



# HANSHI SPEAKS

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Dear Bushi,

I'd like to start by wishing you each a wonderful holiday season and thank you all for your assistance, support and loyalty throughout the year.

We accomplished a great deal in 2006 and hope to continue to make great strides forward in 2007. Our website received some 450,000+ hits and collected some 6,000 unique readers between November 2005 and November 2006.

Some of us traveled to California to a seminar I conducted and to visit Grandmaster Pierce, others went up to our New Jersey outing. Both of these were great learning experiences.

My book was completed and published by Unique Publications. It has since returned from the printer and is now headed to distribution. I want to thank all who helped with the process.

Most important are the faces that I see class after class, year after year. I appreciate very much your dedication and devotion to the art. I know that most all of you have demanding schedules and many other obligations, your time is always valued by the Black Belt staff.

I look forward to sharing with you in our January issue my goals for the school in 2007. Many thanks and again, Happy Holidays.

## UPCOMING BLACK BELT TEST

We will be having a Black Belt Test in February, 2007. This test will span a two-day

period. Day one is closed to non-testing attendees, but day two is open to all of you who are interested in watching. I must stress that the test will take up the better part of a day and require the individuals testing to review all requirements as prescribed. I wish to those testing nothing but success and I look forward to their test.

## MY NEXT BOOK

I am currently working on my next book entitled "Against the Center" this will be a comprehensive look into the science and application of soft fist—the art of throwing. I have included one of the draft chapters here in this issue of your newsletter for your review. I hope you find my observation of interest...

I am currently working on my next book entitled "Against the Center." It will be a comprehensive look into the science behind the application of soft fist—the art of throwing. I have included one of the draft chapters below for your review. I hope you find my observations of interest...

It is important to begin any learning experience with an open mind and an understanding of what the Instructor is trying to share. In these pages you will find a method that will apply, in most cases, to any traditional, combative or mixed arts program. I would like for you to understand, that I don't profess this to be the only way these techniques can be accomplished and would like you to grasp the important nature of adaptability of martial arts. In the same breath, I would like to point out, that we will use not Japanese, Korean or Chinese terminology, but English to describe the techniques. I must stress that this is so, solely for the

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purpose of providing guidance that you can use to adapt any of the following information to your teachings or training.

We must all remember that the art has to meet the ability of the student; and, in turn, the student must be able to, with understanding, marry the technique with his individual skill set. We should all agree that with time, comes improvement and by teaching sound basics and the principals associated with technique, we create a well-rounded and knowledgeable individual that is martially- or combat-capable.

We must try and measure progress not by height of kick or speed but through retention of knowledge and understanding of depth associated with each technique, theory or concept. Depth can be measured by how well you inform the individual practitioner, and how long you are willing to wait for improvement over time. I would compare it to planting a seed. The seed will striggle to work its way towards the light, but over time, with care, it can grow into a strong and might tree.

As instructor or student we must also ponder what our purpose is for teaching or learning an art—this purpose often reflects the level of student produced. The common goal for an instructor should be to produce a well-rounded individual that has both skill and knowledge abilities related to his training.

So, with these simple understandings please allow me to move forward.

I will begin in the beginning discussing concepts associated with a subject of Center. Center is somewhat all-encompassing, it includes balance, Ki or Chi and, of course, distribution of both power and balance.

To help put Center into perspective I have often suggested that if you were to imagine a bowl place between your hips and a ball placed inside the bowl, you could picture center. Lean too far forward, and the ball rolls out of the bowl or you have lost balance of center. This clearly illustrates the fact that Center is fluid and can be put into motion.

Stance plays a large role in how we affectively apply our Center. The mechanics of working one's Center are based on the shifting our

footwork and legs, flexing the knees, transitioning the hips, arranging our torso. These subtleties affect how we manage or apply our center to maximize technique.

To obtain a constant awareness of center, means you are in tune with your balance. As we are all aware, the inner ear has a great deal to do with the internal mechanics of our body's balance. The eyes effectively provide references for the brain and, as we are in motion, these natural processes report and correct our body as it relates to motion and our environment.

I think sometimes we are unaware of the pre-conditioned programming that takes place to make hundreds of unnoticed adjustments, second by second, to keep us up-right, moving and our feet firmly placed to the ground.

A prime example would be the motion generated walking down or upstairs. We all have misjudged the last step. When this happens, the messages are sent to the brain saying, "step to the next stair," but when we put our foot down and there is no stair, the effect is very overt. We quickly counter the mistake and correct our balance. These are the sub-level operating systems that we are referencing.

Or, we could refer to the reflexes happening as we start to fall. Our natural reaction is to grab something as an anchor, that will prevent us from falling. Just think how fast that panic message is sent from the brain to the body, how quickly the eye searches, how fast the hand and arm reach for the targeted anchor; this all happens in a split second. Survival or the reduction of damage in the scenario is what triggers these natural pre-programmed responses. In actuality, we also have to reflect on many strategies which the body has developed over the centuries to protect us from falling. In paragraphs to come we will address the specific science related to balance and these unique strategies.

It should become clear that preservation of Center is a conditioned response. This means that your balance is one of the most important prerequisites that provides you an ability to function. Simply put, if your balance is defeated, your ability to function or defend against an attack is impaired.

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It is these pre-programmed self-preservation reactions that we give little notice or understanding to. Just for a second, think of what it takes for you to bend over and pick-up a penny from the floor. First break down the messages that have to be sent from the brain to the rest of the body: what joints have to bend, how many balance and counter corrections there are, where your upper body is, how you judge the distance, how you focus on the object, how you know you have picked the penny up, the amount of effort it takes—just in the hand and fingers—to pick it up; and so forth. This basic action, in all reality, requires thousands of messages and adjustments to execute. As a collective, this effort might take a few seconds to execute. It is this type of action that is similar to your martial training.

Think for a moment how you move when you block, punch and kick. Think of all the adjustments, corrections and actions needed to accomplish the above and retain your center of balance.

In summary, balance is the foundation of your ability to remain upright and functioning in time and space. So, I could make the following statement and it would be true.

“Defeat your opponents’ balance and you have gained an advantage in the battle.”  
—Vincent Anthony

It should be noted as we move forward, that the soft arts are focused on disruption of balance. Simply put, the goal is to exploit the aggressor’s action and motion and make efforts to destroy their balance.

The overall goal is to have an awareness of conceptual thinking in regard to management and applied reaction through the use of technique directed to one’s Center or Balance. To build an understanding of this, you must have a comprehensive awareness of how your center is activated, used in motion and applied both on a conscious and subconscious levels. With this knowledge we can then manipulate the opponent through the use of technique directed to select targets.

These targets include our *16 major off-balancing points*. These points are targeted for striking areas which, when attacked, cause huge reactions in your opponent’s ability to remain upright and can drastically affect his balance. We also use a term referred to as *Biomechanics* or *Body Mechanics*. This term suggests that we have an ability to execute technique in a series of applications to cause specific results. As an example, if you kick a man in the groin, his knees would buckle and his upper torso would lean or lunge forward. This is a clear example of Bio-Mechanics and how it will position both the target subject and ability to work or relocate their Center.

In other words if I can grasp the concept of how biomechanics work, I can apply technique with an understanding of the affects it has on the aggressor. This provides me the ability to set-up or lead to the next technique which would have a prescribed result.

I hope you found this draft chapter of interest, if you have any question please feel free to email or just ask me in class...

### NEW MEMBER PROMOTION

For newcomers, starting Dec 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006, we will offer the following special. *Sign-up and pay for three months and receive your uniform free.* We hope this effort will provide you the ability to recruit new students.

Stay Safe.

With Deepest Regards,

  


**Vincent Anthony**  
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