang Chengfu



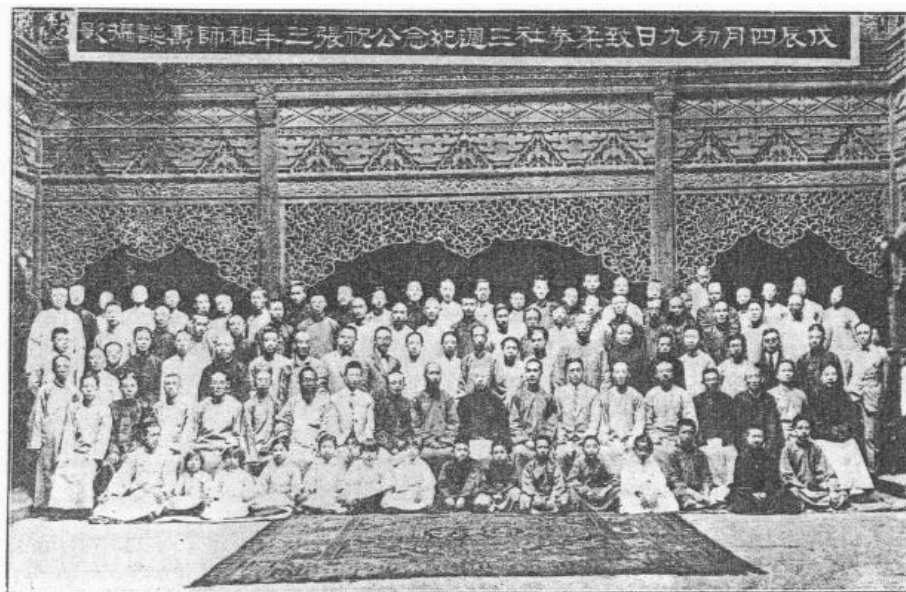
著者陳微明
The author, Chen Weiming



丁卯年致柔拳社二週紀念攝影

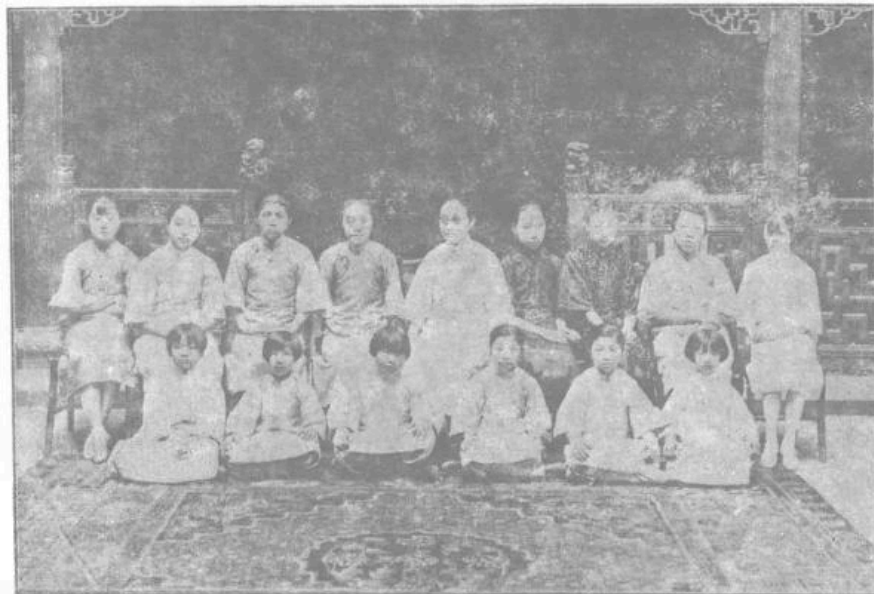
Photo of the Achieving Softness Boxing Society's second-year class, 1927

[In Chen's 1928 sword manual, this photo was labelled as 1926. This is because while the photo was taken in 1926, it is nevertheless a photo of the "class of '27", and is used in this book to represent that aspect of it. Similarly, the group photo in Chen's 1925 manual, though taken in 1925, exhibits the class of '26. In contrast, the photo below of the class of '28 was taken in 1928 rather than in 1927.]



戊辰四月初九日致柔拳社三週紀念公祝張三丰祖師壽誕攝影

Photo of the Achieving Softness Boxing Society's third-year class, in celebration of Zhang Sanfeng's birthday, 5th year of the cycle, 4th month, 9th day [May 27, 1928]



致柔拳社女社員攝影

Photo of the Achieving Softness Boxing Society's female members

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序

PREFACE

余從永年楊澄甫先生學太極拳八年。以資質魯鈍。故有所疑。輒喜請問。先生亦不憚煩。諄諄誨余。中間先生南游。余曾從少候先生學三月。亦頗聞其緒論。乙丑來滬。創辦致柔拳社。教授太極拳。當時太極拳之名。知者尚鮮。不謂四年以來。風發雲湧。學者必太極拳之是學。教者必太極拳之是教。浸浸乎盛矣。或謂余太極南來。先鋒當屬之君。余何敢當哉。太極拳之普及興盛。可以強種國。固足欣幸。然又恐其泛濫而失其本源。流動而忘其規矩。溷雜而違其精意。是不可不慮也。爰以平日聞諸先生之講說。作為問答若干節。聊以貢於有心于太極者。所不知者。不敢言也。再者每得各方賜書。問函授之法。太極拳運轉圓曲。綿綿不斷。口傳手授。尚難得其準則。何能以筆墨形容。然昔許宣平。傳三十七勢。本是單式練法。今師其意。將太極拳中最要之式擇出。為單練式。詳細敘說。加以圖式。較為簡易可明。雖不連貫。其有益于却病延年。無絲毫之異也。己巳秋陳微明識于吉祥輪室

I learned Taiji Boxing from Yang Chengfu of Yongnian County for eight years. Since I am not clever, I enjoyed asking him about things when I was uncertain, and he, sparing no effort, patiently instructed me. During this time, he traveled south, and so I then learned from [his elder brother] Yang Shaohou for several months, absorbing much from his own theories.

In 1925, I came to Shanghai and established the Achieving Softness Boxing Society, instructing in Taiji Boxing. At that time, the reputation of Taiji Boxing was known only to a few, but to my surprise, in the last four years the “winds have blown until clouds now fill the sky” [In other words, word-of-mouth has made it a household word.].

For students, Taiji Boxing has become *the* thing to learn. For teachers, Taiji Boxing has become *the* thing to teach. It is all-pervading. It is said by some that when I brought my Taiji south, I was the first one to do so, but I would not presume to affirm this.

The spreading and flourishing of Taiji Boxing can strengthen the people and the nation, which is indeed worth celebrating. However, I also fear that as it floods it will lose track of its source, and as it flows on it will lose sight of its principles, and as it gets absorbed into the melting pot of martial arts it will be severed from its essence, which are things to be worried about. Hence I have used what I have learned from the explanations of both gentlemen and made it into a number of question & answer segments, grouped into sections, merely to contribute to those who are intent upon Taiji. What I do not know, I have not dared to talk about.

Moreover, I frequently receive letters from all points of the compass requesting that I teach via correspondence. Taiji Boxing is an exercise that turns and curves continuously without pause. It's hard enough to grasp its principles even when learning it in person, so how could it be described in writing? Well, Xu Xuanping long ago taught his Thirty-Seven Postures, which was a method of training individual postures. Modelling upon his concept, I have now picked out the most important postures from the Taiji Boxing solo set to present them as a single-posture practice [See questions 120-131.]. I have explained them in detail and have included photographs to make them simple and easy to understand. Although they are not linked together, they just as good [as the solo set] at preventing disease and extending life.

– written by Chen Weiming at the Chamber of Auspicious Wheels, autumn, 1929

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太極拳源流之補遺及小說之辯正

ON EMBELLISHMENTS TO TAIJI BOXING'S ORIGINS AND POINTING OUT FALSEHOODS WITHIN FICTION

[1]

問太極拳果是張三丰所傳乎。

Was Taiji Boxing really passed down from Zhang Sanfeng?

答寧波府志載有拳術名目。雖未明言是太極拳。然其中與太極名目同者甚多。黃黎洲所作王征南墓誌銘。述三丰傳授源流甚詳。中間曾傳之寧波葉繼美等。故寧波府志載之也。然則太極拳。自可斷定是三丰所傳無疑。

In the *Records of Ningbo Prefecture*, there are boxing arts terms which, although Taiji Boxing is not explicitly mentioned, have many similarities with Taiji terminology. Huang Lizhou [Zongxi] wrote a memorial inscription for Wang Zhengnan which lengthily states that Zhang Sanfeng is the source of what he taught. It is mentioned therein that it was passed down to Ye Jimei of Ningbo, and since this is also mentioned in the *Records of Ningbo*, thus it could naturally be concluded that it was surely passed down from Zhang Sanfeng.

[2]

問三丰集曾載數傳而至關中王宗。王宗與王宗岳是一人。抑係二人耶。

Zhang Sanfeng's teachings were handed down to Wang Zong of Shaanxi. Are Wang Zong and Wang Zongyue the same person or are they two people?

答王宗及陝西人。宗岳山西人。以為一人者誤也。宗岳先生。大約是清初時人。王宗則元末明初之人也。

Wang Zong was from Shaanxi whereas Wang Zongyue was from Shanxi. They were not the same person. Wang Zongyue was from the time of the beginning of the Qing Dynasty [which began in 1644] whereas Wang Zong was from the end of the Yuan and beginning of the Ming [1368].

[3]

問太極拳除張三丰祖師一脈流傳。尚有其他派否。

Apart from the Taiji Boxing that comes from Zhang Sanfeng, are there other transmissions?

答相傳尚有四派。列之於右。

Tradition has it that there are four more:

唐許宣平所傳要訣有八字歌。心會論。周身大用論。十六關要論。功用歌。傳宋遠橋。

– Xu Xuanping of the Tang Dynasty passed on its secrets in the “Eight Character Song”, “On Mental Understanding”, “On Fully Using the Body”, the “Sixteen Key Points”, and the “Song of Function”, all passed down to Song Yuanqiao.

夫子李傳之俞氏。再傳俞清慧俞一誠俞蓮舟俞岱岩。

– Li Daozi taught it to Mr. Yu, who then taught it to Yu Qinghui, Yu Yicheng, Yu Lianzhou, and Yu Daiyan.

韓拱月傳程靈洗。再傳程珌。有用功五誌。四性歸原歌。

– Han Gongyue taught it Cheng Lingxi. It was later passed down to Cheng Bi. It includes a list of “Five Study Reminders” and the “Song of Four Natures Returning to One”.

殷利亭傳胡鏡子。再傳宋仲殊。

– Yin Liting taught it to Hu Jingzi, who then taught it to Zhong Shu of the Song Dynasty.

以上皆別一流派。其詳不可得而記云。

These are all branches from a single school, but none of them have left details that can be verified.

[4]

問河南陳長興所傳弟子。除楊露禪外。尚有他知名者否。

Chen Changxing of Henan taught it to his sons and also to Yang Luchan. Were there also others of note?

答聞尚有河南懷慶府陳清平者。亦得長興先生之傳。陳傳之武禹讓。武傳之李亦畬。李傳之郝為楨。郝傳之孫祿堂先生。

I have heard that Cheng Qingping of Huaiqing prefecture in Henan obtained Chen Changxing’s teaching, and that he then taught it to Wu Yurang [Yuxiang], who taught it to Li Yiyu, who taught it to Hao Weizhen, who taught it Sun Lutang.

[5]

問不肖生所作江湖奇俠傳。述及楊家。多有詆毀之詞。其所載班侯之事確否。

The novel Itinerant Amazing Warriors by Buxiao Sheng contains material about the Yang family and makes several slanderous comments about them. Is the material about Yang Banhou true?

[The novel intended is actually 近代俠義英雄傳 *Tales of Modern Heroes*, in which Yang Banhou features in chapters 56 & 57. Switching the titles is understandable when we take into consideration that they were published as concurrent magazine serials in 1923, then as multi-volume book editions the following year, and were both extremely popular. Fans of both would probably have ended up flipping the names in conversation pretty often. Buxiao Sheng is Xiang Kairan, who wrote his fiction under the pen-name of Pingjiang Buxiao Sheng, which amounts to “Unworthy of Being Born in My Hometown” (Pingjiang County, Hunan).]

答皆道聽塗說之言。毫不足據。自古文人且相輕。何況不讀書不識字之武夫。故名愈高者。妬之者愈衆。種種不實之傳說。反出於同門之後生。而小說家苦無材料。偶聞一段故事。即渲染成篇。種種附會。無中生有。只可作為小說觀。然毀人名譽。往往招口舌之禍。亦不可不慎也。

All a bunch of hearsay. Can’t rely on it all. Scholars have slighted each other since ancient times, illiterate warriors even more so. And so it is that the higher the fame of one, the more jealous the rest of them become, and all sorts of falsehoods get passed on which are then repeated by the next generation. Novelists who are frustrated over lack

of information overhear bits of stories, then add some color, and what they end up writing up is full of strained interpretation, nothing but some something that comes from nothing. Though it can only be treated as fiction, it can nevertheless ruin a person's reputation, frequently leading to unfortunate quarrels, and so you have to be careful.

[This cautionary message may also have been a dose of good-natured ribbing. Xiang Kairan was one of Chen Weiming's students (See Appendix II), and since his novels were bestsellers, they had probably been read by many of Chen Weiming's other students.]

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太極拳之姿式

ON TAIJI BOXING'S POSTURES

[6]

問太極拳自攬雀尾至合太極七十餘式。三丰時所傳。卽是如此。抑有所變動耶。

The Taiji Boxing solo set, from CATCH THE SPARROW BY THE TAIL to CLOSING POSTURE amounts to more than seventy postures. When it was passed down from Zhang Sanfeng, was it like this or have there been changes?

答聞以前太極拳。是單式練法。而不連貫。不如始于何時。將單練之各式。連為一氣。以愚意揣之。大約始於王先生宗岳。因先生所作太極拳論。有各式之名目。係連為一氣也。故宗岳先生。對於太極拳術。其功絕偉。若不連為一氣。恐早失其傳矣。

I have heard that the earlier Taiji Boxing was a method of practicing postures singly rather than linked together. It is not known when it started to be a solo practice of each of the postures being connected into a continuous flow. In my humble opinion, I suspect it probably began with Wang Zongyue. When he wrote his Taiji Boxing essays, each of the postures that were named were connected into a continuous flow. [The postures are not named in the essays themselves, but in the earliest document that contains them, and Chen was apparently of the opinion that authorship of the earliest list of postures for the solo set is therefore also to be attributed to Wang.] Therefore in regards to Taiji Boxing, Wang Zongyue's contribution was huge. If it had not been connected into a continuous flow, I fear it would have been lost a long time ago.

[7]

問北京練太極拳者。俱是楊家所傳。何以形式又略有不同之處。

Those who practice Taiji Boxing in Beijing are all doing what has been passed down from the Yang family, so why are their postures slightly different?

答形式雖略有不同。其意未嘗不同。其所以略有不同之處。據愚意揣測。蓋有二端。一昔時師徒之分極嚴。心有不明。不敢多問。而為師者。又不肯時演與學者觀之。故不能得最準確之姿式。一雖得準確之姿式。而數傳之後。因各人之性情不同。遂無形變改。自不能覺。故太極非傳者有極精密之教法。學者有極沈細之研究。不能得也。

Although their postures are slightly different, the concepts are never different. Why there are these differences is

in my opinion because of two reasons:

– In the old days, there was a strict distinction between teacher and pupil. When the pupil did not understand, he did not dare to ask many questions, and the teacher for his own part was often unwilling to demonstrate in front of the watching student, and therefore the student was unable to obtain the most accurate postures.

– Even if the correct posture was obtained, then over countless generations, due to the differences in each person's personality, tiny little adjustments have been made unconsciously.

Therefore if Taiji is not taught extremely accurately and the student does not study in profound detail, one will be unable to obtain it.

[8]

問然則太極拳之姿式。何者為準確。何者非準確。何從而斷定之乎。

That being the case, then when Taiji Boxing postures are being done correctly or incorrectly, on what do we base such conclusions?

答以王宗岳先生所言之立身須中正安舒四字為準。中正者。不偏不倚之謂也。安舒者。自然舒適。不緊張用力者是也。余所作太極拳術之十要。亦為姿式之準則。如頭無虛靈頂勁。兩面傾側搖動。挺胸直立。上重下輕。兩腿雙重。虛實不清。轉動太快。手法含糊。忽高忽低。兩肩亂動。脚步太小。腰不轉動。皆失其規矩者。總要中正安舒。無處不到。十要之意思。均包涵而不漏。此則雖不能至。亦相去不遠矣。

On words from Wang Zongyue [from Understanding How to Practice]: “When standing, your body must be centered and upright, leisurely and comfortable.” Those four terms set the standard. “Centered and upright” means the same as: “Neither lean nor slant.” “Leisurely and comfortable” means that you are to be natural and at ease, not keyed up and using effort.

Also, I wrote down the “Ten Essentials of the Taiji Boxing Art”, another set of criteria for the postures. If your head is without the principle of forcelessly rousing strength at the headtop, the sides of your face will be tilted and swayed. If you stick out your chest to stand straight, your upper body will be heavy and your lower body will be light. If your weight is evenly distributed onto both legs, emptiness and fullness will not be clearly distinguished. If you move too fast, your hand techniques will be vague. If you suddenly go up or down, your shoulders will move randomly. If your step is too small, your waist will not turn. These are all violations of the rules. Always you are to be “centered and upright, leisurely and comfortable” in every part. The ideas in the Ten Essentials contain all and leave nothing out.

By these means, even if you are unable to reach your goal, you will not be far from it.

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[9]

問有人言脚步不可太大。太大則換步不靈。是否。

Some people say the step must not be too large, because if it is too large, you will not be able to nimbly switch your feet. Is this true?

答此說亦不錯。惟初練架子時。步須開展。總以兩腿之一直一曲為準則。如左腿直則右腿曲。所曲之腿。以膝與足尖成一垂綫為準。則腰可鬆下。前後轉動。步太小。則腰之轉動亦小。對方來勢如猛。則無消化之餘地。不得不退

步矣。如遇路窄。無地可退。則無可如何。如步稍大。以腰轉動。則可化對方之力而還擊之。

Yes, but when you begin training in the solo set, your step has to reach out. This is because the standard for the legs is that one be straight while the other is bent, for instance if your left leg is straight, then your right leg is bent. For the bent leg, the standard is that the knee makes a vertical line with the toes, and then your waist will be able to loosen downward and turn more easily. If your step is too small, the turning of your waist will be smaller as well, and if the opponent's attack is fierce, you will not have any extra room to neutralize and have no choice but to retreat. However, what do you do if the space happens to be confined and there is nowhere you can retreat to? Well, if you simply take a slightly larger step, your waist can turn more effectively, and you can thereby neutralize the opponent's force and then counterattack.

[10]

問有人言架子不可太低。然否。

Some people say the solo set must not be done too low. Is this right?

答架子低則步大。腰可轉動。架子高則步小。腰之轉動亦小。其高低總以兩腿一直一曲為度。是適中之步。如過於低。則重心下陷。而不能往前。虛實反不能分。太極拳論云。先求開展。後求緊湊。若功夫純熟之時。步法手法。均可收小。神而明之。存乎其人。故其小者。乃由大而來。其高者。由低而來。其緊者。由鬆而來。其斷者。由綿綿而來。如此。則其小者高者緊者斷者。方有把握。不然。則恐遇緊急時。仍不能隨機應變。步法散亂。而不免於窮促也。

If the set is done low, then your steps will be big and your waist can turn. If the set is done high, then your steps will be small and the turning of your waist will also be small. The height depends on the legs being one leg straight and one leg bent, for it is to be appropriate to the step. If the height is too low, then your center will be bogged down and unable to go forward, and you will no longer be able to distinguish empty and full. A Taiji Boxing essay [Understanding How to Practice] says: "First strive to open up, then strive to close up." Once you are very skillful, then your stepping and hand techniques can all be shrunk in, for they are now fully understood by your mind and are a part of your body.

Therefore, when it is done small it has developed from doing it big, when it is done high it has developed from doing it low, when it is done tight it has developed from doing it loose, and when it is staccato it has developed from doing it flowingly. If so, then whether small or high or tight or staccato, you will be confident. If not, then I fear that when you encounter an emergency, you will still be unable to respond according to the situation, your steps will be in disarray, and you will be in dire straits.

[11]

問有人言架子不必多練。但習推手。即可長功夫。然否。

There are people who say that the solo set does not need to be practiced that much, that as long you are practicing pushing hands you can develop skill. Is that so?

答凡輕視架子者。皆未得架子之規矩精意者也。架子為最要之基礎。久久練之。身體方能重如泰山。輕如鴻毛。若不練架子。雖多推手。身體仍有不穩之時。易為人所牽動。

All those who belittle the solo set have not yet grasped the essence of its principles. The solo set is the most fundamental part of your foundation. By practicing it over a long period, your body will then be able to be "heavy as a mountain" or "light as a feather" [See questions 42 and 43.]. If you do not practice the solo set, then even if you practice pushing hands a lot, your body will still have moments of instability and will be easily affected by opponents.

[12]

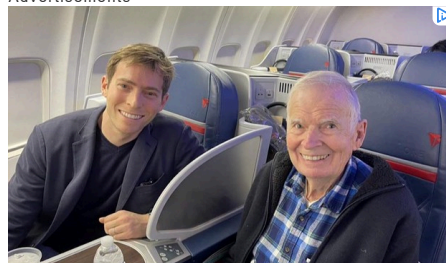
問有人言練太極拳。仍須用力者。然否。

Some people say that when you practice Taiji Boxing you still have to use effort. Is this right?

答太極拳論云。極柔軟。然後極堅剛。太極拳之堅剛內勁。係由柔軟鬆開而生。練架子愈柔軟鬆開。則長內勁愈速。稍有強硬不鬆之處。即為長內勁之阻礙。蓋鬆開則兩臂容易沈重。不鬆開則兩臂仍是輕浮。是為明證。余所著太極拳術內。已論之詳矣。凡持此說者。大抵天生有點力量。喜恃其力。或習過硬拳。不肯捨棄。故尚不能堅信極柔軟然後極堅剛之說。雖練太極。終不能得太極最精妙之意也。

A Taiji Boxing essay [Understanding How to Practice] says: “Extreme softness begets extreme hardness.” Taiji Boxing’s hard internal power is generated from softness and loosening. When you practice the solo set, the more you soften and loosen, the more rapidly you will develop internal power, but if there is the smallest area that will stubbornly not loosen, then the growth of internal power will be obstructed. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that if you loosen, your arms will heavily sink, and if you do not loosen, your arms will lighten and float. I already discussed it in detail in *The Art of Taiji Boxing*. Typically those who hold to this view have been born with a degree of strength and so prefer to rely on it, and those who train in hard boxing styles are not willing to give it up. Therefore if you are unable to believe the theory that extreme softness begets extreme hardness, then even though you practice Taiji, you will be forever unable to achieve its most exquisite concept.

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[13]

問教者用同一教授之法。而學者之姿勢。有好有醜。其故何也。

When teachers are using the same teaching method, why are the postures of some students pretty while those of others are ugly?

答其醜者。必生硬而有力者也。其好者。必柔軟而不用力者也。譬如范金者。必以熱度使之鎔化。方能隨心所欲。或使之方。或使之圓。均可如意。若以生硬之金鐵。欲硬打成或方或圓之器物。則恐用力甚苦而見功甚遲。故教拳者。既令學者。用極大之力。使全身生硬而不易於轉動。而又欲其姿勢之佳善。是欲前而却行也。人之天生氣力。譬如生鐵。必須使之柔軟。久久鍛練。變為精鋼。看似柔軟。堅剛無比。是為太極拳之內勁。

For the ugly ones, it must be that they are stiff and using effort. For the pretty ones, it must be that they are soft and not using effort. Taking the shaping of metal as an analogy, we must heat it to make it pliable, and then we can shape it as we wish, making it square, making it round, whatever we feel like. If on the other hand we take some hard metal and we want to pound into something square or round, then I fear it will take too much effort and we will see results much more slowly.

Therefore a boxing instructor who causes students to use way too much effort makes their whole bodies stiff and their movement difficult, and if he then also wants their postures to be pretty, he is wanting them to move forward but has removed the path. A person’s innate strength is like pig iron, which must be made soft and go

through a long process of smelting for it to become refined steel. Taiji Boxing's internal power appears to be soft and yet is peerlessly hard.

[14]

問練太極拳時之頭部應如何。

When practicing Taiji Boxing, how should your head be?

答頭容正直。不可低而下視。頭低者則精神提不起。

Upright. You must not lower it or look down. If you lower your head, then your spirit will not be able rise.

[15]

問練太極拳時之眼光如何。

When practicing Taiji Boxing, how should your eyes be?

答眼者神之舍也。眼光有時隨手而行。眼隨手則腰自轉動。有時須向前看。所謂左顧右盼中定是也。左顧右盼則腰轉可化人之勁。前看則中定。將人放出。久練太極拳。則眼光奕奕有神。神光足者。其功夫必深無疑。

Your eyes house your spirit. Your eyes will sometimes go along with the movements of your hands, and when your eyes go along with your hands, your waist naturally turns, but sometimes you must look forward. This is why there are the terms “looking left”, “looking right”, and “centering”. When looking left or right, your waist is turning to be able to neutralize the opponent's power. When looking forward, you are centered and about to send the opponent away. After practicing Taiji Boxing for a long time, your eyes will be radiant with spirit. When your spirit is abundantly shining, your skill will assuredly be deep.

[16]

問練太極拳時。口宜閉宜開。

When practicing Taiji Boxing, should your mouth be open or closed?

答參同契云。耳目口三寶。閉塞勿發通。太極拳本為動中求靜。輔佐靜功之法。若張口。則呼吸由口。舌燥喉乾。閉口。舌抵上齶。則自生津液。隨時吞嚥。是華池之水。為養生之甘露。凡言宜開口者。則太極拳之好處。完全失之矣。

It says in *Three in Agreement* [chapter 22 – “Barring Shut the Three Treasures”]: “Eyes, ears, and mouth are the three treasures [which could be considered the three external treasures, the corresponding three internal treasures being essence, energy, and spirit]. They are to be sealed off and not emitted through.” Taiji Boxing is based on seeking stillness within movement, a method for facilitating meditative practice. If your mouth is open, breathing will be done with your mouth, and your tongue and throat will dry out. If your mouth is closed, your tongue will press to your upper palate and thus generate saliva. Swallow it as necessary, for it is the water from the “splendorous pool”, the sweet dew for nourishing health. Those who say the mouth should be open will completely miss the benefits of Taiji Boxing.

[17]

問練太極拳時之腰。應如何鬆。

When practicing Taiji Boxing, how should your waist be loosened?

答曰。鬆者。非硬往下壓之意也。硬壓則不易轉動。鬆則轉動可如意。太極拳論云。腰如車輪。此言其活。又曰。腰如蠶。此言其正直。腰不下鬆不正直。則臀高聳。不但甚不雅觀。而且尾閭必不能中正。神必不能貫頂。力必不能由背脊而發。

Loose means that there is no intention of stubbornly pressing it downward. If pressing it stubbornly, you will have difficulty turning. If loosened, then you can turn freely. A Taiji Boxing essay [Understanding How to Practice] says: “The waist is like a wheel.” [“The energy is like a wheel and the waist is like an axle.”] This describes its

liveliness. It also says “The waist is like a banner.” [“The mind makes the command, the energy is its flag, and the waist is its banner.”] This describes its uprightness. If your waist is not loosening downward and standing upright, your butt will stick out. Not only is this very inelegant to watch, but your tailbone will be entirely incapable of being centered, your spirit will be entirely unable to penetrate to your headtop, and your power will be entirely unable to issue from your spine.

[18]

問練太極拳用掌時之手指如何。

When you use your palm in practicing Taiji Boxing, how should the fingers be?

答手指亦宜舒展自然。不可拳屈。又不可太張開。使之硬直。拳屈則氣貫不到指尖。硬直則氣亦不到。兩掌按出時。不可太過膝。過膝則失其重心。嘗見練太極拳者。兩掌按出過度。全身傾出。臀後高聳。此式由於脚步太小。腰不能下之故。足不到而手往前探。不但打人不出。則已身前傾。恐立不。穩打人必須進足貼身。則兩手隨腰略進。人已跌出。此乃全身之勁也。

The fingers also should be extended naturally. They must not curl in and become fist-like, but also must not be overly extended and thereby cause them to be stiffly straight, for in either case energy will not reach to the fingertips. When your palms push out, they must not go too far beyond your knee, for if they do, you will lose your balance. I have seen practitioners of Taiji Boxing pushing their palms out too far, consequently leaning until their butts are sticking out and rising up. This kind of posture comes from your step being too small, causing your waist to be unable to sink. When your foot does not reach then your hands will reach out forward, and then not only will you not send the opponent away when you attack him, but your own body will lean forward and probably destabilize. When you attack an opponent, you must advance your foot to get close to him with your body, then your hands will slightly advance along with your waist and he will already be stumbling away. This then is whole-bodied power.

[19]

問太極拳之蹬脚分脚亦用力否。

As for Taiji's pressing kicks and kicks to the side, do they use effort?

答太極之腿。乃鬆彈之勁。非生硬之勁也。

Taiji's kicks too have a loose springy energy, not a stiff energy.

[20]

問練太極時之神氣態度應如何。

When practicing Taiji, what should our bearing be like?

答總以神凝氣靜。中正安舒。從容大雅。綿綿不斷為準則。看似輕靈而又極沈重。看似動宕而又極安靜。凡太輕浮流動。或過於劍拔弩張之態。皆未得其精意者也。

Always the criteria are:

- Your spirit is concentrated and your energy is calm.
- It is to be centered and upright, leisurely and comfortable.
- It is to be indulgently unhurried and greatly elegant.
- It is to be done continuously without pause.

It appears light and delicate but is actually very heavy and sunk. It appears the movement is wandering but is actually very calm and still. Generally, if it is overly floating and flowing, or if it is too much like you are drawing a sword or loading a crossbow, in either case you have not yet got the right idea.

[21]

問太極拳七十餘式之次序。必須如此。而亦能變動否。

In the Taiji Boxing solo set there are more than seventy postures in sequence. Must it be like this or can we change them around?

答相傳之次序如此。其相連接之處。亦極自然。故學者當謹守之。譬如一篇好文字。增一字減一字不可。雖然。文字本有無窮的變化。太極拳亦然。若將各式顛倒。其連接之處。果能自然。又何嘗不可耶。太極拳架子。本是平時練功夫之體。若用時。則又何能刻舟求劍。而必依其次序耶。若然則真愚之至矣。

This is the traditional sequence and the way they are linked together is very natural, therefore students should follow it faithfully. Take for example a work of excellent literature. You may not add to it or subtract from it a single word. That being the case, there were no limitations to the manipulation of words during the original writing, and the same is true for Taiji Boxing. If the postures get flipped around, as long as they are still linking up naturally, that would be okay. The Taiji Boxing solo set is the everyday essential training, but when applying it, do not “expect to find your sword that fell in the river by carving a mark on the boat at the spot it fell and then looking for it according to that mark after the boat has moved on down the river”, for to insist on doing it according to the sequence would be just as monumentally stupid.

[22]

問君所著之太極拳術。當可作為準則。

You wrote The Art of Taiji Boxing. Can that be regarded as the standard?

答何敢云然。不過余從楊澄甫先生學太極拳時。對於架子之姿勢。頗十分注意。著此書時。每式必問過五六次。方敢下筆。澄甫先生亦教誨不倦。此書不過代澄甫先生筆述之耳。

I wouldn't dare to say so, but when I learned Taiji Boxing from Yang Chengfu, I paid quite a lot of attention to the postures in the solo set, and when I wrote the book, I must have asked him about each posture half a dozen times before daring to put it down in writing. Yang Chengfu was a tireless teacher and that book is nothing more than his dictation.

[23]

問楊澄甫先生現在所練之架子。與君所作之書。又略有不同者何耶。

The way Yang Chengfu presently practices the solo set is slightly different from the way you wrote it in your book. Why is this?

答澄甫先生現在所練之架子。惟第二次琵琶式後。又添一擡膝拘步。白蛇吐信之後。又將身體屈回如撇身錘後之搬攔錘一樣。此則無甚大關係者也。蓋若遇地方寬闊之處。左右擡膝拘步。本可多打數次。不但左擡膝可加。右擡膝亦可加。琵琶式變搬攔錘。與拘步變搬攔錘。均無不可。至於白蛇吐信之後。澄甫先生教余之時。本未回身。若敵拳來擊。吾以左手接其肘。以右拳擊其脇下。故稍坐腰即將拳打出。更為簡便。兩次撇身錘後及彎弓射虎後均係回身。蓋已有三次矣。

The way he presently practices the solo set, the only differences are that after the second PLAY THE LUTE there is another BRUSH PAST YOUR LEFT KNEE IN A CROSSED STANCE added, and after WHITE SNAKE FLICKS OUT ITS TONGUE, he withdraws his body the same way as in the PARRY, BLOCK, PUNCH that follows TORSO-FLUNG PUNCH. This is not really a big deal.

If you find yourself in a spacious environment, LEFT & RIGHT BRUSH PAST YOUR KNEE IN A CROSSED STANCE can be performed many times, and not only can a BRUSH PAST YOUR LEFT KNEE be added, but a BRUSH PAST YOUR RIGHT KNEE can be added too. PLAY THE LUTE changes to PARRY, BLOCK, PUNCH or BRUSH PAST YOUR KNEE changes to PARRY, BLOCK, PUNCH – either way is fine.

After WHITE SNAKE FLICKS OUT ITS TONGUE, there was originally no withdrawing of the body when Yang

Chengfu taught me. If an opponent attacked with a punch, I used my left hand to connect to his elbow and used my right fist to punch below his ribs, thus slightly sitting my waist then sending out the punch, which is simpler. After TORSO-FLUNG PUNCH on both occasions [the second called WHITE SNAKE FLICKS OUT ITS TONGUE] and after BEND THE BOW, SHOOT THE TIGER, all of these moments now involve withdrawing the body, so it now occurs three times.

[24]

問君所增加之長拳。又將反面之式加入何耶。

Why did you make additions to the Long Boxing set, including adding postures on the opposite side?

答若講練功夫。練太極拳已足。長拳本可不練。余因人身之運動。似宜左右平均發育。故將反式加入。諸君以此長拳作體育運動之法觀之。可也。

If we are discussing the training of skill, practicing the Taiji Boxing solo set is sufficient and the Long Boxing set can basically be skipped. For the sake of exercising the body however, it seemed to me appropriate to cultivate both sides equally, and therefore I added postures on the opposite side. As everyone regards the Long Boxing set as but a method of physical exercise, it seemed okay [to add to it]. [This set, a modified version of the solo set, is explained in detail in a large section of Chen's 1928 sword manual. Reading through the instructions, a tool for more advanced skill-building is implied rather than a mere exercise, rendering Chen's comment here somewhat baffling.]

[25]

問太極拳架子如擣膝拘步。必將手往後轉一大圈。然後向前打出。如此迂緩。何能應敵。

In the Taiji Boxing solo set, for example in BRUSH PAST YOUR LEFT KNEE IN A CROSSED STANCE, you must send your hand to the rear in a large arc then strike forward. If it is done as slow as this, how can it be used to respond to an opponent?

答太極拳之各式。均係圓圈。蓋求其鬆開圓滿。全身轉動。此所以練體也。若求其用。豈能拘定形式。譬如三百六十一度之渾圓體。用時僅用一度。或半度。均無不可。而練體則不可不求其圓滿。若應敵時。亦照練體之迂緩。此真笨伯之流矣。

Each of the Taiji Boxing postures has to do with roundness. Seeking for it to be loosened and fully rounded, turning with your whole body, is the way to practice the solo set. But if you seek to apply it, how can you restrict it to a fixed shape? For example, a circle will cover a complete three hundred sixty-one degrees in the solo set, but when you apply it, it is enough to use only one degree or even half a degree. So when practicing the solo set, you have to get it to be fully rounded, but if when you deal with an opponent, you still do it according to the slow way it is practiced in the solo set, this would be very foolish.

[26]

問老輩練拳之意思。雖不能見。亦有所聞否。

As for ideas the past generations had about practicing the solo set, since we cannot watch them, are there any stories?

答聞楊少候先生說。露禪老先生。練單鞭下勢時。以制錢一枚。置於地上。可以用口銜起。又可以以肩靠人之膝。其腰之下如是。班侯先生練拳之時。或面現喜色而冷笑。或忽作怒容而發喊。是所謂帶喜怒哀者也。此則功夫深到而自然顯之於外者。非勉強而可學者。

Yang Shaohou said that when Yang Luchan practiced the SINGLE WHIP, LOW POSTURE, he placed a copper coin on the ground and could use his mouth to pick it up, and that he could also use his shoulder to bump an opponent's knee, such was the lowering of his waist. And also that when Yang Banhou practiced the solo set, his

face would become joyous and he would laugh sinisterly or he would suddenly look angry and emit shouts. This is called “drawing forth the emotions”. At his depth of skill, they would outwardly manifest naturally. It is something that is neither conscious nor learned.

太極拳之推手

ON TAIJI BOXING'S PUSHING HANDS

[27]

問初學推手。可用力否。

When beginning to learn pushing hands, can you use effort or not?

答。不可用力。打手歌云。棚捋擠按須認真。棚捋擠按四字要分清楚。擠按坐前腿。棚捋坐後腿。先照規矩。每日打數百手。或數千手。則自然兩腿有根。腰極靈活。一年之後。再彼此找勁。（找勁者。彼此不照規矩。隨意攻擊化解）找勁不可太早。太早則喜用力。成為習慣。不能得精巧之意。

You must not. The Playing Hands Song says: “Ward-off, rollback, press, and push must be taken seriously.” All four must be clearly distinguished. When you press or push, you sit on your front leg. When you ward-off or rollback, you sit on your rear leg. Begin by moving in patterns, every day doing hundreds or thousands of reps, and then naturally your legs will develop root and the flexibility of your waist will greatly increase. By the time a year has passed, you and your partner will be seeking energies. (This means you will be both moving free of pattern, attacking and neutralizing as you please.) You must not be seeking energies too soon. If too soon, you will enjoy using effort until it becomes habitual, making yourself incapable of achieving skillful intent instead.

[28]

問棚捋擠按四字。能包涵無窮之變化耶。

Can ward-off, rollback, press, and push contain limitless transformations?

答此四字內含之意思無窮。即如一按字。有輕靈而進者。有重實而進者。有左重右虛而進者。有左虛右重而進者。有兩手開之意而進者。有兩手合之意而進者。如一擠字。有正擠者。有偏擠者。有加肘擠者。有換手擠者。而用臂之各點。又時時變換。如此點之中心已過。即改用彼點。節節是曲綫。節節是直綫。處處是黏勁。處處是放勁。所謂曲中求直者是也。又有摺疊而擠者。或翻上摺疊。或翻下摺疊。均隨敵人之意而變換之。如一棚字。或直棚。或橫棚。或在上棚。或在下棚。粘住敵人之臂或手。隨時變換方向。總之不要敵人在我臂上或身上。得有一目的而可以放勁。若敵人將得有目的。即立時改變其方向。惟須粘住。不可丟離。若敵人丟離。速速打去。所謂逢丟必打是也。如一捋字。有向上捋者。有向下捋者。有平捋者。捋之中有擰。有機會則用。若用勁整快。則手臂或斷矣。

These four terms contain endless meanings. In the case of push, there is going forward lightly and quickly, there is going forward heavily and solidly, there is going forward with your left side heavy and your right side empty, there is going forward with your left side empty and your right side heavy, there is going forward with your hands spreading apart, or there is going forward with your hands joining together.

In the case of press, there is pressing squarely, pressing off to the side, pressing with your elbow, or pressing with switching hands. Using your arm at each point of contact, constantly adjust, but if you go past the center of the point of contact, switch to using another point of contact. At every point there is a curve. At every point there is a straight line. At every moment there is sticking energy. At every moment there is releasing energy. And so it is said: “Within curving, seek to be straightening.” There is also pressing while folding, which can be folding by turning over upward or folding by turning over downward, always adjusting according to the opponent's intention.

In the case of ward-off, there is direct ward-off, horizontal ward-off, upward ward-off, or downward ward-off.

Sticking to his arm or hand, constantly adjust the direction. To sum it up, I do not want the opponent to acquire a clear target on my arm or body at which he can release power. If he does acquire a target, immediately change direction, but you must stick to him and not break away. If he breaks away, instantly attack. And so it is said: “When you meet separation, you must strike.”

In the case of rollback, there is upward rollback, downward rollback, or level rollback. Within rollback, there is breaking, which is applied when the opportunity is right. If power is applied fully and with speed, his arm will break.

[29]

問不動步推手與動步推手孰要。

Is fixed step or moving step pushing hands more important?

答不動步推手。所以練腰。腰若靈活。化人之勁而有餘。則可不用步。動步推手。兼練腰步。若敵敏捷。則不得不運用步法。與之周旋。既有腰。而步法又活。則變動方向更速。得機得勢。游刃有餘。

Fixed step. It trains the waist. Once your waist is flexible enough to neutralize the opponent's power and leave you with extra room to move, then you can move on to stepping. Moving step pushing hands trains both the waist and the stepping. If the opponent is quick, then you will have to make use of stepping. Spiraling comes from the waist, but with the added liveliness of stepping, you will change direction faster and be more than equipped to catch the opportunity and gain the upper hand.

[30]

問大捋之用如何。

What is the purpose of large rollback?

答大捋是走四隅。採捌肘靠。採是採住敵人之手。使之不易變動。捌是用掌捌之。使敵人欲放勁之時而中斷。肘是用肘。靠是用肩。大捋之步法。更大而速。非兩腿有勁。不能輕靈變化。

It addresses the four secondary techniques of pluck, rend, elbow, and bump. Plucking is when you pluck down the opponent's hand and make it difficult for him to adjust. Rending is when you lash out with your palm to cause the opponent's power to be interrupted at the moment he wants to release it. Elbowing is the using of your elbow. Bumping uses your shoulder. The stepping in large rollback is larger and faster, and if you do not have strength in your legs, you will not be able to change nimbly.

[31]

問除棚捋擠按採捌肘靠八法之外。尚有他法否。

Are there other [pushing hands] techniques beyond ward-off, rollback, press, push, pluck, rend, elbow, and bump?

答聞尚有抓筋按脉。閉穴截膜。擒拏崩放。抖擻切錯。諸法。余不過略聞其名。尚未知其用也。

Techniques I have heard of are “grabbing tendons”, “pressing pulses”, “sealing off acupoints”, “severing tissues”, “joint-locking”, “releasing explosively”, “shaking”, and “carving”. But I have learned only a little about them and do not yet understand how to apply them.

[32]

問推手全不用力。若敵力太大。直逼吾身。將奈之何。

In pushing hands there is never the use of effort, but if the opponent's power is too great and is headed right towards me, then what?

答推手雖不用力。然練之數年。自然生一種棚勁。此種棚勁。並非有意用力。而敵人之力。自能棚住。不能近身。初學者鬆開練習數年。使全身毫無僵硬之處。亦可練習棚勁推手。雖用棚勁。須隨腰轉。俗亦謂之老牛勁。

Although in pushing hands there is never the use of effort, after several years of training you will naturally develop ward-off energy. This kind of energy does not have the intention of using effort, but the opponent's power can be naturally warded away, unable to approach your body. A beginner loosens up by training for several years, causing the body to completely lack areas of stiffness. The ward-off energy can also be trained through pushing hands. But when applying ward-off energy, it must go along with the turning of your waist. It is often called "old ox" energy.

[33]

問太極拳推手之意以何為宗。

On what should we base the concepts in Taiji Boxing's pushing hands?

答自以王宗岳先生太極拳論為宗。若違乎太極拳論之意者。則敢斷言其錯誤。

Work from Wang Zongyue's Taiji Boxing essays. If you ignore the ideas in them, then anything you attempt to say on the subject will be wrong.

[34]

問太極拳論之外。尚有發揮精意者否。

Beyond those texts, are there others that express essential concepts?

答有李亦畬先生之五字訣。發揮拳論之意。亦甚扼要。茲錄其訣如下。一曰心靜。心不靜則不專一。一舉手。前後左右。全無定向。起初舉動。未能由己。要悉心體認。隨人所動。隨屈就伸。不丟不頂。勿自伸縮。彼有力。我亦有力。我力在先。彼無力。我亦有力。我意仍在先。（按此數語。略有語病。應云無論。彼有力無力。我之意總在彼先。）要刻刻留心。挨何處。心要用在何處。須向不丟不頂中討消息。從此做去。一年半載。便能施于身。此全是用意。不是用勁。久之則人為我制。我不為人制矣。二曰身靈。身滯則進退不能自如。故要身靈。舉手不可有呆像。彼之力方礙我皮毛。我之意已入彼骨裏。兩手支撐。一氣貫穿。左重則左虛而右已去。右重則右虛而左已去。氣如車輪。週身俱要相隨。有不相隨處。身便散亂。便不得力。其病於腰腿求之。先以心使身。從人不從己。後身能從心。由己仍從人。由己則滯。從人則活。能從人。手上便有分寸。秤彼勁之大小分厘不錯。權彼來之長短毫髮無差。前進後退。處處恰合。工彌久而技彌精。三曰氣斂。氣勢散漫。便無含蓄。身易散亂。務使氣斂入骨。呼吸通靈。周身罔間。吸為合為蓄。呼為開為發。（按先天之呼吸之體。吸開呼合。後天呼吸之用。吸合呼開。）蓋吸則自然提得起。亦拏得人起。呼則自然沈得下。亦放得人出。此是以意運氣。非以力運氣也。四曰勁整。一身之勁。練成一家。分清虛實。發勁要有根源。勁起於脚根。主宰於腰。形於手指。發於脊背。又要提起全副精神。於彼勁將出未發之際。我勁已接入彼勁。恰好不後不先。如皮燃火。如泉湧出。前進後退。無絲毫散亂。曲中求直。蓄而後發。方能隨手奏效。此謂借力打人。四兩撥千斤也。五曰神聚。上四者俱備。總歸神聚。神聚則一氣鼓鑄。練氣歸神。氣勢騰挪。精神貫注。開合有數。虛實清楚。左虛則右實。右虛則左實。（按此係指自身之虛實而言。）虛非全然無力。（按此力字改作意字佳。）氣勢要有騰挪。實非全然占煞。精神要貫注。力從人借。氣由脊發。胡能氣由脊發。氣向下沈。由兩肩收入脊骨。注於腰間。此氣之由上而下也。謂之合。由腰形於脊骨。布於兩膊。施於手指。此氣之由下而上也。謂之開。合便是收。開便是放。能懂得開合。便知陰陽。到此地位。工用一日。技精一日。漸至從心所欲。罔不如意矣。尚有撒放密訣四句。一曰擎。擎開彼身借彼力。中有靈字。二曰引。引到身前勁始蓄。中有斂字。三曰鬆。鬆開我勁勿使屈。中有靜字。四曰放。放時腰脚認端的。中有整字。以上乃李亦畬先生所傳。亦甚精要。

There is Li Yiyu's "Five-Word Formula", which expresses concepts in the boxing theory and is also of vital importance. It is reproduced below:

1. The mind is CALM. If your mind is not calm, it will not be focused, and each movement of your hands, be it forward or back, left or right, will not be in any definite direction. [Therefore your mind should be calm.] At first your movement will not yet be able to come from yourself, and so you should clear your mind and let your body intuit, going along with the opponent's movements. Bend and then extend, neither coming away nor crashing in, and do not expand and contract on your own. When the opponent has power, I also have power, but my power

beats him to the punch. When he has no power, I also have power [have no power], for it is my intention that beats him to the decision. (These couple of sentences may have some faulty wording. The meaning ought to be: Regardless of whether the opponent has power or has no power, my intention is always ahead of him.) You should constantly pay attention. Wherever the opponent nears you, your mind should go there. You must neither come away nor crash in, and then you will be able to analyze what is going on. After doing this for about a year or so, it will become natural. This is entirely a matter of using intention and is not a matter of using strength. Over time, you will reach the point in which you can say “he is under my control and I am not under his”.

2. The body is LIVELY. When your body is sluggish, advancing and retreating cannot be done smoothly. Therefore your body should be lively. When moving your hands, there must be nothing resembling hesitation. When the opponent's force hinders even the hairs on my skin, my intention instantly enters his bones and my hands are bracing him, all as one event. If he puts pressure on my left side, I empty my left side and my right side goes forth, or if he puts pressure on my right side, I empty my right side and my left side goes forth, the energy like a wheel. Your whole body should be coordinated. If there is a lack of coordination anywhere, your body will then be disorganized, and you will then have no power. Seek for the problem in your hips. First use your mind to command your body, and follow the opponent rather than yourself. Later your body will be able to follow your mind, yet this moving from yourself will still depend on following the opponent. If you act from yourself, you will be sluggish. If you follow the opponent, you will be lively. If you can follow the opponent, your hands on him will detect in finer detail, weighing the size of his power and being accurate to the smallest measure, assessing the length of his attack and not being off by the slightest bit, and you will advance and retreat always at the right moment. The more you work at it, the more perfected your skill will be.

3. The energy is COLLECTED. If your energy is scattered, then it will not be stored, and your body will easily fall into disorder. You must cause the energy to collect into your spine. Inhaling and exhaling penetrates and enlivens, influencing every part of your body. Inhaling is contracting and storing. Exhaling is expanding and releasing. (The form of innate breathing is to expand when inhaling and contract when exhaling, whereas learned functional breathing contracts when inhaling and expands when exhaling.) Since with inhaling there is a natural rising, take the opponent up. Since with exhaling there is a natural sinking, send the opponent away. This is the use of intention to move energy, not the use of exertion to force energy.

4. The power is COMPLETE. The power of your whole body is trained to become a single unit, distinguishing clearly between empty and full. To issue power, there should be a source of it. Power starts from your heel, it is directed at your waist, and expresses at your fingers, issuing from your spine. With it there should also be a rousing of all your spirit. When the opponent's power is about to come out but has not yet issued, my power connects with and invades his instantly, neither late nor early, as if my skin is a burning fire or as if a spring is gushing forth. I advance and retreat without the slightest disorder, and seeking the straight within the curved, I store and then issue. Thus I am able to be effortlessly successful. This is called borrowing his force to hit him with, using four ounces to move a thousand pounds.

5. The spirit is GATHERED. With the four above prepared, finally spirit gathers. Once spirit is gathered, then energy is tempered, and this smelted energy then reinforces spirit. Energy is ready to move and spirit is concentrated. Expand and contract are decisive. Empty and full are distinct. When left is empty, right is full. When right is empty, left is full. (These words have to do with emptiness and fullness in your own body.) Empty does not mean you are in that area completely weak (“weak” as in without intent), but that energy should there be ready to move. Full does not mean you are in that area completely stuck, but that spirit should there be concentrated. [It is crucial that changes are within your chest and waist and are not external.] Force is borrowed from the opponent. Energy is issued from your spine. How can energy issue from your spine? It sinks downward, going from your shoulders, gathering in your spine, and concentrates in your waist. This energy

going from above to below is called contracting. Then it goes from your waist to your spine, spreading to your arms to be applied at your fingers. This energy going from below to above is called expanding. Contracting is gathering. Expanding is releasing. When you can understand expanding and contracting, then you will understand passive and active. When you reach this state, then daily work will yield daily refinement, and gradually you will reach the point that you can do whatever you want and everything will happen as you imagine.

There is also “The Trick to Releasing” in four sentences:

1. Raise: I get the opponent’s body to rise up and I borrow his force. (This has to do with “lively”.)
2. Draw in: Once I have drawn him in front of me, my power begins to store. (This has to do with “collected”.)
3. Relax: I relax my power, but I do not allow it to collapse. (This has to do with “calm”.)
4. Release: When I release, it comes from my waist and legs. (This has to do with “complete”.)

This piece also comes down to us from Li Yiyu, and is also extremely essential.

[35]

問二人比手之時。究以身壯力大為占便宜。然否。

When two people are competing, does the one with the stronger and larger build actually have more advantage?

答二人比手。亦猶用兵。多算勝少算。無算者雖勇必敗。比手則意多者勝。無意者敗。蓋彼用之力。我知之甚悉。我用之意。虛實無定。奇正相生。一意方過二意又發。二意方過。三意又發。老子所謂一生二。二生三。三生萬物。變化無窮。喜用力者。必為力所拘。不能隨時隨處變化。用意者。屈伸自由。縱橫莫測。機至發動。如電光之閃炸彈之發。彼雖跌出。尚不知所以然。此意之勝於力無疑也。

When two people are competing, it is just like using armies. The side that does more calculating defeats the side that does less, and if no calculating has been done, defeat will be inevitable no matter how much valiance is brought forth. [paraphrasing from *Art of War*, chapter 1] When competing, it is the one who has the most intent that will win, while the one with no intent will lose.

If the opponent uses effort, I will know very well what he is doing. I on the other hand will be using intent, and so my emptiness and fullness will be indeterminate, and my “obvious techniques and surprise ones will give rise to each other” [*Art of War*, chapter 5]. Once my intent has gone in one direction, I am expressing with a second intent, and once the second is on its way, I am expressing with a third. It is as Laozi said [*Daodejing*, chapter 42]: “From one comes two, from two comes three, from three comes everything.” I transform limitlessly.

One who enjoys using effort will inevitably become stuck, unable to change in accordance with either the timing or the position. One who uses intent bends and extends unrestrainedly, zigs and zags unfathomably, and when the opportunity comes to issue, it is like a flash of lightning or a bomb exploding. Even though the opponent has stumbled away, he will not know why it happened. Hence intention is undoubtedly superior to exertion.

[36]

問推手聽勁。（知覺對方用力之方向長短。謂之聽勁。）祇用兩臂。他處亦須聽勁否。

In pushing hands, does listening energy (meaning the perceiving of the direction and length of the opponent’s force) only use the arms, or are there other areas that also must listen?

答聽勁功夫。先練習兩臂。久而久之。全身皆須練習聽勁。粘在何處。其處皆有知覺。皆能懂勁。敵掌或拳。挨近吾身。皆能化去其力。使之落空。方能謂之真懂勁也。

The skill of listening is first trained in the arms, but over the course of time it must be trained everywhere in the body. Wherever there is sticking, there is to be perceiving, and then every part will be able to identify energies. As

the opponent's palm or fist approaches my body, if every part of it is able to neutralize his force and make him miss, then I can be said to be truly identifying energies.

[37]

問粘住敵人。一動手彼即跌出。是用何法。

When sticking with an opponent, how do I get him to stumble away with but a gesture of my hand?

答太極拳論云。有上即有下。有前即有後。有左即有右。此三語最宜注意。所謂誘之以利。攻其不備者也。孫武子曰。備前則後寡。備後則前寡。備左則右寡。備右則左寡。無所不備。則無所不寡。寡者不備之意也。蓋備前則忘後。吾攻前正所以攻後。備左則忘右。吾攻左正所以攻右。與兵法正同矣。

A Taiji Boxing essay [Essays, part 1] says: "With an upward comes a downward. With a forward comes a backward. With a left comes a right." These three phrases fit this issue best, and is otherwise explained as [Art of War, chapter 7]: "Lure him in by giving him some advantage... Attack where he is unprepared." Sunzi said [Art of War, chapter 6]: "In preparing his vanguard, he will suffer a weak back, and vice versa. In preparing his right flank, his left flank will be weak, and vice versa. And in preparing everywhere, his defense will be too diffuse to be of any use." By "weak" is meant unpreparedness. When he prepares in front, he forgets his back, and so I make an obvious attack to his front in order to [make a surprise] attack to his back. When he prepares his left side, he forgets his right, and so I make an obvious attack to his left in order to [make a surprise] attack to his right.

[38]

問不粘亦可聽勁否。

Can you listen without sticking?

答亦或有此理。內家拳不外練精化氣。練氣化神。練神還虛。三種境界。若能練精化氣。則體魄堅剛。外力不入。若能練氣化神。則飛騰變化。意動形隨。若能練神還虛。則人我兩忘形神俱遣。至此境界。雖不粘而亦能制人矣。Yes, there is a theory to this. There is nothing more to the internal school of boxing than training the essence to transform it into energy, training the energy to transform it into spirit, and training the spirit to return to emptiness – three levels. If you can train your essence to transform it into energy, your body will become tough and external forces will not affect you within. If you can train your energy to transform it into spirit, then you will undergo an exhilarating change: wherever your intent moves, your posture will follow. If you can train your spirit to return to emptiness, the distinction between you and your opponent as two people will vanish and the distinction between body and mind will disintegrate. Reaching this level, you can control an opponent even without sticking to him.

[39]

問八卦掌步行圓式。移步換形。變化無窮。不知太極亦有圓轉之步法否。

The stepping in Bagua walks in a circle, shifting position through stepping, transforming limitlessly. Do you know if Taiji also has a circular stepping method.

答昔楊少侯先生。曾教余二人右手相粘。由下往上畫一圓圈。兩人之步。亦作圓形向右旋轉。右步在內。一起一落。仍在原處。左步前邁。步落地極輕。所謂邁步如貓形者是也。左手相粘。則左步在內。右步前邁。向左旋轉。此係二人粘手練習。聽勁之意。亦在其內。而移步換形。步法之變法。與八卦無異。

Yang Shaohou taught me an exercise of two people sticking with their right hands, drawing circles upward from below, while stepping [to the left] to make a rightward [clockwise] circle, right foot stepping inward, left foot stepping forward [along the circle's edge], the feet lifting and lowering until they have returned to their original position. The steps come down very lightly, as it is said [Understanding How to Practice]: "Step like a cat." When sticking with their left hands, the left foot steps inward and the right foot steps forward [along the circle's edge],

[stepping to the right] to make a leftward [counterclockwise] circle. This is an exercise for two people to train sticking with their hands, and also contains an element of listening energy, but the shifting of position by stepping and the method of changing steps is the same as in Bagua.

[40]

問黃百家內家拳法有應敵打法色名若干。如長拳滾砍。分心十字。擺肘逼門。迎風鐵扇。異物投先。推肘捕陰。彎心杵肘。舜子投井。剪腕點節。紅霞貫日。烏雲掩月。猿猴獻菓。縮肘裹靠。仙人照掌。彎弓大步。兌換抱月。左右揚鞭。鐵門閃。柳穿魚。滿肚疼。連技箭。一提金。雙架筆。金剛跌。雙推窗。順牽羊。亂抽麻。燕抬腮。虎抱頭。四把腰等名目。今之太極拳。亦有之否。

It says in Huang Baijia's Boxing Methods of the Internal School: "The art has many colorfully named combat techniques, such as: Reaching Punch and Rolling Chop, Punch Across the Center to Each Side, Swinging an Elbow to Force the Door, Waving an Iron Fan Against the Wind, Letting Go of One Object to Fling Another Forward, Pushing an Elbow into the Crotch, Caving in with Your Chest to Pound His Ribs, Emperor Shun is Thrown into the Well, Cutting with Your Wrist to Attack His Joints, Sun Breaking Through Dawn Clouds, Dark Clouds Hiding the Moon, Ape Offers Fruit, Coil an Elbow in to Curl Up and Bump, Immortal Shows a Palm, Drawing a Bow in a Long Stance, Share an Embrace with the Moon, Left & Right Lifting a Rod, Sealing the Door with an Iron Bar, Hanging a Fish on a Branch, Filling the Stomach with Agony, Successive Arrows, Lifting Up a Gold Piece, Holding up a Writing Brush with Both Hands, Arhat Tumbles on the Ground, Pushing Open a Window with Both Hands, Leading a Sheep, Untangling a Rope, Swallow Tilts Up a Cheek, Tiger Hides its Head, and Wrapping All the Way Around His Waist, and so on." Does Taiji Boxing have these things nowadays?

答此皆用法之名。太極拳用法。聽人之勁。隨機應變。本無定法。昔時以形之近似而假以名。歷時既久。未敢強解以說。然其用法。未必盡失其傳也。其要為敬緊徑勁切五字。敬者。時時留意。不敢散漫也。緊者。即粘連逼緊之意也。徑者。近也。用最近捷之法也。勁者。堅剛之意。極柔軟然後極堅剛也。切者。相密切而不丟離也。

These are all names of techniques. The method in Taiji Boxing is to listen to the opponent's energy and respond according to the situation, and so it really has no fixed techniques. In the old days, postures closely resembled the names that were lent to them, but much time has passed, and we can no longer presume to definitively analyze them according to their descriptions. Yet the transmission of their function has not been entirely lost, for their essentials lie in five terms [from the Bio of Zhang Songxi, *Records of Ningbo Prefecture*]: focused, sticky, expedient, potent, and precise. Focused means constantly paying attention and not daring to be disorganized. Sticky means the concept of sticking and following closely. Expedient means near – use the method that is closest and quickest. Potent means the idea of being solid, as in [Understanding How to Practice]: "Extreme softness begets extreme hardness." Precise means observing carefully and not being disconnected.

[41]

問太極拳必求其柔。柔之利益何在。

In Taiji Boxing, you must strive for softness, but what is the advantage of softness?

答求其柔者。所以使全身能撒散而不連帶也。假如推其手。手動而肘不動。推其肘。肘動而肩不動。推其肩。肩動而身不動。推其身。身動而腰不動。推其腰。腰動而腿不動。故能穩如泰山。若放人之時。則又由脚而腿而腰而身而肩而肘而手連為一氣。故能去如放箭。若不能柔。全身成一整物。力雖大。然更遇力大於我者。推其一處。則全身皆立不穩矣。柔之功用豈不大哉。故能整能散。能柔能剛。能進能退。能虛能實。乃太極拳之妙用也。

Striving for softness means getting any part of your body to be able to loosen and become uninvolved. If your hand is pushed, your hand is moved but your elbow is not moved. If your elbow is pushed, your elbow is moved but your shoulder is not moved. If your shoulder is pushed, your shoulder is moved but your torso is not moved. If your torso is pushed, your torso is moved but your waist is not moved. If your waist is pushed, your waist is moved

but your leg is not moved. And therefore you can be as stable as Mt. Tai.

When sending an opponent away, there is also the single continuous flow from foot through leg through waist through torso through shoulder through elbow to hand, and therefore you will be able to send him away as if you are loosing an arrow.

If I cannot be soft, my whole body becomes a single object, and although I may be strong, if I encounter someone stronger and he pushes just one area, my whole body will then be destabilized. So how can the function of softness not be important?

Therefore, be able to integrate [with all parts] and also be able to disintegrate [with any part], be able to be hard and also be able to be soft, be able to advance and also be able to retreat, be able to fill and also be able to empty. This is the subtlety of Taiji Boxing.

[42]

問太極拳不用抵抗力。何以推不能動。

Taiji Boxing does not use effort to resist, so how is it that when a practitioner is pushed he cannot be moved?

答太極拳雖不用抵抗力。然不用力而練出之掙勁。極為圓滿。不但兩臂有之。全身處處皆有。故功夫深者。彼雖有時不用化勁。而亦推之不動。其抵抗力實為極大。此非有意之抵抗。所謂重如泰山者是也。

Although Taiji Boxing does not use effort to resist, not using effort trains the ward-off energy to come forth, which is extremely round and full, not only in the arms but everywhere in the body. Therefore for one whose skill is deep, there are times when he does not use neutralizing energy and yet still is not affected by a push. His power of resistance is truly tremendous, but he does not have the *intention* of resisting. This is called “heavy as a mountain”.

[43]

問有時用力推之。而覺無有何耶。

How is it there are times when pushing forcefully that it feels like there is nothing there?

答。此即是化勁。能不丟不頂。其長短緩急均與來者適合。如捕風捉影。處處落空。看是甚輕。而不知乃是提起全付精神。運用腰腿。所謂輕如鴻毛者是也。

This is neutralizing energy. If you are able, without either coming away or crashing in, to match the length and speed of an opponent's attack, it will be like he is grabbing the wind or grasping at shadows, always missing. It will look so delicate, and it will not be comprehended that it is a matter of fully rousing your spirit and using your hips. This is called “light as a feather”.

[44]

問推手之拿法如何。

What are the grabbing methods like in pushing hands?

答太極之拿。並非用大力按住。使之不能動也。其原理有三。一所拿之直線方向。能背住對方之力。不能用力翻過。二對方之力雖大。我不與抵抗。略隨之起。轉一圓圈。則彼力自斷。復隨我之曲線而轉至原處。不能翻過。此皆含有幾何及力學之理。三內勁充足。雖輕輕粘住。對方亦不能動。一二法也。三勁也。知法而無勁。有勁而不知法。皆不能拿人。皆不可缺者也。

Taiji's grabbing also does not use a great deal of effort, which would cause you to be unable to move. There are three concepts to it:

1 [straight grab]. By grabbing in a straight line along the direction the opponent is moving, I am able to reverse his power so that he is unable to come back at me even through effort.

2 [curving grab]. Even if his strength is great, I do not resist him, I slightly go along with it by lifting and

turning it over in a circle so he cuts off his power himself and then goes along with my curving to end up back where he started, again unable to come back at me.

Both of these techniques contain principles of geometry and mechanics.

3 [grabbing without grabbing]. If your internal power is sufficient, then even though you stick to him ever so lightly, he still will not be able to move.

The first two are about technique and the third is about energy. If you know the technique but have no energy, or if you have energy but do not know the technique, either way you will not be able to capture the opponent. Both are indispensable.

[45]

問太極拳論云。捨己從人。豈自毫不作主張乎。

A Taiji Boxing essay [Essays, part 2] says: “Forget about your plans and simply respond to the opponent.” How can I make not the slightest decision?

答論所謂捨己從人者。即老子所謂與之為取也。隨彼之長短。則視我之功夫之大小。功夫小者。則隨之必長。必俟其力盡後。方能回擊。功夫漸大者。則隨之亦可漸短。俟其力之半途斷時。即可回擊。功夫愈大者。則隨之極微。彼力已斷。即可回擊。有時粘住。彼力竟不能發出。即可放勁。則不必從人。而自作主張矣。

These words from the essays are the same as Laozi’s message [in *Wenzi*, chapter 3] that “to give is the way to get”. The extent to which I go along with the opponent depends on the degree of my skill:

– If I have a lesser skill, then I must go along with him longer, and I must wait until his power has finished in order to be able to counter.

– If I have a somewhat greater skill, then I can go along with him to a shorter extent, waiting until his power has come out halfway and interrupting it, and then right away I can counter.

– If I have a much greater skill, then I go along with him the tiniest little bit, interrupting his power from the start, and then right away I can counter. Sometimes when I am sticking to him, his power is completely unable to issue and I can instantly release energy, in which case I do need to go along with him, for I am in charge.

[46]

問放勁時。沈着鬆淨。專主一方。是否全身之勁皆去。

When releasing energy, “sink and relax, concentrating it in one direction” [from Understanding How to Practice]. Is it the whole’s body power that is going out?

答是。全身之勁去。故放之必遠。若只兩臂之勁。則有限矣。太極放人之勁極長。而功夫愈大者。則其動愈短。有時不見其動。而人已跌出。蓋其動雖短。其勁仍甚長也。

Yes, your whole body’s power is going out, and therefore the energy released will surely go far. If it is only the energy of your arms, it will be limited. In Taiji, the energy sending an opponent away is extremely long, but for a practitioner with that much more skill, the movement is that much shorter. Sometimes you will not see his movement, but the opponent is already stumbling away. Although his movement is short, his energy is long.

[47]

問太極拳論云。動中求靜靜猶動。如推手之時。動中如何求靜。

A Taiji Boxing essay [Thirteen Dynamics Song] says: “Within movement, seek stillness, and in stillness, there is still movement.” [“In stillness, movement stirs, and then once in motion, seem yet to be in stillness.”] During pushing hands, how is stillness to be sought within movement?

答推手與人相粘。隨人轉動。動之中須有靜意。如動中無靜。是為流動。則動必不能穩。假使敵人乘我之動而放勁。流動必為人放出。動中有靜意。隨時能聽勁變化。不易為人放出。靜之中須有動意。如靜中無動。是為死靜。

則靜必不能活。假使敵人乘我之靜而放勁。死靜必為人放出。靜中有動意。隨時能聽勁變化。不易為人放出。此最精之理也。

During pushing hands, as the opponent and I stick to each other I go along with his movement, and within my movement I must have an intention of stillness. If there is no stillness within my movement, this is just moving all over the place, with the result that my movement will be unable to be stable. If the opponent then takes advantage of my movement and releases energy, my moving all over the place will inevitably get me sent away. If within my movement I have an intention of stillness, I will at all times be able to listen to his changes, and it will not be easy for him to send me away.

Within stillness there must also be an intention of movement. If there is no movement within my stillness, this is a dead kind of stillness, with the result that my stillness will be unable to be lively. If the opponent then takes advantage of my stillness and releases energy, my lifeless stillness will inevitably get me sent away. If within my stillness I have an intention of movement, I will at all times be able to listen to his changes, and it will not be easy for him to send me away.

This [movement in stillness and stillness in movement] is the most essential principle.

[48]

問推手棚捋擠按。用同一之法。有施之甲而能放出。施之乙不易放出。則又何故。

In pushing hands, there is a single method of applying ward-off, rollback, press, and push, and yet I have performed it on one person and been able to send him away but then when I perform it on another person I have difficulty doing so. What is the reason for this?

答此各人身體剛柔動作之性質不同也。有臂軟而腰硬者。臂硬而腰軟者。有臂腰俱軟者。有臂腰俱硬者。故用同一之法。而效則異。此則須舍其活動難放之處。打其不動易放之處。舍其活動難放之時。打其動完易放之時。則每發必中矣。

This is because the character of one's hardness and softness of movement is different for each person's body. One person will have arms that are soft and a waist that is stiff. Another will have arms that are stiff and a waist that is soft. Yet another will be soft in both waist and arms. Still another will be stiff in both waist and arms. Therefore though you are using the same method in each case, the effect for each ends up different.

For this problem, you must forget about trying to get him where he is moving, for that area is difficult to release energy into, and instead attack him where he is not moving, for that area is easier to release energy into. [i.e. Ignore the moving targets, shoot the sitting ducks.] When you do it this way, you are always sure to get a bull's-eye.

[49]

問何謂難放易放之處。

Could you clarify the areas in which it is easy to release or difficult to release?

答譬如甲此處甚活。彼處不活。即打其不活之處易放之處。

If he is moving a lot in one area, in another area he will not be moving very much. It is easier to release energy into the area that is not moving very much.

[50]

何謂難放易放之時。

What are moments in which it is easy to release or difficult to release?

答譬如甲正動之時。方向已變。不得中心。是難放之時。此中心將過。得第二個中心。彼來不及變動。則是易放之時也。

If he was moving along one path, but then he has already changed direction, you will not be able to get to the target, and this is a moment in which it is difficult to release energy. But once that target has gone, there will be another that he will be too late to adjust, and this is a moment in which it is easy to release energy.

[51]

問何謂退中求進。

What does it mean to seek advance within retreat?

答假使敵人進迫。我不能不退。然有時手臂粘住之處。隨彼之進而回屈者。而同時身步反往前伸進。彼力完時。我手隨腰放勁。則彼跌出更遠。

If an opponent advances forcefully, I have to retreat. But sometimes at the area where my arm is sticking to him, my arm goes along with his advance by withdrawing while at the same time my body and step are advancing forward. Then when his power has finished, my hands go along with my waist to release energy, with the result that he stumbles away even farther.

[52]

問太極拳最要是不丟不頂。假使對方能聽勁。二人不丟不頂。則永遠不能將人放出。將如之何。

In Taiji Boxing, the most important thing is to neither come away nor crash in, but if the opponent has listening energy, both people will neither come away nor crash in, and thus neither person will be able to send the other away. What to do about this?

答假使對方兩臂均能聽勁。不能得其機會。而身上尚未能聽勁。忽然乘機丟斷。速往身上放勁。亦有時能將對方放出。所謂勁斷而意不斷也。

If the opponent is able to listen with his arms, I will be unable to catch an opportunity, but if he is unable to listen with his body, I can seize an opportunity to suddenly break contact and quickly release energy against his body, and this will in such situations give me occasions when I can send him away. It has been said in this way: "The energy breaks off but the intention continues."

[53]

問前言不粘之時。亦能聽勁。其情形如何。

You said before that without sticking there can still be listening energy. [See question 38.] Under what circumstances is this so?

答粘住。人不能將我打出。是能聽粘住之勁。不粘住。人即能將我打出。是不能聽不粘住之勁。不粘住之勁。亦要能聽。無論不防之時。人不能將我打出。則是功夫純到而能聽不粘住之勁也。

If I am sticking to the opponent and he is unable to hit me, this is because I can listen to his energy when I am sticking to him. If I am not sticking to him and he is able to hit me, this is because I cannot listen to his energy when I am not sticking to him. When I am not sticking to him, I should still be able to listen to him, and then no matter how unprepared I am, he would be unable to hit me, but it takes a very high level of skill to be able to listen to the opponent's energy without sticking to him.

太極拳之散手

ON TAIJI BOXING'S VARIOUS TECHNIQUES

[54]

問太極拳之散手。如何用法。

How are Taiji Boxing's various techniques to be applied?

答太極拳七十餘式。均是散手。既有散手。何必又習推手之法。蓋太極拳散手之變化。均由推手聽勁而來。能聽勁則散手方能用之而適當。若不粘住敵人。不知聽勁。則用散手。亦猶外家拳之格打。未必着着適當也。太極拳論云。由着熟而漸悟懂勁。（着即是散手）由懂勁而階及神明。可見着熟是第一層功夫。懂勁是第二層功夫。着熟不難。懂勁最難。譬如敵人打一拳來。若不先粘住。則不能聽人勁之。不能聽人勁之。則不能或左或右或高或低或進或退。而施用散手。既粘住之後。若敵人手往上起。則亦隨之而起。即可以左手擊其胸部。若敵人手往下落。則隨之下落。以左手擊其面部。若敵人手往前進。勁偏於左。則隨之向左化去其力。即可分手。以左手粘之。騰出右手擊其頭部。勁偏于右。則隨之向右化去其力。以左手擊其頭部。或肩部。若敵人抽拳。則趁勢向前放勁。此略言其大概也。總之太極之散手。與他種拳之散手不同。太極拳之散手。是由粘住聽勁而出。他種拳之散手。是離開而各施其手脚。遠則彼此不相及。近身則互相抱扭。仍有力者勝焉。許君禹生所作太極拳勢圖解。每式之後。均附以應用。甚為詳細。余曾叩之楊澄甫先生。云太極拳術。若將散手用法加入。則更備矣。先生曰。太極拳散手。隨機應變。無一定法。若會聽勁。則聞一知百。若不會聽勁。雖知多法。亦用不好。故余所著之書。未將散手加入也。孫武子曰。知己知彼。後人發。先人至。太極聽勁。全是知彼功夫。能粘住敵人。彼不動。我不動。彼微動。我先動。彼不會聽勁。一動即跌出矣。若太極拳聽勁功夫尚不能到。不能粘住敵人。則不必與人動手可也。

The Taiji Boxing solo set has more than seventy postures, and they are all techniques. But equipped with techniques, why must we also train in pushing hands methods? Because the adaptability of these techniques always comes from the listening energy of pushing hands. If you are able to listen to energy, then the technique will be used appropriately. If you are not sticking to the opponent, you will not know how to listen to his energy and thereby apply techniques, and you will be left with doing the blocking and hitting of external styles, which technique after technique is not the right thing to do.

A Taiji Boxing essay [Essays, part 2] says: "Once you have ingrained these techniques, you will gradually come to identify energies ("techniques" meaning these various postural techniques), and then from there you will work your way toward something miraculous." From this it can be seen that the ingraining of techniques is the first step toward skill and identifying energies is the second stage. Techniques are not difficult, but identifying energies is extremely difficult.

For example, when an opponent attacks with a punch, if you are not first sticking to him, then you are unable to listen to his energy. If you are unable to listen to his energy, then you will be unable to execute any techniques, be they left or right, high or low, advancing or retreating. But once you are sticking to him, then if his hand lifts, go along with it by also lifting, and then you can use your left hand to strike to his chest. Or if his hand lowers, go along with it by also lowering, and then use your left hand to strike to his face. Or if his hand goes forward with the energy inclining to the left, go along with it to the left to neutralize his power, and then you can spread your hands apart, using your left hand to stick to him and clearing the way for your right hand to strike to his head. Or if the energy is inclining to the right, go along with it to the right to neutralize his power and use your left hand to strike to his head or shoulder. Or if his fist pulls back, take advantage of the momentum by going forward with releasing energy. These brief descriptions give a general idea.

To sum up, Taiji techniques are different from the techniques of other boxing styles. Taiji Boxing's techniques come from sticking and listening. The techniques of other styles involve staying apart for each person to use his hands or feet. When they are at a distance, they have no contact with each other, and when their bodies are close, they wrestle with each other. Always the stronger one wins.

In Xu Yusheng's 1921 manual, after each posture there was a very detailed application explanation included. I once asked Yang Chengfu about this for the *The Art of Taiji Boxing*: "If I added in applications to the techniques, would it be more complete?" He said: "Taiji Boxing techniques are responses according to situations and are without a fixed pattern. If you know how to listen to energy, then hearing one thing lets you know a hundred, and if you don't know listening energy, then even if you know many techniques, you will not be able to apply them well

anyway.” This is why when I wrote that book I did not add applications for the techniques.

Sunzi said [*Art of War*, chapter 3]: “Know both enemy and self.” [and from chapter 7:] “Leave after but arrive before.” Taiji Boxing’s listening energy is entirely a skill of knowing the opponent. Able to stick to the opponent, then [from addition to Playing Hands Song]: “If he takes no action, I take no action, but once he takes even the slightest action, I have already acted.” If he does not know listening energy, then with but a gesture he will sent stumbling away, but if you still have not attained the skill of Taiji Boxing’s listening energy, and you are unable to stick to the opponent, then it would be better if you were not actually fighting with others at all.

[55]

問若遇他派拳家。手脚極快。一時不能粘住。將奈之何。

If I encounter an expert in a different style whose hands and feet are really fast and I have no chance to be able to stick to him, what do I do?

答他派拳。均以離開見長。然離開過遠。亦不能打上吾身。若欲打上吾身。必係手足能相及之處。彼近吾身。則吾可粘之矣。粘住之後。則可聽彼之勁。急動則急應。緩動則緩隨。若遇此時。不可膽小。急進身粘之。粘住則無危險。不粘則彼可得勢矣。

In other styles of boxing, they separate to fight at a distance. But if an opponent’s distance from me is too far, he will be unable to hit my body. If he wants to get to me, he has to get close enough with his hands or feet that we can reach each other. So once he nears my body, I can stick to him, and once I am sticking to him, I can listen to his energy. [from Essays, part 2:] “If he moves fast, I quickly respond, and if his movement is slow, I leisurely follow.” When you are in this situation, you must not be timid. Quickly close on him and stick to him. By sticking to him, there will be no danger, but if do not stick to him, he can get the advantage.

[56]

問二人粘手聽勁之功夫略等。亦能施用散手否。

If two people are sticking with their hands and their listening skill is about equal, can the various techniques be applied?

答此則不易施用。蓋俱能聽勁。則不使之脫離故也。若一方能丟離而施用散手。則其功夫必較深。故精於太極者。粘住人。則對方決難以施其散手。故粘手之功夫。至為重要。而不可輕視之也。

Not easily. If they both have listening ability, each will not allow the other to disconnect. So if one can manage to disconnect and pull off one of these techniques, then his skill is obviously deeper. A Taiji expert will stick to his opponent to make it decidedly difficult for him to carry out his techniques. Therefore sticking is the most important skill and must not be looked upon as inconsequential. [This indicates that if your opponent knows all of these techniques but is not good at sticking while you know none of these techniques but are good at sticking, you will win.]

[57]

問攬雀尾之用法如何。

How is CATCH THE SPARROW BY THE TAIL to be applied?

答敵如右拳打來。我以右手粘之。敵如又用左拳打來。則左手粘其手腕。進右步。如右步本在前。則不必進。以右臂捋之。彼如向後奪。則趁其奪勁擠之。或按之。看其形勢如何而應用之可也。

If an opponent punches at me with his right fist, I use my right hand to stick to it, then if he also punches at me with his left fist, I use my left hand to stick to it, advancing with my right foot (If my right foot is already forward, I do not need to advance.), and then use my right arm to roll him back. If he wrests away to the rear, I take

advantage of the energy of his escape and press or push him. By observing the state of his posture and momentum, I can then respond accordingly.

[58]

問單鞭之用法如何。

How is SINGLE WHIP to be applied?

答單鞭之用。係應付左右兩面之敵。有時亦用雙掌。

This is for dealing with opponents to both sides. It is also sometimes done with double palms.

[59]

問吊手有何用。

How is the hooking hand to be used?

答吊手是捲勁。用時先以指。繼以手指之骨節。繼以手背。繼以腕骨。如輪之向前向下轉動。

This is an example of rolling energy. When you apply it, first use your fingertips, then knuckles, then back of the hand, then wrist. It is like the forward and downward rotating of a wheel.

[60]

問提手用法。

How is RAISE THE HANDS to be applied?

答我進右拳或右掌時。敵若以右手下按我之右腕。則隨其按勁而下鬆。以左手分其右手。騰出右手由下而上提。由腹而胸而下頰而鼻。此向上之提勁也。

When I advance with my right fist or right palm, if the opponent uses his right hand to push down on my right wrist, I then go along with his pushing energy by loosening downward and use my left hand to take aside his right hand, clearing the way for my right hand to lift up from below, from his belly area to his chest, chin, or nose, with an energy of lifting upward.

[61]

問白鶴亮翅用法。

How is WHITE CRANE SHOWS ITS WINGS to be applied?

答我進右掌或右拳。敵若以左手往下按我右腕。以右拳回擊。則吾右手隨其下按之勁而下鬆。以左手粘其右拳。略往下採。右手從右邊旋轉而上。以手背擊其太陽穴。此名為反珠掌。

When I put forward my right palm or fist, if the opponent uses his left hand to push down on my right wrist while using his right hand to return a strike, my right hand goes along with his downward pushing energy and loosens downward, then my left hand sticks to his right fist and slightly plucks downward as my right hand goes from the right side in an upward arc to strike to his temple with the back of the hand. This is called "Palm Returning a Pearl".

[62]

問搜膝拗步用法。

How is BRUSH PAST YOUR LEFT KNEE IN A CROSSED STANCE to be applied?

答敵擊右拳。我以左手往外搜。以右掌擊其胸部。反之敵若擊左拳。我以右手往外搜。以左手擊其胸部亦可。

An opponent punches at me with his right fist, so I use my left hand to brush it outward and use my right hand to strike to his chest. Or if he punches at me with his left fist, I use my right hand to brush it outward and my left hand to strike to his chest.

[63]

問手揮琵琶用法。

How is PLAY THE LUTE to be applied?

答敵若以右拳打來。其臂甚直。我以右掌接其腕。以左掌接其肘。往右用腰勁。兩掌相錯。則彼之臂必受傷。若勁整時。則肘處之骨節或斷也。此即捋勁。亦謂之擗勁。

If an opponent uses his right fist to attack me and his arm gets very straightened, I connect to his wrist with my right palm, to his elbow with my left palm, and go to the right using power from my waist, both hands rubbing toward each other, with the result that his arm will surely be injured. If done with full power, his elbow will be broken. This is an example of rollback energy and is also an example of breaking energy.

[64]

問進步搬攔錘用法。

How is ADVANCE, PARRY, BLOCK, PUNCH to be applied?

答敵若以右拳打我胸部或腹部。則以右拳由上往下接按其腕。手心向上。以左掌擊其面部。彼若以左手接吾左掌。則速以右拳擊其腹部或胸部。即所謂緊三錘也。

If an opponent uses his right fist to punch to my chest or belly, I then send my right fist down from above, the center of the hand facing upward, to connect with and press down his right wrist, and use my left palm to strike to his face. If he uses his left hand to connect with my left palm, I quickly use my right fist to punch to his belly or chest. This is therefore called “three rapid strikes”.

[65]

問如封似閉用法。

How is SEALING SHUT to be applied?

答我擊右拳時。彼若左手橫推吾肘。我則以左手由肘外接其腕。隨彼推勁而往右領。右手騰出適按其肘節。兩手齊按。則彼跌出矣。

When I punch with my right fist, if the opponent uses his left hand to push my elbow aside, I then send my left hand from the outside of my elbow to connect to his wrist, going along with his pushing energy to guide him off to the right [left], clearing the way for my right hand to push down on his elbow, then push with both hands, with the result that he stumbles away.

[66]

問十字手用法。

How is CROSSED HANDS to be applied?

答此我兩手。粘住彼之兩手。有時欲用分勁或用合勁時用之。

This is for when both of my hands are sticking to both of the opponent's hands. Sometimes I will want to use a spreading energy and sometimes I will want to use a joining energy.

[67]

問抱虎歸山用法。

How is CAPTURE THE TIGER AND SEND IT BACK TO ITS MOUNTAIN to be applied?

答抱虎歸山乃應兩面敵法。故先分手。敵若由右面斜進來打。我即以右手由上接粘之。以左掌擊其面部。設又有敵人由左面來攻。則轉身以單鞭擊之。楊少侯先生云。抱虎歸山。尚須下身抄虎之前後腿。蓋又一種練法也。

This is a technique for responding to two opponents, therefore it is separated into two techniques. If an opponent advances to attack from the right corner, I then use my right hand to connect and stick to it, and use my left palm to strike to his face. If another opponent then attacks from the left, I turn around and use SINGLE WHIP to strike

him [What in Chen's 1925 manual is considered to be the beginning movement of PUNCH UNDER THE ELBOW is here considered to be the ending movement of CAPTURE THE TIGER.]. Yang Shaohou said that another way to use CAPTURE THE TIGER is to lower your body to grab around the opponent's legs.

[68]

問肘下錘用法。

How is PUNCH UNDER THE ELBOW to be applied?

答此連環三手也。以右掌或拳橫擊敵之太陽穴。設敵以左手由外來隔。則抽回。藏左肘下。以左掌擊其面部。設彼又隔我左掌。則右掌由肘下擊其胸部。三手必有一中也。

This is separated into three continuous techniques. I use my right palm or fist to strike across to the opponent's temple. If he uses his left hand to block from the outside, I then withdraw it [my right palm] to store it under my left elbow and use my left palm to strike to his face. If he blocks my left palm, then I use my right palm to strike to his chest from under my elbow. The three techniques must be as one.

[69]

問倒輦猴用法。

How is RETREAT, DRIVING AWAY THE MONKEY to be applied?

答敵若以右拳擊我胸部或腹部。則以左掌採其右腕。含胸坐後腿。以右掌擊其面部。敵若以左拳擊我胸部或腹部。則以右掌採其左腕。含胸坐後腿。以左掌擊其面部。

If an opponent uses his right fist to punch to my chest or belly, I then use my left palm to pluck his right wrist, hollowing my chest and sitting onto my rear leg, and use my right palm to strike to his chest. Or if he punches with his left fist, I would use my right palm to pluck his left wrist, hollowing my chest and sitting onto my rear leg, and use my left palm to strike to his chest.

[70]

問斜飛式用法。

How is DIAGONAL FLYING POSTURE to be applied?

答吾擊右掌或右拳時。敵若以左手往右推吾右肘。則以左手從右肘採其左手。騰出右手。向其太陽處擊之。此即捌勁也。

When I strike with my right palm or fist, if the opponent uses his left hand to push my right elbow, then I use my left hand to pluck his left hand from my elbow, clearing the way for my right hand to strike to his temple. This is an example of rending energy.

[71]

問海底針用法。

How is NEEDLE UNDER THE SEA to be applied?

答敵若握吾右腕時。則用海底針式。彼即不能得力。手必鬆散。

If an opponent grasps my right wrist, I then use this technique to cause him to be unable to achieve anything, his grip compelled to loosen.

[72]

問扇通臂用法。

How is FAN THROUGH THE ARMS to be applied?

答敵握吾右腕。既用海底針化去其力。彼若上奪。則順勢右手抬。進左步以左掌擊其胸部。

The opponent grasps my right wrist, and so I use NEEDLE UNDER THE SEA to neutralize his power, but if he

forces his way upward, then I go along with his momentum and lift with my right hand, advancing with my left foot, and use my left palm to strike to his chest.

[73]

問撇身錘用法。

How is TORSO-FLUNG PUNCH to be applied?

答我用右肘擊敵。彼若以手下按。則隨其下接之力沈肘。以拳下擊其胸部。左掌擊其面部。此亦謂之筋斗錘。

I use my right elbow to strike the opponent, and if he presses it down with his hand, I then go along with his downward power that is connecting with and sinking my elbow by striking downward to his chest with a fist and striking to his face with my left palm. This is also known as FLIPPING THE HAMMER OVER.

[74]

問抔手用法。

How is CLOUDING HANDS to be applied?

答抔手本為練腰之要式。兩手如輪。所以捋敵之手也。或敵由後面來擊。我轉腰以臂接之。翻掌擊其肩部。

This is basically an important exercise for training the waist. Both hands behave like wheels to roll back an opponent's hand. Or if an opponent attacks me from behind, I turn my waist and use my arm to connect to him, then turn over my hand to strike to his shoulder.

[75]

問高探馬用法。

How is RISING UP AND REACHING OUT TO THE HORSE to be applied?

答敵擊右拳。我以左掌接之。以右手擊其面部。

If an opponent punches with his right fist, I use my left palm to connect with it and use my right hand to strike to his face.

[76]

問右分脚用法。

How is KICK TO THE RIGHT SIDE to be applied?

答敵若以左掌或拳來擊。吾進右步。以左手接其腕節。以右臂擗之。起右脚踢其腹部。敵若以右掌或拳來擊。吾進左步。以右手接其腕節。以左臂擗之。起左脚踢其腹部。

If an opponent uses his left palm or fist to strike me, I advance a step to the right [left], using my left hand to connect with his wrist, then use my right arm to cast it away while lifting my right foot and kicking to his belly. If an opponent uses his right palm or fist to strike me, I advance a step to the left [right], using my right hand to connect with his wrist, then use my left arm to cast it away while lifting my left foot and kicking to his belly.

[77]

問轉身蹬脚用法。

How is TURN AROUND, LEFT PRESSING KICK to be applied?

答敵由後面來擊。則轉身分手擊其面部。隨以足蹬之。使之不能防也。以下蹬脚。大概相同。

An opponent comes to strike me from behind, so I turn around and spread my hands apart to strike his face while using my foot to press him, making him unable to defend against it. For the rest of the pressing kicks, it is basically the same.

[78]

問栽錘用法。

How is PLANTING PUNCH to be applied?

答設敵伏身以手擊吾下部或擽吾之左足。即以左手擽開。以右拳下擊之。

If an opponent uses his left hand to strike to my groin or brush aside my left foot, I then use my left hand to brush his aside and use my right fist to punch downward.

[79]

問白蛇吐信用法。

How is WHITE SNAKE FLICKS OUT ITS TONGUE to be applied?

答與撇身錘相同。不過此用掌耳。

It is the same as for TORSO-FLUNG PUNCH, but in this case using a palm in place of a fist.

[80]

問披身伏虎式用法。

How is DRAPING THE BODY, FIGHTING-TIGER POSTURE to be applied?

答敵雙手握我右臂。則右臂隨腰往下往右轉動。則可化彼之力。以左手握其右肘。騰出右手。可以遶上橫擊其頭部。如雙手握我左臂。則向左轉動。以右手握其左肘。騰出左手。遶上擊其頭部。或敵左手推吾右腕。吾以左手由臂下接其左腕。騰出右手。以拳擊其腰部。反之敵若右手推吾左腕。吾以右手由臂下接其左腕。騰出左手。以拳擊其腰部。惟兩足亦必隨勢而邁動。如練拳時之步式。

The opponent grasps my right arm with both hands, so my right arm, going along with my waist, arcs downward and to the right to neutralize his strength while I use my left hand to grasp his right elbow, clearing the way for my right hand to be able to twine upward and strike across to his head. Or if he grasps my left arm with both hands, I arc it to the left, using my right hand to grasp his left elbow, clearing the way for my left hand to twine upward and strike to his head.

Another scenario is that he pushes on my right wrist with his left hand, so I send my left hand under the arm to connect to his left wrist, clearing the way for my right hand to punch to his waist. Or if he pushes on my left wrist with his right hand, I send my right hand under the arm to connect to his left [right] wrist, clearing the way for my left hand to punch to his waist.

In addition, your feet must step as the situation requires, like the footwork when practicing the solo set.

[81]

問雙風貫耳用法。

How is DOUBLE WINDS THROUGH THE EARS to be applied?

答設吾雙手前按時。敵以兩手下壓。則順勢由下分開。上擊其耳門。

If when I am pushing forward with both hands, the opponent uses both of his hands to press down, I then go along with the momentum by spreading to the sides from below and strike upward to his ears.

[82]

問野馬分鬃用法。

How is WILD HORSE SENDS ITS MANE SIDE TO SIDE to be applied?

答敵若右拳擊吾頭部或胸部。則我以右手往左採之。進左足邁至彼之身後。以左臂進抵其胸。腰往左轉。則彼身必往左跌。敵若左拳來擊。吾左手往左採之。進右足邁至彼之身後。以右臂進抵其胸。腰往右轉。則彼身必往右跌。

If an opponent punches with his right fist to my head or chest, I use my right hand to pluck it to the left [right], advancing my left foot so it is behind him, and go against his chest with my left arm, my waist turning to the left,

the result being that he is sure to fall to the left. If he punches with his left fist, I use my left hand to pluck it to the left, advancing my right foot so it is behind him, and go against his chest with my right arm, my waist turning to the right, the result being that he is sure to fall to the right.

[83]

問玉女穿梭用法。

How is MAIDEN SENDS THE SHUTTLE THROUGH to be applied?

答敵以右拳或掌擊我頭部。我左臂上棚。以右掌擊其胸部。凡我臂與彼相粘時。彼手若上起。則可以玉女穿梭式擊之。勢順而易也。

An opponent uses his right fist or palm to strike to my head, so I use my left arm to ward off upward and use my right palm to strike to his chest. Generally, when my arm and his are sticking to each other, if his rises I can use this posture to attack him. It follows from the situation easily.

[84]

問單鞭下勢用法。

How is SINGLE WHIP, LOW POSTURE to be applied?

答下勢係因敵人猛力往前。則坐身以化其力。然後起而擊之。

This has to do with when an opponent makes a fierce forward attack, to which I respond by squatting my body to neutralize his power, then rise up to strike him.

[85]

問金雞獨立用法。

How is GOLDEN ROOSTER STANDS ON ONE LEG to be applied?

答與敵貼身太近時。則以掌或拳擊其下頰。同時以膝擊敵之小腹。

When an opponent gets too close to me, I use my palm or fist to strike to his chin while using my knee to strike to his lower abdomen.

[86]

問上步七星用法。

How is STEP FORWARD, BIG-DIPPER POSTURE to be applied?

答敵若以拳由下往上擊吾面部。則以兩拳架而放之。此亦截勁也。或同時起右足踢其下部。凡足虛點。皆預備用足也。

If an opponent sends his fist upward from below to strike to my face, I then make a rack with both my fists to send it away. This is an example of intercepting energy. I may also at the same time lift my right foot to kick to his groin. Whenever a foot is touching down empty, it is always ready to be used as a kick.

[87]

問退步跨虎用法。

How is RETREAT, SITTING-TIGER POSTURE to be applied?

答用上步七星法。設敵力甚大。復往前進。則退步分手。領彼之拳傾向旁側。則起左足踢之。

When I use the previous technique, if the opponent's power is too great and he advances forward, I then retreat and spread my hands apart, guiding his fist off to the side, then lift my left foot to kick him.

[88]

問轉腳擺蓮用法。

How is SPIN AROUND ON THE FOOT, SWINGING LOTUS KICK to be applied?

答敵若以右拳來擊。吾以右手往右領。以左手推其肘。則可旋轉身軀。以右足踢其背部。

If an opponent uses his right fist to strike me, I lead it to the right with my right hand, pushing on his elbow with my left hand, and then I can spin my body around and use my right foot to kick to his back.

[89]

問彎弓射虎用法。

How is BEND THE BOW, SHOOT THE TIGER to be applied?

答敵若往右推吾右臂。即順其勁往右鬆。彼力盡後。則以右拳轉至彼右脇下。用腰勁回放之。

If the opponent pushes on my right arm, I go along with his energy and loosen to the right. Once his power has been spent, I then use my right [left] fist to strike under his left armpit, using power from my waist to attack in return and send him away.

以上所舉散手用法。不過言其大概。然敵之來勢無定。我何能執一定之法而禦之。總之非隨機應變不可。若欲隨機應變。非平時推手。練出極靈敏之感覺。雖手疾眼快。亦不能用之密合而無間。故用散手。仍須由粘手變化而來。不然。雖記得打法解法數百手。亦不能應付千門萬派之拳脚。太極惟有一粘字。千變萬化。皆由粘字而出。太極拳論云。人不知我。我獨知人。英雄所向無敵。蓋由此而及也。蓋推手之法。全是練習知人功夫。他派拳法雖好。惟無推手。故全靠手疾眼快。然一粘住。則不知勁來之方向長短。不免有抵抗或落空之弊。孫子曰。知彼知己。百戰不殆。即此意也。

The various applications above give only a general idea. Since an opponent will not attack in a fixed way, how can I hold to a fixed method of defense? To sum up: you must respond according to the situation. If you want to respond according to the situation, then without regular pushing hands practice to produce acute sensitivity, even though your hands may be fast and your eyes quick, you will yet be unable to apply techniques continuously from one to another. Therefore in applying techniques, they must still come from sticking and changing. If not, then even if you have memorized hundreds of techniques, you will be unable to deal with any of the thousands of styles. Taiji comes down to one word: stick. Limitless adaptability comes from sticking.

A Taiji Boxing essay [Essays, part 2] says: “The opponent does not understand me, only I understand him. A hero is one who encounters no opposition, and it is through this kind of method that such a condition is achieved.” The methods of pushing hands are entirely a training for the skill of knowing your opponent. Although other schools of boxing methods are good, they do not have pushing hands and therefore depend entirely on fast hands and quick eyes. But simply by sticking [to your opponent], he will not know the direction or extent of your power and unavoidably make the errors of resisting or losing balance. Sunzi said [Art of War, chapter 3]: “Knowing both enemy and self, in a hundred battles you will not be defeated.” This is exactly the idea.

[90]

問粘住敵人之手。彼若用脚。則將如何。

When sticking to the opponent's hand, what to do if he kicks?

答亦可隨時知覺。彼用腿則身必動。彼將起脚。我往下採其手。則彼腿自不能抬起而落下。或彼將起脚。我進步插襠放之。則彼自立不穩而跌出。蓋兩足立地尚有時不能立穩。何況一足。敵若用掃腿。均可前進放勁。

You can at all times perceive what he is doing. For instance, when he kicks, his body will move [and give away his intention]. When he is about to lift his foot, I pluck his hand down, causing him to be unable to lift his leg and have to put it down again, or I may advance a step under his crotch and release energy, with the result that his stance destabilizes and he stumbles away. If there are times when he cannot be stable on two feet, so much the

worse for him when he is on one. For instance, whenever an opponent uses a sweeping kick, you can advance and release energy.

太極拳之勁

ON TAIJI BOXING'S ENERGIES

[91]

問太極之勁。略分幾種意思。

To outline the energies in Taiji, they divide into how many distinct concepts?

答就余所知者。約有粘勁。化勁 提勁 放勁 借勁 截勁 捲勁 入勁 抖擻勁數種。

The only ones I know about are sticking, neutralizing, lifting, releasing, borrowing, intercepting, rolling, penetrating, and shaking.

[92]

問何謂粘勁。

What is sticking energy?

答粘住敵人之臂。或輕粘之。或重粘之。不使之丟脫。是謂粘勁。

Sticking to the opponent's arm, be it lightly or heavily, and not allowing him to break connection or get away.

[93]

問何謂化勁。

What is neutralizing energy?

答粘住敵人。彼若用力來推。則粘而化之。大概直來之力。用曲綫左右引之。使變其方向。是謂化勁。

When you are sticking to an opponent, if he forcefully pushes, then stick to it and neutralize it. Generally the power of an attack will be in a straight line and you will use a curve to draw it off to the left or right, causing its direction to change.

[94]

問何謂提勁。

What is lifting energy?

答粘住敵人之臂。彼若用力上翻。則隨之上起。使之脚跟提起。是謂提勁。

When sticking to an opponent's arm, if he uses effort to turn it over upward, I follow it by lifting upward, causing his heels to lift.

[95]

問何謂放勁。

What is releasing energy?

答敵脚跟提起。身不穩時。則隨其傾側之方向而放之。則毫不費力。而跌出必遠。是謂放勁。太極拳論云。蓄勁如張弓。發勁如放箭。敵提起時。我勁已蓄。隨其方向。沈着鬆淨。去如放箭。孫子曰。勢如擴弩。節如發機。卽此意也。

Once the opponent's heels lift and his body is no longer stable, I release energy along the direction he is leaning, and without the slightest effort he is made to stumble far away. A Taiji Boxing essay [Understanding How to Practice] says: "Store power like drawing a bow. Issue power like loosing an arrow." When the opponent lifts, my

energy is already stored. I follow along with his direction, sinking and loosening completely, and send him away like loosing an arrow. Sunzi said [*Art of War*, chapter 5]: “The power is like a loaded crossbow. The moment is like a flick of the trigger.” This is exactly the idea.

[96]

問何謂借勁。

What is borrowing energy?

答敵若前推。則借其前推之力而採之。敵若後扯。則借其後扯之力而放之。左右上下皆然。是謂借勁。

If an opponent pushes forward, borrow the power of his push and pull him. If he pulls back, borrow the power of his pull and push him. For left and right or up and down, it is the same. [Borrowing energy just means you adopt the same direction he's going in and then give him a loan of four ounces.]

[97]

問何謂截勁。

What is intercepting energy?

答敵若用拳來擊。不及變化。則用截粘。截勁者。即碰勁也。一碰即跌出。此非功夫深者不能也。

If an opponent attacks with a punch and it is too late to adjust, then intercept and stick. Intercepting energy means “knocking energy”: once there is contact, he stumbles away. One whose skill is not deep will not be able to do this.

[98]

問何謂捲勁。

What is rolling energy?

答拳到敵身。如鎚鑽之前進。是謂捲勁。

Punching to the opponent's body with your fist spiraling like a drill.

[99]

問何謂入勁。

What is penetrating energy?

答掌貼敵身。氣往下沈。掌一閃動。其勁直入內。五臟震動。必受重傷。是謂入勁。

With your palm sticking to the opponent's body, your energy sinks downward and your palm makes a sudden movement. The energy penetrates directing into him, jarring his organs and inevitably resulting in serious injury.

[100]

問何謂抖擻勁。

What is shaking energy?

答敵若由背後擊來。無暇轉身。則身一抖擻。彼必跌出。此則非到神妙之地不能也。是謂抖擻勁。

If an opponent attacks from behind and there is no time to turn around, give your body a shake, and he will surely stumble away. If your skill is not at a very high level, you will not be able to do this.

[101]

問勁與着有何分別。

What is the distinction between energy and technique?

答着乃變化之法也。勁即運入着之中。着有萬而勁則一。無論何着。勁是一箇。惟用時之意不同。故勁亦隨之而變。

Techniques are the methods of change. Energy is what moves inside a technique. A technique can be done in many ways but an energy can only be done in one. Regardless of the technique, there is only one energy to it, but if the intent becomes different when it is applied, then the energy changes along with the change in technique. [In other words, if you switch techniques, you can still use the same energy, but if you switch energies, you also have to switch techniques.]

[102]

問勁與力有何分別。

What is the distinction between energy and effort?

答力是生來本有。勁是功夫練出。生來本有之力。是一種生力。譬如生鐵。未經煅煉。功夫練出之勁。譬如煉鐵而已成鋼。古語云。力不敵功。功即練出之勁也。然各種拳派。均是煅煉。而煉出之勁則又不同。太極拳是鬆散練出。乃柔帶剛之真內勁也。凡堅硬練出者。鬆散無意之時。則勁不存在。被人猛擊。不免受傷。而鬆散練出者。鬆散無意之時。勁仍存留。其氣自然充滿全身。無絲毫之間斷。雖被人擊。不致受傷。

Effort is what you are born with. Energy is a trained skill. Effort is a kind of raw strength, like pig-iron in that it has not yet been smelted and refined, whereas the skilled energy that comes through training is like smelted iron that has been made into steel. As an old saying goes, "Strength is not equal to skill." This skill means the trained energy. While all boxing styles have their refinements, their energies are not trained in the same way. Taiji Boxing trains by loosening, thus generating the authentic internal power of softness leading hardness. For one who trains hard energy, during a moment of inattention the energy goes away, and if he is at that time attacked fiercely by an opponent, he will unavoidably be injured. If you train loose energy, then during a moment of inattention the energy remains, naturally filling your whole body without the slightest gap anywhere, and so even if you are attacked at that moment, it will not result in injury.

[103]

問圓勁直勁。是分是合。

Are curved energy and straight energy to be separated or combined?

答太極拳論云。曲中求直。圓勁之中。必須有直勁。直勁之中。必須有圓勁。若有圓勁而無直勁。則只能化而不能放。若有直勁而無圓勁。則遇有化勁者。必致落空。故圓直二勁。能融合為一則善矣。

A Taiji Boxing essay [Understanding How to Practice] says: "Within curving, seek to be straightening." Within curved energy, there must be straight energy. Within straight energy, there must be curved energy. If you have curved energy but are without straight energy, then you will only be able to neutralize and unable to release. If you have straight energy but are without curved energy, then when you encounter an opponent who has neutralizing energy, you will surely be made to miss. Therefore it is best when these two energies can be merged into one.

[104]

問硬勁與鬆勁有何分別。

What is the distinction between hard energy and loose energy?

答硬勁自握其勁。百斤之勁。打上人身。不過五十斤。一半仍留在己身。鬆勁譬如丟一石塊。務求其遠。若有百斤之勁。則全放在人身上。毫不存留於己身。

Hard energy will seize up your own energy. If you [use it to] hit an opponent with a hundred pounds of force, only fifty hits his body and the other half stays in yours. Loose energy is like throwing a stone as far as you can. If you [use it to hit an opponent] with a hundred pounds of force, all of it is released to his body and not the slightest bit of it stays in yours.

[105]

問用截勁有定時否。

Is there a fixed moment to use intercepting energy?

答用截勁最要時之恰當。差之秒忽。則機會錯過。大抵彼勁將發未發。將展未展之時。用截勁最好。

When applying intercepting energy, the most important thing is the proper moment. Misjudge it by a split-second and you will have missed the chance. Generally speaking, the best moment for it is when the opponent is about to issue power but has not yet issued power, is about to expand but has not yet expanded.

太極拳之導引及靜坐法

ON TAIJI BOXING'S METHODS OF LIMBERING & MEDITATION

[106]

問太極拳。與古導引之術同否。

Is Taiji Boxing the same as the ancient limbering arts?

答古導引熊經鳥申。華佗五禽戲。皆取法於鳥獸。太極亦有倒輦猴野馬分鬚種種名目。太極拳不外乎虛實開合。虛實開合。即所以調呼吸也。其最妙處。則在全身運動極勻而緩。動作勻緩。則呼吸自然深長。故息不必調而自調。導引亦不過假形式之開合。以調其呼吸耳。易筋經八段錦乃一技一節之運動。太極拳則是全體之運動。可使四肢百體。皆平均發育。毫無偏重之處。此所以能却病延年也。參同契為丹書之祖。曰緩體處空房。緩體二字。最宜注意。即太極拳論。所謂鬆淨是也。蓋緩體鬆淨。則氣自沈於丹田。故主張用力者。決不能歸於自然舒適之境。則不可得太極導引之利益。形式雖是而意則非矣。

The ancient limbering arts, as in the case of Hua Tuo's Five Animal Frolics, sought to "loosen by imitating the walking motions of bears and stretch by imitating the extending motions of birds" [*Zhuangzi*, chapter 15], all patterned after birds and beasts. In Taiji Boxing, there are various names such as RETREAT, DRIVING AWAY THE MONKEY and WILD HORSE SENDS ITS MANE SIDE TO SIDE, etc.

Taiji Boxing does not go beyond empty and full, and expand and contract. By way of empty and full, expand and contract, the breathing is regulated. Its greatest subtleties lie in moving the whole body evenly and slowly. When the movement is even and slow, then the breathing is naturally deep and long, and thus the breath does not need to be deliberately regulated, for it is now self-regulating. The limbering arts also regulate the breath through the expanding and contracting of the posture, but the exercises of the *Tendon Changing Classic* and the Eight Sections of Brocade work one movement at a time, while Taiji Boxing is a whole-body exercise which can evenly cultivate every part without the slightest emphasis on any one area, and in this way is able to prevent disease and extend life.

Three in Agreement is an early elixirist text, which says [chapter 22 – "Barring Shut the Three Treasures"]:
 "[With the three treasures barred shut,] slow your body down and dwell in an empty room." "Slow your body down" is the most important part to pay attention to. This is the same as in the Taiji Boxing essays [Thirteen Dynamics Song & Understanding How to Practice] where it says "relax completely". If you slow your body down and relax completely, then energy will naturally sink to your elixir field. Therefore those who advocate using effort are utterly incapable of regaining a natural and comfortable state and thus cannot obtain the benefits of Taiji's limbering. Although the postures are there, the mentality is not.

[107]

問太極拳之呼吸如何。

What is Taiji Boxing's breathing like?

答太極拳之呼吸。隨體式之開合。吸為開。呼為合。李亦畬先生云。吸則自然提得起。亦拏得人起。呼則自然沈得下。亦放得人出。吸本為入氣。而反為提。呼本為出氣。而反為沈。蓋太極呼吸之升沈。實為先天氣之消息。故與靜坐金丹之訣密合。其所以能却病延年者由此也。柳華陽風火經云。吸降呼升者。即先天後。天二氣之炁也。然後天氣吸。則先天炁升焉。升是升於乾。而為採取也。後天氣吸。則先天炁降焉。降是降於坤而為烹鍊也。若以口鼻一呼一吸為升降者。則去先天之炁遠矣。按其所言先天炁之升降。與太極拳內中之消息相同。故太極為動中求靜。輔佐靜功之最要法門。凡認太極拳為武技。專求取勝於人者。豈知此中之玄妙耶。

Taiji Boxing's breathing goes along with the expanding and contracting of the postures, inhaling when expanding [contracting] and exhaling when contracting [expanding]. Li Yiyu said: "Since with inhaling there is a natural rising, take the opponent up. Since with exhaling there is a natural sinking, send the opponent away." Inhaling is basically energy entering, and yet it does the lifting. Exhaling is basically energy exiting, and yet it does the sinking. The rising and sinking in Taiji breathing are actually the alternations of innate energy, thus conforming to sitting meditation and the elixirist arts, and by this means is able to prevent disease and extend life.

Liu Huayang's "Wind and Fire Classic" [Chapter 6 of *Treatise on Verifying Immortality*] says: "The inhaling descending and the exhaling ascending has to do with the operations of both the innate and acquired energies. When acquired energy is inhaled, innate energy ascends. Ascending corresponds to the sky [i.e. the upper symbol of the eight trigrams, or your headtop], where it is to be "selected for purity". When acquired energy is inhaled [exhaled], innate energy descends. Descending corresponds to the ground [i.e. the lower symbol of the eight trigrams, or your lower abdomen], where it is to be "smelted and refined". [These two ore metaphors relate the process noticeably to the European alchemists. What they tried to do with metal materials, the Chinese elixirists try to do with metaphysical energies.] If you inhale with your nose and exhale with your mouth to make the ascending and descending, then innate energy will be sent far [in both directions]." What he describes as the ascending and descending of innate energy is the same as the breathing within Taiji Boxing.

Therefore Taiji seeks stillness within movement, the crucial key to facilitating meditative practice. If people consider Taiji Boxing to be a mere martial art, focusing only on defeating opponents, how will they know of this wonder within it?

[108]

問取名太極。究係何意。

What was the actual reason for picking the name Taiji?

答太極本一圓形。為陰陽渾合之一體。太極拳處處求圓滿。分陰陽虛實。故以為名。然此尚是形容其外之體用也。不知人身中間一穴。為立命之處。名為大中極。大者。太也。此穴即人身之太極中點。立爐安鼎。坎離交媾。即在此處。太極拳運轉先天之炁。凝神入氣穴。不久則丹生焉。故太極拳能通小周天之氣。較之但枯坐者更為速焉。Taiji ["grand pivot"] is the circle symbolizing the passive and active aspects merging into a single essence. In every part of the Taiji Boxing solo set, strive to be fully rounded, distinguishing between passive and active, or empty and full. That is the reason for the name.

However, this only describes outward form and function, ignoring that there is a cavity within the human body where the life-force is established. It is called the "great central pivot" [da zhong ji]. For "great" [da], read "grand" [tai]. This cavity in the human body is in the exact center, where stands the "quietly smoldering cauldron" [where the elixir is smelted], the place where the elements of water and fire intersect. Taiji Boxing revolves innate energy, concentrating spirit into the cavity of energy, and not long after, elixir is generated. Therefore Taiji Boxing enables you to understand the energy of the microcosmic universe [i.e. the human body] more rapidly than just sitting stationary.

[109]

問練太極拳兼習靜坐可否。

Is it okay to practice Taiji Boxing and sitting meditation concurrently?

答兼習靜坐。自與養生却病更有效益。惟靜坐之功。難得真傳。傳授不好。往往流弊甚大。不但無益而反有害。如欲兼習靜坐。無真傳口訣。即照練太極拳之意。跏趺而坐。須有虛靈頂頸。尾閭中正。兩目垂簾。兩手相握抱臍。收視反聽。迴光反照。謹閉五賊。恐被盜馳。謹於眼則目不外視而魂歸肝。謹於耳則耳不外聽而精歸腎。謹於口則兌合不談而神歸心。謹於鼻則鼻不外嗅而魄歸肺。謹於意則用志不分而意歸脾。精神魂魄意。心肝脾肺腎。金木水火土。耳目口鼻意。攢簇各歸其根。各復其命。則天心自見。神明自來。必有特別感覺發現。而自與凡人不同矣。柳華陽注重風火。火者神也。風者先天之呼吸也。何以能練神化氣。如水必賴火烹而後發為蒸汽精者水也。若用神火下照。則精自可化而為氣矣。神火下照。有時恐力不足。故鼓巽風以動之。則火必旺。亦由鑄金者之鼓其風箱也。太極拳之能調呼吸。即風火之用也。如蒸汽機。借火力以烹水。發為蒸汽。而數萬噸之重量。可以鼓動。而人身之精氣神三寶。若能保守煅煉。其神通亦不可思議矣。

From that you would gain even better results at nourishing health and preventing illness. But when training in sitting meditation, it is difficult to obtain authentic teaching, and when the instruction is not good, it often leads to tremendously bad effects, and then not only will it be without benefit, it will in fact be harmful.

If you want to practice both but are without authentic instruction, then practice according to Taiji Boxing principles when you sit cross-legged, such as: you must forcelessly rouse strength at your headtop and center your tailbone.

Your eyes are closed, hands cupping your navel, your seeing is withdrawn and your listening is turned inward until reflections of reflections solemnly surround your five organs for fear they will be stolen away.

With solemnness in your eyes, then your eyes do not outwardly watch and your ethereal soul returns to your liver. With solemnness in your ears, then your ears do not outwardly listen and your essence returns to your kidneys. With solemnness in your mouth, then your mouth does not outwardly chatter and your spirit returns to your heart. With solemnness in your nose, then your nose does not outwardly smell and your earthly soul returns to your lungs. With solemnness in your mind, then your functioning will does not scatter and your mind returns to your spleen.

Essence, spirit, ethereal soul, earthly soul, and mind... heart, liver, spleen, lungs, and kidneys... metal, wood, water, fire, and earth... ears, eyes, mouth, nose, and mind... They cluster together, each returning to its root and restoring it to life. Then the natural mind is naturally realized and illumination arrives, and there will surely be a special sensation perceived, making you different from ordinary people.

Liu Huayang emphasized wind and fire. Fire corresponds with spirit and wind corresponds with natural breathing. How can you train spirit and transform it into energy? As water must rely on fire in order to become steam, essence is equivalent to water. If you make use of spiritual fire shining down, then essence naturally can be transformed to become energy. When spiritual fire is shining down, you will sometimes worry its power is insufficient and so you will stir up the wind to fan it, and then the fire will surely be vigorous, as with the rousing bellows used in the casting of metals.

Taiji Boxing's capacity to regulate breathing is the functioning of wind and fire. As a steam engine borrows the power of fire to boil water and emit steam, and thereby a many thousand ton weight can be agitated to move, so for the three treasures of the human body – essence, energy, spirit: if they can be conserved and refined, your powers will be beyond your imagination.

[110]

問練太極拳可以代靜坐否。

Can practicing Taiji Boxing be practiced in place of sitting meditation?

答何嘗不可。靜坐妄念難除。練太極拳。精神貫注。可以毫無妄念。及至心平氣靜。人我俱忘。境界微妙。身體舒適。難以言語形容。是可謂之入太極三昧。

Of course. During sitting meditation it is difficult to get rid of distracting thoughts, but when practicing Taiji Boxing, your spirit is so concentrated that you can be completely without distracting thoughts and reach the point that your mind is level and your energy is calm, the notion of self and opponent as two people has been completely forgotten, distinctions have softened into subtleties, and your body is at ease. It is difficult to describe in words, and so you could say you have “entered a Taiji trance”.

學太極拳者之體格及成就

ON THE TAIJI BOXING STUDENT'S BUILD VERSUS ACCOMPLISHMENT

[111]

問如何體格學太極拳最為相宜。

What sort of physique is the most appropriate for Taiji Boxing?

答無不相宜。惟體格軟硬。習之略分難易耳。大概體格瘦者。較為靈活。而厚重則遜之。肥者較為穩厚。而不免於拙滯。各有所長。亦有所短。然若能勤練功夫。其成功一也。

All are appropriate, whether flexible or stiff, and training will make more noticeable one's areas of difficulty and ease. For example, it is usually the case that thin people are more nimble but become timid when facing heavier people, while fat people are more stable but tend to be more clumsy. Each type has its strong points and each has its shortcomings, but with diligent practice all can equally succeed.

[112]

問練功夫者雖多。而真能成為名手。則不多觀。是何故耶。

Although there are many who practice these skills, it is rare to meet one who is truly capable of becoming a noteworthy practitioner. What is the reason for this?

答吾聞之楊澄甫先生云。成為名手。一要傳授好。二要肯下功夫。三要體格雄厚而又活潑。四要心精細而能領會。四者俱全。若下十年苦功。未有不成名者也。

I have heard Yang Chengfu say: “To become a noteworthy practitioner, the first requirement is good instruction, the second requirement is a willingness to work at it, the third requirement is a physique that is solid but also nimble, and the fourth requirement is to be detail oriented and capable of understanding. With all of these four things, if ten years of hard work are put into it, it will always produce one who is noteworthy.”

[113]

問譬如一人有力。一人無力。同時學太極拳。自以有力者優勝。

If one person is strong and the other is weak, and they have both been learning Taiji Boxing, is it a matter of course that the strong will win?

答若初學數年之間。尚未懂勁之時。不免有時頂撞。自有力者勝。若懂勁之後。能不丟不頂。而腰腿又靈活。至此之時。則有力者亦未必占便宜也。

During the beginning years of their training, they will not yet be identifying energies, and so unavoidably there will be times when they end up clashing with their partners, and naturally the strong one will be winning. Once they reach the point that they are identifying energies, are able to be neither coming away nor crashing in, and have flexibility in their hips, then the strong one will not necessarily have the advantage.

[114]

問功夫之深淺。如何評論。

How is depth of skill to be determined?

答自表面觀之。二人比手。自有勝負。若精密論斷。譬如一人體格雄厚有力。一人體格單弱無力。若此二人比手。雄厚者不能將單弱者打出。則此單弱者之功夫必甚深。應當評為較優也。蓋就原人而論。自是強勝於弱。強不勝弱。則強者之功夫。不及弱者明矣。

It is seen from observing competition between two people, in which there is a winner and a loser. If we are to determine accurately, let us take for example a bout between two people, one who has a build that is solid and powerful while the other has a build that is frail and weak, and the solid one is unable to handle the frail one. This means the skill of the frail one is obviously deeper and should be judged as superior. Since the principle for ordinary people is that naturally the strong defeats the weak and is not defeated by the weak, therefore this strong person's skill is clearly not as good as the weak person's.

[115]

問拳有各派。互相詆訾。非真比手。不能斷其優劣。

There are various styles of boxing and they all slander each other. Can it not be determined which is better or worse without actually having bouts?

答雖真比手。亦難評斷。蓋習甲種拳者。只有三年功夫。而習乙種者。有五六年功夫。而乙勝。此乃甲之功夫不深。非拳派之劣也。若欲精密比較。須選年歲體格力量智慧無不相同之人。同時各學一種拳術。教授者又均是名手。五六年之後。約相比較。如此或可以定拳派之優劣耳。

It is still difficult to determine even when having actual bouts. Suppose person A has been practicing a boxing style for only three years and person B has been practicing another style for five or six, and B wins. This is because A's skill is not as deep, not because his style is inferior. If we want an accurate comparison, we must select two people of the same age, build, strength, and intelligence, who are studying their arts for the same amount of time and are both learning them from noteworthy teachers, and then after five or six years arrange for them to compete with each other, and in this way we might be able to determine which style is superior.

[116]

問練太極拳宜緩。若表演時。太緩則人厭觀。尚不如外家拳之有精神。應如何而能引起觀者之興味。

When practicing Taiji Boxing, it should be done slowly. But when performing, if it is too slow, people hate to watch it and find it inferior to the spirited displays of external stylists. What should we do to be able to attract the interest of spectators?

答太極拳精神內斂。非真識者不能知。本不宜於表演。蓋太問拳本為修身練己之功夫。非博人之喝采也。惟太極拳為最適宜於養生之運動。不能不加以提倡。表演之時。不可太慢。余每見前輩功夫好者。自己練習與表演不甚相同。識是故也。太極拳。二人活步推手。圓轉變化。其精彩不下於外家拳之對打。亦可引起觀者之興味。

In Taiji Boxing, the spirit is gathered inside. Those who do not really recognize this are unable to comprehend it [when they watch it] and so it is basically unsuitable for performance. Taiji Boxing is essentially for cultivating oneself and training one's own skill, not for gaining cheers. Since it is mainly suitable as an exercise for nourishing health, it has to be added to in order to promote it, and so when demonstrating, it must not be excessively slow. I know this because I daily saw the masters of the previous generation perform very differently when practicing on their own and when demonstrating for others.

But the circling and changing of Taiji Boxing's two-person moving-step pushing hands is just as splendid as watching external stylists fighting each other and can attract the interest of spectators.

[117]

問欲成出類拔萃之名手。功夫如何練習。

If we want to become noteworthy practitioners, standing out from the rest, in what way are we to practice?

答。須先有五種心。一信仰心。學一種拳術。必須有絕大之信仰。不可稍存懷疑之意。二尊重心。既擇師而從。須尊重恭敬。不可稍存玩狎之意。三有恆心。人而無恆。不可以作巫醫。學拳術更非有恆不可。四忍耐心。五年不成。期之十年。十年不成。期之二十年。雖資質魯鈍。一時難見功效。若有絕大之忍耐力。未有不成者也。五謙遜心。功夫雖小有成就。不可自以為高。絕無對手。無論何種拳術。必有其特長之處。皆須虛心研究。然後能知己知彼。而不致因驕以失敗矣。

You must first possess five mentalities:

1. Faith –

In studying any boxing art, you must have complete faith in it, and cannot harbor the slightest thoughts of doubt.

2. Esteem –

Having chosen a teacher to learn from, you must esteem and respect him, and cannot harbor even the slightest notions of regarding him lightly.

3. Perseverance –

“A man who is without perseverance will not become a shaman.” [Lun Yu, 13.22] For students of boxing arts, it is even more the case that without perseverance you cannot succeed.

4. Patience –

Not accomplishing it in five years, set your hopes on ten. Not accomplishing it in ten years, set your hopes on twenty. Even if your intelligence is low, though it will be hard to see any results after working at it only a short while, there has never yet been one who did not achieve if in possession of extraordinary patience. [When coupled with 3, there is this message: you have to work at it and wait for it at the same time.]

5. Humility –

Although you may have attained some small degree of skill, you must not put yourself on a pedestal and imagine you are matchless. Every kind of boxing art is guaranteed to have its area of specialty. You must always be open-minded toward studying them and thus be able to know both yourself and your opponent, and then you will not end up losing because of arrogance.

太極拳之效益

ON TAIJI BOXING'S BENEFITS

[118]

問練太極拳於身體究有效驗否。

Does practicing Taiji Boxing actually have proven effects on the body?

答余創辦致柔拳社已四載餘。入社學者。不下千餘人。皆為身體病苦而來者。一年之後。宿疾脫體。精神健旺。顏色光潤。無論肺病咯血胃病不能飲食遺精痔瘡頭痛頭暈手足麻木肺胃氣痛。種種沈疴。不勝枚舉。練太極拳後。莫不霍然。此本社已見之明效大驗也。

I established the Achieving Softness Boxing Society more than four years ago now, and those who have joined to learn amount to more than a thousand people, all of whom came because of illnesses they were suffering. After a year, chronic complaints left their bodies, their spirits were invigorated, and color returned to their faces. Whether it was pulmonary tuberculosis with spitting up of blood, gastric disease with inability to eat or drink, or nocturnal

emissions, hemorrhoids, headaches, dizziness, numbness of the extremities, or just plain old gas pain, all sorts of lingering illnesses, too many to enumerate, all quickly recovered from them after practicing Taiji Boxing. This school has witnessed broad evidence of clear results.

[119]

問女子宜練太極拳否。

Should women practice Taiji Boxing?

答女子身體柔順。練太極拳尤為相宜。本社女子因病來學者。均已健壯。有廣東梁璧疊女士。從余學二年。曾作文一篇。錄於後。女界不可不注意也。文曰。吾雖為女子。而體質非弱。惟性好靜。終日默坐。專心學問。以為立身處世之本。對於修養健康之道。素不講求。日積月累。遂覺氣不足以舉其體。馴至脾失健運。患胃病者垂三四年。日與藥爐為伍。視世間如地獄。無復一毫生人樂趣。一二名醫告吾曰。此病非藥可治。首須節勞。又須稍事於勞。所謂稍事於勞。蓋指體育運動言也。予是時一笑置之。第念生性好靜而不好動。若勉作運動。反增其苦。於是轉習畫。欲以筆墨點綴花木禽魚。揮灑烟雲山水。為陶冶性情之資。然於病仍不減。於藥亦不能為效。計無復之。回念醫者曩告吾言。意稍稍動。適湖北陳微明先生。在滬設立致柔拳社。以太極拳教授男女生徒甚眾。學者各有所得。有宿疾無不盡去。吾父勸吾入社習拳。吾以太極為理中氣。為天道之行健。與調和人身氣血之至理相通。乃毅然入社。時丁卯夏六月也。習拳法未一月。食量頓增。三月後。體量加重。約五之一。嚮所不能為之事。今皆能之。嚮以為苦者。而今則以為樂。精神暢遂體質豐腴。朋友親戚相見。幾不能識。吾亦不知何以收效如此之速也。嗣知太極拳法。渾圓無極。歸於一氣。本天地造物之通於人身者。復隨其機而運用之。使血脈永無凝滯。葆先天之靈明。得後天之長養。正者引之而無盡。邪者格然而不能入。顧太極拳法取柔。莊子謂天下至柔。馳騁天下至剛。老子謂柔制剛。弱勝強。天演之理。故能收益一切。不用力而力自生。不傷氣而氣愈足。諸種內家拳術。以太極拳法為最圓滿。相傳人得之者。可以輕身而延齡。雖不必盡信。而吾之所得已如此矣。陳先生嘗語予曰。汝之始來。為却病也。繼自今久習勿怠。他日所進。將有不可限量。不可思議者。夫吾於太極拳法。其所以學之。與其所得之者。固大有感於其中。深恨得先生太晚。又焉敢怠哉。以上梁女士所述。足見太極拳尤益於女子。惟須有恆心。不淺嘗輟止。未有不見效者也。

The female body is soft and gentle, and so practicing Taiji Boxing is particularly appropriate. The female students who have come to this school on account of illness have all become healthy and robust. There is a Ms. Liang Bidie of Guangdong, who has learned from me for two years, and who has composed a piece of writing on the subject, which is reproduced below. The views of women must be paid attention. Her composition reads:

Although I am a woman, my body is not weak. But my disposition is very calm, and all day long I sat quietly, absorbed in my studies so that I may take my place in society. Regarding methods of cultivating health, I simply gave it no attention, and as time passed I then felt I did not have enough energy to lift my body, for I had gradually developed a disorder of the spleen, and I suffered a gastric illness for three or four years. With the medicine stove as my daily companion [Chinese medicines are cooked whereas in the West they are typically swallowed in tablet form or injected with syringes. This is the equivalent of saying "with the medicine cabinet as my daily companion" or conveys the misery of self-needling that accompanies many disorders.], I looked upon the world as hell and recovered not the slightest joy of being alive.

One or two noteworthy doctors told me: "This is an illness no medicine can cure. You must first of all conserve your energy, and you must also do very little work." And so I was told to direct some small effort into physical exercise, which at the time I dismissed with a laugh. I thought that as I am naturally inclined to enjoy quietude and not enjoy exercise, then if I made an effort to exercise I would instead only increase my pain.

Consequently, I turned to the practice of calligraphy. I wanted to draw words embroidering flowers and trees, birds and fish, and paint freely of mists and clouds, mountains and waters, so as to support the shaping of my character. But the illness still did not diminish, the medicine was incapable of having any effect, and I reckoned I would not recover.

I recalled what the doctors had told me, the idea of some very slight exercise. So I went to Chen Weiming of Hubei, who had established the Achieving Softness Boxing Society in Shanghai and was teaching Taiji Boxing to many students, both men and women alike. The students had all gotten something out of it, and those who had chronic ailments had cast them off completely. My father encouraged me to join the school and do the training so I could use Taiji to regulate my digestive energies, a natural method of getting healthy that would harmonize my blood and energy until they were working together properly.

So I decided to join the school in the summer of the 4th year of the cycle, 6th month [i.e. June/July, 1927]. After training for not even a month, my appetite suddenly increased. After three months, my body weight went up by about twenty percent. I used to be unable to do the training, but now I can do all of it. I used to find it hard work, but now I find it a pleasure. My spirit is abundant and my body is flourishing. When my friends and relatives see me, they can hardly recognize me, and I myself have no idea how such results could happen so quickly.

I have come to understand that the method of Taiji Boxing is sophisticated and limitless, returning you to primeval oneness so that the original creative force of Nature is coursing through your body, and then by going along with its operations, you can make use of it to cause your blood to circulate always without stagnancy. By preserving innate spirit, gain acquired cultivation. Those who do it correctly draw it in endlessly. Those who do it incorrectly obstruct it so it cannot enter.

Take into consideration that the method of Taiji Boxing seeks softness. Zhuangzi [Laozi] said [Daodejing, chapter 43]: “The softest thing in the world wears away the hardest.” Laozi said [DDJ, 78]: “The soft conquers the hard. The weak defeats the strong.” This is a principle of evolution [Indeed, the real meaning of “survival of the fittest” often involves the meek inheriting the earth.] and therefore is able to benefit all things. It does not use effort, and so power is naturally generated. It does not harm one’s energy, and so there is more than enough. Of all the internal boxing arts, the method of Taiji Boxing is the most well-rounded [pun presumably intended].

Tradition has it that those who obtain it can unburden their bodies and lengthen their age. Although it may not be entirely believable, what I have gotten from it is indeed such a case. Chen Weiming once said to me: “You first came here to cure your disease, but if you continue from this point and practice for a long time without slackening, your progress will someday bring you to things inestimable and unimaginable.” What I have learned from the method of Taiji Boxing and so far achieved has greatly moved me, and I deeply regret that I got a teacher as late as I did, but will never dare to slacken!

Ms. Liang’s words above serve to show how especially beneficial Taiji Boxing is for women, but they must be perseverant, not flirting with it for a while and then quitting, for it has always produced results.

太極拳之單式練法

ON TAIJI BOXING’S SINGLE POSTURE PRACTICE METHODS

[120]

問太極拳既有益於人生如此。則必須求其普及。使人人可學。而出版之太極拳書。又難一覽明了。必須如何能使人無師而自習耶。

Taiji Boxing is already good for people’s health as it is, and so we must strive to popularize it so that everyone is able to learn it, but the published books about it are generally difficult to understand. What must we do to enable people to learn on their own without a teacher?

答太極拳之運動。均是曲綫。相連不斷。頗為繁複。余所著之太極拳術。敘之非不詳。然未學者。欲觀書而得之。

亦非易事。蓋非口傳心授不可也。昔許宣平所傳之三十七勢。均為單式教練。今可取其意。將太極拳中最要之式擇出。分式練習。如八段錦等法。無相接連貫之繁。苟敍之清晰。較易按書學習。今特分為以下十式。一太極起式。二攬雀尾左右揉手。三左右摟膝拗步。四十字手。五左右捋手。六左右打虎式。七左右雙風貫耳。八左右野馬分鬃。九左右玉女穿梭。十左右單鞭下勢。十一左右蹬腿。每式左右運動。共有二十四次。若能練習。則於身體亦有大益。與練全套太極拳無異也。

The Taiji Boxing solo set is a thread that curves continuously with pause, and is somewhat complicated. When I wrote *The Art of Taiji Boxing*, I explained it in detail, but for those who have not learned it yet and want to learn it from the book, it is not an easy thing to do, for it cannot be done without personal instruction.

Long ago, the thirty-seven postures taught by Xu Xuanping were all drilled as individual postures. We can nowadays make use of this idea and pick out the most important postures from the Taiji Boxing solo set to practice as separate postures. This is similar to the method of the Eight Sections of Brocade, which is without the complexity of continuous joined postures. Provided I have explained them clearly, they will be relatively easy to learn from this book. Here then are ten [though numbered here as eleven – i.e. ten proper postures plus BEGINNING POSTURE] particular postures which will be presented individually below:

1. BEGINNING POSTURE
2. CATCH THE SPARROW BY THE TAIL with LEFT & RIGHT RUBBING HANDS
3. LEFT & RIGHT BRUSH PAST YOUR KNEE IN A CROSSED STANCE
4. CROSSED HANDS
5. LEFT & RIGHT CLOUDING HANDS
6. LEFT & RIGHT FIGHTING-TIGER POSTURE
7. LEFT & RIGHT DOUBLE WINDS THROUGH THE EARS
8. LEFT & RIGHT WILD HORSE SENDS ITS MANE TO THE SIDE
9. LEFT & RIGHT MAIDEN SENDS THE SHUTTLE THROUGH
10. LEFT & RIGHT SINGLE WHIP, LOW POSTURE
11. LEFT & RIGHT PRESSING KICK

Each posture is exercised on both sides, to make a total of twenty-four exercises. If you can practice these, your whole body will receive a vast benefit no different from practicing the complete solo set. [Going through this whole routine also takes roughly the same amount of time as performing the whole solo set.]

[To prevent confusion, the statement that there is a total of twenty-four exercises needs clarifying:

- BEGINNING POSTURE and CROSSED HANDS are not performed on both sides, because they only face forward with the feet spread to the sides, and so each is counted as only one.
- CATCH THE SPARROW is split into three different kinds of exercises, making a total in itself of six.
- CLOUDING HANDS, FIGHTING-TIGER, WILD HORSE, and PRESSING KICK all alternate left and right during the exercise, and so although each is done as a single exercise, each is counted as two because left and right will add up to the same amount of reps as in the other exercises.

Here is the complete routine of these ten, or eleven, postures spelled out in detail for how they amount to twenty-four exercises:

1. BEGINNING,
2. SPARROW (rub) right,
3. SPARROW (rub) left,
4. SPARROW (ward-off, rollback, press) right,
5. SPARROW (ward-off, rollback, press) left,
6. SPARROW (push) right,

7. SPARROW (push) left,
8. BRUSH PAST YOUR RIGHT KNEE,
9. BRUSH PAST YOUR LEFT KNEE,
10. CROSSED HANDS,
- 11 & 12. CLOUDING left & right alternating,
- 13 & 14. FIGHTING-TIGER left & right alternating,
- 15 DOUBLE WINDS right,
16. DOUBLE WINDS left,
- 17 & 18. WILD HORSE left & right alternating,
19. SHUTTLE right,
20. SHUTTLE left,
21. SINGLE WHIP, LOW POSTURE left,
22. SINGLE WHIP, LOW POSTURE right,
- 23 & 24. PRESSING KICK left & right alternating.]

[121]

問太極拳起勢如何練法。

What is the practice method for BEGINNING POSTURE?

答身正立。兩足平行分開。寬與兩肩等。兩手下垂。（如後第一圖）

Your body stands upright, your feet are parallel, shoulder width apart, and your hands are hanging down. See photo 1:



兩手毫不着力。向前向上漸漸提起。提與胸平。手心向下寬與兩肩等。（如第二圖）

Your hands, without putting forth the slightest effort, gradually lift forward and upward until level with your chest, palms downward, shoulder width apart. See photo 2:



兩臂漸漸收屈。兩手與腰同時下按。按至兩膝處。（如第三圖）

Your arms gradually withdraw and bend, and your hands, moving in unison with your waist, push down until beside your knees. See photo 3:



復漸漸向前向上提起。周而復始。如是者練習十次。

Again [your hands] gradually lift forward and up. The movement cycles over and over. Do it in this way ten times.

[122]

問攬雀尾揉手如何練法。

What is the practice method for CATCH THE SPARROW BY THE TAIL?

答第一式兩足分開。作丁字步。右足在前。左足在後。如右足尖向南。（以下各式均以向南為準）左足尖則向東南。兩足長短之距離。以一直一曲為度。兩足寬之距離。以一足之長為度。兩手平伸。寬與兩肩等。手尖向南。（如第四圖）

Part 1 [rubbing hands (a rollback exercise) – clockwise]:

Your feet are spread apart to make a “T” stance [meaning simply that your feet are almost perpendicular with each other], right foot forward, left foot behind. If your right toes are pointing to the south (All of the following postures will use “south” as a standard direction.), your left toes are pointing to the southeast. The length between your feet is a stride, the width between them a foot. Your hands are extended levelly, shoulder width apart, fingertips pointing to the south. See photo 4:



此兩手毫不用力。隨腰漸漸向右轉。轉至指尖向西南。此時坐實右腿。（如第五圖）

Your hands, without the slightest bit of effort, go along with your waist and gradually arc to the right until the fingertips are pointing to the southwest. At this time, you are sitting onto your right leg. See photo 5:



再由右如畫圓圈。隨腰漸漸往左轉。轉至指尖向東南。此時坐實左腿。（如第六圖）

Then they [your hands] seem to draw a circle, going along with your waist and gradually arcing to the left until the fingertips are pointing to the southeast, and you are now sitting onto your left leg. [Your hands remain extended throughout. It is the weight shift that creates the illusion of the hands moving in circles.] See photo 6:



兩手隨腰。復由左向右圓轉。周而復始。往右轉則坐右腿。往左轉則坐左腿。如是者十次。

Your hands go along with your waist, again arcing from left to right [as you again sit onto your right leg].

The movement cycles over and over. When you are to the right, sit onto your right leg, and when you arc to the left, sit onto your left leg. Do it in this way ten times.

第二式。左足在前。右足在後。左足尖向南。右足尖向西南。兩足寬長之距離。均如前式。兩手平伸向南如前。隨腰漸漸向左轉。轉至手尖向東南。此時坐實左腿。再由左如畫圓圈。漸漸往右轉。轉至手尖向西南。兩手隨腰復由右向左圓轉。周而復始。如是者十次。第二式與第一式。惟左右不同。其法均同。故不另作圖。

Part 2 [rubbing hands – counterclockwise]:

Your left foot is forward, right foot behind. Your left toes are pointing to the south, right toes to the southwest. The length and width between your feet is the same as in Part 1. Your hands are extended levelly to the south as before.

They go along with your waist and gradually arc to the left until the fingertips are pointing to the southeast. At this time, you are sitting onto your left leg.

Then they [your hands] seem to draw a circle, [going along with your waist and] gradually arcing to the right until the fingertips are pointing to the southwest [and you are now sitting onto your right leg].

Your hands go along with your waist, again arcing from right to left [as you again sit onto your left leg].

The movement cycles over and over. Do it in this way ten times. Part 2 is the same as Part 1, except left and right are reversed, and so additional photos have not been made.

第三式兩足丁字步右腿坐實在前。左腿伸直在後如前。右手伸向前向南。高與眉齊。臂稍屈。肘下垂。手心向上向內。手指斜向上向東南。左手心正對右脉門處。約二寸許。手指向上。（如第七圖）

Part 3 [ward-off into rollback into press into ward-off – right]:

Your feet are in a T stance with your right leg sitting forward, your left leg straight and behind, as before. Your right hand is extended forward to the south at eyebrow height, the arm slightly bent, elbow hanging down, palm facing upward and inward, fingers pointing diagonally upward and to the southeast. Your left palm is facing your right pulse area, about two inches away from it, fingers upward. See photo 7:



右手與左手。隨腰往右圓轉。右手心隨轉向下。左手心隨轉向上。右手在上。左手在下。（如第八圖）

Your hands, going along with your waist, arc to the right, your right hand turning over to face downward, your left hand turning over to face upward, right hand above, left hand below. See photo 8:



與腰同時往回收。至全身坐在左腿。兩手隨往後往上轉動。轉至左肩處。左手心向前。手指向上。右手心向內。手指斜向上。（如第九圖）

As your waist withdraws until your torso is sitting onto your left leg, your hands arc to the rear and upward until by your left shoulder, left palm facing forward, fingers upward, right palm inward, fingers diagonally upward. See photo 9:



兩手復隨腰前進。坐實右腿。轉至原處不停。復隨腰往右圓轉。周而復始。如是者十次。

Your hands then go along with your waist as it advances forward to sit onto your right leg, arcing until returning to their original position, and without pausing they then go along with your waist and arc to the right.

The movement cycles over and over. Do it in this way ten times.

第四式兩足丁字步左腿坐實在前。右腿伸直在後如前。左手伸向前。向南。高與眉齊。臂稍屈。肘下垂。手心向上向內。手指斜向上。向西南。右手心正對左脉門處。約二寸許。手指向上。左手與右手隨腰往左圓轉。左手心隨轉向下。右手心隨轉向上。左手在上。右手在下。與腰同時往回收。至全身坐在右腿。兩手隨往後往上轉動轉至右肩處。右手心向前。手指向上。左手心向內。手指斜向上。兩手復隨腰前進。坐實左腿。轉至原處。不停。復隨腰往左圓轉。周而復始。如是者十次。與前法同。不另作圖。

Part 4 [ward-off into rollback into press into ward-off – left]:

Your feet are in a T stance with your left leg sitting and forward, your right leg straight and behind, as before. Your left hand is extended forward to the south at eyebrow height, the arm slightly bent, elbow hanging down, palm facing upward and inward, fingers pointing diagonally upward and to the southwest. Your right palm is facing your left pulse area, about two inches away from it, fingers upward.

Your hands, going along with your waist, arc to the left, your left hand turning over to face downward, your right hand turning over to face upward, left hand above, right hand below.

As your waist withdraws until your torso is sitting onto your right leg, your hands arc to the rear and upward

until by your right shoulder, right palm facing forward, fingers upward, left palm inward, fingers diagonally upward.

Your hands then go along with your waist as it advances forward to sit onto your left leg, arcing until returning to their original position, and without pausing they then go along with your waist and arc to the left.

The movement cycles over and over. Do it in this way ten times. It is the same as on the other side, and so additional photos have not been made.

第五式。右腿坐實。在前。左腿伸直在後如前。兩手伸出。寬與肩等。手尖向上。手心向前。（如第十圖）

Part 5 [push – right leg forward]:

Your right leg is sitting forward, left leg straight and behind, as before. Your hands are extended, shoulder width apart, fingertips upward, palms forward. See photo 10:



兩手向上鬆起。使手尖向前。手心向下。隨腰往後鬆。至坐實在左腿。（如第十一圖）

Your hands go upward and loosen so the fingertips are pointing forward, palms downward, while your waist goes to the rear and loosens until you are sitting onto your left leg. See photo 11:



兩手復往前按出。兩手不可太過膝。復往上鬆。周而復始。如是者十次。

Your hands then push out forward, but must not go too far beyond your knee, and again go upward and loosen, the movement cycling over and over. Do it in this way ten times.

第六式左腿坐實在前。右腿伸直在後。兩手之隨腰前進後退均如第五式。不另作圖。

Part 6 [push – left leg forward]:

Your left leg is sitting forward, right leg straight and behind. Your hands go along with the advancing and retreating of your waist the same as in Part 5, and so additional photos have not been made.

[See question 57 for application explanation to all parts of CATCH THE SPARROW BY THE TAIL.]

[123]

問擣膝拗步如何練法。

What is the practice method for BRUSH PAST YOUR LEFT KNEE IN A CROSSED STANCE?

答第一式左腿坐實在前。右腿伸直在後。作丁字步如前。右手伸出。正對前胸。手指向上。手心向前。左手在左膝外。手指向前。手心向下。（如第十二圖）

Part 1:

Your left leg is sitting forward, right leg straight and behind, making a T stance as before. Your right hand is extended in front of your chest, fingers upward, palm forward. Your left hand is to the outside of your left knee, fingers forward, palm downward. See photo 12:



右手心漸漸翻轉向上。往下轉動。復隨腰往後轉。漸漸坐實右腿。此時右手尖向下垂。左手同時往上起。起至胸前。復隨腰由胸前往右。轉至右肩前。此時右手已漸圓轉而上。至坐實左腿時。左手漸漸往下轉至胸下腹上之處。右手此時由後漸漸轉至右耳邊。（如第十三圖）

Your right palm gradually turns over to face upward while arcing downward, then goes along with your waist arcing to the rear as you gradually sit onto your right leg, your right fingers now hanging down. At the same time, your left hand lifts up until in front of your chest, then goes along with your waist, arcing to the right until in front of your right shoulder as your right hand gradually arcs upward. Once you are sitting onto your left [right] leg, your left hand gradually arcs downward until between your chest and abdomen while your right hand gradually arcs from behind until beside your right ear. See photo 13:



復隨腰往前按至當胸原處。左手亦同時隨腰往下擣。仍至左膝外。眼神隨右手轉動。周而復始。如是者十次。
Then going along with your waist, it [your right hand] pushes forward until where it was in front of your chest, while your left hand also goes along with your waist, brushing downward until again to the outside of your left knee [as you sit onto your left leg]. Your eyes go along with the arcing movement of your right hand. The

movement cycles over and over. Do it in this way ten times.

第二式右腿坐實在前。左腿伸直在後。左手伸出。正對前胸。手指向上。手心向前。右手在右膝外。手指向前。手心向下。左手同前式之右手。右手同前式之左手。隨腰轉動。周而復始。如是者十次。均如前法。不另作圖。

Part 2:

Your left leg is sitting forward, left leg straight and behind. Your left hand is extended in front of your chest, fingers upward, palm forward. Your right hand is to the outside of your right knee, fingers forward, palm downward. Your left hand does as your right hand did before and your right hand does as your left hand did before, arcing along with the movement of your waist. The movement cycles over and over. Do it in this way ten times. It is all the same as on the other side, and so additional photos have not been made.

[See question 62 for application explanation.]

[124]

問十字手練法。

What is the practice method for CROSSED HANDS?

答身正立。兩足平行分開。兩手相交作斜十字形。正當胸（如第十四圖）前。

Stand straight, feet parallel and spread apart, hands crossed to make an X shape directly in front of your chest.

See photo 14:



兩手向上向左右分開。分至與兩肩平時。隨腰下坐。（如第十五圖）

Your hands go upward and spread apart to the left and right. Once they have reached shoulder level, your waist is correspondingly sitting. See photo 15:



兩手復由左右向內漸漸相合。隨腰上起。起至胸前仍作斜十字。兩手如同畫一大圓圈。隨腰上下。周而復始。如是者十次。

Your hands then go inward from the sides to gradually join together, your waist correspondingly rising, and lift in front of your chest to again make an X shape. Your hands seem to be drawing a large circle with your waist following along up and down, the movement cycling over and over. Do it in this way ten times.

[See question 66 for application explanation.]

[125]

問抃手練法。

What is the practice method for CLOUDING HANDS?

答兩腿作平行綫分開。約距離兩足半之譜。兩手先平分。與肩成為一字。手心向下。（如第十五圖）右手隨腰往下往左圓轉。漸漸轉至手心向上。轉至左肩前。手心漸轉向內。坐實左腿。此時左手不動（如第十六圖）

Your legs are in a parallel stance, spread about two and a half feet apart. Your hands are first spread levelly apart, making a line with your shoulders, palms facing downward. (Look again at photo 15.) Your right hand, going along with your waist, arcs downward to the left, gradually turning so the palm is facing upward, then arcs up until in front of your left shoulder, gradually turning so the palm is facing inward. You are now sitting onto your left leg and your left hand has not yet moved. See photo 16:



左手亦隨腰往下往右圓轉。漸漸轉至手心向上。轉至右肩前。手心漸轉向內。坐實右腿。先坐實左腿之時。左手轉動。右手同時隨腰復往右轉。隨轉手心隨轉向下。與肩成為一字。（如第十七圖）

Your left hand, also going along with your waist, now arcs downward to the right, gradually turning so the palm is facing upward, then arcs up until in front of your right shoulder, gradually turning so the palm is facing inward. You are now sitting onto your right leg, but the movement of your left hand began while you were still sitting on your left leg. At the same time, your right hand, going along with your waist, again arcs to the right, the palm turning to face downward, until making a line with the shoulder. See photo 17:



坐實右腿之時。左手轉至右肩。亦不停。同時隨腰復往左轉。隨轉手心隨轉向下。與肩成為一字。此時右手復轉至左肩處。坐實左腿。（如第十六圖）兩手隨腰一往一來。圓轉如輪。右手至左肩處。眼神隨右手轉。左手至右肩處。眼神隨左手轉。周而復始。如是者十次。

By the time you are sitting onto your right leg, your left hand has arced to your right shoulder, but it does not pause there. It goes along with your waist to again arc to the left, the palm turning to face downward, until making a line with the shoulder. The right hand at the same time has again arced to your left shoulder and you are sitting onto your left leg. (Look again at photo 16.)

Your hands go back and forth along with your waist, turning like wheels. When your right hand has reached your left shoulder, your eyes then go along with the arcing of your right hand, and when your left hand has reached your right shoulder, your eyes then go along with the arcing of your left hand. The movement cycles over and over. Do it in this way ten times.

[See question 74 for application explanation.]

[126]

問左右打虎式練法。

What is the practice method for LEFT & RIGHT FIGHTING-TIGER POSTURE?

答兩足分開作平行綫如抃手式。先坐實右腿。右手伸直與右肩成——一字。手心向下。左手屈在右肩處。手心亦向下。兩手隨腰往下往左轉。左手由左復向上轉。轉一大圓圈。轉至額上。握拳。手心向外。右手轉至胸前握拳。手心向內。兩拳虎口相對。此時坐實左腿。（如第十八圖）兩手轉動時。眼神隨左手轉動。

Your feet are spread apart, making a parallel stance as in the CLOUDING HANDS posture. Begin by sitting onto your right leg as your right hand extends to make a line with your right shoulder, palm downward, and your left hand bends in to be by your right shoulder, palm also downward. Your hands go along with your waist by arcing downward and to the left, your left hand then making a large arc upward from the left until above your forehead, grasping into a fist, the center of the hand outward, as your right hand arcs until in front of your chest, grasping into a fist, the center of the hand inward. The tiger's mouths of both fists are facing each other. You are now sitting onto your left leg. While your hands arc, your eyes go along with the movement of your left hand. See photo 18:



左拳復向左向下轉。轉至與左肩成為一字。復隨腰向下向右圓轉。轉至胸前。手心向內。右拳隨左拳同時向左向下。復轉而向右向上。轉一大圓圈。轉至額上。手心向外。兩手虎口相對。（如第十九圖）眼神隨右拳轉動。

Then your left fist arcs to the left and downward until making a line with your left shoulder, then goes along with your waist, arcing downward and to the right until in front of your chest, the center of the hand inward. Your right fist at the same time goes to downward to the left [right], then makes a large arc upward to the right [left] until above your forehead, the center of the hand outward. The tiger's mouths of both fists are facing each other. [You are now sitting onto your right leg.] Your eyes go along with the movement of your right fist. See photo 19:



兩拳左右旋轉。一往一來。如是者十次。

Your fists rotate left and right, one coming and one going. Do it in this way ten times.

[See question 80 for application explanation.]

[127]

問左右雙風貫耳練法。

What is the practice method for LEFT & RIGHT DOUBLE WINDS THROUGH THE EARS?

答右足在前。左足在後。作丁字步。先坐實左腿。兩手相交在左膝上。手心向上。(如第二十圖)

Your right foot is forward, left foot behind, making a T stance. First sit onto your left leg, hands crossed above your left knee, palms upward. See photo 20:



兩手向下左右分開。開至與兩肩成為一字時。復向前轉。漸轉漸合。合至額前。握拳。手心向外。兩拳相對距離約二寸許。腰亦同時前進。至坐實右腿。稍停。(如第二十一圖)

Your hands go downward and spread apart to the left and right until making a line with your shoulders, then arc forward, gradually arcing, gradually joining, until in front of your forehead, grasped into fists with the center of the hands outward, the fists about two inches apart. Your waist at the same time advances forward until you are sitting onto your right leg. Slightly pause. See photo 21:



兩拳復鬆開為掌。變至手心向上。復向下左右分開如前狀。腰同時向後坐。至左腿坐實。兩手復向前相合。至坐實右腿。如是者十次。若左足在前。右足在後。亦同前法。

Your fists then loosen to become palms, switching to facing upward, then go downward to spread to the sides as before, your waist at the same time sitting back, until you are sitting onto your left leg. Your hands then go forward and join together until you are sitting onto your right leg. Do it in this way ten times. If your left foot is forward, your right foot is behind, and the method is the same as before.

[See question 81 for application explanation.]

[128]

問野馬分鬃練法。

What is the practice method for WILD HORSE SENDS ITS MANE SIDE TO SIDE?

答兩足作平行綫分開。如掚手式。單式練習。步法不能不變通。若身向南。先坐實左腿。兩手相合。在左膝上。右手在下。手心向上。指尖向東南。左手在上。手心向下。指尖向西南。兩手如抱球狀。（如第二十二圖）

Your feet are in a parallel stance spread apart, as in the CLOUDING HANDS posture (In the single posture practice methods, the footwork has to be adjustable.), your body facing south. First sit onto your left leg, your hands coming together above your left knee, right hand below, palm upward, fingertips pointing to the southeast, and left hand above, palm downward, fingertips pointing to the southwest. Both hands seem to be holding a ball.

See photo 22:



兩手漸漸分開。右手斜向上向西南分去。手心仍向上。指尖漸轉向西南。左手斜向下向東北分去。手心仍向下。指尖漸轉向東南。腰隨兩手分時。漸漸移右。坐實右腿。眼神隨右手向西南。稍停。（如第二十三圖）

Your hands gradually spread apart, your right hand diagonally upward to the southwest, palm still facing upward, fingertips gradually turning to the southwest, while your left hand goes diagonally downward to the northeast,

palm still facing downward, fingertips gradually turning to the southeast. While your hands spread apart, your waist gradually shifts to the right to sit onto your right leg, your eyes going along with your right hand to look to the southwest. There is a slight pause. See photo 23:



右手心本向上。漸漸往回收。轉至向下。指尖漸轉至向東南。左手心本向下。漸漸往右轉。轉至向上。指尖漸轉至向西南。與右手相合。右手在上。左手在下。兩手如抱球狀。在右膝上。兩手漸漸分開。左手斜向上。向西南分去。手心仍向上。指尖漸轉向東南。右手斜向下。向西北分去。手心仍向下。指尖漸轉向西南。腰隨兩手分時。漸漸移左。坐實左腿。眼神隨左手向東南。稍停。法如前。不另作圖。如是者往復十次。

Your right hand, palm upward, gradually withdraws, turning over to face downward, fingertips gradually turning to point to the southeast, while your left hand, palm downward, gradually turns to the right, turning over to face upward, fingertips gradually turning to point to the southwest, coming together with your right hand so the right hand is above, left hand below. Both hands seem to be holding a ball above your right knee.

Your hands gradually spread apart, your left hand going diagonally upward to the southwest [southeast], palm still facing upward, fingertips gradually turning to the southeast, while your right hand goes diagonally downward to the northwest, palm still facing downward, fingertips gradually turning to the southwest. While your hands spread apart, your waist gradually shifts to the left to sit onto your left leg, your eyes going along with your left hand to look to the southeast. There is a slight pause. The method is as on the other side, and so additional photos have not been made. Do it in this way ten times.

[See question 82 for application explanation, also question 70.]

[129]

問玉女穿梭練法。

What is the practice method for MAIDEN SENDS THE SHUTTLE THROUGH?

答右足在前。向南。左足在後作丁字步。先坐實左腿。左手在上。手心向下。右手在下手心向上。兩手相合。在左膝上。(如第二十四圖)

Your right foot is forward, facing south, and your left foot is behind, making a T stance. First sit onto your left leg, and with your left hand above, palm downward, right hand below, palm upward, your hands come together above your left knee. See photo 24:



右手漸漸向上向前轉。轉至額上。手心向外。指尖向東南。左手同時向前按出。略與胸齊。手心向外。指尖向上。兩手動時。腰亦同時向前進。至右腿坐實。稍停。（如第二十五圖）

Your right hand goes gradually upward and forward, turning over, until above your forehead. The palm is outward, fingertips pointing to the southeast. Your left hand at the same time pushes out forward at about chest level. The palm is outward, fingertips upward. When both hands move, your waist at the same time advances forward to sit onto your right leg. There is a slight pause. See photo 25:



右手隨腰向右略轉。轉至手心向下。左手同時亦略向右轉。轉至手心向上。右手在上。左手在下。相對。（如前第八圖）隨腰往回收。隨收隨轉。轉至右手仍在下。左手仍在下。兩手相合。坐實左腿。與前起式同。復往前進。如是者十次。如左足在前。右足在後。則先坐實右腿。兩手相合。在右膝上。一切均如前法。惟左右手上下交換耳。Your right hand goes along with your waist and slightly turns to the right until the palm is downward, your left hand at the same time turning slightly to the right until the palm is upward, so they are facing each other as right hand above and left hand below. (Look again at photo 8.)

Then going along with your waist, they withdraw, turning over until your right hand is again below and your left hand is again above, and as your hands come together, you sit onto your left leg, then go forward again as before. Do it in this way ten times.

If your left foot is forward, your right foot is behind, and so you will start by sitting onto your right leg, your hands coming together above your right knee. It will all be the same as on the other side except your left and right hands will be reversed above and below.

[See question 83 for application explanation.]

[130]

問左右單鞭下勢練法。

What is the practice method for LEFT & RIGHT SINGLE WHIP, LOW POSTURE?

答左腿坐實。右腿伸直兩足寬之距離。約一足長。左手伸出。手心向前。手尖向上。與左足尖同一方向。左臂略屈。肘正對膝。不可太伸直。右臂向後伸直。五指下垂。與右腿同一方向。眼神看左手。作單鞭式。（如第二十六圖）

Your left leg is sitting and your right leg is straight. They stand with about a foot's width between them. Your left hand is extended, palm forward, fingertips upward, in the same direction as your left toes. The arm is slightly bent, with the elbow directly in line with the knee, and must not be too straight. Your right arm is extended to the rear, with its five fingers hanging down, in the same direction as your right leg. Your eyes are looking toward your left hand. You are making the SINGLE WHIP posture. See photo 26:



身隨腰漸漸收回往下坐在右腿上。愈低愈好。低至左腿伸直。身不可太俯。頭仍要有頂勁。左手隨腰向回收。收至右肩處。轉而向下。至左膝處。（如第二十七圖）

Your torso, going along with your waist, gradually withdraws and sits down onto your right leg, the lower the better, lowering until your left leg is straight, but your torso must not overly lean and your head should still have an energy of pressing up. Your left hand at the same time, going along with your waist, withdraws until by your right shoulder then arcs downward until by your left knee. See photo 27:



復隨腰向上起。起至與眉齊。手心仍向外。右手同時隨腰向下向左轉一圓圈。向上轉至左肩。（如第二十八圖）

Then it [your left hand], going along with your waist, rises up to eyebrow height, palm again outward. Your right hand at the same time goes downward and makes a large arc to the left until by your left shoulder. See photo 28:



左手又復隨腰向回收。轉而向下。右手復向右轉。至伸直如前。兩手隨腰上下。如輪圓轉。如是者十次。右足在前。左足在後。作單鞭勢。均如前法。

Your left hand, going along with your waist, again withdraws and arcs downward as your right hand arcs to the right until extended as before. Both hands go up and down along with your waist, circling like a wheel. Do it in this way ten times.

[Then switch to] your right leg forward, left leg behind, making the SINGLE WHIP posture, and it is all the same as on the other side.

[See question 84 for application explanation.]

[131]

問左右蹬腿練法。

What is the practice method for LEFT & RIGHT PRESSING KICK?

答先正立作十字手式。向南。兩手略向上漸漸分開。如半月形。右手向西。左手向東。分開之後。兩手指均向上。右腿同時提起。向西蹬出。（如第二十九圖）

First stand straight, making the CROSSED HANDS posture, facing south [as in photo 14].

Your hands go slightly upward, then gradually spread apart to resemble a half-moon shape, right hand to the west, left hand to the east. Once they have spread, the fingers of both hands are upward. At the same time, your right leg lifts and presses out to the west. See photo 29:



右腿收回。右手由右往左。與左手手心相對。左手略在上。右手略在下。同時隨腰由左往右往下圓轉。右足同時隨腰隨兩手。往西邁步坐實。兩手由下圓轉往上相合。作十字。兩手同時分開。左手向東。右手向西。左腿提起。向東蹬出。（如第三十圖）

Your right leg withdraws as your right hand goes from the right to the left, your left hand at the same time going in a downward arc from the left to the right in accordance with the movement of [the left side of] your waist, until

the centers of the palms are facing each other, left hand slightly higher, right hand slightly lower. Your right foot at the same time goes along with your waist and hands, stepping to the west and sitting, and your hands are upward from below and join together to make the **CROSSED HANDS** posture. Your hands spread apart in unison, left hand to the east, right hand to the west, as your left leg lifts and presses out to the east. See photo 30:



左手復由左往右。與右手手心相對。右手略在上。左手略在下。同時隨腰由右往左往下圓轉。左足同時隨腰隨兩手。往東邁步坐實。兩手由下圓轉往上相合作十字。兩手復分開。左足蹬出。如是者十次。

[Your left leg withdraws as] your left hand then goes from the left to the right, your right hand at the same time going in a downward arc from the right to the left in accordance with the movement of [the right side of] your waist, until the centers of the palms are facing each other, right hand slightly higher, left hand slightly lower. Your left foot at the same time goes along with your waist and hands, stepping to the east and sitting, and your hands arc upward from below and join together to make the **CROSSED HANDS** posture. Your hands again spread apart as your left [right] foot presses out. Do it in this way ten times.

[See question 77 for application explanation.]

[APPENDIX I]

致柔拳社社員姓名錄

LIST OF ACHIEVING SOFTNESS BOXING SOCIETY MEMBERS

[a list of nine hundred twenty-six names]

王鼎元 薛晉雄 岑巍 秦鑑本 孫潔人 嚴敬慎 王傳燁 李剛俠 蕭國樹 沈彭生

Wang Dingyuan, Xue Jinxiong, Cen Wei, Qin Jianben, Sun Jieren, Yan Jingshen, Wang Chuanyi, Li Gangxia, Xiao Guoshu, Shen Pengsheng,

胡鏡庸 倪國才 王嘯漁 孫億年 楊成才 施漢章 王立才 李衍善 邱成瑜 朱雋鹿

Hu Jingyong, Ni Guocai, Wang Xiaoyu, Sun Yinian, Yang Chengcai, Shi Hanzhang, Wang Licai, Li Yanshan, Qiu Chengyu, Zhu Juanlu,

郭俊民 郭俊鋈 郭俊鈺 王漢禮 許頤齋 戴桐原 韓思民 許雲翔 楊憲臣 王侶樵

Guo Junmin, Guo Junji, Guo Junhe, Wang Hanli, Xu Yizhai, Dai Tongyuan, Han Simin, Xu Yunxiang, Yang Xianchen, Wang Lüqiao,

潘志傑 馮之沛 秦曙聲 董鐵峯 翁受宜 李秉法 胡福良 胡敬侃 孫莘農 孫億中

Pan Zhijie, Ping Zhipei, Qin Shusheng, Dong Tiefeng, Weng Shouyi, Li Bingfa, Hu Fuliang, Hu Jingkan, Sun Shennong, Sun Yizhong,

周錫蒸 陸海藩 林祖庭 鄭志仁 孫乃騷 朱企賢 管峻 王俞欽 沈成基 陳維東

Zhou Xizheng, Lu Haifan, Lin Zuting, Zheng Zhiren, Sun Nailu, Zhu Qixian, Guan Jun, Wang Yuqin, Shen Chengji, Chen Weidong,

蔡汝銑 李樹德 葉慎齋 李崙 顧明 洪通 趙敵七 楊成才 王野石 顧提明

Cai Ruxi, Li Shude, Ye Shenzhai, Li Lun, Gu Ming, Hong Yu, Zhao Diqi, Yang Chengcai, Wang Yeshe, Gu Timing, Huang Youlan, Li Jianyun, Mao Yaoting, Li Hengsan, Weng Zhuangming, Li Zhichao, Jin Xingchu, Qian Tiesang,

Qi Fuqing, Pan Dingxin,

程志祥 景湘坡 孫雪橋 毛汝霖 李鏡清 徐日宣 顧懋予 李圓虛 張景履 梁鈞疇

Cheng Zhixiang, Jing Xiangpo, Sun Xueqiao, Mao Rulin, Li Jingqing, Xu Rixuan, Gu Maoyu, Li Yuanxu, Zhang Jinglü, Liang Junchou,

潘志瑩 關耕逸 陳子清 阮鑑光 嚴新農 楊佑初 謝利恒 楊履初 周椒青 金潤痒

Pan Zhiying, Guan Gengyi, Chen Ziqing, Ruan Jianguang, Yan Xinyong, Yang Youchu, Xie Liheng, Yang Lüchu, Zhou Jiaqing, Jin Runyang,

韋伯興 吳元松 雀文瀾 唐庸緒 孫聞遠 鄭子松 何樹芬 羅麟生 徐巨川 劉玉書

Wei Boxing, Wu Yuansong, Que Wenlan, Tan Yongchu, Sun Wenyuan, Zheng Zisong, He Shufen, Luo Linsheng, Xu Juchuan, Liu Yushu,

顧賞之 錢慈嚴 金德本 田豫鐸 陳潤身 陳鐸民 馬立順 彭定保 陳榮廣 趙南公

Gu Shangzhi, Qian Ciyan [Qian Chongwei – author of first preface in Chen's 1928 sword manual], Jin Deben, Tian Yuduo, Chen Runshen, Chen Duomin, Ma Lishun, Peng Dingbao, Chen Rongguang, Zhao Nangong,

葉樂康 吳甄士 劉斌傑 陳湯生 胡純一 胡純如 茅錫榮 杜恩湛 杜跋予 江臥雲

Ye Lekang, Wu Zhenshi, Liu Binjie, Chen Tangsheng, Hu Chunyi, Hu Chunru, Mao Xirong, Du Enzhan, Du Bayu, Jiang Woyun,

王燦 胡樸安 錢旭耕 錢旭林女士 錢景淵 陳文翰 謝映齋 董惠民 郭鳴九

Wang Can, Hu Pu'an [author of second preface in Chen's 1928 sword manual], Qian Xugeng, Ms. Qian Xulin, Qian Jingyuan, Chen Wenhan, Xie Yingzhai, Dong Huimin, Guo Mingjiu,

周作孚 金寶坤 蔣仁山 蔣仁潔 何國衡 陳彭林 任德臣 李丹霞 吳印滋 王槐卿

Zhou Zuofu, Jin Baokun, Jiang Renshan, Jiang Renying, He Guoheng, Chen Penglin, Ren Dechen, Li Danxia, Wu Yinzi, Wang Huaiqing,

者雨舟 秦運堯 薛松隱 李廷書 夏其昌 翁菊生 金靜覺 趙任甫 姚乃勳 管義正

Zhe Yuzhou, Qin Yunyao, Xue Songyin, Li Tingshu, Xia Qichang, Weng Jusheng, Jin Jingjue, Zhao Renfu, Yao Nairang, Guan Yizheng,

何漢文 胡立勛 孫麟書 李維格 鄧根廉 胡少堂 孫莘農 殷懋超 樂楣榮 朱尊一

He Hanwen, Hu Lixun, Sun Linshu, Li Weige, Deng Genlian, Hu Shaotang, Sun Shennong, Yin Maochao, Yue Meirong, Zhu Zunyi,

吳榮 朱小珊 蘇祖齊 葉去非 唐昌 王紹鏊 朱永昌 王輔世 艾建平 金熙章

Wu Rong, Zhu Xiaoshan, Su Zuqi, Ye Qufei, Tang Chang, Wang Shao'ao, Zhu Yongchang, Wang Fushi, Ai Jianping, Jin Xizhang,

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 顧振予 樂蓮華 朱叔屏 郭伯良 趙仰雄 沈照恩 陳升潮 章興瑞 董儀 施濟羣
 Gu Zhenyu, Yue Lianhua, Zhu Shuping, Guo Boliang, Zhao Yangxiong, Shen Zhao'en, Chen Shengchao, Zhang Xingrui, Dong Yi, Shi Jiqun,
 陳立蟾 陳嘉賓 楊世昌 裴功懋 徐省吾 顧蔭之 應仲琳 李新華女士 鄭章斐
 Chen Lichan, Chen Jiabin, Yang Shichang, Qiu Gongmao, Xu Shengwu, Gu Yinzhi, Ying Zhonglin, Ms. Li Xinhua, Zheng Zhangfei,
 甘兆玲 蔣文瑞 陸長華 陸琳寶 顧怡庭 徐世洪 韓榮棠 黃守一 張懷萱 黃頌夔
 Tian Zhaoling, Jiang Wenrui, Lu Changhua, Lu Linbao, Gu Qiating, Xu Shihong, Han Rongtang, Huang Shouyi, Zhang Huaixuan, Huan Songkui,
 邱普慶 徐治平 吳英性 謝介子 俞道就 謝公展 黃抱中 朱宏基 王大佛 林志鵬
 Qiu Puqing, Xu Zhiping, Wu Yingxing, Xie Jiezi, Yu Daojiu, Xie Gongzhan, Huang Baozhong, Zhu Hongji, Wang Dafo, Lin Zhipeng,
 霍東生 李哀鶴 邵炳生 宋沛道 黃荊塘 孫葆康 陳彭齡 阮賓華 陸林孫 金興章
 Huo Dongsheng, Li Aihe, Shao Bingsheng, Song Peidao, Huang Jingtang, Sun Baokang, Chen Pengling, Ruan Binhua, Lu Linsun, Jin Xingzhang,
 毛璞 徐澤予 金禮楷 陳琦 張威遠 陳輔之 林安邦 鄧志仁 路偉 路國綿
 Mao Pu, Xu Zeyu, Jin Likai, Chen Qi, Zhang Weiyuan, Chen Fuzhi, Lin Anbang, Deng Zhiren, Lu Wei, Lu Guomian,
 袁孝根 屠一如 朱鐸民 畢星歧 梁洪增 張松年 董栽生 董柏臣 陳丕承 楊廉夫
 Yuan Xiaogen, Tu Yiru, Zhu Duomin, Bi Xingqi, Liang Hongzeng, Zhang Songnian, Dong Zaisheng, Dong Baichen, Chen Picheng, Yang Lianfu,
 王雪樓 陳季良 惲尊國 卞芷湘 吳南浦 柳章甫 唐舜 沈一明 顧省之 徐斌金
 Wang Xuelou, Chen Jiliang, Yun Zunguo, Bian Zhixiang, Wu Nanpu, Liu Zhangfu, Tang Shun, Shen Yiming, Gu Shengzhi, Xu Binjin,
 鄭慎齋 江宗漢 湯漱風 何連芳 王炳煒 嚴宓 孫公俊 張延孫 莊緝之 姚鳴鶴
 Zheng Shenzhai, Jiang Zonghan, Tang Shufeng, He Lianfang, Wang Bingwei, Yan Mi, Sun Gongjun, Zhang Yansun, Zhuang Jizhi, Yao Minghe,
 朗堃昇 劉文燦 丁杲華 項本俠 沈叔瑜 王夫祿 陸良華 柳哲芝 胡可煙 章亮富
 Lang Kunsheng, Liu Wencan, Ding Daihua, Xiang Benxia, Shen Shuyu, Wang Fulu, Lu Lianghua, Liu Zhezhi, Hu Kejian, Zhang Liangfu,
 章子英 丁訓翔 吳國鋒 宋沛道 趙毓將 陳滬生 范善本 吳友文 姚繼灝 周惠桐
 Zhang Ziyang, Ding Xunxiang, Wu Guofeng, Song Peidao, Zhao Yujiang, Chen Husheng, Fan Shanben, Wu Youwen, Yao Jihao, Zhou Huitong,
 王舜列 羅何 柳培之 秦履雲 李續川 吳金石銘 林君鶴 柳潤水 嚴岳泉 楊宗端
 Wang Shunlie, Luo He, Liu Peizhi, Qin Lüyun, Li Xuchuan, Wujin Shiming, Lin Junhe, Liu Runshui, Yan

Yuequan, Yang Zongduan,

李少周 馮仰山 徐洪賚 呂薇孫

Li Shaozhou, Ping Yangshan, Xu Honglai, Lü Weisun

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[APPENDIX II]

出外教授姓名錄

LIST OF INSTRUCTORS TEACHING BEYOND THE SCHOOL

[a list of one hundred thirty-nine names]

關綱之 王一亭 徐冠南 聶雲台 沈星叔 江味農 李雲書 趙雲韶 謝泗亭 向愷然

Guan Jiongzhi, Wang Yiting, Xu Guannan, Nie Yuntai, Shen Xingshu, Jiang Weinong, Li Yunshu, Zhao Yunshao, Xie Siting, Xiang Kairan [author of *Tales of Modern Heroes* – see question 5],

唐仲南 周陵 黃詠秋 姚星南 申榕 馬子宜 馬毅伯 劉佩英 顧聯承 伍梯雲

Tang Zhongnan, Zhou Jun, Huang Yongqiu, Yao Xingnan, Shen Rong, Ma Ziyi, Ma Yibo, Liu Peiyu, Gu Liancheng, Wu Tiyun,

謝慧生 鄒海濱 余伯陶 黃太玄 錢瘦鐵 譚景韓 李木公 李蜚君 李駿孫 李竺孫

Xie Huisheng, Zou Haibin, Yu Botao, Huang Taixuan [author of third preface in Chen's 1928 sword manual], Qian Shoutie, Tan Jinghan, Li Mugong, Li Feijun, Li Junsun, Li Zhusun,

李榴孫 陸稼蓀 陸振宗 陸亢宗 陸鈿 任尚武 袁仲齊 杜恩湛 金輯五 金藻文

Li Liusun, Lu Jiansun, Lu Zhenzong, Lu Kangzong, Lu Dian, Ren Shangwu, Yuan Zhongqi, Du Enzhan, Jin Jiwu, Jin Zaowen,

錢履慶 余守邦 吳叔英 唐人傑 顧巨仁 潘銘之 吳梓臣 周業勤 周孝淵

Qian Lüqing, Yu Shobang, Wu Shuying, Tang Renjie, Gu Juren, Pan Mingzhi, Wu Zichen, Zhou Puqin, Zhou Xiaoyuan,

周孝芬女士 周孝傑 周孝卓 周孝恭 周榮欣女士 張鏡人 吳念劬 袁彥洪 陳少柏

Ms. Zhou Xiaofen, Zhou Xiaojie, Zhou Xiaozhuo, Zhou Xiaogong, Ms. Zhou Rongxin, Zhang Jingren, Wu Nianqu, Yuan Yanhong, Chen Shaobai,

鄭華枝 鄭軾弇 鄭庭 黃膺伯 黃膺白夫人 黃伯樵夫人 朱炎之夫人 葛敬恩

Zheng Huazhi, Zheng Shiyan, Zheng Ting, Huang Yingbo, Mrs. Huang Yingbo, Mrs. Huang Boqiao, Mrs. Zhu Yanzhi, Ge Jing'en,

孫嘉祿 陳福海 沈良 邱載生 孫嘉德 黃秀峰 鄭仲瑜 陳元伯 趙炎午 歐陽正明

Sun Jialu, Chen Fuhai, Shen Liang, Qiu Zaisheng, Sun Jiade, Huang Xiufeng, Zheng Zhongyu, Chen Yuanbo, Zhao Yanwu, Ouyang Zhengming,

常惺 持松 張子美 許世英 趙鐵橋 許崇智 吳志芬女士 吳志芳女士 吳志蘭女士

Chang Xing, Chi Song, Zhang Zimei, Xu Shiying, Zhao Tieqiao, Xu Chongzhi, Ms. Wu Zifen, Ms. Wu Zhifang, Ms. Wu Zhilan,

吳志廉 吳志忠 吳志琪 徐琦 陳仰和 張寅谷 富振遠 蔡伯華 何增祥 簡玉階

Wu Zhilian, Wu Zhizhong, Wu Zhiqi, Xu Qi, Chen Yanghe, Zhang Yinggu, Fu Zhenyuan, Cai Bohua, He Zengxiang, Jian Yujie,

簡竹軒女士 簡竹堅女士 簡竹漪女士 簡仲舉 簡元祐 梁惠英女士 何芳圃 何熾昌

Ms. Jian Zhuxuan, Ms. Jian Zhujian, Ms. Jian Zhuyi, Jian Zhongju, Jian Yuanyou, Ms. Liang Huiying, He Fangpu, He Chichang,

何漢昌 何鑽星 何錫昌 何息廬 何俊良 沈淑貞女士 沈鎮珠女士 沈麗珠女士

He Hanchang, He Zuanxing, He Xichang, He Xilu, He Junliang, Ms. Shen Shuzhen, Ms. Shen Zhenzhu, Ms. Shen Lizhu,

沈守成 沈守德 曹仁澤 施翔林 包挹青 錢峙東 馮懋熊 程子帆 謝翔鳴 張邵棠

Shen Shoucheng, Shen Shoude, Cao Renze, Shi Xianglin, Bao Yiqing, Qian Zhidong, Feng Maoxiong, Cheng Zifan, Xie Xiangming, Zhang Shaotang,

張樹熊 錢聯元 余文亦 王化瑩 楊炳南 關敬元 耿德森 徐琦 施慶寶 劉孔懷

Zhang Shuxiong, Qian Lianyuan, Yu Wenyi, Wang Huaying, Yang Bingnan, Guan Jingyuan, Geng Desen, Xu Qi, Shi Qingbao, Liu Konghuai,

劉雨原 茅思源

Liu Yuyuan, Mao Siyuan

第一屆畢業姓名

1st session [those who joined in 1925] graduates:

趙敵七 秦光昭

Zhao Diqi, Qin Guangzhao

第二屆畢業姓名

2nd session [those who joined in 1926] graduates:

錢慈嚴 胡樸安 孫聞遠 戴俊卿

Qian Ciyan [Chongwei – see first preface, 1928 sword], Hu Pu'an [see second preface, 1928 sword], Sun Wenyan, Dai Junqing

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[APPENDIX III]

致柔拳社簡章

ACHIEVING SOFTNESS BOXING SOCIETY'S GENERAL RULES

本社取老子專氣致柔之意命名曰致柔拳社

This school derives its name from Laozi's concept of [*Daodejing*, chapter 10]: "Focus on your breath and achieve softness".

本社教授內家拳術劍術槍術以流傳國技注重養生為宗旨

This school offers instruction in the internal boxing, sword, and spear arts so as to spread Chinese martial arts, with particular attention upon nourishing health.

凡性情和平有恆心者可入社學習為本社學員

Generally, one who is of a mild temperament and possesses perseverance can join the school to learn and become a formal student.

本社以太極拳為基本教授拳術願學者必須報名繳費本社同人方能教授以示平等待遇且免破壞本社之基礎

In this school, Taiji Boxing is the fundamental instruction in boxing arts. Those who are wishing to learn must sign up and pay tuition, and then you will be able to have instruction from your colleagues here. This demonstrates equal treatment and avoids degrading the school's fundamental curriculum.

專為却病養生者一年卒業求體用兼通可作師範者三年卒業

For those focusing on preventing disease and nourishing health, there is a one-year graduate program. For those who seek to understand both form and function to be able to become teachers, there is a three-year graduate program. [See Appendix V.]

凡來學者分甲乙丙丁四種甲每星期學習六次乙每星期一三五或二四六學習三次丙每星期學習二次以上三種星期日休息丁每逢星期日學習一次

Generally, students who come here divide into four types: student A – one who trains six times a week, student B – one who trains three times a week, M-W-F or Tu-Th-Sa, student C – one who trains twice a week, (The three types above take a break on Sundays.), and student D – one who trains only once a week, on Sunday.

教授時間上午七時至九時下午四時至六時

Instruction times are: morning – 7am-9am, evening – 4pm-6pm.

甲種學員每月納學費十元第二年每月納學費八元第三年每月納學費六元

The tuition for A students is 10元 per month [for the first year], then 8元 per month for the second year, and 6元 per month for the third year.

[I am not precisely sure what this monetary value meant in terms of 1929 Shanghai, but to put 10元 per month into some perspective I will point out that the fixed price for the book in 1933 was 1元2角. You could expect to pay about \$15 for such a book nowadays, and so we can estimate that six classes a week during one's first year was worth the equivalent of at least \$150 per month, which is not an uncommon fee for attendance in today's schools of martial arts, yoga, dance, etc, indicating that such tuition fees are relatively the same now as they have always been.]

乙種學員每月納學費六元第三年每月納學費五元第四年以後每月納學費四元

The tuition for B students is 6元 per month [for the first two years], then 5元 per month for the third year, and 4元 per month from the fourth year on.

丙種學員每星期內來學二次者每月納學費四元第四年以後每月納學費三元以為有恆者勸

The tuition for C students is 4元 per month [for the first three years], then 3元 per month from the fourth year on, and are advised to be persevering.

如在未卒業期內甲種欲改為乙丙丁種乙改為丙丁丙改為丁者不適用逐年減費之例

If the course is not completed within the time, A students may wish to change to B, C, or D, while B students may wish to change to C or D, and C students may wish to change to D, but their year after year tuition reductions will not apply. [In other words, if you for instance downgrade from A to B in your second year, you will for your second year pay the B first-year tuition, not the B second-year tuition.]

丁種學員逢星期日來學者或每星期內來學一次者每月納學費二元

The tuition for D students, who come on Sundays or only once a week, is 2元 per month.

甲種學員以到社之日計算滿三年卒業乙丙丁三種學員以到社之日計算滿三年卒業（每年除休息日以三百日計算）

When A students have reached their allotted days, they have fulfilled their three-year graduate course. When B, C, and D students have reached their allotted days, they have fulfilled their “three-year” graduate course. [To fulfill three years worth at their own rates takes B six years, C nine years, and D twelve years.] (A year is calculated as

three hundred days, eliminating rest days.) [Fifty-two weeks minus a two-week break for the Chinese New Year, and each week minus a Sunday for a day of rest, makes three hundred days.]

每月學費必須按月先繳

Tuition must be paid on the first day of each month.

卒業之後由本社考驗合格給以憑證將姓名登報宣布

After you have graduated and passed the school examination, you will be given a diploma and your name will be announced in the newspaper.

未卒業及未經本社考驗合格不得在外教授及表演本社所授拳術以敗壞本社名譽

If you do not graduate or pass the exam, you will not be allowed to be an outside instructor or teach the boxing arts taught at this school, for that would corrupt the school's reputation.

約至外間教授者另有簡章

There are other rules for those invited to be outside instructors. [See Appendix IV.]

如有願贊助本社經費者作為本社名譽社員

If any wish to make supportive donations to the school, they will be named as honorary Society members.

已繳學費自不來者學費概不退還

For those who paid their tuition fee but have not been attending their classes, the tuition fee will not be returned.

社長 陳微明

Director: Chen Weiming

名譽社長 關炯之

Honorary President: Guan Jiongzhi

教授 陳志進

Instructor: Chen Zhijin

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[APPENDIX IV]

致柔拳社出外教授簡章

ACHIEVING SOFTNESS BOXING SOCIETY'S GENERAL RULES FOR OUTSIDE INSTRUCTORS

本社自開辦以來不過年餘入社者已達數百人沈疴者得起委靡者復振而外間約請往教者亦有多處以時間未能分配竟有未敢應允者良用慊然本社提倡太極拳術以其與養生實有絕大之功效故於前定簡章特標有恒二字蓋非一朝一夕之功也今以學者約往教授或有一月半月即停止者本社同人徒勞往返而他處願學者反以無暇謝絕曠日費時兩無所益今特定出外簡章約者如能遵行非特本社之幸也

Since the opening of this school not many years ago, several hundred people have already joined. Because the ill have received relief and the depressed have returned to vibrancy, we have been invited to give instruction to many places beyond the school. Because we cannot supply all the required time, we have not yet dared to accept any of them and have graciously offered our regrets.

This school advocates the Taiji boxing art, for it has the best effects for nourishing health. In the previous list of rules, specifically included is the word “perseverance”, for it is not an overnight accomplishment. If students were

to invite instructors away and then quit after only a month and a half, it would make a wasted trip for our colleagues. Meanwhile, those who wish to learn in other places would have been declined because of the lack of time on our part, and their time would have been wasted. Since there is no benefit in either case, we have now specifically devised rules for outside instructors, and if those invited to be can follow them, it will not only be for the benefit of the school:

一出外教授必須正式具函約請聲明遵守本社定章簽名蓋章以示鄭重

Instructors who teach outside the school must write a formal letter requesting to do so, stating clearly that they will abide by the rules of school, and affix it with a personal seal to demonstrate their sincerity.

一定章本以三年卒業專為養身者一年卒業出外教授事同一律惟最少期限須在六個月以上（以一百八十日計算）

The structure of the curriculum is based on a three-year graduate program, or a one-year program for those interested in doing it only for health. Instructors who teach outside the school are to follow the same curriculum without exception, but must run a course for at least six months (or a hundred and eighty days).

一本社定有教授程序學者須按照程序學習不得躁急

In this school there is a fixed sequence of instruction. Students must learn according to it and are not allowed to be impatient.

一出外教授須在六人以上如六人以下亦須照六人繳費六人以上照加

Instructors who teach outside the school must run a group of at least six people. If less than six, you must charge them tuition as if they are six to bring it up to the six-person rate.

一每日學習者每人每月學費十元一星期內學三次者每月學費六元一星期內學二次者每月學費四元每星期一次者每月學費二元

For students who come every day, the monthly tuition is 10元. For students who come three times a week, the monthly tuition is 6元. For students who come twice a week, the monthly tuition is 4元. For students who come once a week, the monthly tuition is 2元.

一學費必須按月先交

Tuition must be paid on the first day of the month.

一道路太遠電車不通之處每日學習者每月加車費八元間日學者加車費四元一星期二次者三元一次者二元

If the distance is too far for the trolley to get them to the location, for students who come every day they may add a carpooling fee of 8元 per month, and for students who come every other day they may add 4元, for students who come twice a week they may add 3元, for students who come once a week they may add 2元.

一六個月屆滿繼續或停止須前十日通知本社

After six months, you may decide to continue or quit, but you must first give ten days notice to the school.

一教授時間每次約一小時鐘點隨時商定

Each instruction period is to last approximately an hour, followed by a period for discussion.

一本社教授惟微明志進二人擔任並無第三人在外私相傳授茲為對外教授之責任與名譽及本社內部之誠信起見不得不鄭重聲明故出外教授必須按照第一條正式函約經本社復函應允者方為有效

The only instructors with authority in this school are Chen Weiming and Chen Zhijin, and there is no third person

who instructs the outside instructors. This is so that the duties and reputation of an outside instructor do not conflict with the integrity within the school. You have to be serious and declare it, and therefore outside instructors must abide by the first item on this list of writing a formal letter. When the school has replied with a letter of consent, then your position will take effect.

社長陳微明 教授陳志進 共訂

Revised by director Chen Weiming & instructor Chen Zhijin

[APPENDIX V]

致柔拳社三年畢業課程

ACHIEVING SOFTNESS BOXING SOCIETY'S THREE-YEAR GRADUATE PROGRAM

本社創辦以來於茲二年有餘入社者不下八九百人然有恆心及不間斷者不過數人而已其餘均來去無常或作或輟雖學者宗旨各有不同然恐數年之後成就絕少於微明創辦茲社流傳國技之初心殊有未合細察現今學員頗不乏真實求功夫者特定教授課程分年教授三年畢業列之於右

Since the establishing of this school more than two years ago, no fewer than eight or nine hundred people have joined, but not many of them have persevered without interruption, and the rest have attended inconsistently or sporadically. Although students have different goals, I fear that after a few years they will quit with little accomplished. I established this school with the original intention of spreading Chinese martial arts, and it has not turned out exactly as I expected. But I have carefully observed in the present membership no lack of those who genuinely strive to work at it, and so I have specially devised an instructional curriculum divided into years, a three-year graduate course, the arrangement of which is below:

甲種第一年級太極拳 不動步推手 太極劍

1st year for A students: Taiji Boxing set, fixed step pushing hands, Taiji Sword set

第二年級太極長拳 動步推手

2nd year: Taiji Long Boxing set, moving step pushing hands

第三年級 大捋 散手 對劍 太極槍

3rd year: large rollback, applications, [two-person sword](#), Taiji Spear drills

每一年除星期及年節假期外以三百日計算

Each year, setting aside the weeks for the New Year's vacation [and subtracting each Sunday] amounts to three hundred days.

乙丙丁俱照規定到社之日期計算均以滿三百日為一年

B, C, and D students are each to accord with this fixed account of days and are to consider three hundred days as a "year". [This means that while it is a three-year program for A, it is a six-year program for B, nine-year for C, twelve-year for D. The three-year graduate program for Chen's school thus amounts to: attending nine hundred classes.]

若三年之內改動種類亦須按照規定之日期計算若滿一年（即三百日）方能授第二年課程滿二年方能授第三年課程
If within the three-year course you change to a different schedule, it must be according to the fixed account of days. If you complete one year (three hundred days), you can then be taught the curriculum for the second year,

and upon completing the second year, you can then be taught the curriculum for the third year. [This means that if you for instance switch from A to D after the first six months, you will not be taught the second-year material after another six months, but after another five and a half years.]

本社設有畫到簿以憑計算到社之日期除甲種每日畫到外若乙丙丁三種於規定到社日期畫到若有時欲借本社練習者不必畫到

In this school there is a sign-in book for proving your dates of attendance. Apart from A students, who sign in everyday, if you are a B, C, or D, you will sign in according to a set weekly schedule. If you sometimes want to use the school for extra practice, you do not need to sign in.

本社學員三年學習期滿考驗合格照章即予畢業畢業之後將姓名登報宣布作為本社社員以後來社研究不再取費惟應繳之學費必須按照章程繳足方能畢業

Students who complete the three-year course will have an examination to qualify them, and in accordance with the rules [i.e. the curriculum requirements] will be granted graduate status. After you have graduated, your name will be announced in the newspaper

and you will be regarded as a Society member. From then on when you come to study at the school, you will no longer be charged tuition. You need only pay tuition sufficient to be able to graduate, and it must be according to the rules [i.e. your particular schedule].

說明

王宗岳先生太極拳論云數年純功或不能運化可見太極拳運化之難三年畢業乃至短期限不過知其規矩準繩耳第一年太極拳為基礎習之一年則姿式不差腰能轉動不動步推手亦練腰也第二年太極長拳則動步時多兼練步之靈活動步推手亦練步也太極拳習之爛熟方能學長拳不然恐彼此牽混而雜亂矣第三年大捋求四隅之變化散手以應敵太極拳之規矩盡此矣神而明之則存乎其人甚望繼起者能發明而光大之也太極拳姿式不差即可學劍故列之第一年太極槍及對劍非動步推手純熟不能學故列之第三年丁卯秋八月陳微明識

Explanation:

Wang Zongyue said in his Taiji Boxing essay [Essays, part 2]: “[We often see] one who has practiced hard for many years yet is unable to perform any neutralizations...” From this can be seen how difficult neutralizing is in Taiji Boxing. Even a three-year graduate course is a very short time [within which to train it], but you will understand its principles and criteria.

In the first year, Taiji Boxing is the foundation and is trained for the whole year. Once the postures are right, your waist is able to rotate. Fixed step pushing hands then also trains the waist.

In the second year, there is the Taiji Long Boxing set, which steps more frequently and thereby simultaneously trains the stepping, and moving step pushing hands, which also trains the stepping. Once the Taiji Boxing set has been thoroughly ingrained, you can then learn the Long Boxing set, but if it is not thoroughly ingrained, the two sets will probably get confused with each other and become chaotically blurred together.

In the third year, there is large rollback to work the four secondary techniques, as well as applications for dealing with opponents, and with these the principles of Taiji Boxing are complete, fully understood by your mind, and are now a part of your body. Those who are eager to continue from this point are then able to broadly develop these things further.

When the Taiji Boxing postures are correct, you can learn the sword set. That is why it is placed in the first year. Taiji Spear and the two-person sword cannot be learned unless the moving-step pushing hands has become skillful. That is why they are placed in the third year.

– written by Chen Weiming, 4th year of the cycle, autumn, 8th month [i.e. Aug/Sep, 1927]

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Brennan Translation

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