

1: The 36 Secret Strategies of the Martial Arts - Japan Today

The 36 Secret Strategies of the Martial Arts is a collection of ancient Chinese maxims that encapsulate some of the Far East's most cunning tactics for battle and deception. Each of these strategies represents a distilled nugget of Chinese wisdom.

The warrior spirit must guide this process. He was showing us the movements taught him by his Shaman, which had been passed down through the tribe for generations. The Shaman moved strikingly similar to a Tai Chi master. The Golden Triangle is a roughly drawn geographic area that overlaps the borders of three countries: Myanmar in the west, Laos in the east, and Thailand in the south. This area gets its soubrette from its most profitable export, the golden excretions of the poppy " opium. The terrain of small brown mountains and narrow forested valleys is ideally suited to guerrilla tactics. Both Buddhist and Christian missionaries have failed to convert but a small number of the people away from their ancient animist beliefs. The Shaman or medicine man still plays an important role in the life of the isolated villages. In the author visited with the Ka-ren in one of the more remote areas of the Triangle. There he was fortunate enough to spend an evening with a Shaman and witness his Spirit Dance. It was there that the connection between this tradition and that of the Chinese martial arts seemed to meld. Author at remote Ka-ren guard post Martial arts has often been described and written about as a moving meditation. The picture that most often comes to mind when we consider meditation is that of the Yogi, the Buddhist, and the Taoist, sitting cross-legged in a temple. The key ingredients are silence, stillness, and solitude. Contrast this image with one of continually flowing, and sometimes explosive movements of Tai Chi, and it would appear to be the antithesis of the conditions needed for meditation. From where then did this unique concept, the linking of physical movement with an altered state of consciousness, originate? The five elements and their associated heraldic animals represent an ancient knowledge of how heavenly forces could be manipulated to affect earthly destinies. The central ritual of Taoist magic consists in the ability to call up the forces of these Spirit-Generals and indicates that the heraldic Animals are indeed the essence of supernatural powers. The Chinese PauKua, Ong Hean-Tatt, In the older martial arts traditions of China, Burma, the Philippines, and Malaysia, there are systems of self-defense that are based upon the combat movements of either real or mythical animals. Most of the movements of these styles are more complex and vigorous than their passive cousin Tai Chi, and are thus even further removed from the traditional requirements of silence and stillness. Yet it is in the grand ballet of the animal styles that the connection is closest to the ancient origin of moving meditation. That connection can be seen in the oral traditions. Ka-ren village Every style has its own folklore regarding its origins. But there is also a pattern to many of the tales. The following story is typical of these and contains classic story elements that point to an even older origin In 15th century China, Wang Lang was a young bully who had studied martial arts from a young age. He would strut and intimidate the locals with displays of Kung Fu, but the older men in the village were unimpressed. Who do you think you are? After an arduous journey, Wang reached the Temple and challenged the monks to a duel. Initially the monks ignored him, but day after day Wang issued his challenge and finally the monks accepted. Expecting to duel with the master, Wang was chagrined to find himself faced with the lowest ranking monk. Wang sulked off to the nearby mountains where he trained for months. After his confidence was restored, Wang returned to Shaolin and defeated the novice monk that had beaten him earlier. But his next opponent was a senior monk who flounced him effortlessly. Hill tribe women in traditional clothing on the Fang river Wang again retreated to the mountains to contemplate his failure. Then one day, while sitting in meditation, Wang was distracted by sounds coming from some bushes nearby. Investigating the source of the commotion he discovered a struggle between a praying mantis and a cicada. He captured the mantis and kept it in a cage built from sticks. He used a straw to poke and attack the insect in order to study its fighting strategy. Wang incorporated the strategies of the mantis into his martial arts and returned to the Temple. He defeated every one of the monks sent against him. The Abbott finally ordered a stop to the contest conceding victory to Wang. The Abbot was curious about his unique style of fighting and asked Wang how he came about it. Wang told the story of his encounter with the Mantis. Having also learned

humility from the insect, Wang Lang became a Shaolin monk and his Praying Mantis style became famous throughout China. As a parable this tale illustrates three of the most important strategies of warfare; deception, speed, and surprise. There are also the moral lessons: Common to Shamanism, the Vision Quest is a ritual whereby a young warrior first undergoes a period of training after which he sets off alone into the wilderness. He must bear the hardships of isolation while fasting and meditating until he has a vision. The vision usually takes the form of an animal that reveals certain secrets. For example, if the visionary animal was a fox, the warrior would take on the qualities of cunning, an eagle would bestow far sight, a bear " strength, and so on. Compare the elements of the Vision Quest to the story of Wang Lang: The conditions that induce these altered States include such common experiences as isolation, fatigue, hunger, and rhythmic sound and thus are likely to be re-discovered by different generations and cultures. Since these states may be pleasurable, meaningful, and healing, they are likely to be actively sought and methods of inducing them remembered and transmitted across generations. The Spirit of Shamanism, Roger Walsh The folktales of other martial arts styles also follow the same plot. A Tibetan monk by the name of Ordator was wandering alone in the mountains when he encountered a battle between a crane and an ape. Thinking that the spindly and fragile Crane would soon succumb to the superior brawn and strength of the ape he was surprised when the crane defeated the ape. Bird Deities in China, Waterbury, F. The legendary founder of Tai Chi is said to have been a mountain hermit by the name of Chang San Feng who lived during the Yuan Dynasty He wandered throughout the mountains and learned secret Taoist breathing techniques that made him nearly immortal legend has him living well past In addition, he learned Shaolin Temple fighting from other wandering monks. One day while living on Wu Tang Mountain, Chang heard a hawk [1] screeching and went to see what was happening. What he discovered was a hawk attacking and doing battle with a snake. These myths share a common plot theme with the Vision Quest. Each includes a challenge or test, followed by isolation and hardship, then a revelation in the form of a vision of a wild animal that acts as a catalyst for the transformation of body and mind, finally, each takes on the attributes of the visionary animal. According to his book, Shamanism: Well known among Native Americans, accounts of this practice also date back 4, years in Chinese records. During the Spirit Dance, the Shaman moves in imitation of his animal spirit to call on its powers. This is principle is also mirrored in the martial arts. Performing the movements of Tai Chi is said to generate a spiritual energy " Chi. The Ka-ren belong to the Thai linguistic group whose origins lie in southwest China, possibly Yunnan or Szechwan. In the twelfth century the Mongols drove whole populations in China southwards. The social upheaval this caused helped to bring to an end fabled empires of Pagan and Angkor. The Thai tribes that had been displaced southwards initially settled in the wilderness hill country that bounded these two empires, but when Mongol incursions and civil wars finally destroyed the kingdoms, the Thai came down from the hills and established their own kingdom on the ruins. Ox drawn cart in Golden Triangle But not all the tribes came down from the hills. While their cousins went on to found the Thai kingdom, others chose instead to remain in the uplands living a lifestyle little changed over time. Could the practices of the Ka-ren Shaman be a time capsule of an archaic Chinese martial arts system as it existed a thousand years ago? If so would this mean that the connection between martial arts and Shamanism was closer and much older than we thought? While there are several similarities between the origins of martial arts systems and the Shamanic tradition of the Vision Quest it does not imply that practicing Tai Chi is a form of spirit possession. So the next time you go out and practice your Snake Creeps Down, and Crane Opens Wings in the moonlight, know that not only are you continuing a millennia old tradition of martial arts, but a tradition that quite possibly goes back through the mists of prehistory to the dawn of mankind itself. Trance and Healing in Southeast Asia Today. Tarcher, Los Angeles, Waterbury, F. Support My Work Like most writers and artists I financially hover just above the poverty line. I live like a monk, but the damn cats have expensive tastes in cat food. [Click Here](#) to see the rewards I offer for your support. Our western civilization is at the apex of its development. We have a standard of living undreamt of by our forbearers. However, our technological civilization is built on the most tenuous and fragile of foundations " electricity and petroleum. Remove either of these foundations for more than a couple of months and our civilization will collapse rapidly and we will find ourselves in a literal dark age. This book provides all the information needed to live comfortably without electricity or gas, just like your great

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grandparents did. This book is pages. If you order the paperback version it will be in 2 volumes

2: Thirty-Six Stratagems - Wikipedia

And, like such other classics as "The Book of Five Rings" and "The Art of War," "The 36 Secret Strategies" gives the businessman, the diplomat, the politician, the military strategist, the martial artist, and the sports competitor keys to understanding, interpreting, and countering the actions of even the most daunting opponent.

As thirty-six is the square of six, it therefore acted as a metaphor for numerous strategies. Instead, the prevailing view is that the Thirty-Six Stratagems may have originated in both written and oral history, with many different versions compiled by different authors throughout Chinese history. Some stratagems reference occurrences in the time of Sun Bin , approx. It was subsequently reprinted and distributed with growing popularity. The first three chapters generally describe tactics for use in advantageous situations, whereas the last three chapters contain stratagems that are more suitable for disadvantageous situations. The original text of the Thirty-Six Stratagems has a laconic style that is common to Classical Chinese. Each proverb is accompanied by a short comment, no longer than a sentence or two, that explains how said proverb is applicable to military tactics. These 36 Chinese proverbs are related to 36 battle scenarios in Chinese history and folklore, predominantly of the Warring States period and the Three Kingdoms Period. The Thirty-Six Stratagems consists of 6 chapters, each chapter consists of 6 stratagems. Know that he cannot be superior in all things. Somewhere there is a gap in the armour, a weakness that can be attacked instead. The idea here is to avoid a head-on battle with a strong enemy, and instead strike at his weakness elsewhere. This will force the strong enemy to retreat in order to support his weakness. Battling against the now tired and low-morale enemy will give a much higher chance of success. The idea here is to cause damage to the enemy by getting a third party to do the deed. In this way you know when and where the battle will take place, while your enemy does not. Encourage your enemy to expend his energy in futile quests while you conserve your strength. When he is exhausted and confused, you attack with energy and purpose. The idea is to have your troops well-prepared for battle, in the same time that the enemy is rushing to fight against you. This will give your troops a huge advantage in the upcoming battle, of which you will get to select the time and place. This is the time to attack. Keep gathering internal information about an enemy. If the enemy is currently in its weakest state ever, attack it without mercy and totally destroy it to prevent future troubles. Even when face to face with an enemy, surprise can still be employed by attacking where he least expects it. The idea here is to get the enemy to focus his forces in a location, and then attack elsewhere which would be weakly defended. Make somebody believe there was something when there is in fact nothing. Another method is to create an illusion that something does not exist, while it does. As the enemy concentrates on the decoy, he will miss you sneaking up to him. This tactic is an extension of the "Make a sound in the east, then strike in the west" tactic. In the present day, "sneak through the passage of Chencang" also has the meaning of having an affair or doing something that is illegal. Then go in at full strength and pick up the pieces. When you have gained his trust, move against him in secret. This is the scapegoat strategy whereby someone else suffers the consequences so that the rest do not. More widely used as "[Do not] startle the snake by hitting the grass". An imprudent act will give your position or intentions away to the enemy. Revive something from the past by giving it a new purpose or bring to life old ideas, customs, or traditions and reinterpret them to fit your purposes. Instead lure him away from his position thus separating him from his source of strength. To prevent this you let the enemy believe he still has a chance for freedom. His will to fight is thus dampened by his desire to escape. If the commander falls the rest of the army will disperse or come over to your side. If, however, they are allied to the leader through loyalty then beware, the army can continue to fight on after his death out of vengeance. This is the very essence of indirect approach: Literally, take the fuel out of the fire. This strategy is mainly used to escape from enemy of superior strength. Do not rush into action. The battle fields are close to your own country, thus it is easier for your troops to get supplies and to defend the conquered land. Make allies with nations far away from you, as it is unwise to invade them. Once the enemy is defeated, use those resources to turn on the ally that lent you them in the first place. In this way you remove the supporting pillar, the common link that makes a group of men an effective fighting force. Without directly naming names, those accused cannot retaliate

without revealing their complicity. Lure your opponent into underestimating your ability until, overconfident, he drops his guard. Then you may attack. Then cut off his lines of communication and avenue of escape. To save himself, he must fight both your own forces and the elements of nature. Through the use of artifice and disguise, make something of no value appear valuable; of no threat appear dangerous; of no use appear useful. Initially, pretend to be a guest to be accepted, but develop from inside and become the owner later. This strategy can work on three levels. First, the ruler becomes so enamoured with the beauty that he neglects his duties and allows his vigilance to wane. Second, the group of men will begin to have issues if the desired women courts another man, thus creating conflict and aggressive behavior. Third, other females at court, motivated by jealousy and envy, begin to plot intrigues further exacerbating the situation. It works best by acting calm and at ease when your enemy expects you to be tense. This ploy is only successful if in most cases you do have a powerful hidden force and only sparsely use the empty fort strategy. While he is preoccupied settling internal disputes, his ability to attack or defend is compromised. In the first, the enemy is lulled into relaxing his guard since he no longer considers you to be an immediate threat. The second is a way of ingratiating yourself with your enemy by pretending the injury was caused by a mutual enemy. Keep different plans operating in an overall scheme; however, in this manner if any one strategy fails, then the chain breaks and the whole scheme fails. When your side is losing, there are only three choices remaining: Surrender is complete defeat, compromise is half defeat, but escape is not defeat. As long as you are not defeated, you still have a chance. This is the most famous of the stratagems, immortalized in the form of a Chinese idiom:

3: William Scott Wilson - Wikipedia

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4: Shamanic Origins of Martial Arts

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The origin of The 36 Strategies of the Martial Arts is unknown; however, the text is a synthesis of various military principles, political expressions, and even folk sayings, some of which are from sources that date back 1, years. Professor Hiroshi Moriya supplies clear and succinct explanations of each saying and illustrates them with.

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