

# AYMTA JOURNAL

YANG FAMILY HIDDEN TRADITION TAIJQUAN  
SUMMER 2004 ♦ VOL. 12 ♦ NO. 1



AMERICAN YANGJIA MICHUAN TAIJQUAN ASSOCIATION  
12<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY COLLECTION

## AYMTA



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The *AYMTA Journal* is dedicated to the promotion and practice of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan and related neigong/meditation practices. Readers who choose to practice anything described in the *AYMTA Journal* do so at their own risks. It is always wise to learn from a qualified teacher. None of the officers, directors, advisers, authors or the editorial staff of the *AYMTA Journal* have responsibility of any kind for any injury whatsoever arising from such an attempt.

### Errata

Zouzou writes for *Amicale* that Charlie is mistaken in his report that *Amicale* itself receives any funds or other amenities from the government. She points out that the Association is a self-funding cooperative of various European YMT Groups and as such does not benefit from the French Government's policies towards Sports Associations.

And Claudy informs us that his periodical is *Wen Wu* not *Wu Wen*.

I must also apologize for some blatant typos in the last issue that occurred after the proofreaders had approved the copy. The **f** went missing from **Reflections** on the cover probably due to my cat pressing the delete key when I had the page open. And Don & Terri got their names mangled in the **Contents** in a rushed addition. Further, sometimes errors are introduced as we are correcting other errors. *Beware*: a number of items were added and/or rearranged in this issue after the proofreaders had reviewed the copy.

—Don

## In Celebration

In this year of the monkey we are celebrating the 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of this organization (originally AWYMTA) with a special edition of the *AYMTA Journal*. As the one really tangible item that we offer directly to membership, the *AYMTA Journal* has published many useful and interesting articles, pictures and artwork over the years. Even if you have a complete set we think you will enjoy this chance to read the selected work and to gain an overview about the structure and people who have been behind the publication. Many people have given much time and effort to the creation, development and running of AYMTA, the only North American organization dedicated to perpetuating the teaching of Wang Yen-nien and Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan. Thus the idea of publishing a celebration issue was born.

In contacting writers and contributors for permission to reprint their work (we strongly believe in the importance of international copyright laws and respect the work and effort reflected within the *Journal*) I have had the opportunity to communicate with many past members, contributors, board members, and advisors. It's clear to all that much water has flown beneath the AWYMTA/AYMTA bridge since it was officially founded by Wang Yen-nien, Akai Jong, and Julia Fairchild on March 21, 1992. Members are complex, separated across many continents, and have goals that ultimately can seem in conflict with one another. The articles that appear in this anniversary issue were not chosen because they are "right", "wrong" or for any other reason than that they hopefully represent a strong cross-section of the work put forward by contributors, members, and taiji brethren. It is no secret among those who are involved with taiji organizations that exist beneath the Yangjia Michuan umbrella that there is sometimes discord and even ill-feeling within the fraternity of our practice. The current *Journal* is not an attempt to solve these very real and important issues – nor could it if we wished it to. It is a celebration of the hard work that has gone into the making of each *Journal* past, the development of this organization, and the ideals that are inspired by the lifetime achievement of the one person who stands above any disagreement that we might at times find ourselves in.

Let us welcome any opportunity to recognize what Wang Laoshi has worked so hard to give us. We can honor Master Wang within our singular practice, as we strive to understand, internalize and refine the Yangjia Michuan system of taiji. We can honor him within our teaching, which is clearly one of the most important tasks he asks of us. And we can honor Master Wang within the many organizations that have sprung from the seeds that he has planted within us all.

So as you read through this *Journal*, take a breath, relax the dantien and consider how much positive work has come from the momentous decision by Master Wang to open his teaching to "the outside world." He has given us all the opportunity to be healthier, to be happier, and to be more useful to ourselves and to the societies we are part of.

It is worth reflecting on.

Enjoy,  
Thomas W. Campbell

## 甲申 Why a 12<sup>th</sup> Year Anniversary? 猴年

The earliest known Chinese dating system was a sexagenary cycle created by the intersection of two sub-cycles, the Celestial Stems and the Earthly Branches. At one point it was used for counting periods of days, then both days and years, and finally only years. The 10 Celestial Stems became correlated with the *wuxing* or 5 phases paired with the *yin-yang* dichotomy. And the 12 Earthly Branches became associated with the 12 lunar months and their animal names. Since it is much more common to hear "I was born in the year of the boar," than "I was born in the year of Yin Wood," we find it appropriate to reprise the history of AWYMTA/AYMTA in the Earthly Branch Shen, The Year of the Monkey, since it was founded 12 years ago in 1992.

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The *AYMTA Journal* is published for members. For information about writing or contributing to the *AYMTA Journal* or Web site contact Don Klein at don@aymta.org. Romanization: The *Journal* romanizes Chinese using Hanyu Pinyin except for proper names and place names where other romanizations are in common use. Submissions may include Pinyin with tone marks and/or Chinese characters in Unicode, Big5, or GBK. Electronic submission of articles and pictures is preferred: [AYMTAJournal@aymta.org](mailto:AYMTAJournal@aymta.org) or [don@aymta.org](mailto:don@aymta.org). Printed articles can be mailed to:

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# 1992-1995

**AWYMTA (The American West Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan Association) was officially created on March 21, 1992.**



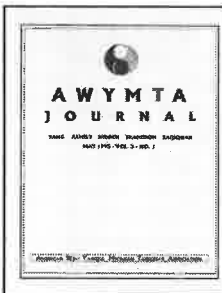
**Volume 1, Number 1 of the AWYMTA Journal had a publishing date of February, 1993.**

The organization members were listed as follows: Founders: Wang Yen-nien, Akai Jong, Julia Fairchild. Honorary President: Wang Yen-nien. President: Akai Jong. Vice Presidents: Michiko Kato, Jonathan Meeske, Harry Wu. Chief Instructor: Akai Jong. Secretary/Treasurer: Sheri Rushing. Board of Directors: Julia Fairchild, Juliet Heizman, Akai Jong, Michiko Kato, George Lin, Jonathan Meeske, Sheri Rushing, Sam Tomarchio, Wang Yen-nien, Harry Wu. Advisors: Caroline Althaus, Gavin Cheng, Luc Defago, Julia Fairchild, Claudy Jeanmougin, Donald Jones, Sabin Metzle, Joseph Morris, Johnson Thomas, Frank Tsao. Articles were contributed by Wang Yen-nien, Akai Jong, Julia Fairchild, Harry Wu, Michiko Kato, Mike Basdavanos, Jonathan Meeske, Robert Politzer, Juliet Heizman, Gavin Cheng, Sam Tomarchio, Sheri Rushing, and Akai Jong. It was 54 pages in length.



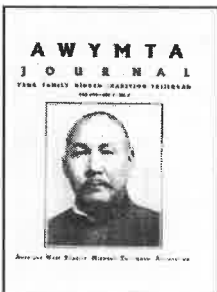
**Volume 2, Number 1 of the AWYMTA Journal had a publishing date of April, 1994.**

The Editor was Wilma Wong, Consulting Editors were Scott Smith and Sam Tomarchio, Design and Layout by Lani Spear and Wilma Wong. The organization members were listed as follows: Founders: Wang Yen-nien, Akai Jong, Julia Fairchild. Honorary President: Wang Yen-nien. Board of Directors: John Cole, James Douglas, Sam Tomarchio, Wilma Wong, Harry Wu. Recording Secretary: Theresa Thomas. Treasurer: Janet Phillips. Advisors: (USA) Gavin Cheng, Donald Jones, Joseph Morris, Johnson Thomas, Frank Tsao. Wei Tsuei. (Taiwan) Caroline Althaus, Julia Fairchild, George Lin. (France) Claudy Jeanmougin, Sabin Metzle. (Switzerland) Luc Defago. Articles were contributed by John Cole, Scott Rodell, George Lin, Mike Basdavanos, Julia Fairchild, Wilma Wong, and Lorna Sutcliff. "Ask Master Wang", first appeared in this issue. It was 32 pages in length.



**Volume 3, Number 1 of the AWYMTA Journal had a publishing date of May, 1995.**

The Editor was Sam Tomarchio, Consulting Editor was Theresa Thomas, Design and Layout by Theresa Thomas and Sam Tomarchio. The organization members were listed as follows: Founders: Wang Yen-nien, Akai Jong, Julia Fairchild. Honorary President: Wang Yen-nien. President: and Sam Tomarchio. Board of Directors: Royal Linden, Sam Tomarchio, Wilma Wong, Harry Wu. Recording Secretary: Theresa Thomas. Advisors: (USA) Gavin Cheng, Donald Jones, Joseph Morris, Johnson Thomas, Frank Tsao. Wei Tsuei. (Taiwan) Caroline Althaus, Julia Fairchild, George Lin. (France) Claudy Jeanmougin, Sabin Metzle. (Switzerland) Luc Defago. Articles were contributed by Wang Yen-nien, Judy Mueller, Theresa Thomas, Sam Tomarchio, Luc Defago, Julia Fairchild. It was 32 pages in length.



**Volume 3, Number 2 of the AWYMTA Journal had a publishing date of Fall, 1995.**

The Editor was Sam Tomarchio, Design and Layout by Theresa Thomas and Sam Tomarchio, Computer Consultant was Royal Linden. The organization members were listed as follows: Founders: Wang Yen-nien, Akai Jong, Julia Fairchild. Honorary President: Wang Yen-nien. President: and Sam Tomarchio. Board of Directors: Royal Linden, Sam Tomarchio, Wilma Wong, Harry Wu. Recording Secretary: Theresa Thomas. Advisors: (USA) Donald Jones, Akai Jong, Joseph Morris. (Taiwan) Julia Fairchild, George Lin. (France) Claudy Jeanmougin, Sabin Metzle. (Switzerland) Luc Defago. Articles were contributed by Sam Tomarchio, Donald C. Jones, Mike Basdavanos, and Theresa Thomas. This issue contained part one of Sam Tomarchio's interview with Wang Yen-nien about his teacher Zhang Qinlin. It was 32 pages in length.



## Congratulations To The American West Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan Association On Its Establishment

by Wang Yen-nien

Translated by Julia Fairchild

Over the last several decades, Taijiquan has become fashionable around the globe. From the start, the spread of Taijiquan has been through individuals; with the number of people studying Taijiquan in various countries on the rise, it becomes necessary to organize into groups to further development and make it possible for students to compare notes and practice with each other.

Some five years ago, students in Europe began establishing associations for Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan and development has been rapid. In America, where land is vast and people many, students should have, early on, fostered growth of this traditional school of Taijiquan by mean of associations.

Luckily, Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan students Akai Jong, Sheri Rushing, Michiko Kato, Jonathan Meeske, George Lin, Juliet Heizman, Sam Tomarchio, Harry Wu, Frank Tsao, Gavin Cheng and others initiated and formed a group: the American West Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan Association (AWYMTA). Finally, after much time and effort, the AWYMTA was officially established on the 21st of March 1992.

I hope each of these students will work enthusiastically to help this association unfold, thereby doing good deeds to benefit all.

I also hope that this influences students of this style on the East Coast, north and south, so that they too will exert their utmost effort and soon be able to set up their own associations.

In the future, students from Asia, North America and Europe will all be able to practice together, learn from each other and investigate ideas together, enabling everyone on this earth to become prosperous and healthy.

I, Wang Yen-nien, have written this article to urge all my students to pull, with one heart, in the same direction and see to it that this association comes into existence without encountering difficulties.

近世太極拳風行全球已經數十年，始終以個體發展。近因學太極拳各國人士大增，為相互觀摩學習，必須成立團體發展，歐洲早已在五年前成立楊家秘傳太極拳協會，發展迅速。美洲地廣人多，早應組織楊家秘傳協會發展。

幸有楊家秘傳太極拳的弟子鍾文凱、鍾俠侶、加滕美智子、米仲武、林景泰、海空雲、陶聖明、吳國錦、曹盛德、程以明等多人發起組織美西楊家秘傳太極拳協會，經多日辛勞，終於在一九九二年三月二十一日正式成立，希望各弟子熱心推展，造福人群，並希望影響美國東海岸南北部本門弟子，也能儘速成立起來，將來亞洲、美洲、歐洲均能相互觀摩研究，使地球上的每一個人皆為幸福健康之人。

師王延年特寫此篇以勉各弟子同心推展，使協會順利成功。

Teacher Wang Yen-nien

November 19, 1992, Taipei

王延年

師王延年

一九九二年十一月十九日於台北

## YMT in Southern California

By Harry Wu  
吳國錦

In January 1990, a Chinese Association—South Pasadena Chinese Club (SPCC)—was established in the city of South Pasadena, a small community in Southern California. There was a group of members who would like to learn Taijiquan. However, they met with two problems: nowhere to find enough money, nor an experienced instructor. Fortunately, Mr. George Lin, also a member of the Board of SPCC, volunteered to take up the responsibility as the instructor to the Taiji Health Class. We the students were so appreciative of his offer. Every Sunday morning, starting at 7:30, we got together at the sport ground in Monterey Hills School to practice Taijiquan under Mr. Lin's instruction.

The average age of the students was above 50 years old. Ninety-nine percent of us were beginners, and, not particularly sporting. So you can see what a difficult job it was for Mr. Lin to work things out with us in the beginning. At the same time, we the students were very patient to follow every stroke, every move of Mr. Lin, who was even more patient than us. The number of students reached to 50, even 60 at a time. In June 1990, the activity came to a climax: Mr. Wang Yen-nien, the master of Taiji in Taipei, arrived in Southern California to teach us in person. He gave us a week's intensive lessons on Taijiquan and Neigong, and both became beneficial to us for the rest of our lives. Even today, we are still pondering over his lessons and trying to grasp the essence of Taiji.

It has been almost three years. Every Sunday morning, be it raining or cold, sometimes even dark, we have never stopped for once. Now Mr. Lin stays longer in Taiwan than in California because of his thriving business. However, every Sunday morning we meet as usual and repeated practice what Mr. Lin has taught us. Many of us have felt and actually became healthier since we started Taiji. We want to thank Mr. Lin for his generous offer that gave us a chance to learn the profound Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan.

Not long ago, the Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan Association established its office in the West Coast. All of us in Southern California were gratified with the news. Such an extraordinary sect of Taijiquan finally landed in America. We believe this Yang Family Hidden Tradition of Taijiquan will soon be flourishing in this country. This is really a blessing for all the Americans.



## The Importance of a Good Teacher

By George (Chintai) Lin

My teacher Wang Yen-nien (now 80 years old) has acted on me and my life, on his students and their lives, as a catalyst in the process of enlightenment by showing us how to develop simultaneously two skills: How to speed up the development of wisdom and how to slow down the aging process.

This conclusion came to me as I read and contemplated this ancient poem found in the Dunhuang Caves in a northwestern province of China:

*Body born; wisdom latent.  
Wisdom revealed; body aged and withered.  
Body hated; wisdom revealed too late.  
Wisdom resented; body too young.  
With body and wisdom never meeting,  
How many times will we be born and die?  
With body and wisdom united,  
Oneness with the universe is discovered.*

The first few lines describe the usual scenario of human beings from birth to death (and rebirth): a baby is born but wisdom, dormant, is not active. With time a person's wisdom is uncovered but usually too late. A body, aged and withered, loses its usefulness.

Here we see the growth of the physical body and the revealing of wisdom (divine mind/heightened awareness) as parallel roads, never meeting and with the physical body of no use to the divine mind.

The last two lines of this poem describe a situation where body and wisdom unite early enough to enable a person to reach for and find oneness with the Way in one lifetime.

The road to oneness with the universe takes physical health. Without physical health, the body does not have the endurance to last the length of time needed. Similarly, without wisdom one's thoughts (and physical body) will not be directed toward this goal.

As Wang Yen-nien's Daoist students in the Gold Mountain School of Internal Alchemy, we learn how to discover or "turn on" wisdom light by consciously focusing on Xuan Guan. We learn how to slow down the aging process by practicing taijiquan and the upper levels of Daoist gongfu, which use "jing," "qi" and "shen" to nourish the internal organs, muscles and ligaments, and the brain and to replenish bone marrow.

Before reading this thought-provoking poem I had not realized quite so consciously that wisdom revealed internally (brighter stronger wisdom light) will eventually express itself on the outside (wiser in our present ways.)

With greater wisdom we are much more likely to choose oneness with the universe as our way of life. Without it, who knows? We may chance upon the right path and then again we may not.

My father studied taijiquan with Master Wang and it was he who first took me (in 1960) to Master Wang's school. I was a sickly adolescent 16-year-old.

After graduating from college (in Taiwan) I went to graduate school (civil engineering, University of Massachusetts, Amherst) in the United States, married, and while working as a structural engineer on a nuclear power plant, moonlighted by teaching the Yang Family Hidden Tradition of Taijiquan in the Boston area. My wife and I eventually moved our family (two daughters, one son) to Los Angeles, where I continued to teach taijiquan, setting up classes at the South Pasadena Chinese American Club.

Over the years I have returned to Taiwan several times. Each time, I would visit Master Wang and ask him for guidance and advice. In the fall of 1987 I asked Master Wang to formally accept me as a sworn student and adept in the Gold Mountain Daoist School of Internal Alchemy. Fortunately, he did not refuse my sincere request.

In 1990, the South Pasadena Chinese American Club organized a taijiquan and Daoist gongfu workshop and I had the pleasure of inviting Master Wang to Los Angeles to instruct us in neigong and Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan. In 1991, I moved back to Taiwan to start a new business and attended the International Taijiquan Teachers Workshop on the Applications of the Yangjia Michuan Style.

Having known Master Wang for more than 30 years, I feel deeply that he is truly a great master of taijiquan and Daoist practices. Knowing that he is well thought of worldwide has not influenced my thoughts.

He not only matches perfectly taijiquan theory with the practice, he has developed this correspondence to the point where "the stove fire for concocting the elixir of life begins to give a pure glow." In other words, he has attained a highly developed and mature level of skill and learning. Humble and kind by nature, he gets along well with his family, students and peers and is comfortable in anyone's company. He possesses a profound understanding of the Way; is extremely proficient in taijiquan and Taoist practices; and has a truly beautiful and distinguished way of being a person.

I lack natural gifts and am not very agile and may not be able to absorb all that Master Wang has and taijiquan classmates to consider as very precious life's opportunities. Seek a teacher who is able to open your wisdom eye and guide you to better health. Avoid the situation described in the above poem: "With body and wisdom never meeting; How many times will we be born and die?" Seize the opportunity to study with a good teacher. Never regret missing the chance.

## Taiji Shan in Big Sur

By Mike Basdavanos

I am stretching toward a sequoia that has become low and looking by now familiar in my mind. I don't attempt to see beyond the tree; its hugeness imposes itself upon the viewer. A step backward and I am looking at what would be the sky if the sequoia were not between me and the heavens. I am just able to view over the top to some far-off point in space that is still connected to the ground by the ancient tree.

Starting a new direction, I skate over the parking lot trying to find root within the subtle shifting of the weight; left foot, right foot, sink and rise, turn and jump, always focusing on the bright red object that is the central character in this blend of movement and intelligence. I uncover a new awareness of the waist, the hand, the leg.

The sun comes and goes, eclipsed by the open fan above my head. The animals are not accustomed to the popping of silk on the bones of wood and even though the tourists are no novelty, these people don't seem to be leaving. They are moving with the speed of dreamers in deep sleep, always about to fall over, but just waking up in time to regain balance and equilibrium.



Again and again they dance the dance of learning, clumsy at one point and full of finesse at another, laughing within and cursing each misstep as if this were the last chance to do it right! Some improvement, slowly the form sets into consciousness like the face of an old friend. Now it is easy to recall the faces of new friends, all linked to some movement of fan and body we move as a group and the momentum is palpable, this is hard work.

Julie's voice is even and clear. The directions are easy but the reality is a stretch and an effort. "Not too bad," says Wang Lao Shi. Translate; do it again a few times until you are sufficiently frustrated to relax and release the hope of ever being able to make these powerful movements real. Now you can make a small rain.

The air is perfect for this kind of practice. I think you sweat but it dries immediately. You are cooled occasionally by the wind from the ocean as it seeps over the coastal mountains. These ancient trees have seen it all, the moving of mountains, crushing of stone into a mixture that geologists are still trying to under-

stand, huge concords floating down the ditches, eagles at roost in eyries above the timber line.

The impression from the land is that things are chaotic, but the changes are the result of millions of years of practice, the land scraping and scraping itself into a huge rock garden nourished by the sweet sea breeze to grow pines and grasses, chaparral and lizard tail, fir and redwood, poppies and wild oats. The smells confuse and overlay as you walk from seaside to mountain top. I wonder at the surprises that different seasons must bring to the dwellers of Big Sur.

I am trying to get the order of the form right once again. As I Split Mount Hua, I am aware the mountains around here split occasionally themselves. During a drive along the coast high-

way, I see a boulder that is 12 feet tall with a split down the middle. The lady who lives across the street at Rancho Rico tells me that the old-timers say the split occurred during the earthquake of 1905. It's comforting to know that the boulder hasn't moved since ... Split Mount Hua! Now, I have an idea of the power that phrase implies.

Everywhere another huge tree...an adult, matured over thousands of years like the Taiji form slowly growing and expressing the same patterns in a larger and larger body. If you look closely at the trees, they all are different, winds and light have called forth changes that make them unique and at the same time alike. Circles of trees. The old tree in the center has been taken by loggers 100 years ago, but five new trunks have grown from the old root. They seem to protect the space the original tree occupied, making it more private and somehow sacred. No one stays in the center; it still belongs to the ghost of the Ancient One.

Perhaps AWYMTA has such a life, a circle of followers connected at the root to a center that cannot be divined or even brought into awareness except by the constant practice of the Michuan form, hidden like the ghost of the ancient tree, informed by the presence of our Teacher Wang Yen-nien. I am unfinished, the fan is wobbling and my attention is at its end ... the trees attract the songbirds for the evening's lullaby.



## Message from the President

The establishment of American West Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan Association (AWYMTA) in March 1992 was based on providing a solid foundation for furthering the growth of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan (YMT) in the United States.

Much of the "blood, sweat and tears" in getting the AWYMTA off the ground and running was due to the dedication and perseverance of our first president, Akai Jong. His continuing efforts to promote YMT led to the rare opportunity for all of us to study with Grandmaster Wang Yen-nien at Big Sur, California, this past September.

The seminars were greeted with great excitement and anticipation. Under the tutelage of Wang Laoshi much was learned. It was a delight to watch Laoshi in action. He taught with a simple elegance. His movements were soft and concise; yet, powerful. But it was his openheartedness, quiet humor, and ability to remain tranquil (even when chaos surrounded him) that was truly inspirational.

In the midst of the action was Julia Fairchild, invaluable as demonstrator, instructor, translator, facilitator and friend. I want to extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation not only for her efforts at the seminars, but also for her continuing aid to the association.

As your new president, I will continue to promote the growth of Yang Family Hidden Tradition Taijiquan. During this transition, it is imperative that we work to keep the enthusiasm building, bring in new members, avoid conflict and competition amongst each other, and continue our practice and study of YMT.

As the first regional association, we look forward to the development of other regional YMT associations—and in time—the unification of these regions into an American national YMTA.

In the words of Wang Laoshi, we must "pull, with one heart, in the same direction."

Sam Tomarchio, AWYMTA President  
April 1994

## Taiji Fan in Hollywood: A Special Performance for David Lynch

By Wilma Wong

During the last week of my three year stay in Taipei, Taiwan, I rushed to complete the Taiji Fan form. I had learned about half from Julia Fairchild and Master Wang's class, but due to a heavy workload, was unable to continue. With the nagging feeling that I might never return to Taiwan, I arranged for Caroline Althaus, another of Wang Laoshi's students, to teach me. The day before I flew home to Los Angeles, I had finally completed all the fan movements.

I had demonstrated the Taiji fan to a friend, Sandra Starr, the director of the James Corcoran Gallery in Santa Monica, California. She invited me to perform for one of her artists, David Lynch.

Since I was an aspiring young filmmaker, I was overwhelmed by the prospect of meeting and demonstrating for Lynch. His credits included the acclaimed films "Eraserhead," "Elephant Man," "Blue Velvet," "Dune," "Wild at Heart," and the television series "Twin Peaks." I admired many of his compelling films for being fantastic, both visually and viscerally. During the many times I had read articles about Lynch, I never doubted that I would meet him; however, I wasn't expecting the moment to arrive through Taiji.

Lynch had been scheduled to hold a question-and-answer session at the Corcoran Gallery. He had arrived early in the afternoon though the talk was at night. Driving in Los Angeles was simply too stressful for him. When I had arrived, he was meditating in one of the rooms in the gallery. All the articles I had read never mentioned he practiced meditation. However, I was not surprised because his films show an inner calm within a land of chaos.

After he completed his meditation practice, he silently entered the room. I barely recognized him. The hair near his forehead stood about two inches tall. His presence was overpowering. I introduced myself and shyly backed away. We talked a little, but he too seemed a bit shy. He acted congenial with a quirky sense of humor, not at all pretentious like so many Hollywood types.

By this time, I had already practiced several times. I felt prepared. My audience of four positioned their seats to get the best view. I slipped off my shoes and felt the strength of the cold concrete under my feet as I walked towards the center of the room. Dressed in black with the red fan in hand, I was in stark contrast to the sterile white gallery walls surrounding me. I poised myself for the performance. I couldn't help but feel energized as though Lynch's art photographs encircled and shielded me.

I moved with ease until the first snap of the fan. The reverberation from the high ceiling room shocked me. Each blast of sound from the snap caused me to blink in surprise but I maintained my composure. My head rang with the poetic names of the moves—*rhinoceros gazes at the moon*, *green dragon explores with its talons*, and so on.

Finally I reached the section learned during my last day in Taiwan. I hadn't practiced the fan enough to have a solid foundation. My mind panicked; my body continued moving. I had no idea where I was. In an enlightening moment, I realized all of this didn't matter. I wasn't performing for judges who knew every move. They didn't know what I was supposed to be doing, so I improvised my way back to the move draw and empty and finished from there. When I completed the form, I was facing the wrong direction and totally disoriented, but was relieved to be done.

Actually, performing wasn't the difficult part. The frightening moment came when I tried to explain YMT to Lynch. My mind raced at a hundred miles a minute jumping from one idea to another. I was not blessed with the gift of storytelling and, in the end, I gave him a discombobulated explanation of everything and anything that mind and mouth could muster.

Do I feel bad about this experience? Not at all. I performed to the best of my ability for a man I highly respect. The setting was idyllic and performing for Lynch was truly an honor. I view this experience as one of the perfect moments in my life, a point in time for pure joy and a glimpse of enlightenment. Life doesn't offer too many perfect moments.

# The Search for Zhang Qinlin: Wang Yen-nien Returns to China After 44 Years

By Julia Fairchild

Huang Hua Gang Park, Guangzhou—June 20, 1993



Members of the Taipei City Taijiquan Association Tour to Mainland China.

## TRIP'S PURPOSE

In the summer of 1993, Master Wang organized a trip to China with a party of 15 for two purposes: to meet with the family and students of his teacher Zhang Qinlin and to pay his respects to Li Yunlong, the man instrumental in locating Zhang Qinlin's family.

## ZHANG QINLIN'S STORY

Zhang Qinlin, born in the year of the rat, taught Master Wang the Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan and Tuishou. Zhang, originally from Hebei Province, lived in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, for a long period. Everyone in the Chinese martial arts world knew that in the north there was Zhang Qinlin and in the south there was Wan Laisheng. Wan, however, dared not to venture north for 20 years after he had been defeated by Zhang. According to many of the "older" martial artists in China, after the Cultural Revolution, the "younger" martial artists never even knew of Zhang Qinlin nor the story about how Zhang Qinlin defeated Wan. That story has been recorded in Wang Yen-nien's book, *The Yang Family Hidden Tradition of Taijiquan, Illustrated and Explained*.

## LI YUNLONG'S INITIAL CORRESPONDENCE

Li Yunlong, the "older brother" of Wang Yen-nien, had studied 81 Step TJQ and Tuishou with Zhang Qinlin and was especially famous for his Xingyi. He had seen an article with a picture of Master Wang in an old taijiquan magazine. He wrote to the address of the defunct organization, but miraculously the Taiwan postal service forwarded the letter to the National T'ai Chi Ch'uan Association, where Master Wang presided as president.

## THE SEARCH

Their correspondence began a long search for a picture of Zhang Qinlin, which nobody seemed to have. Master Wang had asked Li Yunlong to help him contact Zhang's students and relatives. Zhang had only a handful of students, many of them coming from non-taijiquan backgrounds to study his famous tuishou techniques.

Of the people visited in China, two had been Zhang's students: Li Fuyuan, who studied 81 Step TJQ and Tuishou with Zhang sometime after the cultural revolution, making him Master Wang's "younger brother" and Pu Bingru, who studied 81 Step TJQ and

Tuishou with Zhang in the early days of his career in Shanghai, making her Master Wang's "older sister."

While Master Wang had never met or heard of Li Fuyuan until just a year or two ago, he had heard Zhang Qinlin talk frequently of "Old Man Pu," Pu Bingru's father. Old Man Pu, a high-ranking civil servant, was a great patron of the arts and the martial arts, supporting talented young people. Zhang Qinlin, then a student of Yang Chengfu's, caught his eye. Old Man Pu invited him to teach TJQ and Tuishou to his only daughter, Pu Bingru, originally a vowed student of Yang Chengfu. Pu Bingru became a famous martial artist in her own right in Shanghai during the 1950's and 60's. Neither student had a photograph.

## LI YUNLONG'S FAILING HEALTH

During the past six or seven years of occasional correspondence, Li Yunlong was no longer able to speak or write well due to a stroke. His senior student, Zhang Zhang, [studied 81 Step TJQ and Tuishou, also a Qigong

Train Station in Zhangjiakou, Hebei Province—June 1993

teacher and disciple in the Dragon Door School of Daoism] kept up the correspondence and the search. In 1992, Li Yunlong's students gave their teacher an 81st birthday party. Since Master Wang had previous engagements to teach workshops in Europe, he was unable to attend. He did, however, send a birthday gift with his representative, Zhao Xianmin, who knew Li Yunlong and his students well.



Li Jincai, Wang Yen-nien, Li Fuyuan, Li-Baoyu (L to R) meet for the first time.

Pu Bingru's home in Shanghai—July 7, 1993



Wang Yen-nien (front row, right) visits his "older sister" Pu Bingru (front row, middle). Pu Bingru, also known as Pu Yu, is 87.

## LI YUNLONG'S DEATH

Unfortunately, we arrived one year too late to meet the man with whom Laoshi had been corresponding for several years and without whom this trip to China may not have happened. Li Yunlong died in the summer of 1992, not long after his birthday party.

During the trip, Master Wang gave lectures and demonstrations hosted by the students of Li Yunlong at the "Taijiquan Comparing Notes and Demonstration Sessions" held in two different locations.

Li Yunlong's Grave—Baotou, Inner Mongolia—June 21, 1993



Li Yunlong's 2<sup>nd</sup> son, Li Fugui, is standing in back, left of the gravestone with members of the Taipei City TJQ Association.

### END OF THE SEARCH

The saga ended when Master Wang with the help of Li Guolu, senior student of Li Yunlong's, reunited him with Zhang Zhirou, Zhang Qinlin's daughter. She and Master Wang recognized each other immediately. Tears formed in everyone's eyes as the entire village plus all of Li Guolu's Shijiazhuang xingyi students gathered around.

Born in the year of the tiger, Zhang Zhirou, 58, is an only child; however, Zhang Qinlin had adopted a son, but no one knows his whereabouts. She remembers the first and second duans but has forgotten the third duan. Zhang Zhirou's husband died young and after her mother died in 1963, she and her father had to raise her two daughters and three sons alone. Her mother also taught Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan to help the family when times were tough. Her father died in 1976. She lives in a rural farming community with

her sons and their families, while her daughters live with their husbands. She was too poor to send her children to school. Upon leaving, the Taipei City Taijiquan Association members presented Zhang Zhirou with US\$500 to be divided equally amongst her five children and Master Wang presented Zhang Zhirou with US\$500 for herself. In return, Zhang Zhirou presented Master Wang with the only photograph she had of her father—a faded and torn 1" x 1" tiny black and white photograph—the only photo of him that had not been burned during the Cultural Revolution.

*Writer's note: I hope that all of my fellow teachers and taijiquan friends forgive me for not writing in more detail. I have found just putting together this short photo essay a rewarding but arduous task and I am afraid there are a few mistakes. I dare to write this article only in the hope it may encourage others to research further what little is presented here.*

*Editor's note: Ironically and unfortunately, the long-sought after photo of Zhang Qinlin could not be located for this article. However, it will be included in the upcoming book by Master Wang.*

Zhang Zhirou's Farmhouse—Shijia Zhuang, the capitol of Hebei Province—June 30, 1993



The Taipei City TJQ Association visits Zhang Qinlin's daughter, Zhang Zhirou (front row, fourth from left).

## Liu Zhiliang

By Wang Yen-nien

In Chapter Three of the Chinese language medical annals *Zhonghua Tuina Yi Xue Zhi· Shou Fa Yuan Liu* (The Chinese Massage Medical Science Annals: The Origins of Hand Massage) edited by Luo Jinghong and first published in China in 1987, there is a short description of the life of my third oldest martial-art brother Liu Zhiliang.

Dr. Liu Zhiliang (1893-1977) was born in Hunyuan County, Shanxi Province. As a young boy seeking martial-art instruction in his hometown, he learned and practiced the martial art Tantui (springy leg).

In 1909 he was installed as an acting officer in Dr. Sun Yi Xian's [Sun Yat-sen] presidential compound. Later, he went to study at a military academy in Japan where he remained for six years.

When he returned to China he fell seriously ill and the many attempts to cure his illness had no effect. Finally a friend introduced him to Zhang Qinlin, who formally accepted him as a vowed student and he learned Wudang Daoist methods of Neigong (including techniques for moving, standing, sitting and lying-down positions). He gradually began to recover from his illness. He decided to give up the military and take up medicine instead.

While studying medicine, he continued his practice of Neigong. For many years he not only studied books on classical Chinese medicine, he also often consulted with famous doctors, including Cheng Tanan and Tu Zhiyou. He learned much from them and his skills steadily improved.

After China's War of Liberation (1945 - 1949), he joined the Henan Chinese Medical College and established a department specializing in Qigong and Tuina.

During the Cultural Revolution (1966- 1976), he was mentally humiliated and physically destroyed and died of unknown illness in 1977.

*NOTE: In addition to studying Neigong with Zhang Qinlin, Liu Zhiliang studied Taijiquan and Tuishou with Zhang as well. I take this opportunity to state this fact and emphasize that Liu Zhiliang is truly one of this school's "greats." WYN*

## Push Hands Reflections

By Judy Mueller

Push hands is a way of becoming conscious of yourself in relation to others. Oddly enough it resembles psychotherapy in the way it is a microcosm of how one deals with life. In psychotherapy, however, someone else gives you the feedback of your actions to them. Push hands requires you to become conscious yourself by constant practice, developing sensitivity and listening skills on the physical level. Some of the areas I have become conscious of:

1. *When I learn a new move I feel I won't grasp it as well as my partner does.*

How is this a microcosm of my life? Ha! Take a look at my relationships.

2. *When I know (or think I know) a move really well, and my partner doesn't know it, I feel compelled to show him how it is done.*

How does this relate to my life? Same answer as above.

3. *Sometimes when I'm pushing hands with one partner and noticing how well I'm doing I get a new partner and totally wash out.*

I am more in tune with one partner than with another. What, I ask myself, can I learn about myself from this phenomenon? Push hands forces me to understand in a very physical way (a way somehow less threatening than words, which can be so judgmental) how aggressive I am with this one and how fearful I am of that one or of that move or of being hit, etc. It forces me to see who I am in these different situations with these different people in these various moves. So little by little I know myself better: with this one I play; with that one I tease; with the other one I am a serious student; with another, an aggressor; or a perfect model; or a practical joker, etc., just as I am in life.

4. *I have begun to be more aware of my partner and learn to "sense" her moves: when she is going to push me and when she is vulnerable to my push.*

This is crucial in push hands and isn't it in life? Isn't that really what relationships are about? Learning to listen to your partner is an art to be practiced. Is this a good time to tell him I'm going to do "x"? Or, I see he is beginning to step over my boundaries so I will deflect by doing or saying "y."

5. *Push hands is to taijiquan what psychodrama is to psychotherapy.*

It is happening now, in the moment when you have the power to see, experience, become aware and transform all in one moment. As this happens, whether you intend it or not, you transform on every level. The next time it happens on an emotional level you will begin to notice the changes in yourself because of that transformation on the physical level in push hands.

6. *When you try to force something to happen in push hands, you will fail because then you won't be able to respond to what is actually there.*

Oh, how true this is in my life, I'm beginning to understand. I am beginning to realize that as in push hands mental wishes and

pictures of what should happen stop me from being present in the moment to what is happening and I've landed on my butt (derrière, seat, whatever) every time in push hands and especially in life. By becoming more aware of this phenomenon in push hands this helps me notice it in my relationships.

7. *I'm learning about resistance in push hands and how vulnerable that makes me to being pushed!*

The idea in push hands is to deflect the partner's push by melting away, by being soft, by helping him to go in the direction he wants to go without setting in his way. This is called deflecting. How does this relate to my life? Well, I know that if I stiffen up when confronted I will have a huge mess on my hands. Also, if I avoid by ducking or running, I will have to face it the next time or things will pile up. But if I help my partner get what he wants, if I step out of the way and let him get it—I'll see if this works—it certainly is a softer way. It takes a little more thought and flexibility, a little more skill than saying, "No, I won't do it," and be stubborn, or say, "Yes," just to appease him, both of which work for a short time but build up resentment long term. So I think I'll try this more skillful way and see what it means in my relationships.

8. *Not far removed from that concept is the idea of being centered and rooted.*

It is relatively clear what that means in push hands. What does it mean in my life or my relationships? Ever since I can remember, I have noticed how vulnerable I am to being "taken over" in relationships. That is to say I easily go along with someone else's ideas or a partner's way of life. I keep on doing this, thinking I am pleasing them (and I'm probably right) or just because it's easier, until one day I wake up to the fact that I suddenly hate my life, my partner, my friends or whatever or whoever, and that's the end of the relationship. I see that I did not stay in the center of my being, stay true to myself and rooted in my own self so eventually the relationship falls over.

*Note: Judy Mueller passed away August 30, 2003 at age 74. A marriage counselor and psychotherapist, she began her taiji studies in 1980 and studied push-hands for three months in 1995 with Wang Laoshi and Julia Fairchild in Taiwan.*

Grounded energy,  
quieted mind, rooted soul  
Spring nimbly in life



Haiku: Jan Phillips, Illustration: Holly Leavy

## Neigong Notes from Big Sur

By Theresa L. Thomas

*These notes are merely a transcription of the handwritten notes I took at the Big Sur workshop, for the benefit of the membership. You will notice that in many places no effort has been made to correct sentence structure or even to complete a thought. Presenting the notes in this rough form is intended to preserve the flavor of Master Wang talking with Julia Fairchild translating and interpreting, and also to jog the memory of those in attendance in a way that could be helpful. I will be very happy to receive corrections or additions from others who were in attendance at the seminar, or who have attended other Neigong workshops given by Master Wang.*

Neigong is the art of how to circulate, cultivate and nourish qi. It involves prenatal breathing, which originally was not learned, but instinctively known.

Neigong is not just breathing, but the movements inside, with mind and intention and energy channels. In Neigong we are working on:

1. Birth: forever living, finding the eternal self.
2. Aging: never age; don't know the meaning of old; forget the idea of aging.
3. Sickness: don't accept the idea of illness; it is not you, even if it is the body.
4. Death: You don't die even if the body floats away; crystallize out the real self which is indestructible.
5. Bitterness (in life): You have no idea what this means; no fear of deprivation or hunger in life.

If one achieves these, one achieves immortality.

What is it you eat? Five elements

They are needed to work on this special kind of transformed qi, these five kinds (five elements). Four seasons and five kinds of transformed qi:

- |           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| 1. Spring | wood qi  |
| 2. Summer | fire qi  |
| 3. Autumn | metal qi |
| 4. Winter | water qi |

*Earth* comes in between each of the seasons. Each season is 90 days. Take out 18 days for earth qi time (4 x 18 = 72). Then each of the seasons is equal.

How do we distill transformed qi from ordinary air qi?

The first step involves the upper cavity (third eye). Refer to diagram #1. Baihui is like an antenna to bring in signals and energy from the heavens. We need to absorb energy from heaven and earth. Baihui is major place in body. Notice I never wear a hat. Covering the head affects reception. Inhale and exhale are used to help you absorb this energy. If you don't wear a hat, you won't catch a cold.

*Niwan* is located in the brain area inward from the Upper Dantian and down from Baihui. It is a potential that is usually not tapped. We need to use it. When jing or essence is full, Niwan begins to hatch. Once it becomes this qi-body crystallized at Niwan, this is the source of bone marrow and adds to it. Bring jing and qi up to this area and begin nourishing and replenish bone marrow cells. The Chinese view is that the rib bones give you starter cells for blood. This is the place where the internal pill is born, the womb of the head. Immortal fetuses are born here in the top of the head.

*Xuan Guan*—Upper Dantian. Between the two eyebrows, feel sensation if bring finger in with eyes closed. You can feel a

flattened space. Many ancient religions also pay attention to this space [think about icons]. Knowing this point, if you are able to activate it, you will be successful in your practice. Why is it called Xuan Guan In Japan, enter home and that area has same name: mysterious gate. It symbolizes entering the door. Same idea here. Relates to hormonal system and sexual energy. Also relates to your wishes, home of your *intent*, also includes one's natural abilities. This is *the* master field of the body; it can lead the rest in their activities.

These three, Baihui, Niwan, Xuan Guan, are key.

Middle Dantian: the area around the sternum. You can feel a soft bone. *Fang cun*. One square inch. Huge Tao can be found within one square inch. Connection between upper and middle dantian very great. To think about something, must alternate between heart and mind. They are mutually dependent and work together. Once you find this place you don't need a teacher, everything you need is here.

Poem

*Everyone has a Ling Mountain Pagoda inside them.*

*What do we mean?*

*You will notice that from middle dantian to ... is windpipe [voicebox, trachea].*

*Lingshan Pagoda (12 story tower)*

*Buddha is at bottom of tower practicing*

*(Where we should cultivate ourselves is here at the base of the tower.)*

*Where could this pagoda be?*

*(Could be as far as 10, 000 miles*

*But if you want to see how close it could be,*

*It could be as near as one square inch.*

*Close eyes, nourish body*

*(Heart area needs to be quiet)*

*As soon as heart starts to gallop away, have trouble*

*As soon as mind is off in a tree, trouble.*

*These two areas need to be tranquil and quiet.*

*Huang Di Nei Jing* talks about these places in the body. Do not focus mind or intent here; this would be wrong. Signals from above and below are [redirected] here, sent where they need to go.

*Zhong Xia* Dantian the principal dantian. Located 1.2 inches below the navel and 1.2 inches inward, it is the furnace where ordinary qi is converted to transformed qi. Ordinary wine compares to ordinary qi; once distilled it becomes cognac. Very different. Inhale air to this place, passing through the other areas first. The changed qi can be used for nourishing the body. Without this process, inhaled air is just used for maintaining the body, not for nourishing it.

The lower dantian, *Xuan Pin*, has the function of collecting and concentrating the qi being drawn downward to keep it from dis-

persing. It also helps to send it to Guan Yuan (which corresponds to Niwan in the head). It is located 3.6 inches below the navel. The lower dantian is closely connected to the principal dantian and Guan Yuan. When it passes through Guan Yuan, the qi moving upward will go to Niwan [?]. When it passes Guan Yuan it has changed, become pure and clear. Necessary to know where these places are (gesturing to Niwan and Guan Yuan).

*Hua Yin*: Its function is to absorb energy from earth; corresponds to Bai Hui in the head. In breathing, drawing up and squeezing, or relaxing, brings up energy from earth. Greater ability when in contact with earth (sitting). The qi moving down from the heavens is yin; earth is yin but energy moving up from it is yang and can be absorbed at this point.

*Bai Hui*. Inside the head is a plate (heavenly plate) and around edge are 10 heavenly stems. Energy from heavens goes through 10 stems directly to the *zangfu*, six solid and five empty organs. Energy coming from earth goes through 12 earthly branches, also like a plate (earthly plate). This energy goes to skin, bones, muscles, ligaments, etc.

When sitting in meditation, the closer you can get to ground to get the energy, the better. If too far away, energy not as strong.

Need to know these eight places and their functions to practice internal alchemy.

Eight pillars and four beams needed to build a house. These are the eight pillars.

First step: Fix mind on upper cavity.

Step 2: Working on microcosmic and macrocosmic orbits after Step one is firmly established.

(Fire) *Xing* has to do with spirit and naturally occurring body essences. It has to do with wisdom and higher consciousness.

(Water) *Ming* has to do with qi [?], strength of body.

When these are combined... Should be true water and true fire. This type of gongfu is water and fire gongfu. In the first of three diagrams, fire is not good for the body, dangerous. How to make these pure and to get them in the right configuration. (First diagram, yin and yang separate: messy fire (*li*) and muddy water (*kan*)).

Refining the fire and water: draw from *kan* and fill up *li*, once purified, body begins to change and we begin to work on microcosmic and macrocosmic orbits. Still not enough to change configuration. Need to invert *chien* and *kan* to reach proper configuration so yin and yang can meet. The stronger the gongfu the hotter the fire; the more plentiful the water, the more steam is created and you can create the immortal pill. (Step 3.)

Diagram 3: working on immortal pill.

The practice for men concentrates on semen (tame the white tiger). The practice for women concentrates on blood (slay the dragon). Very separate and distinct practices.

*Ming* refers to everything we find in the dantian, mostly qi. If you maintain fullness of qi in the dantian, long life (for women, qi and blood). *Xing* and *ming* cannot leave each other; they are very closely related.

Fix on the upper cavity for 100 days; then should have sensation that things have changed. Need perseverance, despite feet falling asleep, sore back, legs, etc.

*NEIGONG Notes from Big Sur Part 2 how to fix on the upper cavity and discussion the microcosmic orbit*

*A continuation transcribing handwritten notes from the workshop at Big Sur.*

Fixing on the Upper Cavity & Its Practice

This is the fundamental step. Pay attention: When we are sitting and circulating qi or practicing gongfu, it may be daytime or evening. 1 to 3 or 5 to 7 zi-wu. 11 PM to 1 AM is Zi period; 1 AM to 1 PM is Wu period. The moon or sun is at its height and qi to be absorbed is great, so easier to absorb, especially evenings 11 to 1, because this is first inkling of yang. Yin finally has changed from yin to yang and is decreasing. We prefer to choose these special times.

Daytime practice is fine too. Find a place: very few people, a quiet and tranquil area.

[Night meditation?] What dangers are lurking? Sometimes after reaching higher levels of gongfu, "ghosts" will come to get you to disturb you from your practice and rob you of some of your qi. They want to become human-like and cultivate their eternal selves. Exist or not? Don't know, but be prepared, with hand movement shown. In earlier societies, Chinese believed white crane and deer could become immortal. Foxes too. They had their own methods of working on immortal pill. It takes them longer than humans, even thousands of years before they can take human shape and use the human body as a vehicle to find that immortal self. They like to absorb human energy to help their own practice.

The Comforting Secret, also the Zi-wu or the Midnight-Noon hand position gives you an inner strength that radiates out in a circle about 50 feet, 16-17 meters.

Repeat the Great Bright six-syllable mantra three times, at a relaxed rapid pace.

This is how to begin, especially during the 11 PM to 1 AM period, for fixing on the upper cavity and also micro and macro orbits. This period is important because things that ordinarily don't come out, some beneficial and some not, come out then, so it strengthens you.

TO GET READY. Sitting: Follow these steps *before* beginning.

1. Get into a comfortable position, stable, and centered
2. Calm the heart and mind. Be sure they are tranquil and calm. Get rid of all extraneous thoughts. Then effectiveness of sitting is much greater.
3. Regulate breathing. Start fast and slow down, breath by breath. Don't start by forcing yourself to be very slow or you will soon run out of breath and will speed up. Start with a pattern you can maintain for a long time. Good: One complete breath (inhale and exhale) in 10 seconds. Inhale and exhale should be even and equal. Inhale through nose; exhale through mouth, six breaths per minute, then four, then, gradually, down to one per minute. **DON'T USE FORCE.** Work on this slowly over a long period of time.

NOW you can focus on the upper cavity. First exhale, then begin. On inhale, use the nose. As air moves in, intent should be at Xuan Guan. This activates Baihui. Sensations: drawing inward of eyes toward this point (a little anxiety-tension there). At the crown, you should feel an empty space or pressure inward; this should happen on inhale. Imagine you are sucking energy down from heaven. In the beginning you may not really feel it, but when really focused, Baihui should have some sensa-

tion like all nerve endings meeting there, pouring inward, not going out. Sometimes it feels like cold air or wind coming in through Baihui; sometimes like a flood or hurricane coming in and Master Wang can't stop it. Don't be afraid. The body needs it; when full it will naturally stop and you will exhale. Eventually it will become more sensitive; beginners often don't feel it.

Then put intent at Niwan; pouring down from heaven energy meets inhaled air and *for men* goes down the front of the body—Ren Mai, passes through the throat (12 story pagoda) to sternum area to lower dantien and then when collected in lower dantien, a flip needs to be made. It curls around and moves inward to the principal dantien and passes by principal dantien.

During inhale, anus is relaxed and open (the yin mai meridian, that is). Then begin exhale, absorbing energy from earth (three treasures: water, fire and wind). Squeeze anus area closed, lift up on yin meridian and as soon as you lift up, this will boost the qi upward (special qi from earth) from Huiyin to Guan Yuan right back up the same path it followed down but not circling around the distillation period to Niwan where it forks, part going back to heavens through top of head and part out through the nose. This is major step for regulating breath.

*For women*, just the opposite in that inhaled air through nostrils passes up to Baihui then to Jade Hill on back of head and down the back (through Du Mai down and around coccyx (tail bone) up to lower Dantien; qi makes upward flip around distillation chamber then down to Huiyin (through Guan Yuan). When it moves upward the qi has become yang. Lead the qi with intent; wherever you put the mind that's where the qi will be.

Front of woman's body is yang so qi does what is natural, but for men the flip is more difficult, so the breathing should not be too fast. Add the 11-1 hand loop and just concentrate on making these flips all on the inhale. Once the qi has been tipped over and made the turn, sent it right back down to Guan Yin and Hui Yin.

Xuan Guan: master of other *fields* and gates in body which obey its will.

Yin Mai - master *channel* for other channels in body. In our body all these channels cannot be activated without movement of Yin Mai. Where is it? From Guan Yuan to Hui Yin. As soon as this spring starts to move, all part of body move.

To begin, focus *all* attention on Xuan Guan and feel eyes drawn toward that point. Think about looking inward (two ways: turn toward center line of body, cross eyes, or look outward; look inward (cross eyes) is better and think about looking at back of head. This activates the area to see wisdom light. This also gets rid of extraneous thoughts. After awhile, see field of light—wisdom light, first maybe mix of colors, later pure white gold light.

Women inhale down back, flip around principal dantien and go back up the back, because we are just working with the nose. Working this way is prime preparation for microcosmic orbit.

*Vol. 4 No. 1 of the Journal was supposed to contain the conclusion of Theresa's notes from the Big Sur Neigong Workshop, with Master Wang's discussion of the microcosmic orbit, but it was not included.*



## A Short History of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan in the United States

By Donald C. Jones

### How Did I Get Into This?

I began studying taiji in May of 1970, and before that, I was a run-of-the-mill karate student. My teacher was a Chinese man who was a short-term student of Teacher Wang Yen-nien [ed: Huo Chi-Kwang]. Though he studied our style from Teacher Wang, and I believe he also studied parts of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan from a student of Teacher Wang's, he never credited Teacher Wang as being his instructor. He also studied with the now deceased Mr. Lu Hongbin.

### I Finally Get the Real Thing!

I ceased to study with my original teacher and began to study with Mr. Joseph Morris in 1979, sometime after his return from Taiwan. After being accepted as a student in Teacher Wang's school, Joe took up temporary residence in Taiwan, in order to study. His instruction started in early 1975, and in the course of his studies there, he became a vowed and, eventually, a certificated taijiquan student of Teacher Wang Yen-nien. During this time, Joe Morris studied directly under Teacher Wang and is therefore a fifth generation student. There he learned the Thirteen Postures, the three sections (duans) of the Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan form, and various traditional weapons forms, including the taiji sword. I might mention that he also learned the rudiments of meditation from Teacher Wang, which he also taught to me. He left Taiwan in March of 1979 to return to the United States.

It is my belief that when he began teaching, in 1979, Joe Morris was the first person to openly teach Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan in the United States to non-Oriental people. Even though my first instructor attempted to teach this form, he was actually teaching a highly modified form of the Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan form. I don't know if he modified the form because he couldn't remember, or do it correctly and didn't know any better, or if he was attempting to distort it so that it could not be used as a martial art. Another theory is that this distorted form is actually a combination of our style with the forms learned from Mr. Lu Hongbin. My initial instructions with Joe Morris were devoted to relearning everything that I had been taught in order to eradicate the errors which I had been taught and to make this taiji form into a viable martial art.

### The Decision to Invite Teacher Wang.

In late 1982, being aware of the great amount of misrepresentation taking place relative to taiji, my teacher Joe Morris, decided to bring his teacher here in order that others could see the "real thing." At the time of this decision, I was among a small group of students that he was teaching. One student, who soon after dropped out, helped make both plans and commitments regarding what needed to be done to bring Teacher Wang here. Since Teacher Wang had never been to America before, we thought that the chance of getting him to accept our invitation was rather small.

As Joe's wife at that time was Taiwanese, she was able to write the initial letter of invitation in Chinese. To our surprise, the invitation was accepted. Teacher Wang also indicated that one of his current students, a Miss Julia Fairchild, an American national, would act as translator for all future communications and proceedings. Once it was clear that Teacher Wang would actually be coming, it was decided that serious planning needed to take place. Money for the venture was put up by Joe, another student, Mr. Robin Lindheimer and myself. Since I had some computer skills, I generated a spreadsheet for the event in order to track any incoming monies and any expenditures. A student of Teacher Wang's, a Mr. Robert Politzer who lived in the greater Chicago metropolitan area, was given Joe's telephone number. As they both were students of the same teacher, they were considered classmates.

After Robert made contact, he came to Joe's classes in order to work out with us. I believe that he was on hand during the process of planning, and that he also, to the best of my memory, did assist Joe with some of the events related to Teacher Wang's visit here.

### Teacher Wang Comes to the U.S. for the First Time

In the summer of 1984, we succeeded in bringing Teacher Wang to the United States for the very first time. He gave a demonstration at the Americana Congress Hotel in Chicago on 19 August 1984. He also gave classes in pushing hands at the Njia Institute, then also in Chicago.

The events of that summer of 1984 were to later change my life. During a pushing hands class session, I asked Teacher Wang about the importance of meditation. I asked this question because my teacher, Joe Morris insisted that we first meditate before attempting to do anything else. He did this as this was the way in which he had been taught by Teacher Wang. My question was answered, but it was clear that he really did not want to discuss the question in any depth and he did not wish to teach us any meditation at that time. In fact, I thought that I would never learn anything more on the subject from Teacher Wang, but I was wrong.

### It Was All Fated.

After spending about a month and a half in Chicago in the home of Joe Morris, Teacher Wang visited the East Coast of the United States. It was at that time that he attended an open house at the school of Mr. Robert Smith. Attending that event were Messrs. Johnson Thomas and Scott Rodell. Both were martial artists who had never met Teacher Wang before. This initial contact led Scott to eventually travel to Taiwan in order to invite Teacher Wang to travel here again, but this time he was to talk on the Dao. He was to give a seminar on Daoist meditation/neigong. This event took place in the spring of 1986. I traveled to the East Coast for the first time ever, in order to attend, and during that time I shared an apartment with Robert Politzer. It was at that time that Johnson Thomas, Robert Politzer, Scott Rodell and I, among others, were initiated into Teacher Wang's Daoist school. Teacher Wang later formed the American Daoist School, XIAN ZONG JINSHAN PAI JINDAN DAO XIU DAOYUAN (literally, The Immortal Ancestor Gold Mountain Daoist School of the Jindan Method Sanctuary). For the sake of simplicity, we call ourselves, the Jinshan Daoist School. After that fateful event, things really started to develop, and I might say that the rest is history.

### AWYMTA is Formed

Not too long after the birth of JDS, my Daoist brother, Mr. Akai Jong formed and established the American West Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan Association for the perpetuation of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan. It was also in Taiwan that my teacher, Joe Morris, first met Akai. There, as classmates, they became good friends. I personally approve of what AWYMTA is doing to perpetuate Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan, and I am very pleased with the efforts of the current president, Mr. Sam Tomarchio. I feel that we can do a great deal to educate the public regarding our chosen style of taijiquan, which differs dramatically from those forms which are most often demonstrated and taught throughout the world. I feel that there is a place for our style in the panoply of styles and forms that currently proliferate. I feel that we are in possession of a fine form that has a great potential for both healing and improving the quality of the lives of many people. I feel that we have a significant gift in our hands, and it is incumbent on us to share it appropriately. It is both an honor and a pleasure to be associated with such a fine organization and with so many excellent individuals.

*Edited with permission of the author for length.*



## Strasbourg 1995 First International Yang Family Michuan Taijiquan Festival

By Mike Basdavanos

"Goodbye, *wie geht's, bonjour!*" It happened almost that quickly as the train from Frankfurt carried us past the most sophisticated graffiti art and through one quaint German village after another toward Strasbourg, and our final destination on the Rhine. Fortunately, Colette's German was enough to get us on the right train in the midst of jet lag, sleepless flying and delays in New York, and deposit us in the flowerfull Alsatian city of Strasbourg, France on a quiet Saturday afternoon. The last quiet afternoon for a week to come...

The Alsatian Brass Band played with gusto as the opening ceremony took place with formal greetings and the "fraternite" of many guests from far lands coming together. The first International YMT Festival was off to a surprising and positive start.

Earlier that afternoon we had met Sam Tomarchio, Jillian Albert, and Alfredo the Russian with his group in the snack bar, and with the help of Marc Gibert made our way through Strasbourg to see the city with a timely visit to the Horloge Astronomique and a breath testing climb up the stone steps of the Cathedral where Victor Hugo and Goethe came to ruminate.

Morning practice: Basic Exercises. Over the next few mornings I became the breakfast stop for the small black flies that must be the relatives of the ones that inhabit Vermont and prefer Taiji players because of the slow and lazy targets they offer. I came to love the smell of citronella which was the only thing that stood between me and a transfusion.

The matin bells of the surrounding churches were replaced by the Xi-hos of Taijiquan enthusiasts. The breath gets longer, the stretch lower, the back more tucked under. (how many Tigers can you carry to the Mountain?).

Again, under the large trees we meet to perform the fan dance, stopping the curious who stare with the forgetfulness of children and the appreciative knowing of people who still practice sword fighting as a national sport (*touché*). Right around the corner I see a couple dressed in white with wire masks and fencing foils to remind me that we are not so unusual in this land of ancient traditions.

Instructions in three languages, pick your translation, teachers from half a dozen countries, a range of experience that covers 25 years of study with Wang Laoshi. The details of application are expressed and embellished by people who urgently pass this skill to those assembled. At times you know more than is said and at others you have the revelation with those around you of a pattern of movements that has threaded its way through centuries to reach you and provide a tool to experience changes in the mind, the world and the body, wearing down the entropy of emotions and replacing it with the fullness of energy-giving breath and movement.

The energy overflows and during the next six days there will be more dancing—taijiquan and otherwise—than I have seen for several years.

Tuesday morning, the flies are still feasting, they are a real distraction but I look over at Henri Mouthon to see blood running down his arms and notice that the festival T-shirt has an oracular blood red line of printing dripping down the Taiji symbol.

Other things are starting to happen. People are rising extra early to practice with each other and lots of coaching is going on. This is the best thing that happens, the connection and exchange between people

practicing in the Michuan Tradition. Surely there is much to gain from these festivals and making an effort to attend events like these brings rewards to students that teachers should consider well.

There is a newness in each person's communication style that focuses attention and may broaden understanding in a way not possible with your regular teacher. This is particularly important in our study because Chinese can have so many meanings and nuances that need to be questioned and understood. Sometimes a perceived lack of understanding is answered in a surprising way among group members. Encouragement comes from many voices and technique can be tested with new partners to validate your learning. Over and over these things occur as people focus on absorption and Wang Laoshi makes sure to push the learning forward, always seeming to show up at the time when some point needs to be clarified. One has the feeling of being watched over during these workshops. A feeling that time has somehow expanded to accommodate everything that is scheduled to happen.

When, on Wednesday afternoon, we perform together for the public and the press, the representative of the City of Strasbourg, Monsieur Baumgartner would remark that he thought politicians could gain tremendously from practicing the slow relaxed movements he observed. Little does he know that his introduction into the Michuan Tradition is only an hour away. His was not the only surprise that afternoon. We weren't expecting a concert of Gong and Saxophone music dedicated to the festival by some of Christian Bernapel's talented students. One after another the groups performed, and on a spongy judo mat, central equilibrium takes on a whole new meaning. American, Belgian, British, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Taiwanese, and Taijiquan the fabric weaving in a tapestry of Martial and Mental Art. Doctor, artist, technician, troubadour, mother, father, teacher and a hundred other roles laid aside to practice together. Again, Wang Laoshi is up and out on the floor demonstrating the correct technique for push hands practice and Julie Fairchild gracefully illustrates the receiving end of over 60 years practice. Only the smallest movement is visible before she is sitting on the floor. (Was that a *Cai*?)

On to the buses for a trip to the city hall "*hôtel de Ville*" and a reception hosted by the Mayor's representative M. Baumgartner. I'm sure he will never forget the first time he performed "roll down" with a glass of Alsatian beer in one hand and a hundred XIIIIIIHIII HOOOOOOOS to guide his breathing. I think the walls of the Mansion may still be vibrating with the Xi Hos we released. Certainly the guards have a great story to tell.

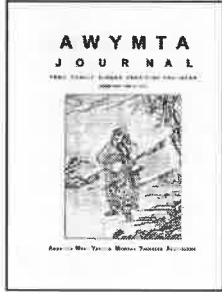
That evening, a banquet, but again, the unexpected, a magician comes to the tables and warms up the guests for the main attraction, a special dance choreographed with original music for the Festival. Christian's students perform another miracle of art. We watch the unfurling of Taiji and follow the dancers as they separate and join again and again, sometimes as individuals and at other times one body seeming to fold and unfold, filling and receding as the saxophonist brought awareness to the silence with vertical flutters and horizontal long tones that synchronized with the images of movement.

Xi Ho! In the beginning was the Xi Ho and at the end was the wild dancing of tired taiji players shaking off accumulated energy of three days of Friendship, Feasting and Fraternite.

*NOTE: Huxi is the Chinese word for breathe. When separated the components naturally translate as exhale (hu) and inhale (xi). Ed.*



# 1996-1999

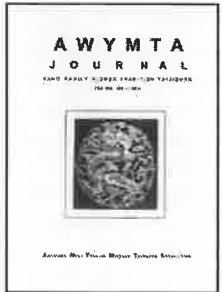


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Articles were contributed by Mark Linett, Wang Yen-nien, Sam Tomarchio, and Akai Jong. This issue contained part one of Sam Tomarchio's interview with Wang Yen-nien about his teacher Zhang Qinlin. It was 32 pages in length.

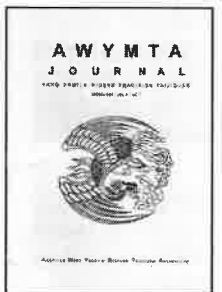


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Articles were contributed by Fei Shijia, Jacqueline Stenson, Ann Lee (Poetry), Donald C. Jones, and Claudy Jeanmougin. It was 36 pages in length.

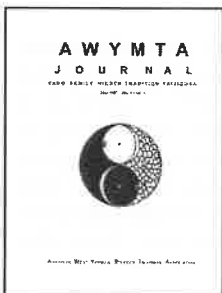


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Articles were contributed by Akai Jong, Mike Basdavanos, Sabine Metzle, Gail Curley, Fei, Shijia, Sam Tomarchio, and poetry by Ann Lee, It was 32 pages in length.



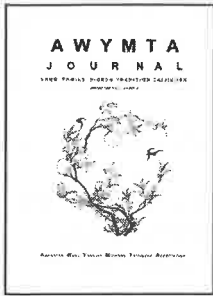
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Articles were contributed by George (Ching-tai) Lin, translation by Luc DeFago and Simonette Verbrugge, Thomas Campbell and John Cole. It was 32 pages in length.





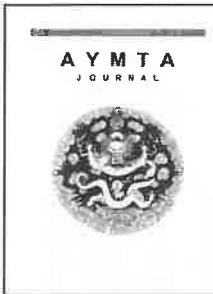
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Articles were contributed by Maureen Poole, Wu Tian-fu (translation by Julia Fisher-Fairchild), Francine Baltazar-Schwartz, Claudy Jeanmougin, (translation by Simonette Verbrugge, poetry by Ann Lee, and Julia Fisher-Fairchild.

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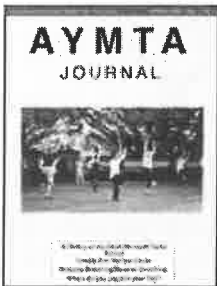
*The organization was incorporated as a California Public Benefit Corporation and, reflecting its growth into a National Association, the name was changed to AYMTA (American Yangjia Michuan Taijquan Association).*

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Articles were contributed by Julia Fisher-Fairchild, George Lin, Mark Linett, David Liaw, translation by Julia Fisher-Fairchild, Poetry by Ann Lee.

It was 44 pages in length.



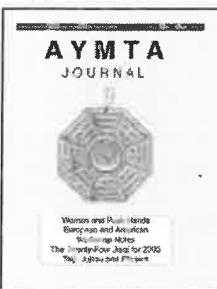
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Articles were contributed by Mike Basdavanos, Alan Tillotson, Dan McKee, Charles Adamac, Ann Lee (poetry), Rodney Conn (poetry), Gretchen MacLane, Julia Fisher-Fairchild, and Wang Yen-nien. Original artwork was contributed by Holly Leavy.

It was 44 pages in length.



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Articles were contributed by Valerie Oppel and Zousou Vallotton (translated by Chris Nelson, Brad Binder, Thomas Campbell, Wu Tian-fu (translated by Julia Fiosher-Fairchild), Angelika Klotz, Michael basdavanos, Michael Stone, Chris Nelson, Ann Lee (poetry), and Don Klein (poetry). Original artwork was contributed by Holly Leavy.

It was 44 pages in length.



## Master Wang's Tuishou Class: A Personal Overview

By Mark Linett

Last June, Master Wang completed a series of tuishou (push hands) workshops here in Taipei. For a period of over two and a half years (fall '92 through spring '95) Master Wang taught beginning, intermediate and advanced levels of push hands.

### Introductory Level

In the beginning introductory level the basic push hands exercises were taught. Practicing these movements not only helps to develop strength, flexibility and rooting but also a deep familiarity and understanding of the movements in the form.

First we learned the entire set of basic tuishou exercises with the feet stationary (dingbu tuishou). Then later as the movements became more familiar and natural we practiced them while moving one step forward and one step back (huobu or fixed-step push hands). And then finally we practiced some of the basic exercises in a series of steps (dongbu or moving-step push hands). As we were learning these movements, Master Wang continually reminded us to relax, breathe from the dantian, sink the chest and tuck the weilu point at the base of the spine.

During the first session, Master Wang also taught two series of moving two-person exercises: Dalu or the Four Large Hand Movements (draw down, twist the joint, elbow strike, shoulder strike). The method is practiced in the four diagonal directions.

Bafa (the Eight Hand Methods) is a way to practice the last third of the Thirteen Postures with a partner. The Eight Hand Methods are draw down, twist the joint, elbow stroke, shoulder strike, hold off, sweep to the side, push and compression strike.

In Bafa one partner begins with draw down and the other responds with hold off. The partner who is issuing energy continues with twist the joint and the partner absorbing energy does a sweep to the side. The elbow strike is met with a push and the shoulder strike with a compression strike. At this point the partners switch roles with the issuing partner becoming the absorbing partner and the movements are repeated.

In practicing the Eight Hand Methods with a partner we have the benefit of working on forward and backward stepping while developing the ability to remain stable and balanced while in connection with a partner.

### Intermediate Level

In the second of the three workshops, Master Wang focused on rooting and issuing energy. In the rooting practices one partner pushes continuously at the dantian while his/her partner sits solidly on the back leg. The same is practiced while being pushed at the lower back and at the chest. To maintain

balance and stability one has to sink the chest and tuck the tailbone. Master Wang came behind each one of us and gave us each a push to the lower back to see if we were rooted and stable.

We went on to practice releasing internal energy (Fajin) using each of the eight basic hand movements. In the Peng Fajin practice one partner issues energy with a push while the other partner absorbs the incoming energy with hold off (thus drawing the partner into what Master Wang calls the void or the moment the partner loses his/her root). The absorbing partner then bounces the issuing partner away with a Peng Fajin.

### Advanced Level

In the third session, Master Wang gave us the opportunity to take all aspects of the push hands practice and refine them. In several classes we practiced standing on bricks either facing our partners with the back foot at 45 degrees and front feet parallel and about 10 cm. apart (see Figure 1) or standing with our front feet side by side (see Figure 2).

Practicing on bricks made it more obvious when we lost our root since we could see when the feet moved or shifted. In doing free-style push hands on the bricks it was also much clearer when someone lost balance or stability since they simply stepped off the bricks onto the mat.

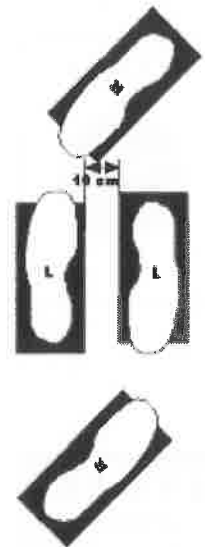


Figure 1 Front feet parallel, 10cm. apart

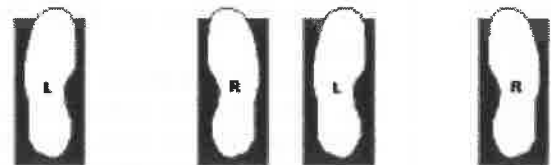


Figure 2. Front feet side-by-side

When practicing standing sideways on the bricks we discovered how important it is that we turn the waist. Master Wang often told us to turn the waist and allow the rest of the body to follow. The practice taught us to use the waist to lead the rest of the body.

I have only brushed the surface of what Master Wang taught during these workshops. On several occasions he spoke of the need to practice not so much with the intent of becoming great martial artists but more with the idea of becoming teachers who faithfully pass on the tradition and techniques of the Yangjia Michuan School of Taiji Quan. I am sure that the participants in these workshops would agree that Master Wang took us more than one step toward that goal.

## Seven Important Tuishou Concepts

By Wang Yen-nien

Translated by Julia Fairchild

ONCE the taijiquan form has been learned, once the movements of the form, their martial and practical applications, have become thoroughly familiar, then the practice of tuishou (push hands) becomes a method for learning how to respond to other people in appropriate and timely ways; strengthening the body and lengthening one's life; and for reaching a realm of Daoist practice aimed at developing one's sixth sense and a higher level of awareness.

WHEN practicing tuishou, incorporate the following essential concepts:

1. STAY RELAXED, PLIABLE [Song, Rou]: A function of Yin and Yang, full and empty. The entire body should be relaxed thoroughly, without the least bit of crude strength, and so pliable that the whole body will seem to be without bones and yet elastic, resilient and with bounce.
2. BUILD UP THE LIFE FORCE [Qi]: A function of your ability to draw qi deeply into the dantian. Circulate qi stored in the dantian around the entire body in an unimpeded, continuous flow. Use prenatal breathing to circulate qi in the "microcosmic orbit."
3. DEVELOP WILL TO LIVE [Shen]: Will to live comes by means of concentration or focus of one's attention aided by the inspiration of the sixth sense. Do not neglect this nor be indolent. Maintain an unhurried manner.
4. DEVELOP CATCHING ABILITY [Jie Jin]: The ability to lead incoming force into the void. Use your arm or other parts of the body, which remain relaxed and pliant, to take advantage of the right moment and catch incoming force in such a way that it causes your partner to be emptied of his force.
5. DEVELOP BONDING, STICKING ABILITY [Zhan Nian Jin]: A function of your ability to expand and contract, extend and retract freely and unhindered. Coming into contact with the partner, use the "do not resist, do not let go" method. Your partner will then have no place to apply his force, be unable to release his energy and unable to escape.
6. DEVELOP GROUNDING ABILITY [Hua Jin]: A function of your ability to use softness to overcome hardness. Achieved with the round and lively application of the "pull or push with four ounces to topple a thousand pounds" method, grounding ability, when applied correctly, causes your partner's center of gravity to rise and he will find himself rootless or voided of energy.
7. DEVELOP CHANNELING ABILITY [Fa Jin]: Use slowness to control fastness. If the partner does not move, you should not move either. If your partner moves even slightly, you should have moved already. Coordinate your movements with dantian energy; aim correctly at your partner's center of gravity and channel the energy of the body as a whole. This will produce an outward flow of energy that feels like pure steel and yet has bounce.

THESE seven essential concepts for tuishou players I list briefly here in the hope that students practice diligently and study to improve themselves according to these principles.

### Editor's Glossary

SONG (adj): relaxed.

FANG SONG (v.): to be relaxed; to relax.

ROU (adj): supple, flexible, pliable QI (n.)- life force; vital energy.

SHEN (n.): spirit, mind. Translated in this article as "will to live."

JIN (n.): energy, strength. The term in this sense is often erroneously transliterated as JING that is the adjective form of this character and which means tough, powerful, sturdy.

JIE (v.): to receive, to catch. Also translated as to absorb, to borrow.

ZHAN, NIAN (v.): to stick, to adhere. Each word has different implications: ZHAN implies to moisten, to wet (e.g., how your T-shirt "sticks" to you when you sweat), NIAN implies sticky, gluey, viscous, bonding (e.g., a stamp "sticks" to an envelope because of the glue).

HUA (v.): to change, to transform. Also translated as to neutralize. The term "Hua hai wei li," "turn a disadvantage into an advantage" gives the idea best.

FA (v.): to issue, to discharge, to emit, to channel outward. Also translated as to release.

NOTE: In gathering information during the preparation of this article, it came to our attention that the meaning of the terms Zhan and Nian (as well as the associated terms Lian and Sui) were not clearly understood or were misinterpreted by a number of YMT practitioners. In order to avoid further misunderstanding, we asked Wang Laoshi for a definitive answer. See his response in the Q&A section.

## Basic Exercise No. 2: Xiang Qian Zuo You Wan Yao

By Claudy Jeanmougin

translated by Simoneffe Verbrugge

向	XIANG:	towards, in the direction of
前	QIAN:	in front, forward
右	ZUO:	left
左	YOU:	right
弯	WAN:	arch, bend, flex
腰	YAO:	waist

The translation, from Chinese, should not cause any problem since the exercise evidently consists of flexing (or bending from the waist) in three directions :forward, to the left and to the right.

In the flexion, as opposed to the exercise kick and pull to the leg, there is no movement of the feet, they remain fixed.

Bending the body forward, to the left, to the right (Diagram A)

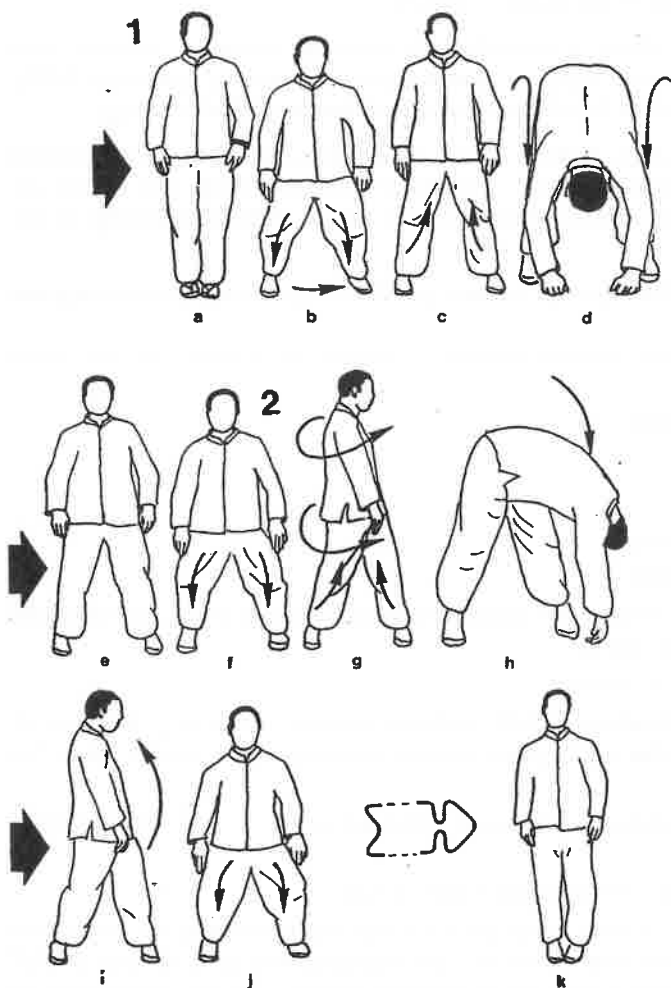


Diagram A

### ACTIONS

- It reinforces the functions of the internal organs through deep massaging during the bending. This action is deeper than the one exerted in kick and pull to the leg because, before bending, the trunk rotates first to create a diagonal stretching of the fascias of the internal organs. We could say that the exercise No IV prepares the exercise No II.
  - It stimulates the function of the kidneys through the movement of the organs. The kidneys are not fixed and move in the abdomen. It reinforces the pelvic girdle and the thighs. The sacro-lumbar muscular mass is entirely mobilised.
  - It stretches the muscles of the vertebral grooves. Bending the trunk stretches the sacro-lumbar mass as well as the muscles of the vertebral grooves by means of the muscular chains.
  - It stretches the muscles of the abdominal girth. During the preliminary rotation of the trunk, all the abdominal muscles are stretched. This shows the importance of this rotation.
  - It stretches the muscles on the back of the legs. Any bending of the trunk generates a stretching of the muscular mass on the back of the legs.
  - It relaxes the scapular belt, the head, the arms and the hands. Any stiffness in one of those parts will go against the effects of the stretching. It enhances the perception of the body. This exercise is very technical. To perform it well requires an extreme watchfulness of one's body in order to have a perfect segmentary placement.
  - It coordinates breathing and movements. The relaxation will become total on the exhale. The end of the exhale must correspond perfectly with the end of the stretching. The same way, the beginning of the inhale must correspond with the straightening of the trunk.
- TECHNICAL DETAILS**
- In Exercise 1 (see Diagram A), during the bending "d," the knee caps are free, this shows that the quadriceps muscles are totally relaxed. This way the stretching of the muscular mass on the back of the legs and in the loins is passive.
  - In this exercise, the straightening must be a slow movement and one must wait until the entire trunk is straight before straightening the head. This is particularly important for people suffering from high blood pressure. The straightening happens together with the tucking in of the pelvis and one should not exaggerate the tension of the curve of the back. The purpose of this exercise is not to touch the feet or to put the hands on the ground but to ease the lumbar area and the back of the thighs.
  - Exercise 2 should not be performed by people suffering from back pain. (It should be started again only when the pain has totally disappeared). In this exercise, the pelvis must be in alignment with the direction of the eyes and the eyes must be

directed 90° from position “f.” The legs remain straight throughout the bending and the straightening movements.

- In Exercise 2, while bending in “h,” the trunk must be centred on the thigh and the two hands come to rest on each side of the foot. While straightening, the two hands fall on each side of the thigh at an equal distance from it.

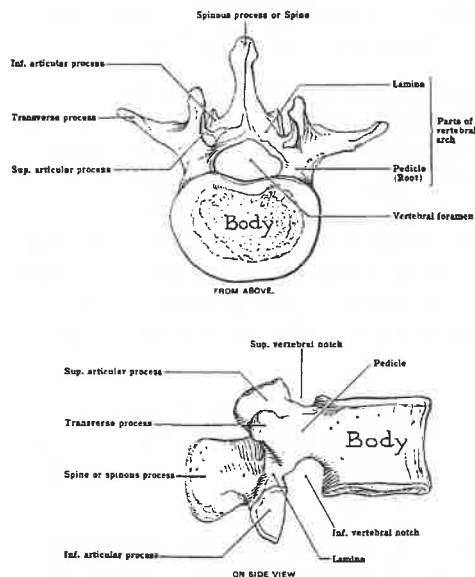


Figure 1: A Vertebra (2<sup>nd</sup> lumbar)

- While straightening in “i,” the eyes keep looking in the same direction until vertical position is achieved. The trunk keeps facing the lateral and vertical plane that passes through the leg on the same side as the bending. While straightening, one must beware not to let the trunk deviate inwards, in order to avoid any lumbar troubles.

Straightening must be total, with the body clearly erected before turning, flexing the thighs and tucking the pelvis in to resume position “j.”

Between “j” and “k” the same movements are performed but in the other direction. This exercise can be repeated for approximately 10 minutes.

**BREATHING**

In “b” bending the thighs is performed on the exhale.

In “c” extending the thighs is performed on the inhale.

From “c” to “d” bending is performed on the exhale.

From “d” to “e” straightening is performed on the inhale. Bending the thighs in “f” corresponds to an exhale.

From final position in “f” to “g” :inhale, then exhale during phase “h.”

Straightening from “h” to “i” is performed on the inhale.

On the opening there is an inhale, on the closing there is an exhale. During the inhale, which is an active phase, muscle movement is induced. During the exhale, a phase of relaxation, (the exhale should not be forced during basic exercises), the tissues are relaxed in order to prepare for enhanced subsequent stretching.

**ALTERNATIVE**

There is an alternative that consists of making three bendings (Exercise 1 from “b” to “e”), or more, before going on to Exercise 2.

Biomechanical approach of the lumbo-pelvic region in the exercise “Xiang qian zuo you wan yao”

First of all we must know that the lumbar column is not meant to perform rotational movements of the trunk.

The upper articular facets of the lumbar vertebrae face backwards and inwards and are in an almost vertical plane. (Figure 1).

Due to this orientation, the articular facets are inscribed in a circle of which the centre (Point O) is at the back of the vertebra itself. The more one gets closer to the lower vertebrae, the bigger the distance between this centre and the vertebrae (Figure 2 : on “a” you can see the 5th lumbar vertebra, on “b” the first one).

The centre of the circle that passes through the articular facets is not in the centre of the lumbar vertebrae. For that reason, during the torsion of the trunk, a shearing of the intervertebral disk will occur, as indicated on Figure 2, b.

The total amplitude of the rotation at lumbar level is 10°, that is to say 5° to the right and 5° to the left from the neutral position, which equals only 1° on average per level since there are 5 lumbar vertebrae.

We have indicated that the lumbar column was not meant to work in torsion. The torsion of the trunk happens mainly at the dorsal level as shown in the following diagram.

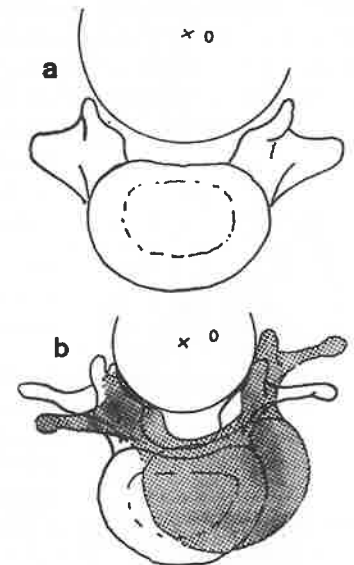


Figure 2

Angles in	LUMBAR	DORSAL	CERVICAL	TOTAL
ROTATION	5 10	35 70	80-90 160-180	120-130 240-260
INCLINATION	20	20	35 to 45	75 to 85
BENDING	60	40	40	40
STRETCHING	35	25	75	135

Table I. Mobility of the Spinal Column

Table 1 shows us the role of the lumbar spine which is precisely bending-stretching with a predominance for bending. Let us examine what happens during a movement of lateral inclination.

The articular facets being almost vertical, it is easy to understand lateral inclination. However this movement is done with a rotation of the vertebrae in the direction opposed to the inclination. This automatic rotation can be explained as follows :

There is a crushing of the intervertebral disk which takes an angular form;

Second, the tension of the ligaments of convexity (LC) tends to shift them towards the shortest route, which is the middle line close to the spinous process. That way the acute angle comes to the side of the articular processes, on the side of the inclination and it pushes back the vertebrae towards the opposite side.

We can say that there is no pure inclination at lumbar level. This is also true for all the vertebral levels but with totally different mechanics.

Let us go back to our basic exercise and particularly the movement 2 with the bending on the left. In "g" there is a rotation of the trunk with a torsion of the entire spine, except for the cervical level which only absorbs the residue of the tension. The intervertebral disks suffer the shearing as indicated on Figure 2b. Since the right articular facet is the farthest forward, during bending it will suffer the highest constraint, and it is on this side that the disk will be crushed the most. We find ourselves in the situation of Figure 3. The vertebrae will turn left, which means towards the lumbar convexity. The mechanical principles are perfectly respected.



Figure 3

Let us imagine different situations in which the parameters of placement are not respected.

1. The rotation of the trunk is not sufficient. The interlocking of the articular facets will not be complete and the left articulars risk finding themselves more towards the front

than the right ones. At the moment of the bending, the disk will be crushed on the left side and not on the right side which will result in a rotation of the vertebrae to the right, which is the opposite side to the one anticipated by biomechanics. In this case, the lumbar column, being put in a nonconventional functioning situation, might refuse to rotate and provoke a muscular spasm.

This could then lead to pain or worse. It could also lead to aggravation of a pre-existing injury and this would be even more embarrassing considering that this discipline is supposed to be a way of improving one's health.

2. The straightening is not performed correctly in the axis of the left thigh. The slightest deviation of the trunk inwards (towards the back leg) involves a loosening in the right articulars. This can provoke an inversion in the orientation of the lumbar curve with the same inconvenience as previously described.

3. The shoulders are not facing completely to the side. There is no interlocking of the articulars on the right side and everything happens as though it was an inclination to the left with rotation of the vertebrae to the right. Nothing will happen if the straightening follows the same route (in this case the exercise is useless since there is no correct stretching of the vertebral muscle chains). However, if on straightening one tries to put the shoulders back in the axis, this will cause excessive constraints on the vertebral disks by trying to "crush" them in another direction.

This exercise allows a selective stretching of the paravertebral muscular chains. In the forward bending, the right and left chains are concerned: in the right bending, it is the right chain, in the left bending it is the left chain.

If it appears that this exercise is difficult or even "dangerous;" if badly performed, this basic exercise is paradoxically excellent for all lumbar problems.

*NOTE: This article is reprinted with permission from École Française de Taijiquan.*

## TWO WAYS TO PROGRESS

By Sabine Metzlé

Translated by Simonette Verbrugge

*In 1981 I left France and spent 10 years in Taiwan studying taijiquan. In 1991 I returned to Paris and started teaching taijiquan because a lot of people asked me to do so. In the beginning it was difficult for me because of my lack of confidence and teaching experience. I then came to consider that teaching was the other side of the same coin—that the qualities required for a teaching are precisely the ones you are supposed to develop while you are learning.*

In my opinion, there are two ways of progressing after having learned a martial technique: There is competition and teaching. These two ways involve the same qualities: awareness of oneself and of the other, rooting, balance, listening, sensibility, adaptability, relaxing, tranquility of mind and concentration.

To issue the energy in *fa jin* is only possible if one hits at the right time, in a correct posture, with the energy gathered in the dantian.

Teaching, that is, the externalization of the knowledge acquired, is only happen-

ing through a method adapted to the public/partner. I hesitated for a long time and I am still hesitating, before realizing that the basic principles of taijiquan and of daoist philosophy had to be applied first. This means, follow the course of events, do not resist, do not force anything, adapt, so that all blockages, misunderstandings, lack of communications, etc., will slowly vanish and leave space for the correct perception of things and the objective expression of an art that has been, until now, kept to oneself.

One of the common points in individual and group practice is the search for har-

mony. Harmony of the different parts of the body while performing a movement, harmony of the breath and the movement for a better martial and therapeutic efficiency, harmony between the people who form the group, between the group and its environment, between teacher and pupils, balance between two energies complementing each other: yang animates yin, yin nourishes yang ...

To teach taijiquan is to learn it again while trying to adapt it to the social entity that makes up the group.



## Lizards and Daoists: A Comparison

By Julia Fisher-Fairchild

Dantian-like throat pouches in certain lizards called monitors pump air into these lizards' lungs enabling them to run and breathe at the same time for a sustained period of time, something other lizards cannot do. This observation of throat pumps in lizards recently reported on by Elizabeth Pennisi in *Science* (February, 1998, p. 808), reminded me of the way human daoists use the lower abdomen and brought to mind several hypothetical questions.

Humans and other mammals use a specialized muscle, the diaphragm, for breathing, freeing the other muscles for locomotion. Lizards, however, do not have diaphragms and "the same rib muscles that cause the lungs to expand and contract also make the lizard's body stay upright and wiggle from side to side as it runs," reports Pennisi. She notes, "Monitor lizards can chase down their prey while many of their reptilian cousins sit and wait to snag a meal.

Researches suggest monitors evolved throat pumps to overcome this basic body design flaw. Maybe one lizard [who] discovered the power of the throat dantian survived longer? Do other types of lizards also have a throat dantian and just not use it?

Humans all have a dantian in their lower abdomens but not all humans use it. Just as humans can learn to use their lower abdomen as a breathing pump, why couldn't other types of lizards be trained to use their throat dantians to breathe better and enable them to chase their prey and breathe easily at the same time the way monitor lizards do? More accurately, we should say humans "relearn" not "learn" to use the lower abdomen as a breathing pump since human fetuses already use the lower abdomen. It would be interesting to see if baby lizards in the womb use their throat dantians.

### LIZARD BREATHING AND TUNA

Monitor lizards' throat pouches expand on the inhale and contract on the exhale in the same way the dantian in the lower abdomen works for humans practicing neigong and Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan (YMT). Scientists also observe monitors breathe by exhaling all at once but inhale in a series of small breaths. Does the

monitor lizards' inhale/exhale time ratio equal one, as it should for humans using the Daoist Art of Breathing technique (TuNa)?

Humans can train themselves to breathe using the abdominal dantian to effect better health and longevity. What about monitor lizards? The Science article does not mention whether or not monitor lizards at rest breathe with their throat pouches, but assuming they do, it would be fun to train monitor lizards at rest to slow their breathing rate and to increase the volume of air inhaled into and exhaled out of the throat pouch to see if this influences monitor lizards' longevity. Just as the abdominal dantian breathing in humans using the Daoist TuNa breathing technique promotes better health and a longer life, lizards trained to breathe with their throat pouches using TuNa would hypothetically also live longer.

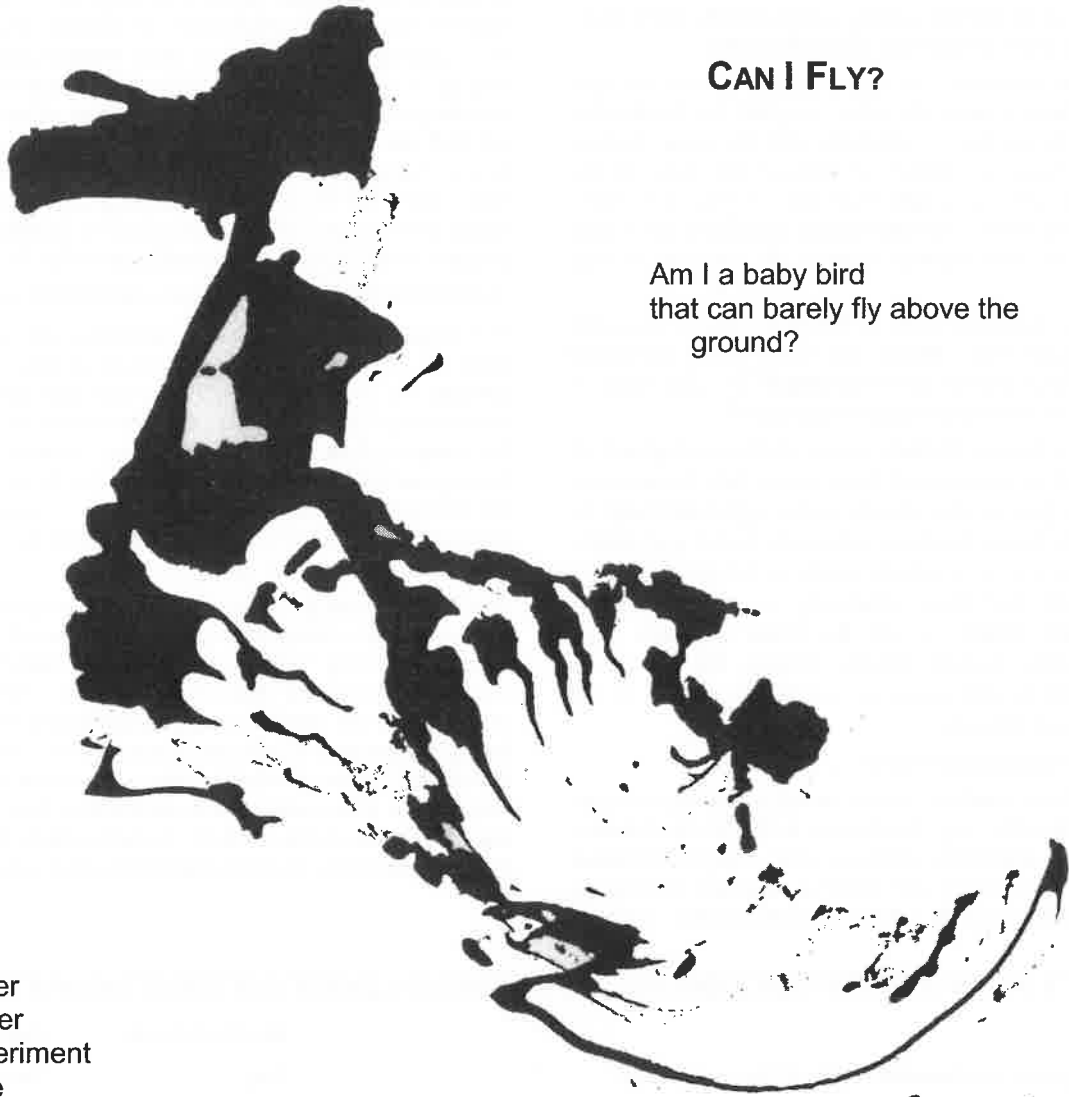
### DANTIAN BREATHING EQUALS FLUID MOTION

The didgeridoo, the Australian aborigine instrument, and certain types of Chinese funeral horns require a continuous flow of air through the instruments to obtain their trademark never-ending-flow-of-sound sound. Players use their cheeks as pumps to keep up the constant flow of air the same way monitor lizards use their throat pouches to pump air. Using the cheeks to pump air through the instrument to produce a constant flow of sound may not affect the longevity of the instrument or the player, but it does produce a sound without stops and starts.

Similarly, humans practicing taijiquan and neigong use the abdominal dantian for a never ending flow of qi around the body the produces the flowing "without stops, without starts" body movement sought for during the practice of taijiquan. Without that breath connection to the dantian, the perpetual motion we want to achieve during the practice of taijiquan is not possible. The breath connection to the dantian is what enables us to sweat but not get out of breath. It is what enables us to endure over time both in our practice of taijiquan and in our lives. Lizards making a similar breath or dantian connection would hypothetically have comparable results.

### A LIST OF HYPOTHETICAL COMPARISONS OF MONITOR LIZARDS AND HUMAN DAOISTS

	Monitor Lizards	Human Daoists
1. Able to chase prey and breathe easily at the same time?	Yes	Yes
2. Able to obtain an inhale/exhale ratio equal to 1 when using abdominal or throat breathing?	Yes	Yes
3. Throat-pouch or abdominal breathing able to affect longevity?	Yes	Yes
4. Able to learn TuNa (Daoist Art of Breathing) and use it in motion to better survive in the world?	Yes	Yes
5. At rest?	Yes	Yes
6. Able to play the didgeridoo or the Chinese funeral horn using the cheeks to produce a constant flow of air through the instrument for long periods of time?	Yes	Yes
7. Able to catch a fly on the tip of the tongue in a single bound?	Yes	Yes (just checking to see if you're really paying attention)
8. Able to achieve immortality?	Yes	Yes



## CAN I FLY?

Am I a baby bird  
that can barely fly above the  
ground?

I can fly higher  
I can fly further  
if only to experiment  
to experience  
helplessness, nervousness, without  
control

*Ann Lee*

Your intensive love suffocates me  
You know my every move  
Be supportive, my love  
I can fly  
Fly high beyond the sky!

## Master Wang Wins Award

*We are pleased to announce that Wang Laoshi won the Sixth Global Chinese Culture and Arts Award for Chinese Martial Arts. The R.O.C. National Association of Yang Family Taijiquan hosted a banquet honoring Master Wang for his achievement on October 29. The R.O.C. National Tai Chi Chuan Association honored him by hosting a tea party in his honor at the National Sports Federation earlier this month. The award ceremony will be broadcast by Taipei TV stations on November 14. A video of the awards ceremony will be available early next year. Among the several articles published in the Taipei press regarding these awards, the following is a translation\* of one which appeared in the Great News Daily on August 16, 1998.*

\* Translated by Julia Fisher-Fairchild

## THE SIXTH GLOBAL CHINESE CULTURE AND ARTS AWARDS WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The ROC Jaycees Club, which aims to promote Chinese Culture and arts, recently announced winners of the Sixth Global Chinese Culture and Arts Award. Cosponsors of this prestigious award include: ROC National Government Executive Yuan, Department of Cultural Affairs, Information Office, Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission and the Taiwan Provincial Government Department of Cultural Affairs.

The awards were bestowed for ten different categories with a total of 16 persons capturing this special honor. Four of the winners come from Mainland China. The award ceremony was held at the Sun Yet-Sen Memorial Hall on October 19.

The Global Chinese Culture and Arts Award, first held in 1993, was originally limited to ROC resident artists only. In 1996 ROC President Lee Teng-hui pointed out the need to expand eligibility to include ethnic Chinese from all over the world. ROC Jaycees Club President Zhuang Songrong, announced the number of applications and recommendations received from around the world totaled more than 300.

The selection process includes a first, second and final review of all applications. Those passing the three stages of review are sent to separate review boards established for each of the ten categories. The review boards then vote on two winners: one for Taiwan nationals and one for overseas Chinese. Four of the ten categories: Seal Carving, Folk Arts and Handicrafts, Folk Dance and Folk Theater announced only one winner each.

The Award winners include: Chinese Literature, Yang Gua (ROC), Shen Z.L. (Overseas); **Chinese Martial Arts, Wang Yen-nien (ROC)**, Xu Yanlin (Overseas); Chinese Calligraphy, Tian Yuqing (ROC), Xu Yunrei (Overseas); Chinese Painting, Liu Qiwei (ROC), Yao Kui (mainland China); Chinese Seal Carving, Jiao Yi (Overseas); Chinese Folk Art and Handicrafts, Shi Hongyi (ROC); Chinese Folk Dance, Hong-Lee Tsai-eh (ROC); Traditional Theater Arts, Wang Hai-ling (ROC), Zhu Rongshan (Overseas); Folk Music, Xu Mushan (ROC), Hu Zhihou (Overseas); Folk Theatre, Liao Huizhi (ROC).

## Significance of Neigong in Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan

By Julia Fisher-Fairchild

I.

Because healing begins with the mind, the abdominal-based breathing technique, neigong, employs the mind to guide qi around the body: In meditation this leads to a feeling of timelessness, of expanding beyond the body and of oneness with the universe. In taijiquan (TJQ) it generates a continuous, never-ending flow of movement, an outward sign of excellence in all forms of TJQ.

Neigong, a Daoist breathing technique based on focusing the mind on breathing with the abdomen while keeping the lungs quiet, forms the foundation upon which Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan (YMT) stands. Without neigong, YMT becomes only an exercise. YMT amalgamates martial art: as a survival technique with neigong as a longevity technique via their common denominator—the Mind.

Why does TJQ work as a tool for better health? How does it help change one's health? The answer lies in the use of the mind. Better health comes with a strengthening of the mind. The body cannot heal because it cannot make itself sick. Sickness is of the mind and has nothing to do with the body. "Mind guides Qi and Qi moves the body," the taiji classics tell us. TJQ, a type of training-of-the-mind gongfu, leads to a strengthening of the mind where true healing begins.

People interested in beginning TJQ often ask what they should start with and Master Wang answers, "with breathing." In the beginning, your breathing practice and your practice of the movements of the

form run parallel. Over time and with effort and attention and practice, the two merge to become one. In the beginning, you breathe with the lower abdomen only when you specifically think about it; later breathing with the lower abdomen becomes automatic and practiced 24 hours a day whether you think about it or not, no longer an isolated or special event.

II.

"When moving forward or backward, up or down, left or right, the principle is always the same. All movements are directed by the mind..."

—The Sanfeng Taiji Classic, attributed to Zhang Sanfeng

An abbreviated explanation of Tu Na, the Daoist Art of Breathing, the bedrock of neigong :

—Exhale through the mouth, without force, without sound; the abdomen contracts and the diaphragm lifts; Qi moves upward from the lower abdomen and out the mouth; the lungs stay quiet; the solar plexus is relaxed and slightly retracted.

—Inhale gently through the nose, without force, without sound; the abdomen expands, the diaphragm drops; Qi is drawn downward to the expanding abdomen; the lungs remain quiet; the solar plexus remains relaxed and slightly retracted.

It takes great strength of mind while inhaling to remain constantly aware of the expansion of the lower abdomen; while exhaling to

remain constantly aware of the contraction of the lower abdomen; the whole while remembering to keep the solar plexus relaxed and slightly retracted because this enables the lungs to remain quiet; and guide qi with the mind (daoyin) through the energy lines, barriers and fields in the body.

Once breathing and expansion and contraction of the lower abdomen are firmly connected during the practice of TJQ, try this: Sit in meditation, breathe using the abdomen as described above and use the mind to visualize yourself practicing TJQ. With the visualized image in synch with your abdominal breathing, see how far through the form you get before losing concentration!

Practicing YMT with the mind and breathing tightly bonded like this, strengthens the mind and helps lengthen the breath. Slowing the rate of breathing while increasing the volume of air inhaled and exhaled by increasing the expansion and contraction of the lower abdomen promotes longevity. One often hears the Chinese say, "The longer the breath, the longer the life."

The key to bonding the breath to movement is the mind for without thinking about it it would not happen. Critics of matching movement with breath say if you have to think about it it isn't natural. We say: finding this relationship is a natural habit; is the essence of your natural learning process.

III.

**"Not all martial artists understand neigong; similarly, not all those who understand neigong are martial artists."**  
—Wang Yen-nien

Understanding prenatal, postnatal and reverse breathing can be difficult without a few basic concepts to help you:

1. The breathing method used in neigong is called Tu Na. Tu Na stands for the words Tu, to exhale, and Na, to inhale. Tu Na is a Daoist breathing technique. Like the name implies, Tu Na begins with an exhale (not an inhale.) Tu Na is also called prenatal breathing because it imitates the breathing of a fetus in the womb. The abdomen expands and contracts but the lungs stay quiet. Prenatal breathing is a priori, or, "formed or conceived beforehand." It is a breathing technique you know before you were born and one that you can observe being used not only by fetuses in the womb but also in small children up to the age of about 8.

2. Prenatal breathing emphasizes the expansion and contraction of the abdomen only, keeping the chest area quiet.

3. Postnatal breathing emphasizes the expansion and contraction of the lungs. For example, most sports emphasize the use of the lungs. Some types of exercise use a mix of both expansion and contraction of the lungs and expansion and contraction of the abdomen.

4. Prenatal breathing is not reverse breathing.

5. Reverse breathing emphasizes breathing that reverses the natural flow of qi around the body. By natural flow of Qi, I mean qi moves upward on the exhale and downward on the inhale. In reverse breathing, Qi is forced to move downward on the exhale and upward on the inhale.

The chart on the following page makes a general comparison between prenatal breathing (neigong) and reverse breathing.

IV.

**"If you plan to expand outward, you must first move inward."**—Author unknown

Breathing with the abdomen generates a never-ending flow of Qi around the body that produces the flowing "without stops, without starts" movement sought for not only during the practice of TJQ but also during meditation.

Without conscientiously making that breath connection to the abdomen, the perpetual motion we want to achieve during the practice of TJQ and meditation is not possible. Once you have set Qi flowing around the body in perpetual motion, turn your thoughts inwardly. Now you need do nothing. To do nothing ("wuwei") is to rest, and make a place within you where the activity of the body ceases to demand attention. Turning the thoughts inwardly leads to a sudden unawareness of the body, and a lolning of yourself and something else in which your mind enlarges to encompass it. It become part of you and you become part of it.

In the practice of TJQ, we seek an inner tranquility that allows us to discover the continuousness of minds. During the practice of meditation, focusing the mind on the breath leads to what the Daoists call: "Man and the Heavens Become One."

**A COMPARISON CHART OF PRENATAL (NEIGONG) BREATHING AND REVERSE BREATHING**

	INHALE/EXHALE	DIAPHRAM/ABDOMEN	DIRECTION OF QI (UP OR DOWN)	LUNGS	SOLAR PLEXUS
Prenatal (Neigong) Breathing Techniques	<b>EXHALE</b> Exhale, without force, no sound, through the mouth	Abdomen contracts, diaphragm lifts	Qi moves upward and out	Lungs remain quiet	Solar plexus retracted and relaxed
	<b>INHALE</b> Inhale, without force, no sound, through the nose	Abdomen expands, diaphragm drops	Qi is drawn downward to the expanding abdomen	Lungs remain quiet	Solar plexus remains slightly retracted and relaxed
Reverse Breathing	<b>EXHALE</b> Exhale with force	Abdomen expands	Qi descends	Lungs contract	Solar plexus extended
	<b>INHALE</b> Inhale with force	Abdomen contracts	Qi rises	Lungs expand	Solar plexus extended

## Tuishou and Women

By Valérie Oppel and Zouzou Vallotton

Translated by Chris Nelson

We discovered not too long ago that it was possible to enjoy Tuishou (Push Hands) and we wanted to share that discovery. We put our heads together and came up with the following article.



Valérie Oppel



Zouzou Vallotton

### I. Specifically for Women

What follows comes from our experience and seems to be tied to our being women. But hopefully men will recognize themselves as well in this discussion.

To do Push Hands is to enter in a relationship with someone, with everything that it implies. We are referring among other things to emotions and feelings. Instead of denying them, we believe it is better to attempt to "regulate" them: recognize them, accept them and give them their proper place instead of letting them run roughshod over us, which tends to happen too often.

For example: I manage to push my partner (whom I had previously considered more experienced). I am so proud of myself that I forget about the returned energy and am unbalanced because I was not focused anymore on what was happening in the moment.

A surprising paradox: in general, I feel incapable of unbalancing the other (stereotype of the weak woman), but at the same time I am afraid of hurting him (strong or mothering woman).

The typical characteristic of women: they doubt themselves. From the start, I overestimate my partner. I see in him/her only the qualities, but find only the faults in myself. If he manages to throw me off balance, it is because he is skilled. If I throw him off balance, it is because I used force, and not skill or art.

This negative estimation of oneself can be a block, with thoughts such as, "I'm the only one who stinks here."

### The Fears

Fear seems to be the crux of the matter, and we've barely touched on it. We have tried to make a list: fear of pain, fear of causing pain, of being judged, of being ridiculous, of not knowing, of seeming aggressive and unfeminine ...

Yet it seems that fear is a strong block to listening and creativity.

We are conscious that in Push Hands we are showing ourselves as we really are; we have left the reassuring world of the duans' repetitive movement. We show our qualities, no doubt, but we are thinking mostly of the weaknesses that we are revealing, and we fear being judged.

Fear of seeming aggressive means that I peacefully chat with my partner instead of being focused on what is going on between our bodies.

Fear of being judged or ridiculous is paralyzing.

Fear of hurting or being hurt makes me tense, and I therefore risk being hurt because I'm tense.

Since I believe that I know nothing, that I don't know how to do it, I cannot react normally and I am not using my full potential. And every bad day is a confirmation of that belief. I would tell myself "See, I can't do it, it's the proof that this Push Hands is not for me!"

Having internal monologues during Push Hands ("Come on." "You can do it.") is a form of self-sabotage, a block to our listening skills and presence in the moment.

### II. The Stages

We thought about the road we have traveled, and that which remains to be traveled. We realized that in Push Hands we go

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through very distinct stages, and it is always a pleasure to reach the next one. It happens place during a "real" exchange with a partner that an epiphany is reached, which makes us move forward and stays tied in our memories to that partner. Ironic detail: we admit that, in both our cases, it was with men that we've had these moments of sudden growth.

We have tried to describe the typical journey of a woman learning Push Hands. Let's see if the (female) readers recognize themselves!

#### **First stage**

I hate Push hands. It's violent, and I'm a pacifist—I give life, I don't wage war—I'm not aggressive enough, it's not in my nature—it's the men who like to fight, you can see that in the school yards—we are no good because we never learned to fight when we were kids—I'm not even going to try.

#### **Second Stage**

I'm scared of hurting someone, I'm scared of being hurt. When I practice Push Hands I fidget and wonder what all these movements mean. I get winded quickly.

#### **Third Stage**

I start listening, to absorb. I'm still not offensive, but my body learns how to react to a push. When I push the other, I don't follow through. I tend to lean back.



#### **Fourth Stage**

I like to take the offensive. I listen less. My movements are more focused. I tend to lean forward.

#### **Fifth Stage**

I start to use/ transform the other's energy. I take pleasure in provoking and discovering my partner's response. I manage more and more to integrate movements from the form in free-form Push Hands. Each movement has a purpose.



#### **Sixth Stage**

I find my own style, I find pleasure in winning against advanced partners.

#### **Seventh Stage**

I free myself of my habits, I lose with pleasure because I learn; I try to forget everything in order to always learn and discover. My movements are more and more subtle and round.

### **III. Push Hands Between Men and Women**

Men are stronger than women. They are perhaps afraid of abusing it, and the women fear being dominated.

Men are bothered by our chest. When they touch it by accident, they feel obliged to apologize and the unease can quickly spread to both partners.

A woman who wants to seduce her partner (consciously or subconsciously) might prefer to appear weaker.

Who has never felt the complicated feelings that arise when the phrase "change partners" is said. Exchange of glances, a step forward ... couples form, its ballroom dancing ...fear of having to play with X, fear of missing Y, fear of being left alone ...

We think that it is simpler for a woman to push with another woman. If this raises issues, all the better. To progress in Push Hands, one must practice. Once women have acquired more experience in combat, they will be less afraid of practicing against men. Or rather, it would seem less of a challenge.

This is, therefore, not about gender segregation, but about opening. Opening oneself to Push Hands and its joys, and to mixed practice later.

And to the men who might feel excluded from the Women-Only Push Hands Seminar. It's not that we don't like you that you are not invited. On the contrary. We wrote this article to explain our experience of Push Hands. Now it is your turn to write one from a man's point of view.

# Poetry and Reflection

## Creativity

by Ann Lee

Born to be sensitive  
Curse and blessing  
This moment - sunshine  
Next second - storm  
Let fly imagination  
Inspiration overflows  
Creativity abounds

## Taiji on the Beach

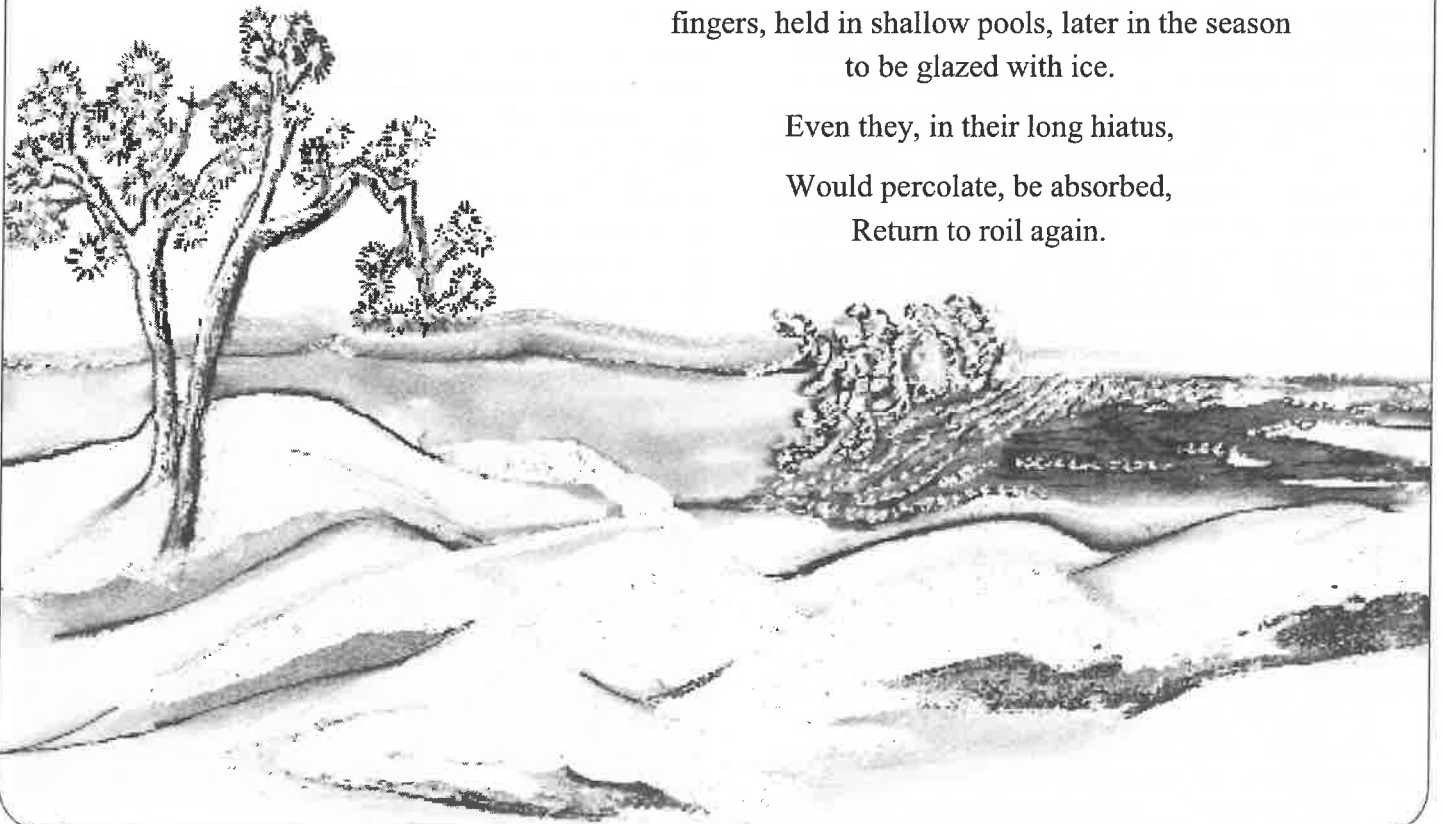
By Don Klein

What trapped my eye  
Were not the sharp static contrasts, the repeated  
snowy groves of pine tall upon the dunes;  
Not the whitened fields of beach mirrored  
in the rolling caps;  
But the gentle washing of the waves  
on the narrowed spit of sand,  
advancing then retreating,  
the brief shimmering moistness  
on the matte of sand.

Bào Hǔ Guī Shān

Yet there were those too agile encroaching  
fingers, held in shallow pools, later in the season  
to be glazed with ice.

Even they, in their long hiatus,  
Would percolate, be absorbed,  
Return to roil again.



## A Taiji Guest in Taipei

By James Sauer



Salah Elhilali, James Sauer and Don Coleman

Over the past several years, I have become more attuned to the evolution of things around me. For example, I have had a long-term appreciation for aspects of nature in her visible surface. Yet, as time goes on, I appreciate more and more of nature in the arcane depths, where energy and resources are expressed in an orderly sequence. The regeneration of foliage

in trees and plants is certainly an example of that. There remains this sequence of growth, the development and production of something new, and even though the cycles repeat, the end product is new once again.

I have searched, as well, to study the more arcane aspects of myself. I seek to draw closer to my own true nature. In order to do this, I have had to relax and give myself to this process. The sequence of growth is very similar, one step, or stage, stacked upon the previous one. I have surely needed to study my own cycles of things, accept them or change them, and move on. Over time, as I look back, it has most often meant the production of something beyond what has been before.

When I began practicing the martial arts, I had no conception of a trip to Taiwan, let alone a trip to advance my studies at Laoshi's daoguan. Were this notion to have been presented to me at that time, I would have found one way or another to shun any gestures of my involvement. There were no thoughts of Taiwan—thoughts only of which body posture followed the one I just learned and so forth. I did have a consciousness of certain mental and spiritual principles as I sought to draw closer to my true nature. I continued to practice, to work hard, one day at a time. Progress was gradually noticeable, first as a spot on the branch, then as a bud, then an early flower; such was the order of things over much time.

At a most unexpected moment, I was approached by my teacher, Don Coleman, to accompany himself and another student, Salah Elhilali, to Taipei to study at Laoshi's daoguan, joining the students there for about two weeks. He asked me to think about this level of commitment. I said I would—but my decision was already made. I knew it was a time for me to accept. And so the planning began.

The three of us, Don, Salah and I, set out for a long journey's flight. Upon arrival, we were greeted by Julia and escorted, via bus, to Taipei. We bought maps and were briefed about directions. We were fortunate to have a first day of rest and strolling about. We visited the Grand Hotel (ah . . . never did do the breakfast there—next time) and the site nearby where we would have outdoor practice, at the War Memorial of Five Hundred Heroes. On most days, we practiced three times: At the Memorial, or, if raining, on our own (one rainy early morning did find me at the outdoor Memorial practice, alone with one of the elders, whose scolding, barking style

of instruction is forever embedded in my memory); at the American School of Taiwan; and at the daoguan. Prior to going, we discussed being physically challenged. There were what seemed to be rigorous and excruciating practices. Perhaps this is slightly exaggerated . . . well, on second thought, perhaps not.

The days revolved around the practices as our main purpose for being there. Our lives became much walking—which was great—climbing in and out of taxis, catching the Metro to and fro, and certainly not last nor least, “doing rain.” There was intermittent shopping, resting, eating (mmm . . . those meals at Shin Yeh) and a little sight-seeing, i.e., The National Palace Museum and a half day at Yangmingshan where we were taxied by a great man who waited four hours in the parking lot to return us to the city proper (it was at Yangmingshan where we performed fantastic feats of strength and acrobatics and obtained enlightenment. If you find this hard to believe, just ask us).

About midway through our stay, we had the great fortune to participate in a one-day martial-art demonstration. There were several martial-art schools represented throughout the day with constant performances from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The large gymnasium was divided into quadrants: four groups performed simultaneously, each rotating in a new group as one finished. Never before had I seen so many martial artists gathered under one roof. Laoshi's daoguan received three trophies that day, including a first place for Michuan Section I.

The practices were very moving. We were graciously received by all at the daoguan. We were respected for being there and instructed according to need. At no time did I feel devalued or belittled for my level of skill or lack thereof. We recognized the tremendous skill of the class regulars as they so aptly demonstrated great gongfu.

Laoshi sat perched in his straight-backed chair, motionless at first, while the class moved through various warm-ups. As the three of us followed the lead of Julia, or a designee, we could feel his eyes upon the class and his presence throughout. On occasion, he would call out some words in Chinese to direct the next set of rigorous movements. We were so fortunate to also receive Laoshi's words at the end of practices. We would gather around and listen as he would impart deeper meanings of practice in theory and philosophy. He spoke of the physical body and its positioning, of using the mind to direct energy and action, and at the same time seemed to be speaking of these principles and actions in all of life.



Taiji Competition – Fan Form





Wang Yen-nien and His Students

It is this, perhaps, which for me strikes the deepest chord of all. There were many great things to absorb in Taiwan—the graciousness and helpfulness of the people of Taiwan—to name one. Yet, for my situation, I went to Taiwan under much duress. I left behind a 7-year-old daughter (who yet thinks my arrival home from work is the greatest thing of all) and my wife in early pregnancy and extremely ill. My practice of the martial arts in Taiwan went far beyond the form itself. In Taiwan, I had to dig down in order to get through the physical training. Yet, at the same time, I placed myself in a situation where I was essentially practicing 24/7. I had

much to manage and breathe through—and at times, the various stressors seemed to meld together. It all became one thing.

I began this story with a discussion about growth and nature, and the orderly sequence of things, stacked one upon the other. Way back when, as I began martial arts, I had spiritual principles. However, the continued practice not only advanced my physical ability, it has become the vehicle to evolve me to conscious daily-life applications. This is very difficult for me, a most challenging feat of practice. In the course of being in the world, i.e., working a job, going to school, being a parent, etc., it often seems impossible to maintain my skills in the practice of life. I recognize periods of time when I am practicing life mindfully. The next thing I know, I have long left the moment, and my breath is in my nostrils. I have much to work on. It is true that I chose this—that I committed to this path. It is also true that I have had a good teacher. I know when I say this, that I also speak for Salah. I take this opportunity, as I have in person, to thank Don Coleman for his patience and perseverance in teaching me and for asking me to do this trip. I also thank Kathryn Coleman, as I have in person, for her contribution to his teaching and for asking me to write this paper.

Don, Salah and I also want to again extend thanks to Laoshi, to Julia for making sure that all went extremely well, and to the coaches and students who shared in the teaching.

## Men, Women, Taiji: Taiji and the Feminine Ideal

By Chris Nelson

Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan is first and foremost a martial art. That simple fact is made clear when a movement is explained and its martial application revealed. The violence inherent in the system provides a flashpoint between the art of taiji and the cultural baggage that most women are burdened with.

I must reveal here a bias in this discussion. Being a man, my observations are by necessity second hand. The conclusions I have come to are an amalgam of my personal observation of my female students and discussions I have had on this topic with them.

The issue of violence is not a dominant one in our art. There are no confrontations in our practice, and even push-hands can be a gentle and relaxing exercise. But the martial imagery, as well as the biomechanics of style, deal directly with issues of power. More precisely, taiji deals with issues of exercising and controlling power within one's own body. And that is where the conflict lies.

Issues of control of the female body have been wrestled with for several millennia. For the majority of recorded history, the issue was clear; women belonged to the men that had quite literally bought them. The right to vote for women was only ratified at the beginning of the century, less than 80 years ago. A woman's ability to control her fertility and her economic well-being are barely 40 years old. Entire books have been written on the present culture's negative image of women and their bodies, and hardly need to be repeated here. It should therefore come as no surprise that issues of control over one's own body are far from resolved for some women. And this can be seen cross-generationally, though younger women seem more comfortable with the idea of using their bodies in more forceful fashion.

Another complication arises from the mechanics of the style. The emphasis on hips and thighs in the movements brings focus on a portion of the body laden with various connotations. Issues of body image, gender, reproduction and sex, as well as abuse for some,

makes the area a very sensitive topic for many female practitioners. And yet it is impossible to correctly perform the movements of the style without fully engaging the hips or the pelvis.

An example of this issue arose in class one day. One of the female students, while performing a simple push-hands exercise, was never breaking from simple circular movement. She was not expressing energy in a straight line (a push to the opponent's shoulder). The exercise was performed at low speed, so that there were no worries of injuries. The student nevertheless was not rising fully on the back leg, turning the hips appropriately and pushing. Not until I placed my hands on her hips (with her permission) did she finally move her hips the final six inches, turning her move from a weak to a powerful push. That last movement was well within her physical range of motions. But it was not within her psychological one.

In typical Daoist fashion, this issue brings about both positives and negatives. Teachers of the style must be more aware and understanding of the difficulties that some women have to face in order to correctly practice taiji. By facing these very issues, women are offered a way to work through and deal in a positive way with the internal issues of body politics.



## Questions and Answers

Wang Laoshi began to answer questions from members with the second issue of the *AWYMTA Journal*. He has been generous and open, providing a direct forum for students and teachers to share the investigation of Yangjia Michuan and all related matters. Questions have come from different sources: mail, email, passed along from student and/or teacher. The journal has also printed answers to questions posed to Master Wang at workshops or lectures. The first question, on Zhan, Nian, Lian and Sui, came up in a tuishou workshop.



**Q:** Laoshi, could you expand upon your explanation of *Zhan*, *Nian*, *Lian* and *Sui*? (New York, 1996)

**A:** I hope to explain the principles in a way that makes them a little bit clearer. The first is *Zhan*. This is like having something very sticky and using it to pick something up. This means you are in the active position, and you are actively going for things and picking them up. So, *Zhan* is an active verb.

The second one, *Lian*, means that you tie all these things together you take a little of this, a little of that, put them all together and tie them up. *Lian* is also an active verb.

Now for the other two: *Nian* and *Sui*. *Nian* is a passive verb. It means that you end up stuck to someone else. You are stuck there and you don't dare leave. This is different from an active position where you are actively seeking things and when you seek them, they become stuck to you. The idea of the passive position is that you accidentally bump into something and get stuck. Once you are stuck to something, you can't let go. And, if that is true, it means that you are in the passive stuck position.

You can only get out when you see an opportunity. You have to wait for the right timing and right opportunity before you can become unstuck.

*Sui* is also a passive verb that means, for example, that if someone is in front, you always have to follow behind. This indicates you are in *Sui* - or the passive following position. If that person does not follow you, then they become lost. In tuishou (push hands) that means they are pushed away. When in a *Sui* situation you have to follow - you don't have a choice. *Sui* means that you are in the passive following position, and you can't get out of that situation unless you have the right opportunity.

So of these four verbs, two are active and two are passive. Also, two are described as yang and two as yin. The active verbs we call yang. The passive verbs we call yin. Yang is empty; that is, it looks empty but indicates an active idea. Whenever a person is in the active position, they can do whatever they want to do. This indicates you are in the active position. If you are in the yin position, then you are constantly following. You are always following the will of the other. Only by finding the right opportunity can you escape that situation. If you don't follow in this manner, then you are not able to deflect the active person's pushes. Oftentimes in tuishou we say, "Why are you putting all of your strength into that person's body?"

Sometimes you are hanging on your partner like a hook. You use your arms and are just hanging on your partner. Then, in a way, you are at the disadvantage. You have given your entire body weight to your partner, and now if you don't follow you will be in trouble. I spoke about this earlier today. If everything is going smoothly it is a sign you are in the advantageous position, and you are in the active *Zhan* or *Lian* positions - that your *qi* has connected to your partner's *qi*. There are no impediments to your *qi* connecting with your partner's. If you are in the disadvantageous position, you are trying to avoid a big push. In order to avoid that push while in the disadvantageous *Nian* or *Sui* positions you have to be passively sticking. You can't do what you want to do. While in the *Nian* and *Sui* positions you must stick to your partner's *qi* but without having any will of your own. Your partner will feel as if gum stuck to him, but you need to stay in this position. You need to stay connected or attached to your partner's *qi*, otherwise, if you create a separation your partner can take advantage of that separation to give you a big push. In *Nian* or *Sui* situations use *qi* to stick to your partner's *qi*; become one with your partner's *qi*. And not just *qi*, but also *Jin* (internal force). *Lian* has everything to do with connecting to your partner's *qi*, and the energy that is being channeled outward. You have to connect with that too. All of these things are mixed together. You could write a book about *Zhan*, *Nian*, *Lian* and *Sui*.

If you begin to understand you will find it gets deeper and deeper as your tuishou improves. The mysteriousness of tuishou now begins to get clearer and clearer. [When I am] In the *Zhan* type energy I connect immediately to your qi and can push you over. [When I am] In *Nian* your hand moves to my hand, immediately connecting to my qi but I do not create a separation and immediately stick to your qi also. So even if you wanted to shake me away, I would not go. If you can understand this concept, your tuishou will improve greatly. *Lian* is taking all these things and tying them up. This is the second active verb. It means that if you want to get away, I catch you again and tie you up. *Sui* is a passive verb, it means that if your partner says turn right, you have to turn right. If your partner says turn left, you must turn left. You have got to follow that energy. If you don't, then you create a separation and will be pushed over. The moment you leave your partner you have created a separation, and your partner will push you over.

The more you practice tuishou, little by little an understanding of these four different types of energy and verbs will develop. If your partner wants to push you, you relax, relax, relax. If he doesn't move, you don't move either - but you are connected to his qi immediately. Then your partner will find it very difficult to find a separation point from which to push you. It is especially useful if your partner is just about to push you and you catch their energy. Then their energy comes in and bounces off you, and they are pushed away by their own push.

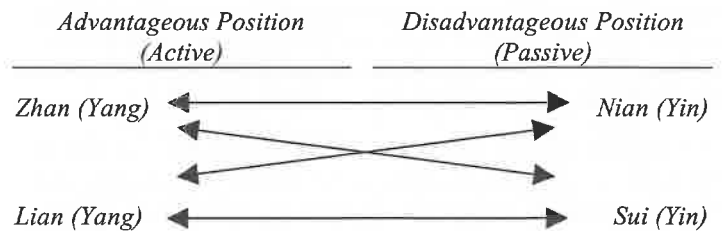
Try not to become too obsessed with this. If you take the simpler route the concise, simple route - then you will actually begin to understand these complex issues better than if you choose the complicated route. The more you become obsessed with this and try to understand it from a complicated point of view, the less you will be able to understand it. Everything takes time and as your gongfu improves, just naturally you will come to an understanding of these four terms.

This morning I spoke about the idea of trying to keep clear the differences between advantageous and disadvantageous positions. For the person in the advantageous (*Shun shi*) position, their use of qi and jin (internal force) turns out to be these four characters. A person in a disadvantageous (*Bei shi*) position who has not yet been pushed over, is using the last two passive energies. What this means is that if you have not been pushed away - your passive energies are good. The person who has been pushed away or bounced off, means that they are full of hard force and are unable to distinguish between these different types of forces. They don't understand the idea of how to be passively connected to their partner's qi - or the idea of totally allowing yourself to follow your partner. You are so close, you become your partner's shadow. There is no separation. And so this idea of advantageous and disadvantageous is really, truly important. Remember that if you are in the advantageous position, you should be actively using your active energies. If you are in the disadvantageous positions, you should not bring out your active energies at this moment, or you will push yourself over. Quickly relax but stay connected to your partner. Become shadow-like and use the *Nian* and *Sui*, re yin energies, then you won't be pushed away.

I hope that helps clarify *Zhan*, *Nian*, *Lian* and *Sui*

**Q:** Wang Laoshi, would you elaborate on *Zhan*, *Nian*, *Lian* and *Sui* and their uses? (Spring 1996)

**A:** These four movements can be explained by the following diagram:



**Note Also** that anything can follow a *Zhan*, not just a *Lian*; similarly, *Sui* does not necessarily follow a *Nian*.

**Q:** What do you mean by "spiraling" energy, how is it created and where is it found in the Yang Family Hidden Tradition Taijiquan?

**A:** Every move in the Yang Family Hidden Tradition of Taijiquan that has an "up" or a "down" necessarily includes the idea of a spiral, or more specifically, a spiral curve occurring in a series of planes around a central axis. We could also describe this as a helix.

The spiral, created by a coiling and uncoiling of the leg as a screw thread combined with the turning of the hips and waist, varies from large to small depending on the degree of turning of the hips and waist.

Almost every move in this style of taijiquan includes the principle of the spiral. Wherever you find legs and waist involved in a movement you will find a spiral.

Under normal circumstances, the spiral is gentle. If, however, you use the energy created by the spiral in combination with the internal energy (*neijin*) and release it—well—the result is something entirely different.

**Q:** Let's say I have a knee injury, for example, and am not able to practice taiji for four weeks. Is there something I can do, like mentally doing the practice with the breathing while I heal? (California, 1996)

**A:** Yes, you can visualize yourself practicing the form. That is very helpful, but it is actually more difficult to try to visualize yourself doing it than to do it physically. This is the development of strength of mind, and we should be doing it anyway - injury or not. While it is a very good idea to practice with the mind, visualizing yourself doing the form, it is much more difficult than anyone can imagine.

Also, if you do have an injury, such as a sore knee or ankle, you do not have to squat down all the way. Just go as far down as you want to. Never push it. It does not mean you have to stop [practicing]. All the different heights are okay. Many older people, for example, are certainly not going to be able to do the squats. It doesn't matter. They can keep their legs straighter. They do not have to squat down as far, but they can still do the form. And it is perfectly all right.

[Q&A]

**Q:** *It is said that taiji free fighting is derived mostly from practicing the form. Is this true? (France,1995)*

**A:** In free fighting, or San Shou, of course you need to be able to practice the form. But this comes from practicing the form well and being able to separate the form into small pieces and applying them. However, technology today has leaped forward in the area of weapons, such as bombs, missiles, automatic weapons, etc., so it is meaningless to use martial arts/taiji or the idea of fighting somebody like this in the modern world.

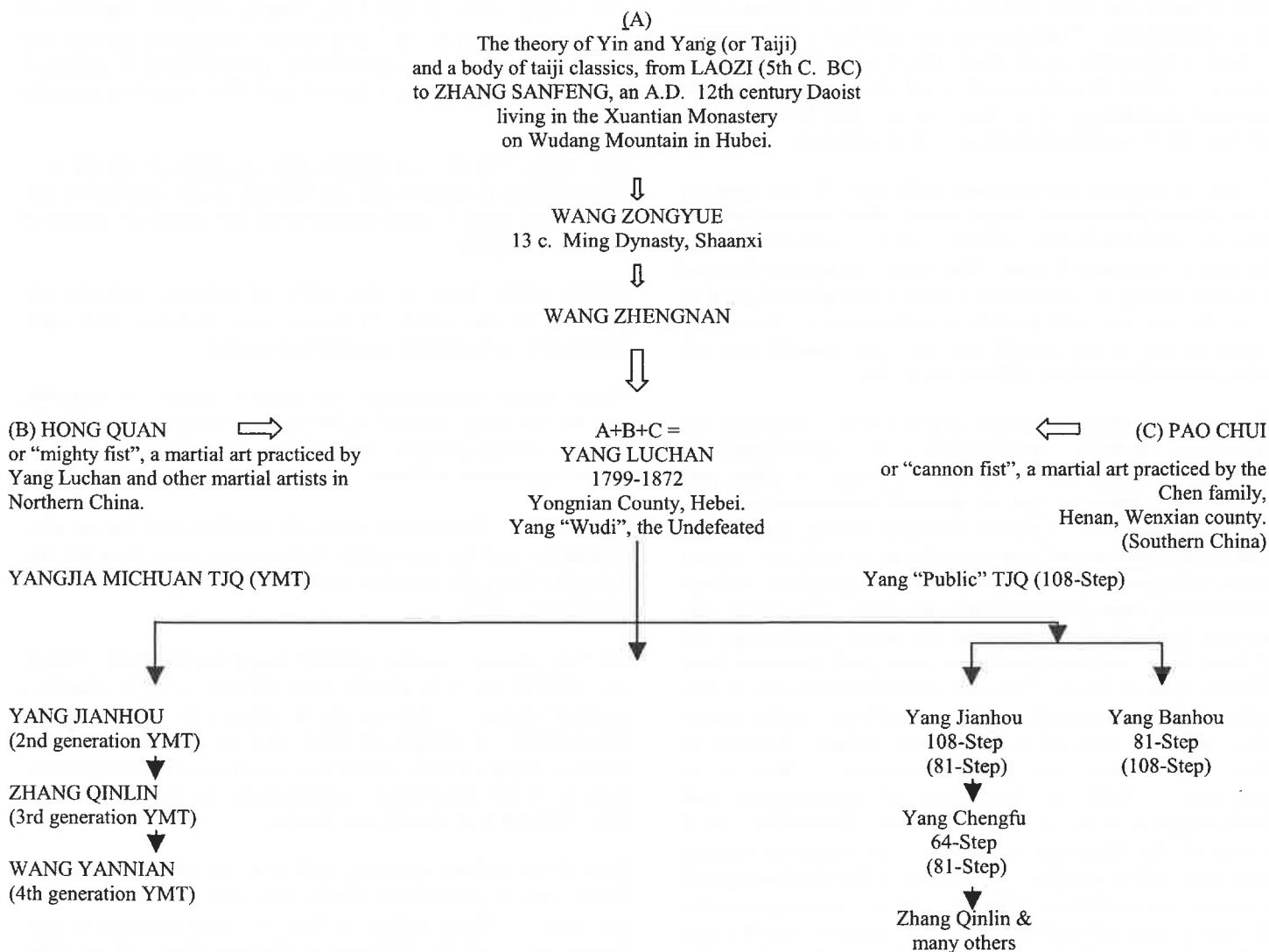
But why do we still want to practice taijiquan and its martial applications? First of all, there is the idea of maintaining your health, because in modern society there are many things that are harmful to the body. This includes the food we eat, the things we drink and even the roads we walk on. If you depend only on medicine to keep yourself in good health, that is not the answer. You need to have a way to keep yourself healthy using your own body and mind.

The most mysterious aspect [to our study] is the idea of getting yin and yang to be one. The human body is yin and yang and is made up of positive and negative ions. Because we are made up of these positive and negative ions, it makes sense to use the theory of yin and yang to improve health and replenish the positive and negative aspects of the physical body.

**Q:** *Would you please clarify "81-Step" Taijiquan?*

**A:** The 108-Step was what was handed down by Yang Jianhou; the 81-Step was what was handed down by Yang Banhou. Even though Yang Jianhou also handed down the 81-Step, he taught and handed down the 108-Step more than the 81-Step. Similarly, even though Yang Banhou also handed down the 108-Step, he taught and handed down the 81-Step more than the 108-Step. The 64 Step was handed down by Yang Chengfu. Even though Yang Chengfu also handed down the 81-Step, he taught and handed down the 64-Step more than the 81-Step.

The following diagram illustrates the above.



**Q:** *In the form there seems to be two types of movements: one type for push hands, rounded and yielding; the other, combative. Since we don't strike in push hands, how do we think about these movements as a practice?*

**A:** In real tuishou, there is no limit to what you can use. So, of course, all the strikes can be used. In a regular class, these movements would not be used. If you were going to use them, then it is a question of your control over your own body. The purpose is not to attack a person and purposely injure them. It has to do with your own gongfu/ability, and do you have control over your own movements. You have to be able to control yourself, then you can use them. For example, let's say I'm moving in and using an elbow strike. You can still practice how to channel energy (fajin) using these types of strikes, but you must make sure your partner is not injured. For the most part, the person you are using these [strikes] with would not know exactly what to do, and wouldn't have their hand ready [in the correct defensive position]. Then you would certainly injure them. However, you can still practice channeling energy outward using these strikes (or any other "strike" movement) with a partner, but in a controlled situation. Then you are not injuring them but still working on how to channel energy outward.

**Q:** *Some teachers teach "Grasp the Sparrow's Tail" with four twists of the waist and with the body spiraling down, then up, then down and finally up again for the ji. Some teachers show this move with the turns of the waist but with no up and down spiral movement of the body. Which is correct?*

**A:** Sometimes I teach "Grasp the Sparrow's Tail" without describing the spiral aspect because many students find this concept difficult to see and to understand in the beginning. Since the spiral is inherent in most moves of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan, from Basic Exercises through Tuishou, I suggest teachers describe the waist and leg motion as seen in the "Grasp the Sparrow's Tail" as a spiral with the body moving up and down, rather than staying at one height, as early as possible. Beginning students tend to exaggerate the up side of the spiral, causing them to over turn their waists and send the hip out too far. To avoid this, introduce the spiral without exaggerating.

**Q:** *Which part of the sole of the foot should be rooted to the ground? Should it be certain points or the whole sole that is in contact with the ground?*

**A:** The weight of the foot is evenly distributed over the whole sole of the foot. The "root" is at Yungquan.

**Q:** *Laoshi used to teach "Monkey Retreats" in section two and three of the long form with rising (spiraling up) on the exhale. Now he teaches it with sinking (spiraling down) on the exhale. Which is correct? I have the same question for "Bend the Bow, Shoot the Tiger" move in section three.*

**A:** In both "Monkey Retreats" and "Bend the Bow, Shoot the Tiger" it is possible to release energy on a spiral down or on a spiral up. Students should be able to practice both these moves either on a spiral up on a spiral down. Both ways are correct.

**Q:** *I assume that "Punch from Under the Elbow" can also be done either as sink or rise on the exhale?*

**A:** While "Monkey Retreats" and "Bend the Bow, Shoot the Tiger" are taught both ways so that students learn how to release energy on the upward spiral and the downward spiral, "Punch from Under the Elbow" should be practiced only on the drop and would be incorrect done standing up. This may not be obvious until one studies the applications.

**Q:** *What is it that we hear on the audiotape of the long form at the end of many moves (i.e., "Needle at Bottom of the Sea") that sounds like "ku lou" (I can't distinguish tones)?*

**A:** The words that sound like *ku lou* mean "squat down" in Taiwanese.

**Q:** *I think I hear the phrase "ku lou" at places where "squat down" doesn't make sense to me: the exhale on horizontal elbow, single arm sweep, elbow-shoulder stroke, cast the body (at the kick-punch). Is this true?*

**A:** Yes, "*Ku lou*" or squat down, means to sink deeper into one leg. For example, at the "elbow, shoulder" strike this would happen when the two arms circle up, come together in front of chest and then you "*ku lou*" or sink down before extending the foot and later push the elbow forward.

**Q:** *Should the sword arm extend towards the sky in the Kunlun sword movement that is like Rhinoceros Gazes at the Moon" or should it extend on a horizontal plane?*

**A:** In the fan form and in the new sword (Wudang) the arm should go as high as it can (even to the point of pointing straight up - if you are able!). In the Kunlun sword form, just at the end of duan two and just before duan three this move is intentionally at shoulder height. Also the movements that are in duan four that are like the movements in the fan form to the diagonals - that movement too is intentionally to shoulder height—no higher. In other words, yes, position of the sword arm is the same at the end of duan two/start of duan three: Shoulder height. And Yes~ the Rhino move in the fan and in the Wudang sword form are 135° or more if you want.

**Q:** *Regarding the practice of Tuishou Basic Exercise #14 Dà Lǚ: The "B" person, the one who does zhǒu, kào first, I'm unclear of the direction of kào. I was under the impression "B" steps straight ahead for zhǒu, then steps on the diagonal for kao*

**A:** This is correct. The "B" person steps forward on the cardinal axis with her left foot while making a right elbow zhǒu aimed along the diagonal. The "B" person then steps forward on the diagonal with her right foot while making a right shoulder kào, which is also aimed along the diagonal. The "B" person's step is square to the front for the zhǒu (which is along the diagonal); and to the diagonal for the kào (which is also along the diagonal). This is to say the "B" person's zhou and kào are both along the diagonal.

Please note: The elbow strike (zhǒu) is not in the same direction as the first footstep forward. Perhaps this is where the confusion lies.

[Q&A]

**Q:** *A question arose while I was teaching that I couldn't answer: "Why do teachers of the Cheng Man Ching Style and other Yang styles start with heels together, toes apart and then step out to the right, while we start with heels apart, toes together, and step out to the left — just opposite?"*

**A:** Students often ask why we start with the toes together and the heels slightly apart and I reply when the toes are together the qi is well concentrated in the dāntián; when the toes are apart, qi in the dāntián is dispersed. I often compare this to Chinese ravioli (jiǎozi) — when the edges of jiǎozi are pressed together, the filling stays in; when the edges separate, the filling comes out. Also, I think you will find that when standing, say in Basic Stance, with your toes turned inward, you will feel much more rooted and stable than when standing in Basic Stance with your toes turned outward.

Because the left leg is considered yáng and the right leg yīn, we begin with the yáng (left) leg moving first.

**Q:** *In the taiji classics, it says: "in the curve seek the straight; store then release." Would you please explain that statement?*

**A:** "In the curve, find the straight"—[for example] when you are sinking down, in the sinking is the curve. If you want to find a way to channel that stored energy outward, you've got to spring up. Before you have channeled the energy outward, you first have to gather in—in a curve or in a spring. If you don't have that energy stored, then there is nothing that can come out. This is also true in the form. You can't stand straight up in the form all the time. You need to have this up and down, coiling and uncoiling to gather and release energy. We can describe the spiral up and spiral down as the curve and the straight. You can have a bend in the leg and then you need to straighten it out. So here you have a curve in the leg and the straightening of the leg which imitates the idea of a spring in the leg. This is also true of all the joints. You have the ability to store energy in all the places that bend: the back, the arms—everywhere can be an energy storage point. This is the idea. In the curve or in the bend you can store. You can't always stay bent, and you can't always stay straight. You need to be alternating between up and down, bent and unbent, etc., using these ways to store and release energy.

If you are able to gather or store, then you have something to release. This is called "Kai He" or "opening and closing" or "gathering and releasing." You can't always be on gathering, nor always on release. If you don't gather anything what are you going to be channeling outward. It is just like having money in your pocket. Without money in the pocket you have nothing to spend. You look in your pockets, and they are empty. When practicing the form or doing tuishou, the idea is the same. You need to be able to store. You need to know how to store energy, gather your partner's incoming force and then channel it have nothing coming in, you have nothing going out. These two things must be coordinated. This is coordinating one's internal energy with gathering and releasing. It is also a question of posture. Your posture and your energy must be matched in order to absorb and release.

I often say to people to try and get more spring in the leg. Try to get more of an extension, more of a coil. This means that the more you can open up, the more you are able to store. If you can

store, then you can release. This is the theory and principle of these two lines.

**Q.** *Should one work on the applications or the form's movements? Some people say the applications are not important and that you can practice the form without a real understanding of the applications by just paying attention to the principles alone. (France, July 1995)*

**A.** The first thing we have to ask is: "Is knowing the applications important?" This can be answered in two ways. Let's say that you are already elderly and are only interested in maintaining a certain level of health—then it is fine to just practice the form. Other than people who are elderly, everyone else should know and work on the applications. Once you know the applications of the form, the practice of your form improves, and it is less easy to forget the form. This is because you understand the applications and you know how the hands should move. Also, the more you practice, the more correct your form gets. If you don't know the applications of the form, little by little the form starts to change, and gradually it starts to diverge from the original.





# 2000-2003



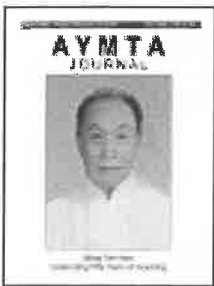
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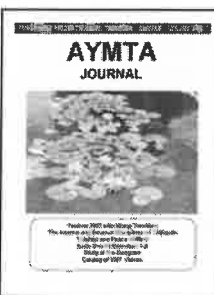
The Fall 2000 issue was dedicated in it's entirety to the Celebration of Wang Yen-nien's 50 years of Teaching. It was published with the invaluable assistance of Wang Yen-nien and Julia Fisher-Fairchild. It featured special binding, a color photograph on the cover, and many historical images provided by Master Wang.

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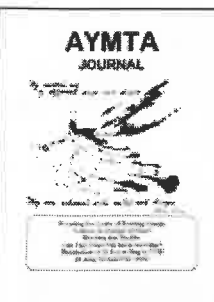
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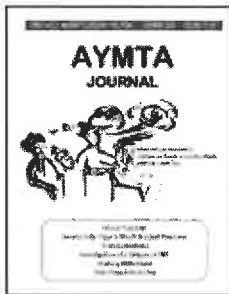
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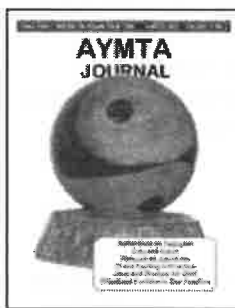
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It was 36 pages in length.





## Tuīshǒu and Peace of Mind

By Terri Pellitteri

During an intensive *tuīshǒu* workshop, I listened to Julia F. Fairchild from Taipei, Taiwan as she invited us to expand our thinking and consider using *tuīshǒu* (push hands) for healing rather than hurting. It was at this point I decided to write about *tuīshǒu* and its usefulness in healing the long-term effects of violence. While this is a fairly personal account, my hope is that practitioners will follow Julia's advice and realize "peace of mind" is the goal of *tuīshǒu*, and life.

The experience of physical and sexual violence, as well as the repeated witnessing of such acts, damages the mind, body, and spirit. It alters how one perceives and navigates the world. Individuals who have endured or witnessed violence often develop ways to disconnect their mind from the body. While it may be useful to disengage from acts of brutality, gaining proficiency in this coping mechanism can have lasting unwanted consequences, especially as it relates to emotional and physical intimacy.

In the moment of fear, it is difficult for the mind to distinguish between actual and perceived danger, and many of us do not stay with fear long enough to make that distinction. In addition, if we have taught the mind to separate and flee during times of assault, things associated with attack (movement, closeness, touch, feelings of vulnerability, smells, sounds, etc) are often thereafter perceived as dangerous, regardless of the intent. Because many of us respond to our perceptions as if they were real, individuals who have experienced violence or abuse frequently exist in a state of disconnect. While the body may be present, the mind and spirit are not available.

A primary principle of *tuīshǒu* is mind/body connection. It is the mind that guides *qì* (chi), which in turn influences the body. Only when we realize we are not our bodies, can we transcend fear and gain peace of mind.

Although we might get to this state through a variety of means (*tàijí*, meditation, yoga, psychotherapy, etc.) Julia Fairchild spoke about how pushing hands with another "speeds up" the process. In her words, "*tuīshǒu* puts you in a relationship with others and when we are in a relationship

with other people, we catapult ourselves into the enlightenment phase." And I believe this to be true. When I added the practice of *tuīshǒu*, things moved very quickly. I had little choice but to confront my feelings of being disconnected.

My initial exposure to *tuīshǒu* was through a "Push Hands" workshop early on in my *tàijíquán* training. While I recognized the importance of staying focused and working through some of my difficulties in my solo practice, I was truly unprepared for the experience of working with a partner. As I retired to my room that first night, I laid in bed feeling the "violations" of the day. Sleep was impossible. The hands that had pushed at my arms, shoulders, and abdomen stayed with me all through the night. Over and over I reexperienced the feeling of touch in an almost claustrophobic way. In addition, even the slightest of sounds coming from the hallway caused my whole body to startle. As I left the workshop, I could not envision *tuīshǒu* becoming a part of my life.

My second exposure was equally disruptive. I was restless and detached for most of the workshop and by the last day I began to mix past and current experiences. As my arms rounded the push hand's move of *Pēng Lǚ Jǐ Ān* my partner became a video of the past. Swirling around us were bits and pieces of previous abuse – a hand ready to strike, a body being pressed into the ground, a man spilling out rage. *Tuīshǒu* had triggered a stream of flashbacks.

Unfortunately, fear prevented me from seeing this experience as an avenue to healing. Had I looked more closely, I would have focused less on the flashbacks and more on the fact that my mind somehow managed to pull my attention back to my partner.

For the next two years I concentrated on my solo practice and turned down invitations to participate in *tuīshǒu*. My goal was to learn what I could about myself, work through some of my fears, and strengthen my mind. Involving a partner at this point felt too disruptive.

In reflection, I think it was valuable to develop a solid *Tàijí* foundation prior to bringing *tuīshǒu* back into my practice.

Through a very slow process I could begin to discover my body and how it moved through space. I could then take this a step further and use the principles of *Tàijí* to study how I related to the world in general, identifying the barriers I construed for myself and the obstacles I needed to overcome. In doing this, I was better prepared to move along the path of healing.

For people who have experienced physical or sexual violations, healing the wounds of intimacy is often very difficult. To be physically and/or emotionally intimate one must invite closeness, and put to rest feelings of shame and fear. One must also experience feelings of vulnerability. Allowing oneself to go into that vulnerable space of intimacy can be difficult for most people, but if you've experienced physical and/or sexual violations, it can become utterly overwhelming. Feelings of vulnerability have a way of directly and immediately reconnecting the violated person to those same feelings of shame and fear she/he had in the past and has worked a lifetime to stay disconnected from.

In thinking about reentering the practice of push hands, I realized *tuīshǒu* had elements of intimacy – closeness, vulnerability, and fear. My hope was I could take what I learned through the experience of *tuīshǒu*, and transfer it to other relationships that involved intimacy. It seemed logical that I could use the principles of this martial art to help me move through my finale stages of healing.

As I engaged in push hands, I initially blocked everything that came towards my body, including my partner's breath, closeness, and touch. Tension filled my extremities and fear captured my breathing. I tried to apply the aspects of mindfulness and softness, but automatic responses repeatedly took over. Although I often felt on the verge of tears, I shut down my emotions to hide this from others.

When I wasn't warding off danger, I was detaching from the present. It was not uncommon for my mind to go into the past as I watched my teacher demonstrate a move, or as I practiced with a partner. Through this lens, the demonstration became a brutal beating, and my engagement became an assault or sexual violation.

Through the guidance of psychotherapy, I came to understand that protection and withdrawal were characteristic of how I responded to interactions involving physical or emotional intimacy. I also came to understand that if I moved into the past, or sent my spirit away, the result was always the same. I could not be one with myself, nor could I be in relationship with another. I lost the opportunity to stay connected.

The only way I knew to break the cycle was to learn to pull my mind back into the present, and at least initially, practice with my eyes shut. I was beginning to understand that when I came to a place of fear, I could easily be drawn into something familiar (such as a past memory) even if this was unpleasant. In observing myself closely, I tried to see if I could identify the very moment my mind started to drift towards the past. And in that moment, it was essential that I called back my spirit, and not slip into this familiarity.

At first this was difficult to do, and I often failed. But this is where good instruction and a solid foundation of *tàijiquán* because a valuable asset. My mind was already in a place of strength and it was being fine-tuned through the help of a competent teacher. I was fortunate to be working with someone who could articulate and demonstrate the principles of this art, and who could stress the need/ability to push through fear. Never in this process was I, or any student, asked to identify our fears or anxieties. Nor was origin important. In my teacher's mind, fear (regardless of the source) was simply a distraction and something that kept us from being in the present. Intrusions and perceptions were seen as interference, and nothing more.

Practicing with my eyes shut helped me eliminate some of the distractions. It also helped me undermined my strong need to anticipate and protect. By focusing on a single element, such as touch, I started to develop sensitivity. Not only did I begin to read my partner's intent, but I began to stay with my own discomfort. Overtime I was able to gradually "open my eyes" to the distractions surrounding me without losing the ability to stay focused and in the present. In doing so, I was learning to build in the bigger picture of interaction, and how to transfer this to other intimate relationships.

Now that I was having some success with mind/body reconnection (the first step in transcending fear), it was time to move on to the next step and discover how to bond and connect to another person. In other

words, how to become one with my partner and let go of the need to remain separate and disconnected.

For months I worked on my proficiency to let go of resistance and stick with my partner. My goal was to become responsive and soft, and I found the herb Kava to be useful in this process. A small dose allowed my body to relax, while helping my mind stay focused. Through this combination, relaxed body / alert mind, I experienced my first sense of connection. In accepting the transfer of energy from my partner to myself, I knew I was on the right path. My next step was to lessen my discomfort with giving my energy to another.

In examining my practice, I found that as I approached my partner I often avoided making contact. I would typically cup my hand and sweep across his/her chest rather than follow through with the push. In trying to understand the dynamics of this, I realized that as my mind and qi moved towards my partner, there was a moment of commitment where I felt my body somewhat exposed. Somehow giving my energy to another was tapping into feelings of vulnerability.

With time, I began to understand that pushing hands with another was similar to the "give and take" aspects of a relationship, and I learned to recognize places of fear. I also learned that perceived fear was far more intrusive than the actual experience. Any time I anticipated vulnerability and/or fear, feelings of distress spread throughout my body and I often felt flooded and overwhelmed with sensation. However, if I forced myself to stay in the present (to stay with the intimate experience) these feelings began to dissipate, opening the door to a more pleasant and satisfying response.

As I continued to work on softness, I inadvertently ventured into two other important areas of healing, detoxification and compassion.

It is not uncommon for survivors of sexual and/or physical abuse to say they can "feel" the assailant years after the violation. Traumatic experiences can become imprinted or trapped in the body with the results being illness, disease, and/or intrusive body memories.

In my own personal experience, my shoulders had encoded memories of force, making them tight and restrictive. In practicing with my teacher, he would comment about the tension in my arms and

the coldness of my hands. At one point he told me the qi would never reach my hands, and warm them, until I let go of the fear trapped in my shoulders.

To free myself, I imagined my shoulders were soft like butter and any force (even the force of an assailant) would simply go right through them. There would be no resistance. As I combined this visualization with my practice of *tuīshǒu*, my shoulders started to get softer. I could begin to feel qi circulate around and through this area, as well as through other areas of my body. Eventually I was able to give up the illusion that I needed protection. And in doing so, I chose peace of mind over fear.

I found it intriguing that as I detoxified the memories from my body, they were replaced by feelings of compassion. In addition, I could more easily move into the strike (return of energy) aspect of *tuīshǒu*. There was less fear surrounding this contact. To be honest, it was difficult for me to know which came first, compassion or the ability to return energy. Both had a common catalysis, the rage was finally leaving my body.

Someone once told me that a measure of healing is how quickly one can let go of experiences which intruded from the past, and it took some time for me to understand this calibration. I now realize health is a continuous process of being centered (mindful), having qi (life force), yin/yang (balance), and softness (no attachments). When I bring these principles fully into my life, outside forces, such as the past, no longer define my existence.

In thinking about *tuīshǒu* for healing, I find myself with three impressions. One, healing does not necessarily follow a direct route, and as one navigates this unforeseen journey, it is useful to have the guidance of a teacher/spiritual advisor. Two, the process of recovering one's awareness is speeded up within the context of a relationship, such as in *tuīshǒu*. And finally, relationships are for healing, not hurting – a choice one makes. Through this network of connections, one can learn to put aside fear and move into the space of intimacy.

Terri Pellitteri is a student at Empty Mind Full Belly School of Internal Boxing Art

# The Internal and External Disciplines of Tàijíquán

By Wang Yen-nien

## 何謂內外雙修的太極之道

*Tàijí* is the Way [theory] and the practice of *Tàijíquán* is an art – such is the Daoist approach to training in the martial arts. The Daoist martial arts are not intended for daily rounds of battle; they are physical and mental disciplines that train the self in temperament as well as in body. Harm is done neither to others nor to oneself – these disciplines strengthen the body and promote longevity.

Before the ancient Master Zhang Sanfeng had learned the *Dào*, people frequently tried to kill him, and because he had to defend himself, he was also forced to kill people. In the Chinese martial tradition, practitioners of the fighting arts enjoyed no guarantees of survival, and life was short. It was often a very simple law – one killed or was killed – and no defeat went unavenged. In short, a vicious cycle of combats and killings prevailed.

After Zhang Sanfeng withdrew into Daoist retreat on Wudang Mountain, he realized that such a state of affairs was as unreasonable as it was inhumane. He set himself to developing a martial art, *Tàijíquán*, that would transform both the moral character and the physical bearing of its practitioners. Instead of brute strength, his art would utilize the powers of the mind and of the vital energy, *qì*. This way, he would not only ensure his own survival, but save countless others from a sorry fate as well.

While nowadays beating and killing people is illegal, martial arts competitions are still allowed. In these, however, there are not only winners and losers, but also contestants who are injured, and the winners are therefore also, in a sense, losers. How? Because of the internal injuries they receive that may go unnoticed. While the losers may be obviously injured both outside and in – and this is to be expected if one loses – the winners are also slowly but surely shortening their lives. In the interests of ensuring one's health and longevity, therefore, it is best to abstain from competition.

In early days, all manner of competitions were held in order to promote wider interest in practicing *Tàijíquán*. Nowadays, however, because there is such emphasis on there being winners and losers, both parties are liable to suffer injuries both external and internal.

In actual fact, the *Tàijíquán* we generally refer to is intended to be a martial art that causes no harm.

Most people think that martial arts are systems of attack and defense, but the martial aspect of *Tàijíquán* is directed to clearing obstructions from the blood vessels and many channels of the body. It is an art that combines internal and external disciplines to enhance the potency of Daoist practice. What are targeted are one's own physiological functions, while what benefits are one's own innermost powers.

The literary and the martial arts are both processes of Daoist self-cultivation, and are not ways to defeat others. They involve self-improvement and self-discipline, not self-defense. Through virtuous practice and abstention from evil, the two disciplines unite and constitute the Way. *Tàijí* is the Way..

Teacher, Wang Yen-nien

Taipei, May 3, 2001

太極為道,拳為術,這是道家所修鍊的武術。道家的武術不是要去和人天天打打殺殺,道家的武術是要修身養性,鍛煉自己。不傷害別人,也不傷害自己,健身長壽之道。

張三豐祖師沒有修道之前,天天一直有人要殺他,因為他要自衛,他也得殺人。在中國的武林,練武的人生命都沒有保障,很短。經常我殺你,你殺我的。我輸了,還要報復;你輸了,你也要報仇。天天就循環不已的在殺在打。

張三豐到了武當山修道以後,禪悟出這個樣子對做人沒有意義,這樣的生活沒有人性。為了改變練武人的氣質或氣度而研究出來了一套太極拳。用意,用氣,不用力的一種武學。這樣他可以救自己的生命,也可以救其他人的生命。

在現代,打人,殺人是犯法的。而在武術比賽,有輸,有贏,也有人受傷卻是合法的,但贏的人也是輸的人。為什麼贏的也是輸的?因為比賽中無形受了內傷而不知道,輸的人內外全都傷了,輸的人沒保障,贏的人最後慢慢地生命也短了。為了健康長壽,最好就是不比賽。

在初始,為了提高大家練太極拳的興趣而舉辦各種比賽,如今,因為比賽一定要有輸贏,所以雙雙都會受到內外傷害。

其實,我們經常所談的太極拳是一種無傷害的武藝。

武,一般人認為是攻擊與自衛,可是太極拳的武,是為了打通血脈關竅,幫助道功的一種內外雙修之術,打的是自己的經脈關竅,幫助的是自己的內功精修。

文武,是修道的功夫,而不是打人的功夫;是自修自強,而不是自衛。行善而不行惡,文武雙修乃成道。太極即道。

師 王延年

於台北

2001, 5, 3

## Study at the Yen-nien Daoguan

By Kay Reese and Don Klein

We recently returned from our second stay in Taipei studying at the Yen-nien Daoguan and would like to encourage all Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan practitioners to do so if possible. We offer a few comments to help you plan your trip. If you have internet access, also check the AYMTA webpages <http://aymta.org/tailinks.html>.

### Money:

All prices will be given in Taiwan New Dollars (NT\$). The official exchange rate hovers around (NT\$32 to US\$1 but after conversion and transaction fees, it's often lower, so for simplicity divide NT\$ by 30 to estimate US\$.

*Travelers Checks:* many banks charge a charge 0.5 % issuing fee; the Taiwan banks then charge another 1% to exchange them.

*ATMs:* Some US banks charge from .0.5 to 1% exchange rate (Kay's do), others charge none (Don's).

ATMs are certainly the easiest way to get NT\$. We found the Bank of Taiwan ATM machines worked consistently with both our Cirrus & Plus cards, but ICBC machines (recommended by *Lonely Planet*), often cancelled the transactions with no explanation.

### From the Airport to town:

Buses to either the Taipei Main Station or various hotels should cost about NT\$100. If you're getting in late it might be easiest to stay at the YMCA (<http://www.shineyou.com.tw/htdocs/hotel/ymca/english.htm>) within walking distance of Taipei Main Station.

### Telephones:

Some pay phones accept coins, others pre-paid cards. Buy a NT\$100 card from the machine at the airport.

### Addresses:

Taiwan has Roads (路 *Lù*), Streets (街 *Jiē*), Lanes (巷 *Xiàng*) and Alleys (弄 *Lòng*). Roads may have North, South, East, West (北 *Běi*, 南 *Nán*, 東 *Dōng*, 西 *Xī*) designations, and may be further divided into Sections (段 *duàn*), renumbering from 1 in each section. Lanes divert from Roads or Streets at the appropriate numbered address; alleys divert from lanes. So Lane 72 would be between street addresses 70 and 74. A typical address might be 中山北路二段 65 巷 2 弄 3 號 4 樓 = 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, #3, Alley 2, Lane 65, ZhongShan North Road, Section 2.

### Where to Stay?

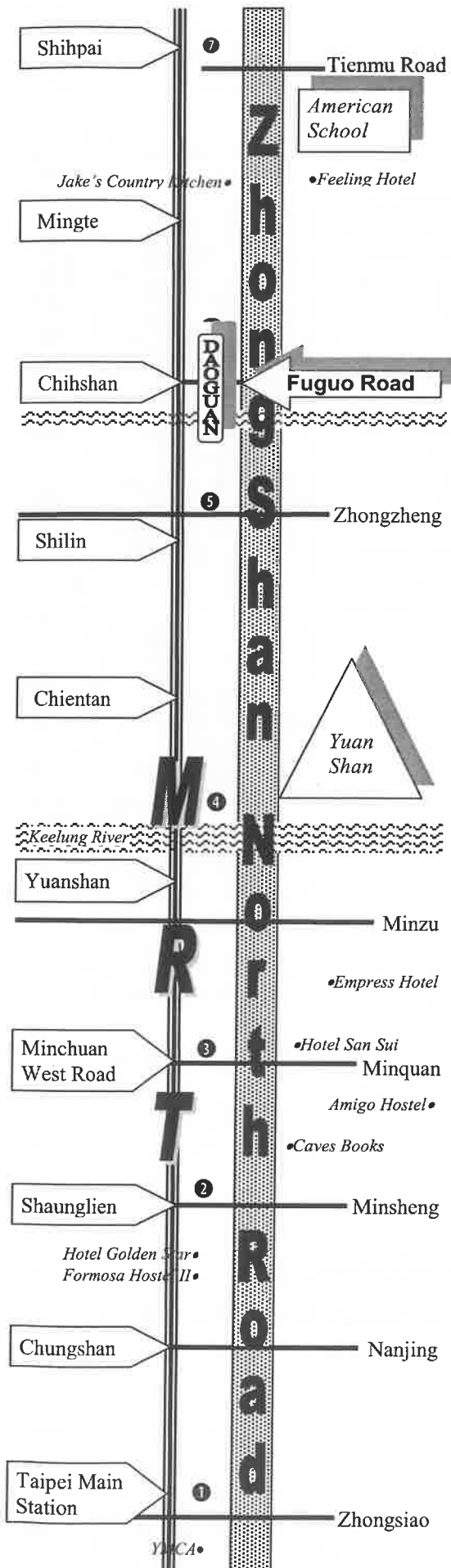
With Taipei's MRT system, you could probably stay almost anywhere with uncomplicated transit to Yuanshan, the Daoguan, and the American School, but it's easiest to stay in the north end of the city. We prefer to be within walking distance of at least one of the class locations. The 1<sup>st</sup> time we lived between the *Mingte* MRT stop and *Zhongshan Bei Lu* and walked to both the American School (10 minutes) and the Daoguan (15 minutes); the last time we were 5 minutes west of the *Yuanshan* MRT stop and walked to Yuanshan (20 minutes).

*Zhongshan Bei Lu* runs North-South and passes all the class locations. The side-bar map represents it and the MRT line as straight parallel lines although neither is truly straight and the distance between them varies - until the *Mingte* MRT stop they are within a block or so of each other; don't try to walk from the *Mingte* stop to *Zhongshan* unless you know the area. The MRT stop names and street names are from the latest *Taipei MRT Route and Information* map and you'll notice two different romanizations: Hanyu Pinyin for the streets and some combination of Wade-Giles and Yale for the MRT stops - compare *Minchuan* and *Minquan*, *Zhongshan* and *Chungshan* (*Jungshan* on other maps). [*Asides:* *Zhongshan* = *Central Mountain* (towering over everything) is an alias of Sun Yat-sen, founder of the Chinese republic. Taiwan sets 1911, the year of the Republic's founding, as year zero, so 90.3.1 represents March 1, 2001.]

If you stay under a month, the choices are hostel or hotel. The hostel of choice is the Formosa II. We stayed there the 1<sup>st</sup> week of our earlier visit; Salah El Hilali from Madison, Francesco Scavetti from Italy, and a number of others stayed there. It's a rather long walk to Yuanshan, but possible. Another choice would be the Amigo Hostel (<http://0808.net/hostel/> US\$7 per night. If we were to use a hotel, we'd certainly consider the Feeling Hotel (<http://www.feelinghotel.com.tw/indexe.htm>) in Tienmu (NT\$1,650-NT\$2,090 per night), within walking distance of both the Daoguan and the American School. Don Coleman and James Sauer stayed at the Empress Hotel (NT\$2,750-NT\$5000 per night), within walking distance of Yuan Shan. The Hotel San Sui is only slightly further south and less expensive (NT\$1,500-NT\$2,400 per night). The larger hotels may charge an additional 10% Service Charge. Check [http://www.dot.taipei.gov.tw/engtrans/prog/Hotel\\_1.asp](http://www.dot.taipei.gov.tw/engtrans/prog/Hotel_1.asp) for a listing of hotels in the *Shihlin* and *Chungshan* districts. There are a number of hotels/motels very close to the Daoguan, but no one has tried them: there's an unverified assumption that many rent by the hour.

If you stay a month or longer, there are additional choices. Some hotels offer monthly "residential rates." While we were there Jacques Craignero from St. Bartheleme stayed at the Gold Star Hotel (NT\$1,100- NT\$2,200 per night). The Gold Star is affiliated with two residential hotels on the lane to the





west of it, one has fairly small rooms for NT\$1,300/month, the other has larger rooms for NT\$1,600/per month plus electricity. They have refrigerators, telephones, TV's; you furnish heaters, fans, hotplates, and the like.

Probably the most common option is to sublet a room in an apartment or to rent or sublet an entire apartment. We've done that both times, as have Charlie Ademec and Jan Phillips. A room should run from NT\$8,000 to NT\$12,000 which may or may not include utilities. Apartments run from NT\$15,000 up, do not include utilities, require a 2 month deposit, and may be unfurnished, partially furnished, or furnished. There are two sources to search on the AYMTA website, but the best resource is the bulletin board in front of *Jake's Country Kitchen* in Tienmu: this time we just missed out on a room in an apartment right around the corner from the Daoguan.

**Local Transportation:**

The MRT (elevated/subway) expanded significantly between our 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> visits and it is possible to get to many places using just the MRT. Cost varies according to distance; the minimum is NT\$20. We recommend buying a NT\$1,000 stored-value card: 1) it only costs NT\$800; 2) you won't need to stand in lines to purchase tickets for each ride. You need your card to enter and exit the stations. As we were leaving Taipei they were installing a new system where one could add value to a stored-value card.

The various bus systems cover the city. A ride costs NT\$15 per zone. Sometimes you pay when you get on, sometimes when you get off. We recommend buying a NT\$300 stored-value card at an MRT station or a 7-11. We also recommend buying *The Bus Guide to Taipei* from *Caves Bookstore*. If all you're going to do is travel up and down Zhongshan, the 220 bus runs the entire length. The Yuanshan/Grand Hotel stop is closer to morning practice than the Jiantan MRT stop.

There are green machines inside the MRT stations just before you exit. They allow you to transfer to any bus by adding a ride to your bus stored-value card. The addition is good for 2 hours, so a lot of people automatically stamp their cards just in case they might take a bus. There is no transfer between buses or a bus and the MRT. [No longer true: the new cards can be used on busses and MRT, transfers subtract from the fare in either direction.]

As indicated, the romanization on street signs varies widely, and in many smaller cities there is no romanization. It's a good idea to have a map that includes the Chinese characters so you can recognize the street signs.

In our 2 month stay we each used 4 NT\$1,000 MRT cards and 2 NT\$300 bus cards.

**How Long to Stay?**

Our 1<sup>st</sup> visit was for a month, the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2 months. Charlie Ademec stayed for 6 months; other people for as little as a week. Although we recommend the trip no matter how short, our feeling is that 1-month was too short; 2 months is the minimum we would recommend if there is an option.

**Cost of Food:**

You can spend as much as you want, but can eat well on NT\$300-400/day. Breakfast of dòujiāng (soymilk) and

under NT\$80. Lunch or dinner in a vegetarian cafeteria (where they weigh the food) or a non-vegetarian cafeteria (by the dish) should cost between NT\$80-NT150. The vegetarian restaurant near where we lived charged NT\$69 for all one could eat. A meal in a small restaurant should be less than NT\$200. If you crave western food, a hamburger or an BLT at Mary's Hamburgers just south of the American School is NT\$40. Sandwiches at the various coffee shops (Doutor, Barrista, Dantes) run between NT\$70 and NT\$150 including a drink.

#### Classes:

Morning Practice at Yuanshan starts at 6:00AM, 6:15AM, or 6:30AM depending on the season. It consists of 1/2 hour of warm-ups followed by one of 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Duans (M & Th), 3<sup>rd</sup> Duan (T & F), Weapons (W & Sa). The membership fee is NT\$500/month with an additional NT\$500 one-time charge.

There are 10AM-12PM taijiquan classes at the Daoguan Sunday and Monday; 10:30-12PM taijiquan classes Wednesday and Friday; 7PM-9PM taijiquan classes Monday and Friday; 7PM-9PM tuishou classes Tuesday and Thursday. Minimum charge is one month, at about NT\$1000 per session per month. Private lessons are NT\$900/hour. That leaves Wednesday nights open for concerts, Beijing or Taiwanese opera, strolls in the parks.

There will probably be additional classes at the American School or other venues.

In addition, Francesco Scavetti, Charlie Ademec, Jacques Craignero and others arranged instruction with other Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan practioners.

#### When to Go?

People advise against June-July-August (hot) and December-January-February (wet and cold), but it's a toss up in the other 6 months. Weather is unpredictable in Taipei and it's hard to judge from prior years' data (checkout <http://www.cwb.gov.tw/V3.0e/index-e.htm> and <http://www.weather.com/weather/climatology/TWXX0021>). We've had good luck: the first time we were there from the 25<sup>th</sup> of October to the 25<sup>th</sup> of November and morning practice was rained out only once; the second time,

from the beginning of March to the end of April, it was rained out 6 or 7 times – less than once a week.

#### Guides:

*Lonely Planet* publishes the best English guide to Taiwan; you might also pick up *Mapping the Culture of Taipei* published by the city government when you are at *Caves Bookstore*. Julia & Anne can provide you with a guide to restaurants and other facilities close to the Daoguan.

#### A Lunchtime Stroll:

Go west from the Daoguan (the F in *FuGuo Rd*); south either on Wenlin Road or Wenchang Road, cross the river, and take the first street to HuaRong Street where there is a lively market from about 10AM to 2PM everyday. The vendors change, so go on various days. Continue on to Jungjeng (Zhongzheng) and go west almost to Wenchang. Haw Huang Vegetarian Restaurant 357 Jungjeng is on the south side of the street. After lunch you can walk to the Shilin MRT stop..



We'll be pleased to answer specific questions at *Kay Reese* <kreese@triton.net> and *Don Klein* <dklein@triton.net>



Joints release the night's  
stiffness as hands wave like clouds  
greeting a new day

Haiku: Jan Phillips, Illustration: Holly Leavy

## 認清推手的目標

## Knowing the Goals of Pushing Hands

By Wang Yen-nien

There are two goals in pushing hands. First, as a means of training in the Dao, it is a path of high achievement. Second, as Zhang Sanfeng noted, purely martial disciplines provide no guarantees for life or health. They are but skills and only reach the bottom tier of art. True cultivation involves combining the intellectual and the martial disciplines, also known as the internal and the external disciplines. Intellectuals practice the former, static path, while men of arms adopt the latter, dynamic path. The combination of the two is known as the "double discipline," and Daoists consider it to be at the highest level of all the forms of training.

Followers of the Dao practice tàijíquán as developed by Zhang Sanfeng. It is based on the Eight Brocades exercises introduced by the Indian Buddhist patriarch Bodhidharma when he found Chinese monks practicing purely static disciplines that did nothing to promote the building of qì. Chinese ascetics in this way returned to the cultivation of qì. Master Zhang Sanfeng combined the internal and external disciplines in tàijíquán (external movement and internal stillness) and silent sitting meditation (external stillness and internal movement). Once in possession of the powerful tàiji method, followers of the Way saved time in their pursuits and obtained marvelous results.

However, neither meditation nor martial practice was sufficient to promote circulation or open the body's channels. Therefore a two-person cooperative practice, known as Pushing Hands, was developed. Using this method, practitioners were ultimately able to promote circulation and open the body's channels and achieve great progress in their practice of the Dao. They found that their powers encompassed the Heavens (absorbing the essences of the sun and the moon), the Earth (absorbing the essences of the Earth) and that by combining the elements wind, water and fire, their spirit, their qì and their soul soon entered into that exalted state where Heaven, Earth and Man are One, and they became holders of the highest wisdom.

As a teacher, and after sixty or seventy years of studying Daoist practice and martial arts, I have come to believe that it is pointless to think about these practices in terms of competition or self-defense. This only harms oneself as well as others. In Daoist practice, people should interact peacefully and aim for daily progress in spirit and spiritual achievement so as to ultimately achieve supreme unity in the Dao.

Laozi, Confucius and Zhang Sanfeng of Chinese antiquity were all practitioners of the Dao. Though they carried swords, they did so not to kill people, but as a means of physical discipline through swordplay. Accordingly, we at the Yang Michuan Tàijíquán Association emphasize performance over competition as a way to encourage exercise and health and fitness. We hope that everyone can achieve the Dao.

Teacher Wang Yen-nien

France, 23 July 2001

推手的目標有二:(1)以修道為目的,是一種高深的行功法。(2)張三豐祖師所講打打.殺殺.生命健康毫無保障,謂之技、藝之末。正確的修行是文.武雙修,也稱為內.外雙修,文者修靜,武者修動,動靜雙修是道家所說最上層的練功法。

修道者以太極拳修行,張三豐祖師所創造,啟於印度達摩長者到中國佛家考察,發現出家人練靜沒有動,每個人毫無生氣,當時即編了一套八段錦神功。因而出家人恢復了生氣。三豐祖師看之此種情形,於似乎創造了太極拳(外動而內靜)及靜坐(外靜而內動),修道者有此太極神功,因此節省許多時間,出現神奇的效果。

靜坐或是練拳,對於血液循環、關竅打通仍嫌不足,然而發明二人對練,即是推手。最後能突破血液循環、關竅打通,對修道大有進步,本身功力可以通天(吸取日.月精華)徹地(吸取地之精華),水.火.風配合本身之精.氣.神很快進入天.人.地合一的神功,成為高深之智慧者。

本師在道功.拳術已有六.七十年之揣摩,發覺比賽.自衛之想法愚蠢,因為傷害自己亦傷害他人,站在修道的立場應以和平相處、天天神功精進,以達成圓滿道功為上。

看中國古代老子.孔子.三豐祖師都是修道之人,雖然他們有配劍在身,但並非為了殺人,而是為了舞劍鍛鍊身體。因此我們楊家太極拳協會表演多比賽少,以推展全民運動、身體健康為目的,以上所說望大家都能成道。

師 王延年

於法國 2001/7/23

## Taiji: From Arts to Dao

By Akai Jong

1. *Life Arts Health art, healing art, and peace art.*
2. *Taiji Martial Arts: Hua for defense, Fa for attack.*
3. *Taiji Jindan Dao: The great Dao of Gold Pill.*

**1a. Health Art and Healing Art:** Through Taiji, we learn how to breathe, how to move our bodies in harmony with nature. We use our own bodies to learn biological science and physical science as ingredients. Then according to the need of health or healing, we create the formula of life arts. The best way to enjoy the health and healing arts is very simple and easy: Just practice Taiji every day with joy.

**1b: Peace Art:** The art of peace of mind is a great challenge in the modern world. After we practice Taiji, we feel peace and ease. Then we get on the freeway and almost get killed. Gas/electricity bills jump up from \$50/month to \$350/month even though we use less. The Twin Towers in New York were blown down, and it is getting dangerous just to open our own mail at our own home.... Anyway, if we forget everything and just go back to practice more Taiji, we'll feel some peace temporarily. The more we do Taiji, the more peace of mind we have. It works better than any drugs, with no side effects at all.

**2. Martial Arts:** Yang Luchan, Banhou, Jianhou, and Shaohou all did Taiji as martial arts. Taiji Hua Jin is the art of defense. Taiji Fa Jin is the art of attack. They work together as Yin and Yang to complete the harmony of Taiji martial arts. Using martial arts to defend oneself is called the art of self-defense. It is the basic human right to protect oneself from murder, rape, assault or robbery.

Traditionally, Chinese people were very peaceful, to the point of being too gentle and too weak. Taiji martial arts were good for both their bodies and their minds. However, with modern music, modern movies, TV, modern sports, modern business, and modern education, people in the whole world are very aggressive. Martial arts not only are not needed, but also would make people more aggressive, make the world more violent.

Furthermore, it is impossible to defend oneself in the modern world. Just smoking kills 45,000 people a year in Canada. Cigarettes alone kill 434,000 Americans each year. Anytime, everywhere, all kinds of chemicals attack us. It is simply too silly to study any martial arts for self-defense. We just simply no longer have the basic human right to protect ourselves in the modern world.

So why bother to study martial arts, when they are useless for us and also harmful for society?

**3. Taiji Jindan Dao:** Zhang Sanfeng said, "Taiji is Dao, Dao is Dan."

"Taiji is Dao": Sanfeng created Taiji arts in order to teach his students Taiji Dao. Taiji arts prepare both the body and the mind for the extremely vigorous training of Taiji Dao.

"Dao is Dan": Dao is Jindan, the Gold Pill. Dao is not philosophy, not religion, not politics, not strategies, not arts, not business, not exercises, not the way of power, not the way of life. Dao is the constant, true, everlasting great Dao of Gold Pill.

Zhang Sanfeng created Taiji to "Xiu Dao Lian Dan," to cultivate the great true Dao and refine the inner Gold Pill.

Laozi's last chapter said "Heaven's Dao, benefit and no harm. Sage's Dao, do and no Zheng." No Zheng is no argument, no quarrel, no fight, no competition, and no war.

To learn the true Dao, it is necessary to find a true teacher and be initiated. Before even finding a teacher, the student must have the whole true and sincere heart, make the lifetime commitment, and always be humble and open-minded.



## An Interview with Wang Yen-nien

By Thomas W Campbell

When I finally sat down with Wang Yen-nien to conduct an interview the festival was over and we had only a short amount of time. It was early Saturday morning and obvious that Master Wang was tired and in need of more green tea than he had probably consumed so far. But we settled in, with Julia Fairchild translating, and started right up. Within minutes Master Wang became attentive and inspired, looking back on his life and discussing it with deep interest. His responses were carefully considered and spoken with emotional authority.

*TWC – Master Wang, you have practiced and taught taijiquan for many years and trained many students and teachers. Would you discuss why you have dedicated yourself to the practice and teaching of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan?*

**WYN** – It was a time when the world was changing, when eras were changing, from the end of the world war, of arriving in Taiwan, and retiring from military service and into private life. Having been in the army I realized how little life was worth, during the war. [Wang Yen-nien was a Colonel, fighting with the Nationalist Army in the Chinese Civil war.] So, considering all of my experiences in the war, I decided after stepping down from military service to dedicate myself to something that would be of use to people's health and to mankind. In Chinese there is saying that once you have seen so much disaster and death you are able to let go of all attachments because you have been to zero and now you can only go up. Also I realized that once you teach taijiquan it is a benefit to oneself, but also a benefit to others. So taijiquan is something meaningful to do with oneself. Something that is meaningful to oneself and meaningful to others. So that's why I chose this route to continue the development, and to spread and expand the practice of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan.

*TWC – Can you discuss how the different elements of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan are interconnected? For instance how do we benefit from each part of our practice, meaning form, weapons, tuishou, etc., and what are the benefits that we discover in training the complete system?*

**WYN** – In the practice of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan, in the beginning Yang Luchan did not openly teach his very effective style. He only taught something that we could think of as “openly,” hoping that this could be for better health. In what we call the “hidden tradition,” there are places in the forms that are not the same [as the “open form”]; the path he began to take was a Daoist path. Many people say where did this Yang family hidden tradition come from, there is no such thing. But it's not that it didn't exist, it's that these people did not know about it. Because Yang Luchan kept it hidden. He did not transmit it openly. Each generation was only allowed to transmit it to one person.

Even though Yang Luchan had three sons, he only transmitted this Yang family tradition to Yang Jianhou, and not to his other sons. “Transmit to one, and not two”, because when you transmit to one you can be more assured that the tradition can remain hidden, and maintained. But when you transmit to two then the likelihood of this secret getting out will be greater.

Then this [Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan] was transmitted from Yang Luchan to Yang Jianhou to Zhang Qinlin to Wang Yen-nien.

The overall benefit of practicing the entire system of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan is, of course, for better health and happiness. Today, most other styles of taiji that we see also have this as their goal, better health and happiness. But because some other



traditions miss this longevity aspect, they are missing part of it. They might find the health and happiness but the goal of longevity will be missing. In Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan the emphasis is not only on health and happiness but also on longevity, and that is the Daoist aspect.

Sometimes other forms will add in a practice of “Qigong.” But what is already a part of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan is called “neigong.” That's as far as the form goes.

The benefit of neigong — it is an internal Daoist alchemist art. Those who are interested in continuing a practice of self-cultivation and internal alchemical arts begin with the practice of neigong. This idea of neigong is to cultivate and nurture the internal organs, to strengthen the inner. In addition there is what we call tu-na, the Daoist art of breathing technique. And once we practice this Daoist art of breathing technique, the internal organs become stronger and healthier. The three treasures that we have, our inner elixirs, are Jing, Qi and Shen. Ordinarily we have these inner elixirs, but if they are not taken care of, cultured and nurtured, they will slowly dissipate over time. When we practice an internal alchemical art, using neigong to develop and strengthen ourselves, and use the Daoist art of breathing, we will be able to develop, strengthen and augment these three naturally occurring inner elixirs, Jing, Qi and Shen.

Jing, Qi and Shen will become full and plentiful, and not dissipate over time.

So this is where, in addition to the form, we also have included in our system neigong that we say adds to longevity. So the idea is to have a long healthy life, a goal that may be missing from other schools. That comes from the benefit of practicing neigong, as it is included in the system of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan practice.

What about sword, fan, pole, tuishou? These are supplementary things. We have the form, which is fundamental. To supplement that we have fan, sword, (Kunlun and Wudang), and tuishou. These are all to help increase the elasticity and strength in the body. For example tuishou can help to open up the meridians and cultiva-

tion areas in the body that are needed in neigong. They also help to increase and benefit the circulation, moving Qi about the body. These supplemental parts of our study, for example tuishou, are designed to open up meridians and blocks and barriers in the body that in a solo practice of a form, or neigong by itself, our Qi may not be strong enough to open.

So we say that the foundation, the base of our practice, is form and the neigong. The other parts, weapons and tuishou practice, are designed to supplement in either a solo or two-person way, to further open up meridians in the body.

*TWC – We encounter students and teachers of Cheng Man Ching’s lineage who know little or nothing of your relationship with Cheng Man Ching. Would you please discuss this relationship?*

**WYN** – I call Cheng Man Ching my older martial-art brother. Why is that? That’s because he was a vowed student of Zhang Qinlin, who was also my teacher. What he studied with Zhang Qinlin was tuishou and neigong. And so because of this relationship with Zhang Qinlin we became martial-art brothers. He was older than me so I call him my older martial-art brother. At that time, in China, he became a vowed student of Zhang Qinlin, my teacher, Cheng Man Ching was already practicing a Yang style, not Yangjia Michuan, but another style. So because he only knew taijiquan at that time and not tuishou, he found Zhang Qinlin and wanted to practice tuishou.

In the beginning Cheng Man Ching invited Zhang Qinlin, who had been living in Shanzi province, to Nanjing. He arranged for him to teach for three months. Then, in Nanjing, with Zhang Qinlin, Cheng practiced and studied tuishou for three months; the most important things that he asked Zhang Qinlin to teach him were tuishou and neigong.

In those days, whether you were a martial artist, or whether you were a Daoist, the relationship between the teacher and the student was a very very important one. When I became a vowed student of Zhang Qinlin, my relationship with Cheng Man Ching was established. And you can never erase this relationship. Because he bowed and became a vowed student of Zhang Qinling and this created a relationship between the two of us.

The difference, though, is that not only did I practice tuishou and neigong but I also learned Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan. And Zhang Qinlin taught me the complete system, and not CMC.



This is to state once again that my relationship with Cheng Man Ching is due to the fact that we are both vowed disciples of Zhang Qinlin. [There are a few more phrases that do not get translated.]



*TWC – How do we, as students and teachers, continue to practice Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan accurately when we are not with you?*

**WYN** – I cannot be everywhere in the world, that’s why I published the first book, *Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan*, volume one. I hope that all teachers and students will use the book as a standard reference. If you can stay in accordance with the book, with the same spirit, teachers can’t go too far wrong. Then I also published a second book that covers applications. The first book, volume one, is how to practice the form; the second is to explain why the form looks like it does. So it’s the second book that aids in keeping the form looking the same. It’s in book two that teachers can teach in accordance with volume one and, with the second book, teachers can be assured that they are not going too far off. I’m afraid that teachers do not pay as much attention to volume two, but it is the second book that will be of the most help to teachers in keeping the integrity of the form. The two books, together, I hope, will be the reference for the future. With these two volumes I hope that Yangjia Michuan teachers will work in accordance with what they contain as standard references. And the applications will not change, the form will not change, and we can all be working together towards one goal.

*TWC – Master Wang, you have spoken of being challenged in tuishou in the past. Was there a time when you participated in tuishou tournaments? Can you discuss these experiences in relation to your thoughts on the evolution of tuishou and competition?*

**WYN** When I was practicing taijiquan with Zhang Laoshi, (Zhang Qinlin), he often said to me that I shouldn’t completely show my gongfu outwardly, that I should keep myself looking ordinary, and not special, vis-a-vis the others. He told me that there would be two benefits to keeping humble like this. One, you won’t have enemies around you, and thus you won’t be in conflict with others. Secondly, you won’t hurt anyone and others will not hurt you. And so, for those of us practicing Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan, we must keep, as our highest goal, self-cultivation. Our purpose in practicing is not to show that we are superior in competition with others.

In the beginning I did not agree with what Zhang Qinlin said. Then, after having come to Taiwan, and after having been in the war and seen so many terrible things, then I truly understood our human route in life... I discovered after coming to Taiwan, that many people, after noticing that my gongfu was good, wanted to challenge me. All the time, one by one, they wanted to challenge me. So

many people came into my environment and constantly wanted to challenge me. And not only people from the taijiquan world. They came from all different styles of martial arts. They all noticed that my gongfu was good and wanted to test me. I felt a very big pressure because of this. Because if I showed my gongfu and won, then I would have an enemy. He would feel unsatisfied and continually come back to challenge me. But if I lost, then I would have no name and nobody would come to study with me.

So I took Zhang Laoshi's words to heart, to keep self-cultivation as my goal, and sought a higher level of human consciousness. When people did come to challenge me I wouldn't make it into a competition. I would make it more the idea that we were cooperating and showing one another our skills, without making the others lose face. It doesn't mean that we don't come together, that we avoid the situation. No. It means that I was able to establish a rapport in tuishou. Because no matter what type of techniques the challengers used, they weren't able to push me over. And so it was as if I was able to protect the truth without attacking. I didn't ever feel that it was necessary to return energy in an attack, during tuishou. But I defended the truth about my own gongfu.

The partner, or the person who I was working with, or who had challenged me, would feel that I had great gongfu, but that I was of good character ... he saw that I didn't return an attack. In this way, by protecting the truth, without attacking back when challenged or attacked, not only did I not create any enemies, but I created great friends. And so anyone who encountered me, and their students, would all say how wonderful Wang Yen-nien is, what a great person he is, and what great gongfu he has.

So this I can attribute to the fact that even Zhang Qinlin encourages one not to go to competition, not to make a competitive situation between people. In this way you create enemies and conflict, rather than friendship. Not only that, but while I was in Taiwan in the early days there were four international competitions, not for taiji only but for all martial-arts styles. And the persons who won each of these four competitions gained great fame. But they shortened their life span. Each one of the four people who won these international events died within five years. So I felt even more deeply that we should not compete. It goes against every Daoist principle of moving toward longevity. Also, it is possible in this competitive



situation to hurt somebody. So if we do not compete we are not going to hurt anyone and we certainly will not hurt ourselves.

It is possible to not compete, and yet to still learn about the situation and each other's techniques very easily, but also it is possible to make it competitive and make enemies. Or you can choose not to make it competitive, to learn and teach within a situation, and to make a friend. It's not necessary to say whose gongfu is better than whose. We can become unattached to the need to win at a loss to others, to the idea that someone wins when

another loses. To have a trophy or medal to prove that your gongfu is great, and then to die a few years later; this is meaningless. It's not only meaningless; it is stupid that in order to attain fame and honor you lose your life.

Personally, I have never been in a competition. I welcome anyone to work with me, to practice with me, to make an investigation together. I will never return an attack with an attack.

*TWC – Thank you for the time you have given. Is there anything else you would like to say?*

**WYN** – I hope that no matter what style of taijiquan we practice we do not get into blaming, criticizing, saying that “this” is real and “that” is not real, that “this” is true and “that” is not true. Because the people who originally created the different styles are all dead now.

And so each generation and what is transmitted from each generation may not accurately reflect what the founders of a particular style truly created ... so how can we know what is real, what is not real, what is real Yang style, what is not real Yang style? It is not meaningful to be in conflict. The real meaningful question is this — is it of benefit to the health? And if we can say that it is of benefit to the health, and that there is healing involved, then this is the only true taijiquan. So that's why I want to reinforce what I have said — that competition [in tuishou] is not for better health. Especially if you ruin your own health just to get first place. This is not real taijiquan. So I hope that we can get rid of emphasizing our differences and work more toward emphasizing our similarities. We should investigate together our similarities, to investigate together what is good about our particular forms and particular styles. And then it becomes a benefit to society, and is meaningful to society as a whole. We don't want to waste our energy and time on “who is better,” etc. It is not a meaningful question. We need to stay focused on our goal.



I try to ignore criticisms that people might have of me — or of our style. And I am only concerned with whether the students and coaches that we are training are working towards better health and peace of mind, longevity. That is my only concern. This is what I have learned as I have endured over time in my practice of taijiquan. We want to avoid creating separation and conflict, to be divisive. We want to move toward being unified, to be one. With the world in such a mess, we need to emphasize the idea of peace, peace of mind, inner peace, without inner conflict. That is what I would personally like to say. And no [tuishou] competitions. We don't want to harm others, and we certainly don't want to harm ourselves.

Interviewed July 13, 2002, in Madison, Wisconsin

## "Check List" for Posture, Position and Movement

By Peter Clifford

*A Sufi was walking along a riverbank when he heard the sound of a fellow Sufi chanting one of the sutras on a small island in the middle of the river. To his surprise, and chagrin, the sutra was being chanted incorrectly, and so he immediately decided to go over to the island to instruct the fellow about his mistake.*

*Finding a small boat he rowed over to the island where he explained to the chanting Sufi about his error, and gave him a lesson in the correct way to chant the sutra. The island Sufi was most grateful for this advice, and he gave thanks wholeheartedly for the correction. When he was certain that the Sufi on the island had learnt to chant the sutra correctly, he returned to his boat, and started to row back across the river. After rowing back halfway he was alarmed to feel a tap on his shoulder. He turned around to see his fellow Sufi, who apologized for having had to walk across the water to speak to him, but he was not completely sure that he had remembered the correct chanting of part of the sutra.*

Paying attention solely to one's posture and position in taijiquan is not the complete taiji way, as it may starve other aspects of the practice. This could result in practicing a form of calisthenics, rather than practicing taijiquan.

Nevertheless the importance and significance in giving attention to one's posture, position and movement in taijiquan is very clear. The moves have an application, and the application needs to be effective, and for this it is necessary to be aware, amongst other things, of one's position and posture.

With this in mind, here are a few short reminders, and points, about posture, position and movement. They are listed here without any commentary, and they are purely in the nature of 'a check list' to help develop one's practice. Whilst practicing it can be very instructive to observe, reflect on, or make a theme of any one, or any group, of these reminders.

The credit for all of them must be given to both my teacher, Wang Yen-nien, and to the Taijiquan Classics.

### **The Head:**

- The head is positioned so that it 'feels suspended as if from above.'
- 'Do not lower the head or look upward frequently or persistently.'

### **The Eyes:**

- 'The eyes, unless directed to move with the hands, look levelly forward with a quiet, comfortable but steady gaze.'
- The eyes are relaxed and look forward in a natural way towards your opponent; the peripheral vision is also relaxed and receptive.
- 'Keep your eyes on a level base and avoid any angry gaze.'

### **The Mouth:**

- The mouth is 'neither open, nor closed.' The tip of the tongue is on the roof of the mouth (the upper palate).

### **The Neck:**

- 'While in movement the neck should be relaxed, following the posture to right, or to left, or vice versa. Do not exert strength and avoid tension.'

### **The Mind:**

- 'The mind is focused on the breath and the moves, whilst remaining receptive to all outside surroundings and influence. Though aware of the outside, focus on what one is doing – the inside.'
- 'The mind moves the qi, and the qi moves the body.'
- 'First you should exercise your mind, then discipline your body.'
- 'Use the mind and not force.'

### **The Shoulders and Elbows:**

- The shoulders are relaxed and therefore dropped, and naturally rounded. Depress the elbows.

### **The Chest:**

- The chest is relaxed and slightly hollowed. 'In this way qi can sink to the dantien,' and it enables a smooth flow of qi.

### **The Back:**

- The back is naturally rounded, complementary to the chest.
- 'The back has to be naturally raised. This posture is to be accompanied by the lowering of the shoulders. Avoid hunchback.'

### **The Hands:**

- Vertical Open Hand: The fingers are open 'not straight, not bent' and the thumb does not protrude. 'The back of the hand and the arm should be in a line. Do not let the wrist bend.'
- Single Whip Hand: 'The five fingers are bent slightly. Bring the five fingers together, but do not use strength.'
- Vertical Fist: 'The thumb is gently wrapped around the outside of the forefinger. The center of the fist should be slightly opened. Do not squeeze the fist closed.'
- 'The hands do not move independently.'

### **The Waist:**

- Relax the waist and hips.
- 'The waist is like an axel tree, and the four limbs like a wheel. If the waist cannot act like an axel tree then the limbs cannot revolve around it. If you want to make the axel rotate, it should be well lubricated.'
- 'Pay attention to your waist at all times.'

**The Buttocks / Tail bone:**

- The tailbone is tucked under. ‘Tip the buttocks forward and up slightly, and hook the lower three vertebrae forward.’
- The tailbone is naturally tucked in and then pulled very slightly up. This lines up the vertebrae in the back.

**The Knees:**

- The knees are slightly bent; they are best positioned over the toes.

**The Feet:**

- ‘Root internal power (jin) in the foot.’
- ‘Whether moving forward or backward, the feet, legs, and waist move in unison.’
- ‘The internal energy, qi, roots at the feet, then transfers through the legs, and is controlled by the waist, moving through the back to the arms and fingertips.’

**The Body:**

- ‘Once you begin to move, the entire body must be light and limber. Each part of your body should be connected to every other part.’
- ‘The body should move like the rolling waves of the ocean.’
- ‘Do not lean the body in any direction.’
- ‘Your entire body should be controlled by the mind and spirit.’

**The Movement:**

- ‘Movements should constantly move from the substantial to the insubstantial.’
- ‘The essence of taijiquan lies in the regulation of movement and stillness.’
- ‘When in stillness you should be as the mountain. When in motion you should move like the water of the river.’
- ‘In movement all parts of the body are light and nimble, and strung together... Movements are without imperfections, without hollowing or protruding too much, and without stops and starts.’
- ‘All movements are directed by force of intent (yi) and not by something external.’
- ‘Taiji is the mother of yin and yang. In motion they separate; in stillness they become one.’
- ‘Stand balanced, move like a wheel. Keep your center on one leg or the other.’
- ‘Seek stillness in movement.’

**Balance:**

- ‘When you practice, you should stand with your posture balanced like a scale.’

**Daily Practice:**

Incorporating these reminders into daily practice is well recommended!



## Ask The Advisers

A single question asked of all the Advisers. The question should not look for a definitive answer, as many asked of Laoshi do and not be contentious, but be open to various opinions.

**“What single teaching of Wang Laoshi or principle that he transmitted is most important to your understanding of or practice of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan?”**

☉ **Serge Dreyer: Martial Efficiency**

In its format the question seems to me too simplistic (although interesting) because the notion of “the most important” highly depends at which stage in one’s progression you received the information and when you did fully (if ever) make profit of its potential. However, I would like to mention one principle that is still valid for me, and which could be summarized as: *Always measure the correctness of one’s movement or/and technique through its martial efficiency.* By following this principle, I progressively came to develop its accuracy through a constant back and forth between the form and my pushing hands, which inform each other. Moreover, I came to realize that by developing this martial efficiency, I was avoiding a lot of mistakes detrimental to health in my form (in the elbow striking posture for example) or in the basic exercises of pushing hands (the first one for example that I too often see practiced in solo with hands high above the level of the shoulders). Martial efficiency can be very soft or very intense physically, but never encompasses violence.

**Taichung, Taiwan**

☉ **Luc Defago: Live the Tàijíquán principles**

In my experience, what is most important in Laoshi’s teaching was the fact that all the teaching was intended to bring the students the furthest possible towards the goal of realizing unity, tranquility, or the state where the 10,000 things become one; the principle is one but the manifestations multiple. Laoshi transmits this and you can feel that Tàijí is not only in movements of the form or in Tuīshǒu; Laoshi sees the Tàijí principles in Life, for example, in a skater or a musician or other situations. Laoshi makes one feel that Tàijí principles pervade the universe and our aim is to be able to swim at ease in the Ocean of qì that is underlying common reality. Laoshi lives the Tàijíquán principles and learning from Laoshi is also learning that. Great teaching from a great Master with a humble heart.

**Geneva, Switzerland**

☉ **Claudy Jeanmougin: Liànxí! Liànxí! 練習練習**

From Laoshi I have learned many very important things. In my eyes all his teaching is very important and the more that time passes, the more I realize the importance of his teaching. Because it has been asked to me to make a terrible choice I would say what I repeat all the time to my students: “Exercez-vous! Exercez-vous!” That is to say, the same words that Laoshi used to repeat at the end of each lecture in the evening at 21 o’clock and just at the end of the morning class at 7 o’clock. How to imagine progress without work? What would Tàijíquán be without practice? Tàijíquán is first and foremost a practice and, as nice as words appear, they will never take the place of the practice.

**Angers, France**

☉ **Julia Fairchild: Xìn rèn 信任**

Trust!

**Taipei, Taiwan**

☉ **Peter Clifford: Empty & Full**

Wang Zongyue in the Tàiji Classics says:

*With primal spirit and chi*

*Concentrated and well coordinated, with the body agile,*

*You will realize the delight of*

*Roundness and swiftness in movement.*

*This is called, “Able to alternate empty and full”*

It is said that there are three prerequisites for a person who wishes to study tàijíquán: a good teacher, determination and diligence, and some natural ability. And of these three, the most important is a good teacher.

How does one find a good teacher? How does one look for someone whose knowledge is not easily exhausted: someone who demonstrates the principles of tàijí, and who expresses the art with skill, someone who is “able to alternate empty and full”? Or, how does one wait, so that, when ready, the right teacher appears?

For myself the search for the “right” tàijí teacher was exhaustive. It covered many countries in Asia, and after a while I stopped out of exasperation. Then the right teacher was found immediately — or was it that, at the end of searching, the right teacher appeared immediately? Either way finding the teacher can be the first invaluable lesson in tàijíquán.

**London, United Kingdom**

☉ **Sabine Metzlé: Use the body and the mind to work on Qì**

For me, the most important teaching from Wang Yen-nien, beyond the physical skill, is the idea of using the body and the mind to work on qì and making the physical movements and the internal work become one, combining stillness with mobility. In Yangjia Michuan the body stands, sits, lies, moves so that it favors internal work.

Working on qì is working on life force; it is a way to be at the source of life. A human body, according to the traditional Chinese view, is regarded as a container full of qì that is part of universal Qì, and, because of this, the body is strongly connected to the environment — otherwise it could not survive.

That is to say that the further I advance in my practice of Yangjia Michuan — following Wang Laoshi’s main teaching that internal work should go along with the practice of the form, that the body serves the qì — I feel that this way of moving the body, with the pelvis tucked in, the chest hollowed, so that the back is stretched in its width and in its length in order to open the fields, the barriers and the cavities along the body, going up and down on one leg in a vertical axis between Earth and Heaven while the waist is turning and making the link between legs and arms, reinforces one’s feeling of being connected with universe. It may sound mysterious for some or laughable for others; it is also very common to speak about the unification of

Earth, man and Heaven in tàijiquán or in Daoist practice. Most of the time they are only but beautiful words: how many of practitioners truly physically understand the meaning of it? In my experience, the practice of internal alchemy along with the practice of the form, not to mention the many benefits for health, leads to a feeling of being not separated from nature, as if there was an umbilical cord at the top of the head. At least, it gives the feeling of being more receptive and sensitive towards things, people, phenomena; it is like having antennas.

It enables you to use the universal qì to reinforce your inner strength, then the ability to use it rests on good skill, but in this field we still have to investigate so that movements, postures can express this energy. But the foundation and the richness of this particular art is Qi, energy and the more you know about how to work on it, the more you allow your body to become a channel for this energy.

St. Cloud, France

## “What is Gongfu”?

### ☉ Akai Jong:

Gongfu means “true achievements.” It is opposite from “Hua Quan Xiu Tui” the flower punch and kick, which only looks good but is useless.

In Taiji forms, if you move lightly, nimbly and strung together, your Qi ebbs and flows, your Shen is inwardly calmed, then your Taiji Gongfu is good.

In Taiji, Tui Shou and San Shou, there are three stages of Gongfu:

1. Zhuo Shu
2. Dong Jing
3. Shen Ming.

**The best way to cultivate Gongfu:** The best way and the only way to cultivate Taiji Gongfu is to honestly follow the teachings of Wang Yen-nien Laoshi and to practice them every day honestly.

**What impedes it?** Arrogance, prejudice, and ego.

**What dissipates it?** Nothing. Once you truly achieve Taiji Gongfu, you’ll never lose any part of them.

The Taiji Gongfu then will become your treasure tool, to help you enjoy the beauty of life, and to heal the natural process of human getting old, sick and injured.

### ☉ Serge Dreyer:

It’s a widely used term in Chinese (arts, martial arts, cooking, handicraft, socializing, etc) that means skill and talent and implies time spent on a work and dedication. Therefore my answer is very simple and is contained in my response to the question about progress in the Winter 2002 issue: maintain enthusiasm and dedication to the practice during one’s lifetime and Gongfu will never give you up. That’s the reason why one should never let others dictate one’s way to Gongfu!

## “How can the integrity of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan be maintained with teachers not being supervised by Wang Laoshi?” “How would you define the integrity?”

### ☉ Akai Jong:

**Integrity:** Means a. Sincere and true, b. Complete as original.

**YMT Integrity:** Means true YMT with a sincere and true heart.

Zhang Qinlin added Jinshan Neigong into YMT. Wang Yen-nien added Shi San Shi, Wudang Taiji Xin Jian, Yen-nien Taiji Shan, and Tuishou #15 Bafa into YMT. He also changed the postures of Taijiquan such as #7 Peng Shou, Lan Que Wei, #18 Bao Hu Gui Shan, #43 and all other Xia Shi, #105 Shi Zi Tui, #108 Bai Yuan Xian Guo, and others.

YMT should be alive and continue to grow. The complete original antique only belongs to the museum, not to the daily practice.

**Maintain YMT Integrity:** The teachers need to truly know the true YMT and teach true YMT with sincere and true hearts. The students need to be truly humble, empty and open-minded, and study with sincere and true hearts. It takes both the teachers’ and the students’ true efforts to maintain the true integrity of YMT.

### ☉ Christian Bernapel:

**Integrity.** What is it? The Larousse dictionary definition: “state of a thing, of a work, which remained intact”; “virtue”; “purity.” One can speak about the integrity of a work, about a school (for example Yangjia Michuan), thus, “to respect the quality and the integrity of the Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan as passed on by Wang Yen-nien” is to keep it intact, pure, corresponding to the original; not to deform it, to distort it.

“How can the integrity of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan be maintained / promoted / respected with teachers not being supervised by Wang Laoshi?”

First: the College of the Teachers of the Yangjia Michuan is a good tool. It is a group of work, study, reflection and exchange on the teachings of Laoshi. The College also moderates the sometimes excessive interpretations of the teachings some believed to have received from Laoshi. It helps “to round off angles” and blunt the egos of the members. The young teachers who were not able to benefit from the direct education of Laoshi should be a part of it so they may be confronted with different interpretations of the same material.

Secondly, all the documentation, the books and videos, are remarkable references, that it is advisable to share and to study.

Finally, common sense and moderation can bring good things.

### ☉ Julia Fairchild:

The integrity of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan as taught by Wang Yen-nien will be maintained by teachers (both those who are supervised and those not supervised by Wang Laoshi) by asking ourselves if we teach the same curriculum as Wang Laoshi. If we choose to teach the same curriculum as Wang Laoshi we must be in agreement about what we believe and be of like mind.

If we have no doubts about the completeness of the curriculum and teach healing and peace of mind as the goal of our practice then we are of one heart and mind with Wang Laoshi and cannot help but teach with integrity. To interpret the goal of Wang Laoshi’s curriculum in any other way is to use it as a weapon for

## [Ask the Advisers]

assault, rather than the call for peace and happiness for which it is intended.

To be of one mind is meaningful; differences in the form are not meaningful. Wang Laoshi opposes the idea that differences in the form are meaningful and emphasizes always that differences do not matter; the similarities are what we must look for.

If we all channeled our different abilities long enough toward one goal, one result — peace of mind — then our similarities rather than our differences will be emphasized. In this way we will be unified and happy rather than separated and unhappy; in this way we will be following Wang Laoshi, teaching what we are learning, and maintaining the integrity of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan.

Integrity equates to honest learning, consistency of thought and full transfer — to teach EVERYONE ALL that we have learned — this, for me, is the meaning of the word “integrity” in the context: “To promote and respect the quality and integrity of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan as taught and transmitted by Wang Yen-nien.”

### ☉ Luc DeFago:

If we speak of the precision of the moves in the forms (hand-sword-fan-long spear), then these are explained in the books published by Wang Laoshi. Some moves may have small variations, but in most of the form moves are very precise down to minor details. Wang Laoshi has explained the moves in various workshops and these can be viewed in the resulting videos. Teachers and students should study extensively these supports: videos and books of Wang Laoshi. Still difficulties putting this understanding into practice may arise, so it is important to have some feedback and discussion such as we have in the biannual European College of Teachers workshops held in Paris. Once in autumn and once in spring, we meet and compare our basic exercises and the form and discuss our understanding of the moves and of the pedagogy of teaching. To understand the moves of the form we go back to the **applications** and practice them to help enhance the form and understand how the moves work with a partner. In *doing* the moves in the form, they become more “full” and “real.” Applications also help one to see the variations possible in the moves and learn what is essential and what is adaptable. This understanding is the means of maintaining the integrity of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan. Wang Laoshi has always helped us to be independent and reach this understanding. It is our duty to be intense in our practice and research, and to that end work together in all ways possible: communication, meetings, workshops, research groups. The College of Teachers can be the warrant of this integrity but the work lies in each one of us.

Integrity in the spirit of practice and teaching of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan is a more tricky issue. I would define it as the Daoist spirit from Laozi, Chuangzi, Liezi to Chan Sanfeng transmitted down to us by Wang Laoshi.

### ☉ Sabine Metzlé:

The integrity of Yangjia Michuan is the entirety of Yangjia Michuan transmitted by Wang Yen-nien: form, tuishou, yongfa, Neigong, weapons, without alteration. It is the preservation of the fundamentals and the specificity of Yangjia Michuan, which makes this style different from other styles. Integrity when practicing or teaching implies a certain state of mind, a behavior which has to do with heart and honesty, sincerity toward yourself first, then toward the other so that you can open up, have better health, progress in life, develop a deeper understanding of yourself, human beings, and life, and help others to go this way. To be able to cultivate the immortality on the one hand and to contribute to the welfare of human beings on the other hand depends on your sincerity: that is what I have understood from Laoshi’s teaching.

### ☉ Serge Dreyer:

I think that diversity, freedom of choice, honesty and sincerity in the transmission of our style of TJQ are much more important than the question of integrity and supervision (while also acknowledging the felt and justified need for some of us to be supervised). What is honesty? From my point of view, this consists of stating clearly to students where one stands in respect to the transmission from one’s teacher. Sincerity? Not to pretend to know more than one actually is able to teach. Respect the maturity of the practitioners and their opinions and above all teach in such a way that one’s students become better than the teacher (I’m keenly aware that this is a very typical and traditional Western oriented point of view) and then our style will flourish.

### ☉ Claudy Jeanmougin:

In my opinion, to respect the integrity of the Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan as taught and transmitted by Laoshi means that we have to take the teaching of Laoshi as a whole and particularly what we call the Form, because the Form is a kind of corpus which is our constant reference for all that we are doing or teaching in Taijiquan. It is not because we have not understood some parts of the Form that we can change this part in the way of our understanding. To understand takes time. Laoshi has tried to modify certain parts of the form. But now he always said, “follow the book!”

I can tell today that I am stupefied to see how even those who have worked a long time with Laoshi have modified the form. And, from this observation I can say one thing: it is not necessary to have worked with Laoshi in order to respect his teaching when we know that some students of Laoshi, consciously or not, do not show this respect. So, the most important in the respect of the integrity is the comprehension of what is taught by Yangjia Michuan through Master Wang. And then to come back to the only teaching of Yangjia Michuan. Because we do not have to forget that our first teacher is our style. So, many teachers who never worked with Laoshi are very good teachers because they have understood the message of our style.

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## Directory of AYMTA Member Instructors

The following AYMTA members are Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan instructors in North America. The addresses listed are for mailing purposes only. Please contact instructors by mail, phone or email for specific information about class times and locations. If you are currently teaching Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan in North America, are a member of AYMTA and would like to be included in this list, contact the Secretary, Terri Pellitteri (address below under Wisconsin). If you are unable to contact an instructor or need additional information, please contact the Secretary. If you are looking for an instructor outside of North America, consult the Worldwide Directory.

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# AYMTA CATALOG

Member Price      Non-Member Price

## BOOKS

<b>YANG FAMILY HIDDEN TRADITION OF TAIJIQUAN, ILLUSTRATED AND EXPLAINED by Wang Yen-nien</b>		
Vol. I (2 <sup>nd</sup> Ed.): The basic exercises and all three sections of the form.		
English/French	\$70	\$95
Chinese/Japanese	\$70	\$95
Vol. II (1 <sup>st</sup> Ed.): Martial Applications		
English/French	\$85	\$115
Chinese/Japanese	\$85	\$115
<b>KUNLUN TAIJI SWORD by Hervé Marest</b>		
Photos and text fully illustrating Kunlun Jian form with Character-by-Character glossary of the KunLun poem and additional material on the Chinese Sword, the Basic Sword Exercises. 321 photo illustrations, 174 pages.	\$40	\$50
<b>LITTLE RED BOOKLET 2003 (3RD) EDITION</b>	\$5	\$10
in Chinese and the Chinese phonetic system "bopomofo"; includes the names of the movements of the Sections 1,2,3, the Yen-nien Fan, the two Sword forms, the Long Pole, the Taiji Classics, and more; small pocket book format, plastic cover.		
<b>YMT BASIC SWORD METHODS</b>	\$10	\$15
Photos and Text on the 8 Basic Sword Cuts; list of WuDang & KunLun Forms in Chinese, Pinyin, English. 56 Pages.		

## FANS

<b>BAMBOO FANS, SPECIFY RIGHT-HANDED (STANDARD FORM) OR LEFT-HANDED (MIRRORED FORM)</b>	\$15	\$20
Lightweight and highlighted by the Chinese characters 延年 Yán Nián (literally extended years).		

## AUDIOTAPES

<b>YANGJIA MICHUAN TAIJIQUAN by Wang Yen-nien</b>	\$15	\$20
A 90-minute tape of the breathing and names of the form movements called out in Chinese.		

## VHS, DVD-Rs

Ensure that your DVD player will play DVD-Rs before ordering.

Although videos published by YMTI are available in various formats, the catalog only indicates those which AYMTA stocks.

<b>WYN IN TAINAN (early 1970s) VHS, DVD</b>	YMTI	\$35	\$45
Wang Yen-nien demonstrating YMT Sections 1,2,3, Kunlun (Old) Sword, WuDang (New) Sword. A little dark but fun - no sound - looks like a Buster Keaton.			
<b>WYN DEMONSTRATING YANGJIA MICHUAN TAIJIQUAN - VHS, DVD.</b>	YMTI	\$30	\$40
Videotaped in the early 1980s in Japan and in Taiwan, this tape shows Wang Yen-nien demonstrating the following: YMT basic exercises, YMT Sections 1,2,3, Tuishou basic exercises, Fajin exercises, Thirteen Postures and Kunlun (Old) Sword Form. The names of the postures are called out in Japanese. 99 minutes Video, DVD or VCD.			
<b>STITCHING TAIJIQUAN NETHERLANDS WORKSHOP (1989) VHS</b>	YMTI	\$30	\$40
WYN teaching Fan, 1 <sup>st</sup> Duan and Basic Push Hands Exercises, with Julia Fairchild and Sabine Metzle assisting.			
<b>RECORD OF NATIONAL SPORTS DAY DEMONSTRATION (1994) VHS</b>	YMTI	\$30	\$40
Group Demonstration of 1 <sup>st</sup> duan. Visits 10 Taipei teaching areas with the various coaches & groups training form & weapons for National Sports Day demonstrations.			
<b>YMT: A RECORD OF TEACHER TRAINING COURSE (1996) VHS</b>	YMTI	\$60	\$80
Demonstrating all 3 duans and each move separately with WYN commenting on correct & incorrect ways to practice selected moves. The audiotope is extracted from the sound on this video. 2 Tapes.			
<b>PUSH HANDS BASIC EXERCISES (1996) VHS</b>	NY YMT	\$150	\$205
Record of New York WYN Workshop detailing the 15 tuishou exercises. 5 tapes.			
<b>THIRD DUAN (1996) VHS</b>	AYMTA	\$90	\$120
This step-by-step instructional video taught by Wang Yen-nien for students new to the 3 <sup>rd</sup> duan, those who want a review aid, or for instructors who wish to explore all the rich details of the form. 3 tapes.			

## JOURNALS

<b>VOL 8 #2 FALL 2000 : Wang Yen-Nien Celebrating Fifty Years of Teaching</b>	\$15	\$25
<b>VOL 4 #1, # 2; VOL 5 #1, # 2; VOL 6 #1, #2; VOL 7 #1, #2; VOL 9 #1, #2; VOL 10 #1, #2, VOL 11 #1, VOL 11 #2</b>	\$10	\$15

**Payment:** only checks drawn on US banks, money orders, and wire transfers are accepted.

**Availability:** A basic inventory is maintained, but not all items may be in stock; enquire about availability. Only NTSC format videos are stocked although PAL & SECAM are available from YMTI. Items may be ordered directly from Taiwan and take up to 2 weeks to arrive by airmail (tapes, VCDs and DVDs) and 8 weeks by surface mail (books): enquire at [ymtitaipei@yahoo.com](mailto:ymtitaipei@yahoo.com).

**Shipping & Handling :** Prices include shipping for orders in the contiguous United states.

Please inquire about shipping costs outside of the contiguous United States at the address below or by email: "AYMTA Orders" <Orders@aymta.org>

**Ordering:** Please make your check payable to **AYMTA** and mail to:

AYMTA Orders  
PO Box 173  
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# AYMTA

## What is AYMTA?

- The American Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan Association (AYMTA) is a nonprofit public benefit corporation. The specific purposes for which this corporation is organized are to transmit, perpetuate, promote and further the growth of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan (YMT) in the United States.

## What is Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan?

- YMT (Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan), translated as Yang Family Hidden Tradition, was created by Yang Luchan. Yang Luchan passed it on to his son Yang Jianhou. Yang Jianhou passed it on to Zhang Qinlin. Zhang Qinlin passed it on to Wang Yen-nien. Master Wang, in order to prevent the loss of this art, has passed it on to all who are interested in carrying on the Yangjia Michuan style.

## Member Eligibility

- Submit a completed and signed application form.
- Pay the annual fee.
- Support the purpose and objectives of AYMTA
- Members need not be YMT practitioners.
- Members are welcome from all over the world

## The Objectives of AYMTA

- To promote and respect the quality and integrity of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan as taught and transmitted by Wang Yen-nien
- To conduct workshops and public demonstrations in YMT.
- To educate the public that the purpose of YMT is to promote health, to prolong the life span, to calm the mind and harmonize the spirit, to develop the art of self-defense, and to provide the entry level to the Great Dao.
- To provide YMT instructors for the public.
- To provide interested members with opportunities to develop the skills necessary to become YMT instructors.
- To provide assistance to member instructors in obtaining required documentation when requested.
- To help instructors improve their teaching and build consistency in teaching YMT.
- To publish a journal (twice a year) and newsletter for members

## Annual Fee

- Regular: US\$35 per Year
- Family: US\$20 per Year
- Full Time Student: US\$20 per Year

美洲楊家秘傳太極拳協會

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