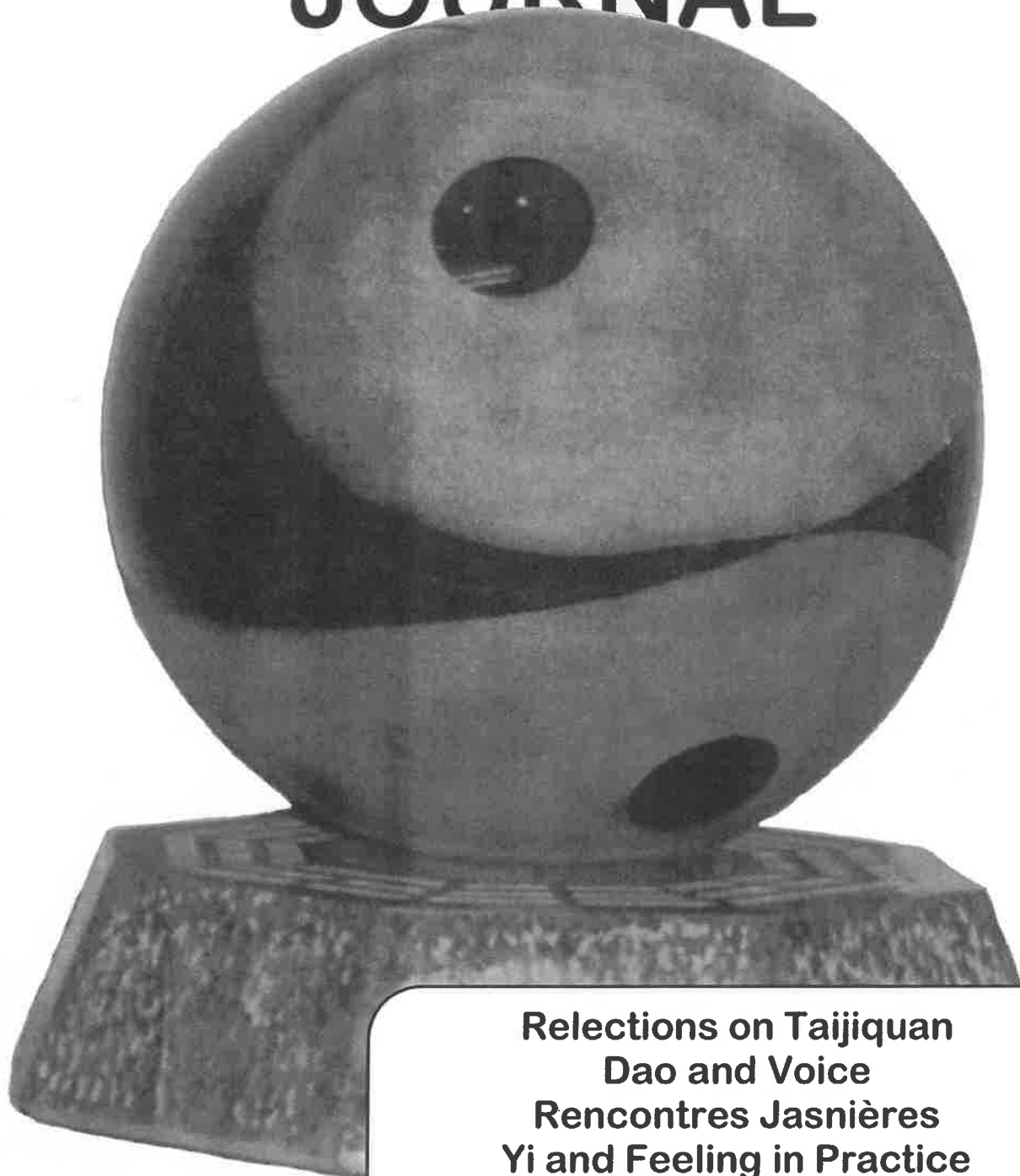


# AYMTA JOURNAL



**Relections on Taijiquan  
Dao and Voice  
Rencontres Jasnières  
Yi and Feeling in Practice  
Jieqi and Zhongqi for 2004  
Ritualized Function in Our Practice**

## AYMTA

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### Editor's Notes

I am pleased to be able to share H. H. Lui's "Reflections on Taijiquan" with my fellow YMT practitioners. As some know, Kay's and my first teacher, Dan Chase, was a student of Mr. Lui's who taught us the long form that ultimately derived from Wang Yen-nien via Huo Chikwang. Dan avidly shared the newsletter that Mr. Lui mimeographed occasionally and sent to his increasing circle of students. Although we never able to meet Mr. Lui, his writings and the "Reflections" essay published in the "green book" informed and I hope inspired our taiji practice and kept us going in those early days when it seemed an impossible art to ever comprehend and learn, much less master.

**Cover:** This time in Taiwan we traveled down the east coast – Hualien to Taidong – rather than the west – Taizhong to Tainan. The three dimensional Yin-Yang is from a sculpture exhibit at "The Street of Stone Art Craft" in Hualien.

**Translation:** In addition to Jack and Christine Carlson, we give thanks to Jill Marese's French Classes at Forest Hills Northern High School for putting their skills to use.

## President's Message

Looking back at the old A(W)YMTA *Journals* in preparation for the Spring/Summer AYMTA/*Journal* celebration, I am surprised (not really) to see that the basic price of a yearly membership has risen only \$5.00 – in twelve years. Please don't panic, taiji folk, I am not here to announce a price increase – nor even to propose one. Rather, I would like to suggest some of the better ways to show your support for the only non-profit organization in North America dedicated solely to furthering the study and practice of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan.

The first level of support is to simply send your membership dues in for 2004 at the first possible moment. That way we don't have to be worrying about a lot of late members who haven't paid their dues by, say, April. We can send out "reminders" in the middle of the year but would rather not feel it necessary. And by paying your dues around the first of the year you are clearly demonstrating grassroots level interest in what AYMTA is trying to accomplish.

The second level of support is to participate in Yangjia Michuan activities and events. AYMTA devotes a great deal of time trying to find out about any YMT related events and to bring word to members of the YMT community. We strongly feel that by helping to promote and sometimes even produce events that bring the YMT community together we are living up to one of the fundamental reasons that AYMTA exists. As quoted from our mission statement: "The specific purposes for which this corporation is organized are to transmit, perpetuate, promote and further the growth of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan (TMT) in the United States." This is a pretty straightforward mandate with a clear message as to what AYMTA is about. You can look at the back page of this issue for the specific objectives of AYMTA. If you are interested in Yangjia Michuan as a student, teacher, healer, from any point of view, these are some laudable goals. Some ways that members can participate include writing, editing, translating (mainly French), making art, etc. for the journal and/or the web page; using web creation skills to become involved with the further development of *aymta.org*; using organization and business skills to help maximize the results that AYMTA can achieve from very limited resources. You can also bring skills and desire for event organization, helping to find ways for AYMTA to work with other taiji organizations, to spread information about YMT through demonstration, lectures, and workshops. And there are many other excellent ways to participate.

The third level of support for AYMTA is to consider becoming a board member. There is much valuable work that gets done in this organization by people other than board members. On the other hand, there is nothing like sitting on the inside looking out – and setting yourself with the task of trying to find ways to improve, expand, or simply make AYMTA more useful. It's a big country that a very small organization is trying to serve. When AWYMTA became a National organization by dropping "West" from its name, the hope was that there would be a similar and representative group from the Eastern part of the country. Although there are now more YMT schools spread across the United States than ever, AYMTA is one of the few links that ties the large regions of the country together. The whole purpose of the organization, I would like to propose, is to provide something that would be difficult to do otherwise. AYMTA is here to help YMT grow, not for profit but for the pleasure of it. That's why the consideration of becoming a board member might be a rewarding step for someone looking to both help the YMT community and to give something back to it.

Thomas W. Campbell

December 29, 2003

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# Reflections on Taijiquan

by Hubert H. Lui

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## Practicing Taiji

Taijiquan, when practiced diligently and properly, serves to rebuild one's body, mind and spirit. The more than one hundred movements that make up the Taiji sequence use every part of the body and bring into play the mind and the spirit of the individual in a pattern of continuously flowing movement. The expected result is harmony in a healthy body, a sound mind and a good spirit. Whether one chooses to practice the Long Form or the Short Form, a half hour to one hour or more of uninterrupted movement is the best way to experience the continuous flowing nature of Taiji.

Most people would agree that meditation is an effective means for improving both our physical and mental health. In contrast with the more common sitting or inactive meditation, Taiji is "meditation in activity." An ancient Chinese sage once wrote, "Meditation in activity is a hundred, a thousand, a million times superior to meditation in repose." Today many people, including medical authorities, have recognized the benefits and therapeutic functions of Taiji. They realize that the exercise can be employed as a healing art, a preventive measure for various diseases or complaints, and also as "an all-round conditioner" to adjust and balance the needs of a healthy person. In fact, for decades in mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and many parts of Southeast Asia, Taijiquan has been used as a means of physical therapy. The exercise itself is the therapist.

In the earliest stage of Taiji history (700–1000 years ago), it was used as a physical expression of Laozi's Daoist philosophy, as well as that found in the *Yi Jing* and Confucius' *Doctrine of the Mean*. Later (100–200 years ago), the practice of Taiji gradually changed into a form of self-defense and was used secondarily for health. In more recent years, the primary goal of Taiji practice has been for health as well as graceful and beautiful movement. The self-defense aspect has become less and less emphasized.

This change in emphasis is in keeping with the Daoist theories of unselfishness, abiding by the norm, emptiness, humility, softness, yielding, calmness, non-striving, knowing and overcoming ourselves. These teachings, followed as a way of life, promote better mental and physical health. They foster harmony within ourselves and between us and our surroundings. This is why, in practicing Taiji, we should do only the types of movement which conform with these ultimate goals and avoid doing any activity which deviates from this path.

In learning Taiji, one must learn with great accuracy at the beginning. It is not easy for beginners to comprehend because of the many competing demands all coming at the same time. Consequently "patience" is the word. In order to be a successful learner, one must embrace three "hearts" or "minds": a heart of determination, a heart of faith, and a heart of constancy.

At the early stages of learning one should pay special attention to the following: a calm mind; application of *yi* (your will), not force or muscular strength; a relaxed body; an erect and balanced body posture. After one gets more familiar with the movement, one should take more note of the following: suppleness and harmoniousness; roundness and swiftness; integration and continuity; coordination and unity of movement. The things we should pay

special attention to at each specific period of time are in accordance with our progress.

In practicing Taiji one should strive to coordinate the consciousness or will with the movement and the breath. The integration of the internal and external features in Taiji training constitutes its special character and makes it unique among systems of physical exercise.

## The Integration of Opposites

As a product of the *Yin Yang* theory, Taiji holds that, "While activity stems from inactivity, within activity there lies inactivity," and, "Softness is company of hardness, they activate each other and complement each other." *Yin* and *Yang* in Taiji are manifested in the simultaneous training of the principles of expanding and contracting, emptiness and solidness, lightness and weightedness, slowness and fastness. The *Yin* and *Yang* also are expressed in closing and opening, exhaling and inhaling, negative and positive, softness and hardness, bending and straightening, neutralizing and charging, yielding and unyielding, evasion and adhesion. Taiji displays everywhere the unity of inconsistent opposites: while they are mutually inconsistent, they are mutually related; while they are mutually checked, they are mutually transformed, complementing each other. Any one-sided training, such as only softness without hardness, cannot be regarded as the proper practice of Taiji.

Although there are numerous schools of Taiji and each bears its own style, they all share the same basic principles of a training procedure consisting of the following: 1) From relaxation (*fangsong*) to softness or resiliency (*rou*), welding softness to transform into hardness (*ying*) or firmness (*gang*). 2) Train hardness back to softness again. 3) Finally, hardness and softness are well blended and they complement each other; within hardness there lies softness and within softness there lies hardness.

All the advancing, retreating, turning and bending movements in Taiji are circular, i.e., round and smooth, and in the form of arcs or spirals. From beginning to end, the circulating of one's *qi* (intrinsic energy) is guided and steered by one's consciousness. The inner *jin* (intrinsic energy combined with strength) is originated from the *dantian* (middle portion of the lower abdomen below the navel). The spinal column is the axis of the body movement; the area of the waist and the coccyx (lower spine) is the center. In the upper part of the body when the wrists move, i.e., turn, the arms follow. In the lower part of the body when the ankles move, the legs follow. The purpose of the spiral "reeling silk" type movement is to deliver the *jin* to the fingertips and to the toe tips. This type of movement also serves as a light and delicate, health inducing self-massage to the internal organs. When one has practiced Taiji for some years and is well versed in the exercise, one may gradually add more and more circles until each movement and the sequence as a whole become extremely complicated and beautiful.

From beginning to end one's spirit must be concentrated and one's movement must be guided by the *yi*. All movements must be light, relaxed, supple and peaceful. Avoid the use of awkward strength (force *li*) or rigid *jin* (dead intrinsic energy). Gradually one should attain to the level that when one muscle or bone joint moves, all other muscles and bone joints move in coordination. Eventually the exercises, which begin with the surface layers of muscle, will penetrate into the deep layers of muscle.

The strength expressed by one's internal *jin* is light but not drifting, nimble but not floating, sinking but not impeded, steady but not rigid. Internal *jin* is guided by *yi*. However, *yi* can only energize 90 percent of the *jin* required. The spirit is able to energize 100 percent. Consequently, when one movement is going to stop, and yet not stop because the spirit sustains the *yi*, the situation of the next movement naturally comes into being. Each movement is born from the previous movement. Remember, when speaking of movement, we primarily refer to the movement of *jin* rather than the movement of the body.

Since in each movement one's mind directs the *yi* to guide the inner body to move, the outer body will follow the inner body. The movement proceeds from inside to outside and then from outside to inside. With the internal and external moving as one, the whole body will act like one family in form, mind, and spirit. The entire sequence of movement should be linked together with one *qi* or spirit, and from beginning to end the whole form should be performed as if with one breath. Taiji consists of two complementary aspects, the *Yin* and the *Yang*. When *Yin* and *Yang* are in harmony, "10,000 things grow." However, Taiji is one; therefore, the source of this growth is one.

### Continuity in Movement and Posture

Continuity in movement is a must in Taiji. Whenever the movement appears to discontinue, the *jin* still continues; whenever the *jin* appears to discontinue, the *yi* still continues, and whenever the *yi* appears to discontinue, the spirit still continues. Thus, the movement is always sustained by the spirit. Only when there is continuity in the spirit can there be continuity in the movement. The form and the spirit are one. This is of utmost importance. The spirit should be up-lifted and should penetrate into all movements at all times. Thus spirit is the No. 1 boss in Taiji movement.

Because of this continuity and the coordination of the movements in Taiji, if one part of the movement is done improperly and inaccurately, it affects the other parts. When one part of the movement is correctly performed, it helps the performance of the other parts. Therefore, in making corrections in one's postures or movements, attention should be paid not only to the apparent errors, but also to the source of those errors. For example, when a movement appears scattered, without center, as arm movement only or the whole body does not move as one unit, then the primary correction should be made in the coccyx/waist area and spine where the axis of the moving body lies.

When the intrinsic energy is flowing, it may be more accurately called "intrinsic energy current." Flowing current, such as water, smoke, or wind, will be blocked or weakened in passing a sharp corner or in meeting a flat wall. It then becomes scattered and loses further strength. Only when the current flows freely forward or turns along smooth arcs or circles can it maintain its strength and create its power. That is why roundness is a special feature of Taiji movements.

The main characteristics of the Taiji posture consist of being: 1) centered and erect, yet comfortable and at ease; 2) light and nimble, yet non-floating and unscattered; and 3) sinking and balanced, yet not sluggish or awkward.

An erect body is extremely important in Taiji posture. From the crown of the head down to the coccyx a straight line must be maintained. The two shoulders, the two sides of the chest, the two sides of the stomach, and the two inner thighs must be in a straight line. This is what brings about the complementary and simultaneous movement of the upper and lower parts of the body. It is said: "Upper and lower follow each other," and "Upper and lower in one straight thread." Keep in mind it is the *qi* that links them together.

The bone joint of the coccyx should always face the middle line between the chest and the stomach as exactly as possible. The bone joints of the two shoulders should be linked together as if held in place by a piece of thread, curving slightly forward to help form a hollowed chest.

The various parts of the body (upper and lower, left and right, front and rear) not only should coordinate with or echo each other during movement, but also embrace each other. When in an opened position (expanded), all the external and internal aspects are open; when in a closed position (contracted) all the external and internal aspects are closed. Regardless how simple or complicated, how minor or major is the movement; one should be firm in one's attitude in following these rules.



The principle of "three points in line" should be observed while pushing with one hand forward. In this case, the finger point should face the nose point above and the toe point below. One's shoulders should coordinate with the inner thighs, the elbows with the knees, and the hands with the feet. This is called the "three external coordinations." Similarly one's *yi* should coordinate with one's *qi*, one's *qi* should coordinate with one's *jin*, and one's mind should coordinate with one's *yi*. This is called "three internal coordinations."

The resilient and buoyant nature of the body in Taiji movement resembles that of a bow. The body consists of five bows: the torso (the trunk of the body) is the main bow, with the waist as the center; each arm is a bow, with the elbow as the center; and each leg is a bow, with the knee as its center. All five bows are mutually related and should act in coordination, forging the *jin* of the whole body as one integrated unit. As a result, when storing *jin*, the body can store plentifully, and when delivering *jin*, the action can be very powerful and strong. If the center of each bow is stabilized by the *yi*, the action of the bows will be secure and accurate. In all the bow movements, the waist and the coccyx lie on the main axis and serve as the stabilizing force. Do not shake the axis area. Keep it firm and steady or you will miss all your targets when you release your arrows (*jin*).

The total emptiness and solidness in Taiji lies in the turning of the waist to both sides. The key of the turning of the waist rests in the coccyx. Therefore the coccyx is the key point of the body bow. Whenever the coccyx moves, the entire body follows. The action of the coccyx assists in the unification of the internal and external movement, the proper order of the primary and the secondary movements, and the linkage and coordination of all the body movements.

When the five bows of the whole body are in good shape and are on guard, when the movements are all guided by the waist/coccyx and spine, and when the *jin* is well integrated, then one is able to

accomplish the ultimate in Taiji defense. "The opportunities are issued by me, while the strength of making use of those opportunities is borrowed from my opponents." One is able to neutralize any oncoming force by evading it in arc form, release *jin* in a straight line, and store and deliver *jin* with both variation and continuity. Thus one achieves the level where "the whole body is fists" and "everywhere in the body is Taiji."

### My Own Discipline in Practice

When I practice Taiji, I always imagine my two moving arms to be a pair of flowing rivers. Thus, continuity and roundness in movement is a must. Any sudden jerk or sharp angle tends to interrupt the free flow of the water.

I often associate each particular movement with some activity in real life. For example, when I do the movement called Grasp Bird's Tail, I put myself in the mood of rowing a small boat across West Lake in China. When I do the Cloud Hands, I imagine that I am on a playground in a cloud and I am turning a balloon round and round and then passing it on to my playmate.

In some other movements I imagine that I am expressing the behavior of nature. The Fair Lady resembles the rising and the engulfing of the waves; the Three Palm Movement and the Repulse Monkey also are like the rolling forward and backward of waves or clouds. Similarly, to enhance my breathing I link my movement (forward/backward, left/right, upward/downward, etc.) to the movement of flowing water and the wind. In this there is rhythm.

I am aware of the fact that in Taiji practice, when softness and hardness, expanding and contracting, and inhaling and exhaling are well blended and properly following each other, I am able to conserve more energy than is required. Therefore the more I move, the more I want to move.

When I make circular movement with my arms to "ward off," I use my pelvis as the base and my arms move only in accord with my lower spine and waist. I do not move my fingers unless I first move my hands; I do not move my hands unless I first move my arms and shoulders; I do not move my shoulders unless I first move my body; and I do not move my body unless I first move my lower spine and waist.

When I release my strength in any form, to press, to punch, or to kick, I put equal strength on the two opposite directions, as much on the rooted foot as on the serving arm or leg. In that way the body balance can be maintained and the foundation of the body will not be uprooted.

In the contracting or retreating movement, I inhale to store intrinsic strength. The movement is slower and follows a smooth curve; it covers a longer period of time and a lengthier path. In the expanding or advancing movement, I exhale to release my strength. The movement is faster, and the path of the movement is relatively shorter and straighter.

After a long time of practicing Taiji, I gradually have the feeling that I am no longer exercising my physical body; rather I am exercising my intrinsic strength, as if I were reeling silk from a cocoon: continuously, patiently and steadily. All my external physical movement is but an expression of my internal intrinsic strength. Thus the joy grows from within. This is why in Taiji the prudent "doers" appreciate the art much more than the observers.

In the early history of Taiji, this exercise was called Long Boxing because it resembles the Long (*Yangzi*) River, whose volumes of water flow without interruption, always fresh, always soft and yet always growing strong. While I am doing Taiji I think about the performance of the Long River. I keep the energy flowing and avoid doing anything that may block the free passage of *qi*, such as sudden jerks or partial body movements or movements that have corners or sharp angles. Of course the mental current should flow freely too. The mind, the energy, and the body should be the same thing, working together harmoniously for the same goal.

When I learn a new movement I try to do it at first as softly as I can. In time it naturally shows more strength and appears harder and harder. Then I soften it again. The second type of softness is different from the first. The first type is based on nothing from Taiji, while the second is the natural product of the two stages of softness and hardness in Taiji. The same is true in the various stages of hardness. The end result of this training is that while the movement looks soft, it is hard; and while it looks hard, it is soft; thus the movement naturally becomes a combination of softness and hardness. That is Taiji.



Hubert H. Lui was born in China in 1911. He received his B.A. degree from Ling Nan University and his M.A. degree from Nan Kai Institute. He began his study of Taiji in Hong Kong in 1954 [with Cheng Wing-kwong]. After coming to the United States with his lovely wife, Elsie, he continued his study in Chicago, Illinois [with Dr. James Wing and Huo Chi-kwang], where he began his long career as a Taiji teacher. From 1968 to 1979, Mr. Lui taught at and was director of the Taiji programs of Columbia College Dance Center and Midwest Foundation of American Yoga and Performing Arts. In 1979, he moved to San Francisco, where he taught a full schedule of Taiji classes. He also conducted numerous workshops around the country. Mr. Lui was consulting author for *Tai Chi Chuan: The Technique of Power* by Tem Horwitz and Susan Kimmelman, published in 1976.

Mr. Lui was a teacher to his core. He taught with boundless energy and as only great teachers can teach-by example and from the heart. Mr. Lui was a great teacher because he was a great human being. His subject matter was Taiji, but Taiji taught as a metaphor for life, a path to fulfillment and happiness. Through his love and generosity, he modeled for his students what it means to be a true friend. He filled his life with the love of family and friends, with his commitment to Taiji, and with his active dedication to the philosophy he taught—a philosophy that effectively synthesized Eastern and Western thought.

Five days after the photographs in this book [*Tai Chi for Health and Harmony*] were taken in 1985, Mr. Lui suffered a stroke, from which he largely recovered. He continued to teach and inspire his students for another 10 and a half years until, in January 1996, he suffered a second and massive stroke that took his life. This book is only one of many legacies he left behind and for which we are deeply grateful. Through his teaching and his life, Mr. Lui provided his students with the nourishment, the strength and the wisdom necessary to carry forth his inspiration. Many of those students continue to gather annually in San Francisco to celebrate this heritage. With enormous gratitude, we rededicate this book to his memory.

Judith Chambliss  
August 2000



# On Tuishou

By Manuel Solnon

Translated by Anna Cotton, Caitin Kelly, Kris Pranger, Alex Troger, Kristen Whitney

These thoughts are those of a student who practiced at the side of Master Wang Yen Nien in Taiwan for close to six years.

It is necessary, before pursuing, to appreciate the generosity of him who gave his talents and perseverance, and that he continue teaching in spite of his handicap.

Of the little I understand it, Tuishou appears to be a practice based on martial arts, with several similar facets. Some practitioners have had experience with some of the facets. They talk about them and, in my opinion, they are good and just for everyone.

I remember that after meditating at the dojo with Laoshi some years ago, he asked us to give our impressions of the practice in general, and questioned some students. Let me relate some of what they remembered as well as their personal experiences.

The experiences of our brothers have a practical effect on all of us that is good and profitable for the general interest.

But how does this subject appear to be talked about for certain?

Simply by tact and humility toward certain people who are tempted to enclose Taijiquan in a pocket of resistance closed to remarks, commentaries, attention and attempts by all. I understand that Tuishou or Taijiquan are not the properties of a single person, but they are practices that nourish the exchange with each breath, error, gain or shift in balance than one makes. But Tuishou must be open to others.

To my eyes, Tuishou presents many “effects” on the physical plane, energetic, psychological, respiratory, as well as the social ... That is why to advance alone seems to be insufficient, limiting and impersonal.

For the will of not seeing it in part, we impoverish it.

*Tuishou is more than that.*

By the desire to limit it to an aspect, we reduce it to a need.

*Tuishou is better than that.*

For the blindness of confining it to action alone, we limit the reach.

*Tuishou is better than that, and so are we for the same reasons.*

Tuishou, in the eyes of this modest student, is more than a technique to martial arts. The energy, the flexibility, the breathing, the movement, the distance and the balance are well visible if one can recognize them, and if one “knows how to read.” If one does not know how to recognize them, we will work hard to make them arise.

The psychological aspect that was given to me to discover was created by a frank push, more real, and more intentional, but also friendly. The push, it's the will of exploring the center of the partner's practice (as well as our own), to discover the point of endurance of which Laoshi spoke at length, the unsuccessful equilibrium, the double weightedness, the *Jihui*, meaning the opportunity to push (now: not before, not after). The practice of Tuishou brings also the discovery of oneself that one believes to be true. Sometimes during a real exchange, the apparent characteristic traits appear, deep feelings of failed relationships that affect us daily without us being truly consciousness of them. The emotions remount in apparent confusion, but are recognized by the self.

It is in a sense therapy for both partners, each aiding the other with sincerity. But this cannot produce itself in a voluntary practice and respect the other. Respect signifies, in my eyes, being honest in one's push that is intentionally voluntary. Thus by one making a

real push with the other, one shows respect by not betraying expectations. So that the exchange is mutually enriching, it seems to me important to associate respect and serious intent, then the two brothers or sisters in practice come out nourished. The remarks of the master during these exchanges come back to me now. He told us that after a first push, if it is not fruitful, we must persevere again and again, meaning two or three times until we arrive at what is expected of us: success in our movements. This man expects that we practice what he teaches, and nothing else. One must not fall, in a clumsy movement, nor make movements that are virtual, boring, monotone or falsely sincere.

We are there to learn and to help each other.

It is said in the first book of Wang Laoshi (page C-3), “Treatise on Taijiquan” (attributed to Zhang Sanfeng), “Just like uprooting something with the intention of destroying it, sever its root and you can be assured it will be quickly destroyed.”

What will happen if each took a part of Taijiquan or Tuishou developing one part more than necessary and omitting the rest? We risk obtaining in the long run custom-made practices, like Taiji gym, Taiji dance, Taiji judo, or of curative care...

For my part I never read that in the books of Laoshi, nor ever heard an unspecified teaching in this feeling.

The flower is made of a root, a stem, sheets, petals and a heart. What we call flowers are homogeneous, harmonious, pretty, that we like to give or receive. What happens if we offer only one part of the flower?

To progress it is necessary to be freed from the opinion of the others, but sometimes, from your own, also, when it encloses you into a narrow vision.

Listen, but do not be blocked.

To be honest to oneself, that is difficult for all of us.

Laoshi often spoke to us about the sixth sense which was one of our goals (Book I page C-9) (proposed on the Taiji), Wang Zongyue said that “thanks to the practice one can gradually acquire a comprehension of what is energy...one is on the way to knowledge. Without a long assiduous practice it will not be possible to reach this level where the spirit is suddenly enlightened.”

The words of my master come back to my ears and his gestures to my eyes.

Wang Laoshi has corrected me hundreds of times, and if I were still there, it would certainly continue. Therefore, I remember a Sunday afternoon in the dojo, during Tuishou practice at 2 o'clock, when he was not happy with me and gave me a strict and firm reprimand. The cause was that I had let pass by a *Jihui*, an opportunity to push my partner. He immediately interrupted our exchange and said, “Why do you not push yourself?”

I was baffled and didn't know what to say. I was surprised by the suddenness and intensity of his remarks. Then, he told me, “If you have a *Jihui* to make a push, you push.” His teaching was clear, frank and without equal. It is thus it appears to me that we should practice.

Finally, I will address my respects, as well as thanks, to my first teacher. He is that one that opened the doors of Taiji for me: Henri Mouthon. I had been impressed by the quality of his movements, that he had so well-memorized. They were of brilliant clarity and

Tuishou Continued on Page 21

## Dao and Voice

Approaching the breath and Taiji using the voice.

By Christian Bernapel and Myriam Moreau

Translated by Melisa Mlivic, Varun Kamarajan, Anna Sabine

By their essence, the fluid gestures of Taiji and the expression of voice allow us to touch on the depth of the being. They have as a common root the breath that reaches the deepest of the body's structure. Thanks to intention, these two participants awaken and adjust our being to the quality of its expression and of its relational dimension. They combine themselves with happiness "to encourage direction and develop the spirit."

Thanks to the expression of voice and sounds, the gestures of Taiji have become more delicate. Develop voice, an instrument both simple and mysterious, with the support of the gesture of the Taijiquan. Thanks to the breath, they all take shape and the body can express itself. The vibrations of voice direct and put themselves in resonance to vibrate the body completely in harmony with the gesture. By intention and the heart, gesture finds its meaning and voice expresses its sensibility.

The Chinese poetic culture frequently uses the strategy of homophones to create in spirit the emptiness necessary to access depth and soul. The Chinese excel in sign language. The French language and the Western languages are languages derived from an alphabet. Old Egypt skillfully combined in its language of hieroglyphs, pictography, and alphabet. Thus, the capacity to read pictures depends on the association of consonants and of vowels **b.a. ba; s.i. si; r.o. ro ...** that, when merged, become the syllables **ba, si, ro**. These associated syllables become one word: **basiro**, (still meaningless) which then appears as signs in its global reading. "Sign," taking its direction from the context in which it is placed.

Thus, our own words appear as a sign language with our own rules. Here, we act in complicity with our Chinese friends in the written expression of the spoken language. The words become ideological. It allows vocal expression of thoughts.

Music is the common language of all civilizations and cultures. It is expressed by multiple sounds thanks to breath, the body and a physiological mould of the throat and palate. Often it is expressed in rhythms and melodies carrying the sense of collective gestures (for example: **oh hiss**) or, in the French language, the terms: the way, the voice and to see (*la voie, la voix* and *vois*) are homonyms.

Here we arrive at our subject: **the breath and voice, the way of the breath**. The breath instills life to the gestures and especially those of Taiji. The classical texts of Taiji are often stated as chants or songs. The basic principles are inscribed in the practice: the song of the thirteen postures and five principles. ... Finally, it is found that a major characteristic of our learning consists of utilizing the voice as an instrument of teaching.

Thanks to singing lyrics, we have notes that express a sound. Managing breath is difficult for a number of the Taiji students. Also, the singers have a difficult time changing their way of breathing from that which is familiar.

The idea of associating the art of gestures and the art of song was born. This is what we have developed, in the frame of workshops to discover and to practice, research on the expression of the voice in our practice of Taijiquan (form,

tuishou, neigong) and the provision of gesture in the training of song.

It remained only a step to apply all of that to the teaching of Taiji. I suggest to students that they take note of the shared movements of the group, basic exercises or sequences of form, while expressing vocal sounds (*rou-xi*) that are familiar. The song courses enrich themselves with the goodness of the simple movements of Taiji.

"Ah," have you considered it?

Master Wang calls our attention, with this well-known vowel, dressed as a consonant, "to prepare" to pass through the door, to enter into the form. When the vowel opens, the throat creates space in the back of the mouth: the best way to let go, one that is propitious for concentration.

"A," "ha," "ah," pronounced in French, Spanish, Italian, English or Chinese do not have the same substance. The palate, the language, the nose, the throat, the trachea, the stomach, the back, the diaphragm and the kidneys all participate in the expression of this sound. It is concise, long, pushes the consonant or extends one of the vowels in a long expiration: a sigh, a call or a cry. It transforms itself while rounding off the sail of the palate in "o," like the breath of the wind. One can see that that substance and expression of this unique vowel are infinite.

Then, when one "starts" the form, it is the throbbing succession of "**rou-xi**," "**o si**"; "**ho shi**"... that releases and leads us, together, in the mysteries of the form. "**Ho**" is breathing out, "**si**" is breathing in and between the two is the suspended breath that permits the transition from one to the other. In the unfolding of the gestures of the form are three stages that permit it to live in our intimate being.

The variations in the modulations call everyone to relaxation, to appeasement, to softness, then to an awakening of energy of transition or a punch, a kick, firmness, expression or an explosion. Different living states are within what seems to be a succession of monotonous gestures.

Furthermore, free and codified tuishou, as well as the expression of *fa jing* obey precise rules regarding respiration. The use of vocal support to create sound follows the form that one must exhale by the mouth: it is a great teaching tool. In the Chinese teachings on sound there are eight energies **péng, lǚ, àn, jǐ, cǎi, liè, zhǒu, kào**. They permit the learning of the aspects of yin and yang, the consonants and the vowels, and their phonetic pronunciations. The sound carries a sense of movement and of its energy. Contrary to performing gestures in silence, the sound facilitates an internal feeling of its expression and reciprocation.

These examples should offer an awareness of the meaning of breathing that presides over the fluidity of taijiquan gestures.

I hope that this approach can evoke conversation and numerous experiments with these aspects. I am very grateful to readers of this article to have let me share these experiences in hopes that they will be able to develop along these lines.

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## Journal Notes

By Mark A. Linett

Over the years I have been keeping some journals with notes of lessons and comments that Laoshi has made. Many of the notes were taken after I had returned home to a steaming cup of Gaoshan Oolong tea. In those moments I scoured my memory for the treasure trove of wisdom and information that Laoshi gave us at the end of our Tuishou classes. Sometime ago I attempted to organize the notes with regard to themes or subjects but somehow it became just too tedious and time consuming. So I've decided that I will just lay out the information and hopefully those interested in push hands will find some use for it in their practice or at the very least it will offer some food for thought. These are notes from Tuishou classes in May and June of 1995.

In push hands the whole body is moving together from ankle to the wrist. When the body moves the whole body moves. The joints fold when pushed—the knees, elbows, waist and chest—if you resist you will be pushed away. Hands must be lively, light and listening as well as working together. As soon as the hands meet with your partner start to change, listening energy is crucial. Don't just stand there and wait to be pushed. Use one hand then the other to channel energy—don't use two hands to push. Lively hands, rotating, sticking, changing. Use the body to listen to your partner's hands. Always look for his center point. Allow the hands to rise and to make contact with the pushing hand—the hands should not be dead but constantly listening and transforming. Hands don't move alone. They are constantly transforming.

Listen with the palms: *qi* is turning in the center of the palm. Stay soft, listening with the entire body and mind:

use your *yi* to listen to your partner's energy, feet respond to partner's attack, use the waist to yield, listen for full and empty using various attacking methods: moving in different directions, sinking and waiting for someone to come, then turning when the push comes, listening and bonding to your partner, constantly looking for opportunities, using sinking or sitting as well as rising to discharge energy.

Discharging is short and natural—clean, not long. If someone grabs you, then quickly push. As soon as the hands move then the waist is already moving.

As soon as you find yourself in a bad position or disadvantageous position get out.

As soon as you find yourself in a difficult situation, release and relax.

Use the elbow to listen—listen with different parts of the arm. Wrists, elbows, palms, shoulders all cooperate.

The partner should not feel any pain when being pushed and there should be no slapping. Pain and slapping are two signs of *li* or strength. When you feel the heat of the hands start to turn.



Mark and Wendy mirroring Kunlun Jian

Slow nondramatic turning of the waist—when someone pushes at the waist move the waist in a circle so that it comes back to its original position

First push will be deflected, return when the push doesn't work—find ways to look for blocked points, search for blocked points where your partner cannot escape.

Slowly push him into a "corner" where there is no escape, where he has less and less room to maneuver. If your body is resisting his hand it gives him a

point to hang onto or a point to push off. Pushes should not easily be seen—one hand is blocking at the same moment the other is pushing out.

Try not to give your partner any idea of where to push and where to put his hands.

The feeling is that there is no place to push. Control his arm or body part until he can't move—that's the time to push.

Practice being soft and moving with the push. If the push is slow, we move slowly with the push. If the push is fast move quickly. In this regard he suggested we read Wang Tsung Yueh.

Sink the chest: don't resist. Allow the hands to slide off the body like ice.

Timing must be perfect like catching a metronome in movement. Yielding and striking at the proper moment.

For the most part the center is on the back leg. Don't shift to the front leg—keep front leg free—if partner uses his legs to sweep or kick, he will go after the front leg. It is easier to change if staying on the back leg. If you really use the legs well the partner will not know how you arrived. Never straighten the legs—especially the front leg—straight legs will easily be pushed over even without anyone pushing you.

Movements should be small—if they are large they are much easier to see. If the movements are too large then areas of the body are exposed to attack. Too small then there is very little time to react for the beginner. Actually there is enough time if the body turns but the timing has to be perfect.

Draw in your partner so that he loses his center and is in the space with no root. That is the time to push him. This all happens in an instant.

When you turn the body you get closer. Deflect and the hand moving outward is immediately longer. Extend the shoulder. Practice the turning of the waist so that it becomes a habit.

Try not to use hand strength when deflecting. When pushed follow the push into the body—try not to react in a quick fearful way. Use the body as a hand...stick and bond to the incoming energy catching bonding and yielding at the same time, not a sudden movement to deflect. Investigate the bonding and yielding.

If someone is staying back and protecting themselves then when they step up to push, it is easy to see the push coming. The idea is to get close and to get the advantage.

Continually find the place where you have more hands available than your partner. Give him what he wants then you can push him at will. The real road is to give yourself to anybody. Give your partner your whole body. There is nothing you don't give him.

Do more Embrace Tiger Return to Mountain to get more spring in the legs.

The basis of Tuishou is *DingBu* (fixed step) to channel energy outward you have to be fixed—even if you are moving around you have to fix your step before you discharge energy. To stay fixed you have to put your mind in your feet. Don't move the feet.

When you practice form, practice low, practice strong and hard.

Practice everyday. Basic exercises are crucial.

Look to practice an alternative to yielding ... *Ding Jing*. When someone keeps doing the same push do something that surprises him. When pushed to the Dantian or other parts of

the chest fill the Dantian and root the push. This kind of *Ding Jing* is very important since it is the kind of *Ding Jing* that one needs to discharge energy. Perhaps use against someone who is looking for a way to push then suddenly soften and root his push. This kind of movement is not the same as resistance—we are using the *qi* in the Dantian and the root in the feet to push back incoming energy.

The waist, legs, hands, *qi*, and breath have to be coordinated: practice until it becomes natural.

Have relaxation in the waist and legs...cannot be relaxed without breathing and *qi*.

Whole body needs to be full of *qi*.

Sometime it takes five pushes or more to find the right opportunity to push.

Caution not to grab when using pulls, just a quick light grab below the elbow or perhaps just slightly above the elbow.

Inward strength must be matched with outward relaxation.

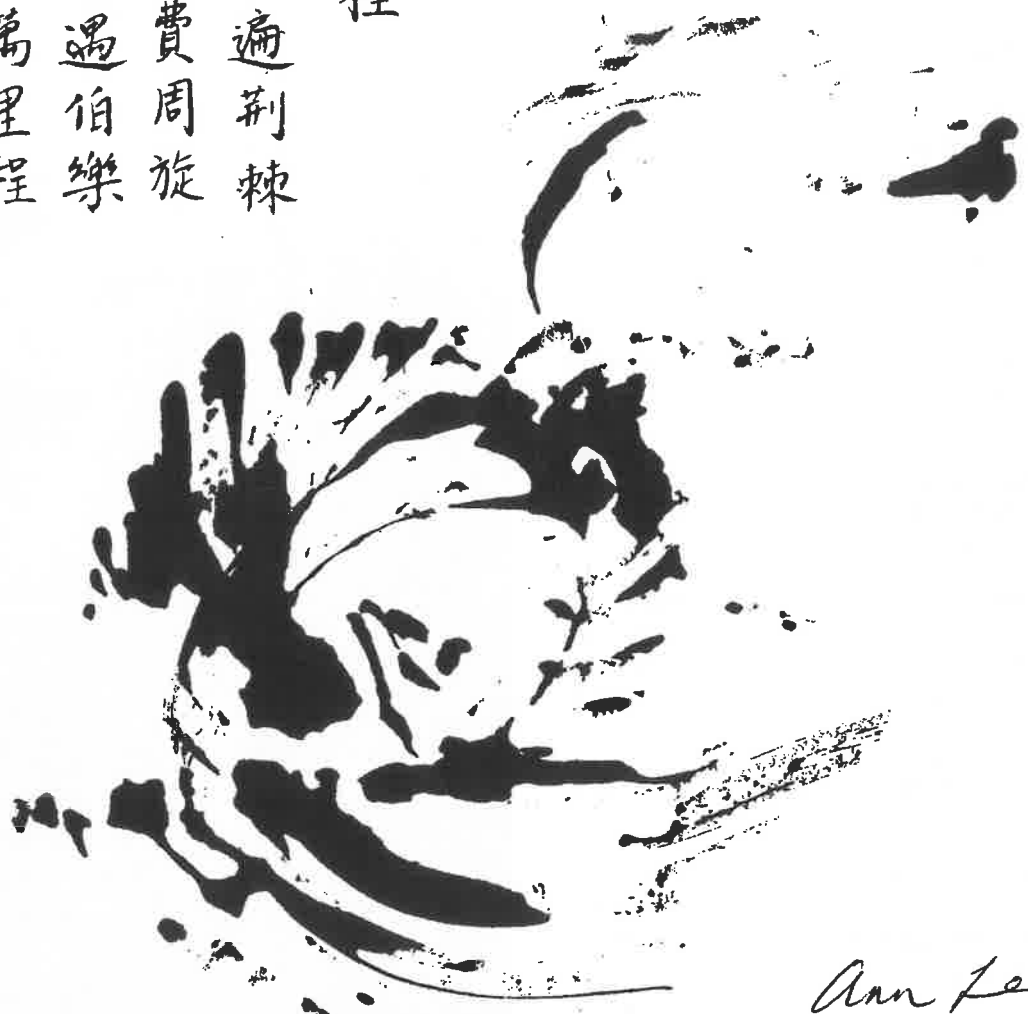
Mark practices in Tienmou, Taiwan  
Photographs provided by Kay Reese.



龍鳳佛宮  
Pagoda of Dragon Phoenix Temple  
in Taitung (Táidōng)

萬里程

徘徊前路遍荆棘  
欲止還行費周旋  
迂迴路轉遇伯樂  
雲散乘風萬里程



*Ann Lee*

萬里程  
徘徊前路遍荆棘  
欲止還行費周旋  
迂迴路轉遇伯樂  
雲散乘風萬里程

Wàn Lǐchéng

páihuái qiánlù biàn jīngjí  
yù zhǐ hái xíng fèi zhōuxuán  
yūhuí lùzhuǎn yù Bólè  
yúnsàn chéngfēng wàn lǐchéng

**Editor:** Again, four lines of seven syllables. Here idioms such as 伯樂相馬 *Bó Lè Xiàng Mǎ* and 伯樂識馬 *Bó Lè Shí Mǎ* are key to understanding. *Bó Lè* is the name of a star in charge of horses but also the name given to Sun Yang, a person in the Spring and Autumn Period about whom there are various stories regarding his identifying hidden qualities in horses. The idioms generalize *Bó Lè* to persons “who are good at discovering or identifying talents and appointing qualified personnel to the right post.”\*

Following is my more literal English rendition and then Ann’s free verse one.

Twisting path, thistles and thorns  
Urge to stop, continue on  
From the maze reveals a guide  
Distance melts as clouds on wind

A Long Journey

Obstacles, I face many times.  
Inadequacies, I grieve.  
Struggles, I give up often.  
Instincts keep me going.  
I stumble and fall, and fall deeper.  
You come to my rescue.  
In awe, I overcome.  
Step forward, and journey, rising.

\*Li Shutian, *Chinese Idioms and Their Stories*, Beijing 1999.

Yi and Feeling In Practice

By Jean-luc Perot

Translated by Steve Malik and Heather Conens

Why? For What? And Then?

These questions, for me, are a part of the practice in that they will take every effort to train you with the best exercises and prevent the art from failing. These motivations are evolutionary.

It often starts with an unconscious decision: a fortuitous circumstance when we encounter the mystique of Taiji and we open the door to endless possibilities.

The students and teachers contribute to the positive atmosphere. If we work in accordance with the pursuit of happiness, we can achieve it.

The ideas and values conveyed by this philosophy will open new perspectives—body awareness, integration of inner forces, discovery of yourself and your capacity to develop. You will also discover the energetic workout, learn of the tradition, and understand the words that are being said and heard. Taiji takes maximum effort for maximum reward.

You will start with the fundamentals—toning the body, stretching, and energizing body and soul. With constraint and precision as our models, our instructors watch us and create an itinerary.

In the fascination of diligence, the mind awakens—the void, suspended time and the relativity of points of view call for interior and exterior transformation. With the years comes faithfulness to oneself, who, beyond the styles and techniques, emerges. One begins to know what one likes, to choose the lines of strength of daily practice and to put aside or refuse things that clutter life. Examination and simplification: the exoticism lessens, the seriousness is put aside and the pleasure increases with the demand of precision. The point of view changes and the enormous model is put to the test of questioning—do the body, soul, and heart travel together?

The meaning of the other in *tuishou*, where one crosses the hands, as before one crossed the iron, incites more intensity in the behavior. Do not oppose oneself, choose the effectiveness by the ease, the privilege of mobility, better feeling, to include and to cure our insufficiencies and our frailties without closing or stiffening oneself.

Each formal gesture is rethought and relived to give an internal coherence to the individual.

Practice becomes more than quotidian, it becomes a part of one’s life; society becomes the place and moment of the exercise. *Wen*, the ability to cross misunderstanding, becomes perceptible, the culture makes its imprint. *Wu*, the martial art, working on oneself, permits maturation and the generous meeting of the self, the other and the world.

*The journey has transformed the immobile traveler.*

## Teacher Profile: Harry Wu (天延)

By John Whittaker

Harry Wu is a fifth Generation Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan student and a sixth Generation Xian Zong Jinshan Pai Jindan Dao Taoism disciple. He was born in Shanghai, China, in 1946. At the age of two his family moved to Taipei, Taiwan. He grew up



influenced by Kungfu films and novels. During high school in Taipei he was first exposed to the practice of marital arts as a student of judo. Weight lifting was also an interest for him then. His university study of architecture lasted five years in the city of Taichung, and, during that time, Harry studied kendo with much enjoyment. Following college came a two-year stint in the army, during which time he studied Karate. Harry married Pei-Pei in 1973, and is the father of Stanley and Larry.

After leaving the army he fell in love with archery, and won a second place in Taiwan National Youth Cup in 1975. He still occasionally draws the bowstring now.

Harry and family came to Southern California in the fall of 1982 to open a branch office for his family's business, and they settled in South Pasadena. The educational opportunities for his sons were an important consideration in making the move. Before the move to the United States Harry studied Qigong with an old Buddhist monk for three years and has continued that practice ever since. In 1988 he became a member of "The South Pasadena Chinese Club" where he met YMT teacher George Lin. George gave Harry his first exposure to Taijiquan. Since Harry had "always wanted to learn Taijiquan" this was an auspicious meeting indeed.

In 1990 Harry first began to study Neigong under Master Wang Yen-nien during his visit to the United States. In 1992 George Lin returned to Taiwan and Harry began to teach the class that George had taught at the Monterey Hills School in South Pasadena. On September 18, 1993, at the Big Sur, California, YMT seminar Harry became a sixth Generation, Xian Zong, Jinshan Pai Jindan Dao disciple. Wang Laoshi gave Harry the

Daoist name 天延 Tiān Yán. Harry returns to Taiwan every other year or so to continue studying with Laoshi.

In 1995 Harry first attended the Zhang Sanfeng (founder of Taijiquan) Birthday Party held annually in Chinatown, Los Angeles. This exposure to the greater world of Taijiquan and its different forms furthered his deep interest in the subject. He has acquired a large library of Taijiquan and Qigong related books and other reference materials. He has met with Mr. Chen Zhenglei, Shaolin monk and other Masters of Taijiquan styles at the "International Martial Arts Championships" held in Dallas, Texas, to gain further exposure and knowledge of all that is Taijiquan. Harry is currently learning the Kunlun Old Sword Form from Chris Nelson, and is assisting in the creation of the AYMTA "Thirteen Postures" instructional videotape that Chris is now authoring.

Harry believes that the study and practice of Taijiquan and Neigong develop human potentiality and increase health. He would like to teach everyone Taijiquan, and he believes that the world would become a more peaceful place if everyone practiced. He says, "Studying Taijiquan as young as possible is best for the rest of one's life." He believes that Taijiquan combined with Daogong (beneficial life-path practices) is not only about exercise and a method of self-defense but also about cleaning one's body and soul to cultivate one's heart.



Harry, Ann Lee, George Lin (Lin Chin-tai)

Harry believes that there are no short cuts to learning, only practice, practice and more practice. As the ancient Chinese aphorism states: Practice a thousand times and comprehension will come.

Harry has been practicing with other students every Sunday morning 7:30 – 9:30 a.m. at the Monterey Hills School in South Pasadena (in the school backyard under the beautiful 100 year-old pine trees) continuously since 1988 regardless of heat, cold or rain. He says, "I will be there to welcome you to join us."

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John practices in southern California  
Photographs provided by Harry Wu.





## Rencontres Jasnères

Two AYMTA teachers who attended the annual workshop in Marçon, France, share some of their impressions with you.



### Scott Chaplowe

While I may not be able to pronounce it, I can report that *Rencontres Jasnères* is a delicious smorgasbord for the internal martial artist. It is a festival where people of various styles, levels, and languages gather to share knowledge and play martial

arts in a safe, supportive community. Having heard about the event for years, I finally made it there this summer as a teacher and participant, and am thankful that I did!

RJ takes place during the last Fri-Sat-Sun of July in the rural countryside of France (about two hours south of Paris). Since the late 1980s, this event has attracted people from around the world, and for good reason. RJ left me with a deeper appreciation and renewed enthusiasm for internal martial arts, as well as a host of new friends and acquaintances. In an era when martial arts is rapidly spreading throughout the world, eroding barriers of secrecy, dogmatism, exclusiveness and elitism, RJ is an open and welcome forum for cross-fertilization and evolution in the internal martial-arts community.

So, where do I begin? How about a few memory snapshots:

- Pushing among a field of people like a child gleefully running about in a candy store.
- Making huge bubbles under which children and adults merged in awe and play.
- Teaching taiji movements and applications while laughing in the steady rain.
- Dipping my body into the cool, relaxing lake after an afternoon of satisfying pushing.
- Lounging in camp with a fine glass of wine and a choice plate of cheese and, of course, a baguette.
- Exchanging eyebrow staff movements with other enthusiasts.
- Staying up late into the night in both heartfelt and lighthearted conversation.

One of the greatest testimonies of RJ was that despite the unseasonable rain experienced this year, it was nevertheless a wonderful experience. There were two periods of workshops in



**Body Mechanics: Lauren Smith and Scott Chaplowe**

the morning, during which a variety of teachers taught various classes ranging from form and weapons to pushing hands. In the afternoon, after a period for lunch and siesta, people met out on a field for open, noncompetitive pushing hands. For me, the latter was an extremely invaluable opportunity to play with a variety of people of different sizes, shapes, skills, backgrounds and attitudes.

As a teacher, I was in a somewhat awkward position of teaching three different workshops of separate themes, each of which could have easily occupied the whole weekend. I had initially proposed three topics that the RJ organizers would let me know which could best compliment the other workshops. Well, when I arrived, I saw a printed schedule listing me to each topic on each successive day. "Bend with the wind" and all went well. In my first workshop, "Pushing Hands Fundamentals," I introduced a variety of interactive exercises stressing generation, absorption, rooting, sensing and projection. It was a great way to start out the workshop, introducing me to about two dozen new friends to play and learn with.

On Day 2, my workshop drew upon the circle/spiral in taiji to explore the endless possibilities of applied movement, while maintaining underlying principles of relaxation, alignment and sensitivity in response to change. This workshop was memorable in that there was a steady rainfall, ensuring that the handful of folks who showed up were especially keen to learn. On Day 3, I was finally able to share with others the eyebrow staff that had accompanied me on my European travels prior to RJ. The morning drizzle stopped just in time for my class. It is fun introducing this weapon to beginners, and new movements to those with a background. Several of the people at RJ were practiced in the eyebrow staff in the same form and from the same teacher that initially introduced me to the eyebrow staff: Serge Dreyer. I was able to share additional movements and interactive exercises that I had since trained in, and prior to the last afternoon pushing-hands session, I even gave a demonstration in front of the whole gathering of the somewhat esoteric staff form I have been studying. This proved a



Scott teaching eyebrow pole

supportive venue for me to concentrate and focus on form presentation.

As a RJ participant, I spent my free morning sessions participating in a workshop on the short stick taught by Arun Song. It was hard to choose among all the other workshops, but I couldn't pass up the opportunity to examine another weapon, close to my primary weapon, but of different length and girth. Similarities, as well as different interpretations, deepened my understanding of movement in this medium. Of course, I also participated in the afternoon pushing hands. After an introduction to the whole gathering about the structure and guidelines of the pushing, a bell would ring every 10 or 15 minutes, signaling for people to change partners. (For beginners, an informal class took place on the side introducing principles). Ah, if you could see the smile on my face as I remember these afternoons. The exchanges were like conversations, some playful, some earnest, some exploratory, others cautious ... all unique opportunities to practice the principles of taiji in spontaneous interplay with another.

But the organized sessions, whether workshops or the afternoon pushing, are just one aspect of RJ. The qi flowed back into camp, where people intermingled with play and laughter, food and drink, children, music and dance, and (of course) more sharing of martial arts. I could produce a long list of old friendships renewed, and the many more new ones made. Suffice to say, I finally got to meet, or better yet push with, Jean-Luc Perot. And especially meaningful to me was to hang once more with one of my primary taiji mentors, and dear friend, Lauren Smith. I regretted not being able to attend the workshop Lauren taught during RJ itself, but I am very thankful that I stayed three days afterwards to participate in his follow-up pushing-hands workshop at the same location. It is worth noting that several of the teachers offer their own workshops that bookend RJ.

My only regret about my RJ experience was that Serge Dreyer was absent. Not only is Serge one of the initial organizers and primary teachers of the event, he was my introduction to and subsequently principal teacher of the YMT system. It was hard to believe that I was finally making it to RJ and he was to be absent, but he is hard at work completing his Ph.D. dissertation (a labor I well respect after my years in graduate school). Nevertheless, his presence was felt, and I found myself reflecting on something he once confided to me: one of the most profound ways taiji has enriched his life has been through the people it has brought into his life. RJ is certainly a testimony to this, and I am thankful to heartily confer.

I have often looked at taiji as a conversation. In the form, one's conversation is internal, which is at the core of self-inquiry. With a school or system, the conversation extends to the "family," which plays a critical role in one's development. At events such as RJ, the conversation expands to the larger community, in which one aspires to assimilate and integrate the principals more fully into their life and social interactions. While each aspect of the conversation is ultimately part of the whole, the latter is especially precious in that it is so rare, and yet so fulfilling.



**Charlie with group**

**Charlie Adamec**

*Rencontres Jasnières* (which I believe means a gathering in the Jasnières wine region of France) is an internal martial-arts festival that has been taking place in the Loir (not the Loire) Valley of France for the past 17 years. The event is hosted by the European Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan group called ARAMIS (Association de Recherche en Arts Martiaux Internes en Sarthe). The gist of the event is to bring together people from all different internal martial-arts styles (mostly taiji) from anywhere (mainly Europe) to gather for a lakeside camping retreat. The event is for three days (sandwiched between independent workshops before and after) in which there is a wellspring of opportunity to study, practice and socialize with quite a medley of folks, all of which is fostered by the idea of growth and development of internal martial arts as a whole. From my perspective, I found this to be quite true.

The gathering site, Camping des Varennes, is tucked away in the countryside and is shrouded by small villages. I don't believe that any of the 300 participants were locals, so this meant that everyone had to make a special trip to get there. Such a situation really bolstered the enthusiasm level. People always seemed to be up to something: taking a workshop from one of the over 25 teachers who were present, taking a dip in the lovely

lake, practicing push hands, or chitchatting by the snack stand. One had only to take a moment and step out of the hubbub to see a picture of community forming before one's eyes.

All three days featured one-and-a-half hour workshops in both the early and late morning. There was quite an array of things being taught. Some folks had been waiting for several years to study with particular teachers. Others simply joined a workshop in progress because it piqued their fancy as they were strolling by it. It looked like a 25-ring circus sprawled along the lakeshore.

The afternoon sessions were, to me, the centerpiece of the whole event. For 3 hours each afternoon we'd gather in a big, grassy field for freestyle push hands. The only structure was that someone would ring a bell every 10 minutes to announce that it was time to change partners. The bustle of such an event reminded me of a high-school dance (with only the air of camaraderie serving as the chaperone). All levels of experience and styles of practice pushed with each other. There's a certain wide-eyed wonder in simply turning to someone you've never met, asking them to push hands with you, and within moments be engaged in a profound energy exchange ... Hmmm, perhaps that's a bit of an over-generalization as there were a few TV wrestling-style bouts and a fair share of absent-minded arm swinging that served as a backdrop to conversation. Anyway you choose it, the spectrum was there to sample. I personally feel that my Taiji practice was up'd a notch because I participated.



Charlie teaches in Berkeley, California  
 Photographs supplied by Scott Chaplowe and Fabienne Poncin-Epaillard

2004 *Rencontres Jasnières* will take place July 25–27 at Camping des Varennes in Marçon located in the heart of a vineyard region 30 kilometers South of Le Mans which is about 200 kilometers southwest of Paris (1 hour by train). From there one can take a train to Gare Château-du-Loir and a taxi to the camping grounds—although reportedly Charlie hiked from Château-du-Loir and Scott took a taxi from Le Mans. Hmmm ...

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 to be placed on the mailing list.



## A View of the Summer 2003 New York Workshop

On our travels home we extended the “gifts” of this workshop by reminiscing about the lessons learned, adventures gained, and the friendships that were strengthened. Key to our experience was the teaching of Sabine and Robert as they spoke of the partnership of “application and tui shou.” Through their instruction we learned about the balance of external/internal and the importance of this balance in our practice. In this *Journal* article, we share the connections that filled our days. Hopefully we have captured the spirit of balance/partnership that was inherent to this workshop.

### Environment

External: enjoying the hardships of “rustic” limits

Internal: setting the stage to purify the spirit

### Instruction

External: dialogue/demonstration

Internal: practices to develop listening/jing

### Food

External: visual feast of breakfast hall

Internal: nourishment to help in our learning

### Water

External: (at camp) best used for external purposes

Internal: life sustaining, especially when filtered for impurities

### Wine

External: clinking of glasses and camaraderie of toasts

Internal: the warmth of friendship

### Porch

External: structure of the porch gave way

-to the internal experiences inherent in social gatherings





Swimming

External: using the surface of water to demonstrate Wield the Pipa

Internal: understanding the “void” that exists below the surface

Entertainment Circle

External: display of talent (sing-a-long about mice on slabs, guitar, Shakespeare, jokes, film, school bus song, master of ceremonies who kept things going, etc.)

Internal: generosity of heart and spirit

Weather

External: damp/thick

Internal: the “electricity” of new learning, and a strong bolt of lightening to end the workshop

Workshop

External: generosity of host school

Internal: memories we take away

We are appreciative of Sabine and Robert for their teaching and for their complementary knowledge, skill and approach. Throughout the workshop they personally modeled the internal/external balance that is vital to this art.

We also thank the participants for allowing opportunities of transformation. Together we took in new information and transformed into use. We became softer over the days, moving from the efficiency of speed to the efficiency of “no frill/simple movement.” Through Sabine’s and Robert’s direction, each of us was challenged to transform again (and again) as the situation demanded. And, through making connections, strangers turned into friends/comrades.

You all have a place in our hearts.

*Sue Berthouex*

*Kathryn Coleman*

*Terri Pellitteri*

Photographs by Kathy Stiffney, Tom Campbell

# Ritualized Function in Our Practice

Presentation at the European College of Teachers of YMT

By Sabine Metzlé

Translated by Jack and Christine Carlson

It seemed important to me to stress the importance of this function and to give the explanation for it, having noted that many teachers and students tend to forsake the exercises of the school and to create or improvise new exercises, trusting the inspiration of the moment. This function, as taught to us by Master Wang, has a direction and a reason for being.

Initially, my subject was to be called "The Ritual in our Practice." But, most often, for Westerners, ritual has generally neither the same significance, nor the same calling, nor the same reach as in China. Thus I will speak about ritualized function.

I do not criticize enriching the practice with new contributions; I would like simply to give once again the repetitive function of the practice all its value and its importance.

## Definition Of Ritual

*Encyclopedia universalis*: A definition that proposes several approaches, extracts which summarize these approaches:

### FUNCTIONAL APPROACH:

The ritual classically refers to sequences of acts ordered and prescribed, repetitive, with standardized behaviors which, at first sight, cannot be explained in terms of rationality and which therefore seem to be resting on symbolic notation.

### SYMBOLIC APPROACH, THE RITUAL SAYS SOMETHING:

The ritual has a communication function that is primarily expressive and symbolic. It "says something" rather than "it doesn't do some thing"; to understand the significance of a ritual comes down to understanding the "grammatical rules of an unknown language"; it clearly assimilates the ritual to a code of communication of the linguistic type, implying in the same way a knowledge and an acceptance shared by the actors of the rules of these codes.

### PRAGMATIC APPROACH, WHICH MAKES THE RITUAL:

More than its significance, which is explicit in the ritual, under consideration are the standardized sequences and pre-

scribed actions –"how to do it". In many companies, the actors know how to carry out a ritual, but they seldom provide explanations on what they express and symbolize, and that can not attributed to a simple "lapse of memory." The fact that the significances are implicit or appear liable to lapse of memory shows how much the ritual differs from the verbal communication, and how it approaches art.

To summarize these approaches: a sequence of ordered acts, a common language, the stress laid on ritual action more than the ritual, and how to do it and not why to do it.

## The Practice In Taiwan

### *On Monday morning:*

- Bend forward (3 times)
- Bend to the right and to the left (3 times to the left, 3 times to the right)
- Kick with the heel, pull down to the leg (10 min)
- Tuishou exercises: 1-2, 3
- 1st , 2nd duan.

### *On Tuesday morning:*

- Bend forward (3 times)
- Bend to the right and to the left (3 times to the left, 3 times to the right)
- Carry the Tiger Back to the Mountain (9 times)
- Tuishou exercises: 1-2, 4
- 3rd duan

### *On Wednesday morning:*

- Bend forward (3 times)
- Bend to the right and to the left (3 times to the left, 3 times to the right)
- Basic Stance (10 min)
- Tuishou exercises: 1-2, 5
- Weapons

### *On Thursday morning:*

- Bend forward (3 times)
- Bend to the right and to the left (3 times to the left, 3 times to the right)
- Kick with the heel, pull down to the leg (10 min)
- Tuishou exercises: 1-2, 3
- 1st , 2nd duan.

### *On Friday morning:*

- Bend forward (3 times)
- Bend to the right and to the left (3 times to the left, 3 times to the right)
- Carry the Tiger Back to the Mountain (9 times)
- Tuishou exercises: 1-2, 4
- 3rd duan

### *On Saturday morning:*

- Bend forward (3 times)
- Bend to the right and to the left (3 times to the left, 3 times to the right)
- Single Leg Stance (10 min)
- Left/Right Descend (squat) (3x3 to the left and to the right)
- Tuishou exercises: 1-2, 5
- Weapons

In the evening, the form follows the same progression, and the study of tuishou also proceeds according to a precise order starting with the simple exercises to lead into the more complicated exercises.

The opening is always done with the left foot; the order, the duration and the number of the exercises are always well defined.

The chain of action consists of three sequences, opening and closing with the left foot.

## Concept Of Ritual In China

Taijiquan belongs to a thousand-year-old tradition of ritual that has a dominant place in Chinese civilization and that has profoundly distinguished Chinese thought.

Concerning the ritual in China, Anne Cheng writes in her book *History of Chinese Thought* :

From whatever angle one examines it, the thought of ancient China is characterized by a taste for order, or, more exactly, scheduling, set up with a supreme rank of good. This taste for order is translated in the concept of *li*, in the beginning indicated by the natural veins of jade. This concept corresponds to the idea of ritual scheduling more than to



that of an objective order obeying a teleological design: “if Greek thought is the spirit of the potter, in which an amorphous mass of clay is made initially perfectly malleable then entirely turned to the idea of the craftsman, Chinese thought was marked by the spirit of the lapidarist, who employs all his art to the resistance of jade, to the direction of the layers of the raw material, to release the form which preexisted in it which no one could have known before discovering it.” There is a complicity between the two homophones *li* (理 natural order), and *li* (禮 ritual spirit), the latter not being a grid affixed on the outside of the universe, but the vein of the universe which must be discovered, to make reappear, to reveal with the photographic sense of the term. Chinese rationality, instead of emerging from the myths and continuing in opposition to them, was born within the ritual spirit that gave it form. Thus the rationality indicated by the term of *li* is connected quite naturally with its homophone already cited, *li* ritual.

The Taoist practices of long life are accompanied by ritual, which makes it possible to be in resonance with the universe.

For Confucius, to be human is to be first in relation to others, relation that is perceived as being of ritual nature. To behave humanly is to behave ritually. . . . The formula becomes, “To overcome ego, to be replaced with a sense of rites” indicates the need for an asceticism (through ritual) aiming at disciplining the tendency to self-centeredness. —Anne Cheng

Therefore, in the Chinese vision, man is always thought of as being in relation. The obstacle to this capacity to be connected to others or with the universe is the ego, and ritual is precisely what makes it possible to cross this obstacle.

It will be understood that the concept of *li* is often misunderstood as the idea that one commonly takes ritualism as a simple label, a protocol, in short a collection of purely external conventional attitudes. — Anne Cheng

In the Chinese design: “the mission of man is to dialogue with men and the universe” — François Cheng.

The ritual in this sense is like a profound vocation: to make the ego disappear, and to carry out a true interior transformation in the practitioner.

Is this an idea so distant from us? The humanization and education of children does not happen through the repetition of actions.

### Intuition and Science

Opening with the left leg: in the Chinese vision, the left leg is yang.

More generally, in front of the body is the south (heat), in back is north, to the right is the west, to the left is the east. From the physiological point of view the muscular sequence of the opening located in the limbs is expressed more to the left.

In the Taoist vision, the body is the image of the macrocosm and connected to it; the number of repetitions (3, 9, 24, 81 etc.) exercises practiced in the neigong or the taijiquan are not randomly selected, but symbolize universal cycles of production. To apply this symbolic system to practice is a way for the follower to be in resonance with the macrocosm, to fuse with the universe.

Here are comments of a scientist during a show of photographs of atoms:

When one is in the universe of the atoms, there are no more borders between our matter and all the matter that surrounds us. There is enormous space between the atoms, the vacuums in the bodies between the atoms are comparable with the vacuums between the galaxies, stars and planets; all function in the same way: with cores and electrons which turn around, of the suns, the planets which turn around with vacuum and space. In the matter and space, there are no opaque borders; there is the place and the space

Two different ways to say the same thing: the infinitely small one and the infinitely large one are similar, are connected and share the same operating mode.

Taijiquan is close to exorcist and ritual techniques since on the basis of starting points, it will be spread in space and time, time which proceeds slowly and regularly and returns to the starting

point. From the taiji that is the unit, which is basic energy, basic breaths will spread all things manifested, and then one returns to the starting point, as a great breathing where the things are spread and fold up themselves.

—Catherine Despeux.

The universe is not in explosion, but in dilation, expanding. The universe resembles a body that contains us —Hubert Reeves

All this repetitive practice, codified, is to some extent a way of rejoining creation.

Chinese thought, starting from the idea of the breath, proposed a unit design of the universe where all is connected and is held.

— François Cheng

This particular vision is primarily intuitive: the knowledge which the Chinese developed in the energy field is an empirical knowledge, and many Westerners, in spite of their rational spirit, are attracted by energy arts; what causes Westerners to be attracted to something which does not have a scientific basis?

To trust instinct, intuition, and to have confidence, gives intuition again its place, its importance, and develops it. Westerners often reject what cannot be reasoned, formulated. They do not understand the function of the repetition, repeating each day the same exercises, at the same hour; if they feel something despite everything, they reject it nevertheless: it goes against the creative spirit and the analytical mind so dear to Westerners. What that would change if there were no more screens, if the daily practice were made with imagination, imagination of the practitioner. To be creative, in particular in pedagogy, is essential, but each thing in its time. I really believe in the fundamental good of the ritualized operation of our practice. It is the royal way that makes it possible for the practitioner to be centered and to enter into relation with others and the environment.

Simon Leys: “from the Western point of view, China is quite simply the other pole of the human experience.”

### Effectiveness of ritualized operation

This practice centered on the repetition of the rather simple movements, accompanied by breathing and the

Ritual Continued on Page 21

## 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, not be contentious, but be open to various opinions

*Advisers were asked to respond to any of the accumulated questions so they could be cleared out. Here are two responses. This also means we have no questions for the next issue, so we encourage readers to replenish our stock.*

### 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!

### The role/function of martial arts aspects in YMT:

#### *Akai Jong:*

Wang Yen-nien Laoshi always says that YMT is the original personal form that Yang Lu-Chan relied on in becoming famous. Every movement of YMT is martial arts practical; there is not even one movement in YMT that is useless for martial arts.

Simply put, if any movement of YMT form is NOT martial arts efficient, then it is not YMT at all.

**In my teaching:** I no longer practice and teach YMT as martial art. I believe that martial arts are harmful to humanity because the whole world is aggressive and violent now.

In my Taiji class, everyone is peaceful, friendly, to share not to compete. I teach basic exercises and forms precisely as transmitted by Wang Laoshi.

I teach my students NOT to be concerned about martial arts at all. If you only make several hundred dollars, it’s useless to learn how to use them to buy a new car, buy a big house and fly to Paris for a long vacation.

But if you make several hundred million dollars, then even if you never learn how to buy, you’ll have any cars, houses and vacations you want.

Of course, it’s very difficult for me to make money. Even only to make 10 dollars, I have to work worse than a slave and still may not get it.

But to learn Taiji, it is so easy for everyone. All you have to do is just practice the right way very day, and you’ll cultivate your Qi as long river and big ocean. If anyone is dumb enough to attack you, they just simply drown and commit suicide. Why bother to learn how to use a small cup of water to defend yourself? Why not just cultivate your Qi as long river and big ocean and cultivate your Shen and heart as heaven, sun moon and star?

Laozi said, *Wu wei er wu bu wei*  
Do nothing but achieve everything  
*Wei er bu zheng, li er bu hai*  
Benefit and no harm  
Do and no compete



**Serge Dreyer:**

As in any other TJQ style, the role and function of martial arts aspects (MA) in YMT are fundamental. It doesn't mean that every practitioner of our style should necessarily be martially oriented but at least everyone should be aware of the underlying *raison d'être* of the movements they perform daily.

From my point of view, the role of MA in TJQ could be compared to performing music for a musician. It gives meaning to the whole practice because it's an interaction with the other. As such, it involves sharing, conflict, harmony, question, response (or not), emotions, feelings, the spice of life... Moreover, as TJQ is concerned, the awareness of the MA aspect in the form can give a clearer picture of the health aspect. For example, if one knows the MA meaning of the Zhou movement in the First Duan, one doesn't need to raise the elbows in the preparation of the elbow strike nearly as high as the shoulders—as it is often seen. Avoiding that implies both a better MA protection of the upper ribs and more relaxed shoulders.

To dig further, the practice of pushing hands (PH) helps the practitioner to deal with tensions and fears deeply rooted in one's body and mind. Neither the form nor the so-called "exchange of energy" can achieve this result at such a profound level. Another very exciting aspect that one can get out of the pressure of the unexpected in free PH is creativity. Moreover, notions like taiji, yin and yang are constantly actualized in free PH. For this reason, PH could be labeled as a Chinese spirituality in movement. There's no such a dichotomy as a gentle form on one side and a violent PH on the other side: people make the difference, not the system. When Wang Yen-nien was training some of us for free PH in preparation of tournaments, it was not for the delicate. Some lost, some won but we all learned to play with our fears and emotions. That's where the real victory lies.

Ignoring the MA aspects of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan or its clearly martial terminology, as Christian Bernapel has remarked upon, makes me think of a postcard I bought a few years ago:

*A man was standing on a pile of books to watch the sun above a wall; next to him was a door opened.*

**On Tuishou Continued from page 5**

helped afterward to place me back in the teachings of my master. I told myself, following that, what several professors had clearly said about the movements, including a part of the teaching of Wang Laoshi. That's what I could see when I met some of them.

We cannot permit ourselves to say that we understand all of the scope of Taiji and/or Tuishou (even if certain others are tempted to take that place). But, on the other hand, all these teachers are, to my eyes, carriers of the teachings of Laoshi upon our bodies.

This is perhaps why Wang Laoshi said that Taiji moved toward the West and that in the future the Chinese who would like to learn it would have to go to Europe.

To finish, permit me to tell you this:

The hand is soft, light, but very attentive and lively. The hips are quick to move, the shoulders are relaxed. The heart listens, the minds hears. The student does not search to conquer, he does not search to dominate, not another nor oneself, by using force. To master one's being, vigilant attention seems to be the right choice. We do not seek to pull Taiji in one direction more than another, we apply basic

**Ritual Continued from page 19**

concentration makes it possible to reach a more subtle level, to enter internal feelings which are refined with the passing of years. By repeating each day the same gestures, one revives day after day a universal memory, registered in the body, which provides us structure. The idea is not so much to have a physical activity, but to return more and more in an energy process, to put oneself in resonance with a universal movement. The external exercises must be a basis for interior work.

Each exercise has a quite specific function: (see Master Wang's book, Volume I)

The series of exercises make the body work in a complete way with the installation of the axis, connecting oneself with the sky and the ground. The *Basic Stance* makes it possible to develop endurance in the legs and the arms and internal force through the relaxation and breathing. One learns how to relax the shoulders and to let the elbows hang, to hollow the chest and to round the back, to tuck the coccyx and to relax all the musculature (intestinal and stomach functions).

*Bending Forward, Left, Right:* develops the pelvic musculature and the thighs while stretching the muscles of the abdominal strap, relaxes the spine, teaches how to coordinate breathing and movement (renal function).

*Left/Right Single Leg Stance:* seeks the stability of balance (cardiac function).

*Kick and Pull Down to the Leg:* stretches the pelvic belt and the thighs, works to transfer weight (visceral functions).

*Carry the Tiger Back to the Mountain:* develops the synchronization of the 4 members with the movements of descent and ascent (internal organs, reduced blood pressure).

*Left/Right Descend (Squat):* develops the elasticity of the waist and thighs, softens the muscles of the pelvic belt, the thighs and the legs, works on the variations of position of the center of gravity (intestinal internal organs and gastro-intestinal movements).

**In Conclusion:**

These exercises constitute the common substrate, our common language, which connects us all in the practice of Yangjia Michuan, exercises which set up all fundamental Taijiquan: something that we need to preserve in affiliation with our origins, as a kind of continuity in time.

principles and fraternity toward others and ourselves. We see the different effects that our form produces in us. Let us not hang on to each other like the shipwrecked on the rowboat. To block is to annihilate; to let free is to invite return.

I hear that it is good to let slip sensations as good as this.

I will end with one last phrase from Laoshi:  
*If there is no intention, there is no Tuishou, as there is no Taiji. Intention goes to the ends of the fingers.*

Last heard, Manuel was on his way to Mongolia.

# 文武

## Wǔ Wén Volume IV

Wǔ Wén is an occasional periodical edited and published by Claudy Jeanmougin,  
Following is a summary of the articles in the recently published Volume IV.  
Contact Claudy for ordering information: [jeanmougin.claudy@wanadoo.fr](mailto:jeanmougin.claudy@wanadoo.fr)

Translated by Geoff Smith, Alisha McMahon, Illiana Falkenstern, Kate Griffes

### Taijiquan and Daoism

Since it seems to be acquired from thinking, especially in the West, is Taijiquan really a Daoist art? In attentively analyzing Chinese texts, one notices that there is no proven link between Taijiquan and Daoism.

Returning to the origins of Taijiquan, the Chen family, the author remarks that the different Chen generations shed light on the neo-Confucian influences in philosophy and metaphysics.

Then, Taijiquan was considered a means of cultivating the expressions of the nobles conforming to the social rules of Confucius: health, efficiency, capacity and self-defense.

As for the concepts of Taiji, Yin-yang and Qi, they are equally the fruit of the interpretations of neo-Confucians and are not all Daoist, just as the concept of Daoism itself is not reserved exclusively for Daoists.

### Ju Ming

The famous Taiwanese sculptor Ju Ming, by having his own museum in Taipei, was able to realize the colossal Taijiquan statues. A slightly banal but nevertheless modest and discreet person, Ju Ming melted his existence into his work.

This disciple of Yang Yin Feng, strongly overcome with the ideas of Daoist culture, took his inspiration from the observation of nature and advocated the interaction of life and art. By practicing Taiji for more than 20 years, Ju Ming had emulated the voice of this bodily experience in a plastic manner. He is especially known for the "Taiji" series, which has launched his international career: colossal giants having the flexibility and flowing gracefulness of dancers. "To practice Taiji with the body and the hands or to sculpt with the hands is, in fact, the same thing," he says. *A fascinating connection.*

### Wu Wei

Having already approached the first three principles of *Dao Yin Fa*, the author approaches here the fourth and final principal of the practice. *Wu Wei* (nonintervention) is approached from different angles: literal translation, biomechanics, physiology, Chinese energy and philosophy. "Without action, nothing can be done," affirms the *Dao De Jing*. Introspection is the most mysterious of the four principles.

### Taiji and Health

The aspect of health in Taiji is considered an evident advantage for its therapeutic benefits and virtues of self-defense by a large majority of practitioners who come from elsewhere to this discipline. However, no scientific studies have been done concerning this question. In teaching, Bob Lowey is devoted to showing the physical, psychological, biological and biochemical transformations that occur in a student's body when he/she first begins Taiji. The effects of practice on the biological systems, respiration, cholesterol levels and hormones are equally approached.

### The Different Audiences of Taiji

Between those who know nothing of Taiji, those who have previously practiced martial arts, those that come to regenerate their health, those that want only to relax themselves or diminish their stress, and those who want to learn how to defend themselves, the scope of initial motivations for participants is extremely vast. The teacher must thus know how to adapt himself to the group and to the circumstances, the place of practice and the age of the public being equally important factors to take into account. Some real examples illustrate the diversity and complexity of the situations that the teachers must face. Often, a portion of the improvisation and the feeling of the movements prove themselves to be primordial.

### Student and Teacher

The unique nature and varied relations between student and teacher merit respect. This marvelous interaction is here illustrated by some personal or traditional accounts, some telephone conversations and some poems—in a way that permits the heart and spirit of the reader to open itself to all the possibilities that can enrich the student-teacher relationship. It would be too bad, and in any case arduous, to sum up the expansion of humanity; better to let it be discovered.

### Vocabulary of the Chinese Terms of Taijiquan

The participants of Taiji voluntarily use a Chinese vocabulary, thus the expression is sometimes far from what they want or what they are thinking about expressing. In closing this gap, the vocabulary of Chinese words of Taiji aims to make certain words clear by replacing them in their context in reference to the Classics of Taijiquan. From *An* to *Yongfa*, a large and useful manual, is proposed here, for the greater benefit of each person. Each word is defined as completely as possible, the vocabulary making itself apparent more in reality than in a glossary, a glossary that asks nothing more than enriching oneself

## On Chinese\*

Since the new edition of “the little red booklet” (see *AYMTA Catalog*, inside Back Cover) includes pronunciation in Bopomofo, it seems appropriate to describe that phonetic system, more formally called Zhùyīn Fúhào (注音符號, ㄅㄆㄇㄏㄏㄨㄨㄨㄨ) whose characters or symbols are based on calligraphic forms. It was developed in 1913 when Běijīnghuà (commonly termed Mandarin in English) was adopted as the standard language (Pǔtōnghuà) in the Republic of China and continued development through 1930. Although the PRC adopted the romanized phonetic system Hànyǔ pīnyīn in 1979 (approved in 1958), Taiwan (ROC) continued to use and develop Zhùyīn Fúhào. In general, Bopomofo represents the same sounds (phonemes) as Hànyǔ pīnyīn.

Consonants			
ㄅ	ㄆ	ㄇ	ㄈ
b	p	m	f
ㄊ	ㄉ	ㄋ	ㄌ
t	d	n	l
ㄍ	ㄎ	ㄏ	
g	k	h	
ㄐ	ㄑ	ㄒ	
j	q	x	
ㄓ	ㄔ	ㄕ	ㄖ
zh	ch	sh	r
ㄗ	ㄘ	ㄙ	
z	c	s	
ㄩ	ㄨ	ㄩ	
y	w	yu	
Vowels			
ㄧ	ㄨ	ㄩ	
i	u	u, ü	
ㄚ	ㄛ	ㄜ	ㄝ
a	o	e	e, ei
ㄞ	ㄟ	ㄠ	ㄡ
ai	ei	au	ou
ㄢ	ㄣ	ㄤ	ㄥ
an	en	ang	eng
ㄦ			
r, er			
Dialect (non-Mandarin)			
ㄞ	ㄟ	ㄠ	
v	ng	gn	

There are an additional 24 symbols for the other two major Chinese languages on Taiwan, Hakka and Tâiwānhuà or Taiwanese (also known as Hoklo, Mînnánhuà or Hokkien).

- i and ou (ㄧㄠ) combine to iu (e.g., 溜 liú).
- i and eng (ㄧㄥ) combine to ing (e.g., 令 líng).
- u and en (ㄨㄣ) combine to un (e.g., 孫 sūn).
- er (ㄦ) at the end of a character becomes just r.
- u stands for both wu (ㄨ) and yu (ㄩ), usually without any confusion. Exceptions are in combination with consonants l and n where a distinction needs to be made (路 lù and 綠 lǜ) (奴 nū and 女 nǚ).
- e stands for both ㄜ and ㄝ, usually without any confusion. The only exception is when ㄝ is used alone as in 誨; in that case spell ei.
- i and en (ㄧㄣ) combine to in (e.g., 林 lín).
- u and ei (ㄨㄝ) combine to ui (e.g., 雖 suī).
- u and eng (ㄨㄥ) combine to ong (e.g., 松 sōng).

\* Various sources; see especially Nam Sun Wang, “PinYin and BoPoMoFo ZhuYin Equivalence,” <http://www.glue.umd.edu/~nsw/chinese/pinyin.htm> which includes a full chart of all syllables in Zhuyin Fuhao and Hanyu Pinyin as well as other phonetic systems.

## On the Bookshelf

This time, we are pleased to review two books on Jian, sword, by longtime Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan practitioners: Scott Rodell is the director of Great River Taoist Center in Washington, D.C. Hervé Marest is one of the founding members of the European Teachers College.

**Chinese Swordsmanship: The Yang Family Taiji Jian Tradition** by Scott M. Rodell, Annondale: Seven Stars Books and Video, 2003 Pp xiv + 290 \$32.95

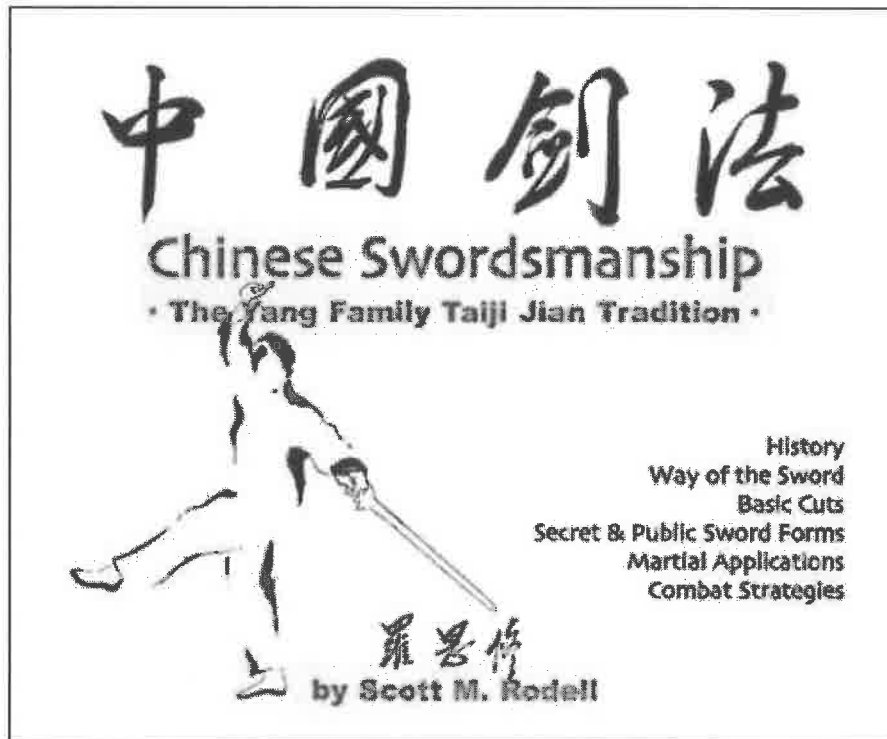
This book is written as an introduction to *taiji jian*, *taiji* straight sword practice, in the Yang family tradition for novices and as a reference tool for those learning the public and the Michuan *taiji jian*. Scott Rodell does this by presenting the *jian* as the weapon of choice, historically, and as a means of self-cultivation, contemporarily. He also presents the forms and their applications.

Scott succeeds in the historical presentation by an abundance of historical information regarding the public and the Michuan systems. Throughout the book he

references the reality of fencing, when the *jian* was used as one of the primary means of defense. This gives valuable reasons to the practitioner and clarifies the practitioner's mind much more than the simple instructions. For example, the description of one's grip on the sword includes an argument against an improper grip: "An improper grip leads to sloppiness ... The end result in an actual duel would be for the swordsman to disarm himself as soon as he attempted a serious cut. (31)" The book includes a valuable time line, as well as historical drawings and photographs.

Scott succeeds in presenting the *jian* as a means of self-cultivation by constantly reminding the reader of the internal aspects of the *jian*. *Jian* training allows one to hone one's mind and intent, because, in a sense, the stakes are higher in weapons training. Of course, one cannot be mindful of the other fencer unless one knows what the other fencer might do, or if one is unsure exactly what one is doing oneself.

This is where Scott gives his greatest contribution. He builds the reader's understanding of the form and their applications by first building a good foundation, while not forgetting the details in the end. An obvious starting place is a description of the *jian*



itself. Based on over 20 years experience of Chinese swords, Scott's description includes the metallurgy, as well as a detailed description of parts of the sword and its use. From there Scott presents the grip, stance, cuts, forms and the applications of each movement with texts and many photographs. This is clearly the focal point of the book. The layout of the book allows one to look at the solo form, the text describing the movements, and the application of the movement with an-

other person(s) all on the same page. This format allows for a three dimensional, detailed look at each piece.

While Scott demonstrates his mastery of the subject by leaving nearly no stone unturned, *Chinese Swordsmanship* could benefit from some reorganization. First, Scott makes an argument for why a *taiji* practitioner would study *taiji jian* today, but doesn't do so until page 65. This section would be better placed at the beginning of the book to invite the practitioner to *taiji jian* practice. Second, one of the boons of the text is its training tips, but they are rather disparate. For example, holding the basic stance is on page 39, but further suggestions for practice do not appear until page 259. Third, there should be an entire section devoted to the internal aspects of the practice and another solely to deflections and stepping. These are addressed in *Chinese Swordsmanship*, but they are woven in throughout the book.

That said, *Chinese Swordsmanship* is a fine and enduring contribution to martial art enthusiasts, *taiji* practitioners, and historians. It will quickly be considered a classic.

-Bede Bidlack, Still Mountain T'ai Chi Center



*The Kunlun Taiji Sword* by Hervé Marest, photographs and translation by Monique Routhiau. Published by IFAM (Institut de Formation aux Arts Martiaux Internes), 2003. 174 pages, 321 photographs.

Hervé Marest has documented the Kunlun Jian in the same manner that Volume I of Wang Yen-nien's *Yang Family Hidden Tradition of Taijiquan* illustrates the Duans. The subtitle reads "according to the teaching of Master Wang Yen-Nien and of all the Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan teachers."

Contents include:

- Introduction;
- Recommendations For The Practice of the Sword;
- The Chinese Sword;
- The Hand Postures;
- The Eight Sword Gestures;
- All Eight Duans;
- List of the Movements of the Ancient Sword;
- Translations, Character by Character, of the List of the Ancient Sword Movement;
- The Symbolism of the Sword;
- Bibliography;
- IFAM Publications.

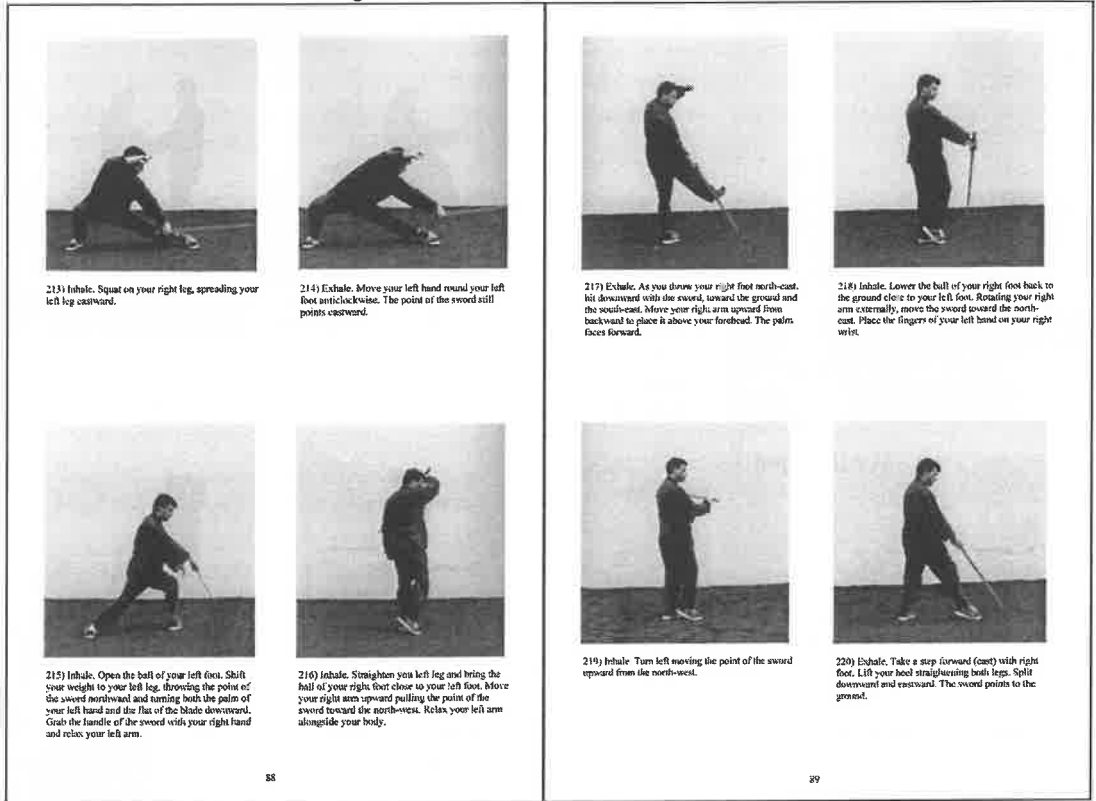
Our initial impression is that this is an effective manual on this Jian system for the following reasons:

1. Layout is simple and inviting.
2. Illustrations are clear and a good viewing size.
3. Guidelines for postures per illustration are clearly written and easy to understand/follow.
4. The form appears consistent with our perception of Kunlun Taiji Sword based on the teaching of Master Wang Yen-nien, with perhaps minor variations of certain postures.

We appreciate Hervé's efforts in producing this useful manual and for Monique Routhiau's English translation. We have benefited from this publication and will continue to use it to supplement our practice.

—Don Coleman and Terri Pellitteri

*The Kunlun Taiji Sword* is available from AYMTA; see Catalog, p. 33.



新年快樂



**Xīnnián kuàilè**  
 as we welcome in  
 the *Year of the Monkey*,  
 with its most famous representative  
 Sūn Wūkōng, the Monkey King  
 who could distinguish good and evil  
 and journeyed west with  
 Tang Monk Xuánzàng  
 to help find the sacred sutras

## Consistency and Changes

By Kay Reese and Don Klein



We planned our third visit to Taiwan so that we would take the final four weeks of the Fall classes and take part in the National Sports' Day gathering on November 8th (formerly on Sun Yat-sen's birthday — no longer a national holiday).

Taipei was familiar, yet different. Restaurants and shops we knew had disappeared or moved: it took three tries to find Lion Books, only next door to where it had been. The food court at Shilin Night

Market had been torn down and moved to a modern building (as had the Nanjing Food Circle). In looking for a new martial arts store we discovered the Rouhe Night Market. Instead of zheng and nanguan concerts, we attended huangmei opera and martial drumming and dance; Taiwanese opera on the PoAn Temple grounds was replaced with the I Wan Jan Puppet Theater. We lived in a delightful situation much further south than before and although we were able to explore new neighborhoods, we were unable to make morning practice at Yuan Shan because of the distance and early hour. Instead we added slightly later practices with Wendy Liang and Mark Linnet, visits to 228, XinDian Riverside and DaAn parks, and once, at East Danshui Riverside Park, practice with a YMT group.

### Changes:

Immediately, in our first class on Monday we walked in at the end of the teaching of *shisān shì*—with a revision of the execution of the *jǐ* in the third section that had been taught to the class the previous week. We were told that Wang Laoshi is asking the various YMT groups to perform everything as identically as possible. To this purpose he has instituted review sessions for the Taiwan coaches. On September 27th the topic had been *shisān shì* and *bāfǎ*. It is our understanding that in both cases the *jǐ* should be executed by shifting to the forward leg and bringing the opposite (full) hand in front. We had thought to illustrate this report with pictures or drawings, but decided it would be presumptuous when we were emailed that Laoshi “will prepare a photo illustration with explanation.”

Then in the class on Yen-nien Shan (fan), we found that Wang Laoshi has asked that the *tuībù* (back steps) in *Wúlóng Bǎiwěi* (Black Dragon Wags Tail) be executed as snake steps, similar to the way they should be done in sword.



As four or five of us were preparing for November 8th, practicing *Wūdāng Jiàn* (new Sword), Laoshi asked Don to perform the closing sections, and when Don executed *Fēngsǎo Méihuā* (Wind blows through the Plum Blossoms), shook his head indicating it was incorrect and asked that it



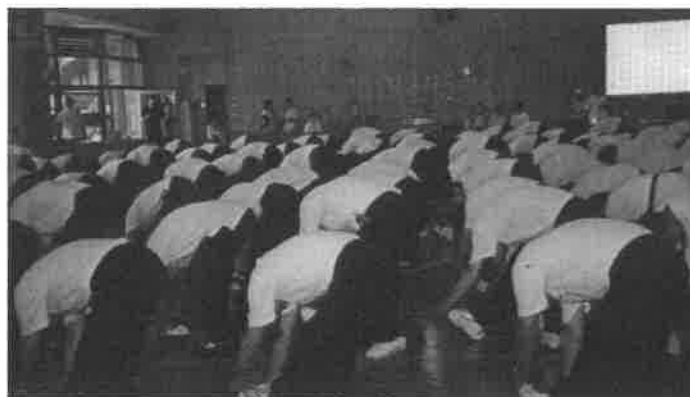
be performed again. After attempting it slightly differently a number of times, we understood that we were no longer to flatten the sword toward the rear (as in Wind Blows through the Lotus Blossoms), but to move it from the final cut in Old Man Carries the Lute to an upright (canded) position on the right side and curve an arc from that position as we executed the strike to the left side.

### Consistency:

This year the November gathering of the YMT teaching groups was not a *demonstration*: it was a *group practice*. Rather than individual teaching groups performing solo one or two elements, each form was performed once and everyone who could was encouraged to join in.



Those who practice with us know that we prefer to do the Duans and the Sword to Laoshi calling the movements on an audiotape. This practice is encouraged in Taiwan so that all of the various Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan groups can perform together with the same timing. For the first time, the Fan tape has been edited to achieve consistent breathing and it was used by all of the teaching groups. There were probably more people performing Fan than anything other than Basic Exercises. Although currently only the Duans are available in the AYMTA catalogue, we believe that an audiotape or CD with the weapons forms being called will soon be issued.





Group practice photos by Kay Reese's camera and whoever was holding it.

楊家秘拳  
不招拳會



Amicale du Yangjia  
Michuan taiji quan

## EXCHANGE: Rencontres de l'Amicale 2003

By Charlie Ademec



In recent years there has been a growing idea within our community of Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan (YMT) practitioners that perhaps we need to develop more connections between YMT schools and associations around the world. One such connection that finds fibers in its knit every year is the one between the European Amicale (Friendship association of YMT practitioners) and our own beloved AYMTA. Almost all of the past relations were built around workshops featuring Wang Yen-nien, both in Europe and in America. Two years ago Amicale invited AYMTA to send a representative to their annual all-member gathering. I likened it to two folks who had repeatedly enjoyed each others company at different social functions and then one finally came around to ask the other one for a date.

I had quite a few butterflies flitting around my belly when I came to the understanding that I'd be going over as the 2003 representative. However, I was able to subdue them a bit by recalling some of the comments that Jim Carlson (Rouhe Daoguan, Michigan) had made about his visit to the 2002 Amicale gathering. Well, exact quotes are vague in my memory but he seemed to end every tale with "Y'know, they're just about some of the nicest people I've ever met." Even though this is a common statement from Jim, that in no way takes away from the sincerity of the sentiment.



Also, his tips for proper outdoor workout attire (based entirely on his previous year's hard-won education) were in a way his most important comment. It mentally helped my peach-soft, 85 degrees in mid-October, hand, make the acquaintance of a European November's icy grip. I immediately began tossing the Hawaiian shorts and sandals from my pack and replacing them with every piece of warm clothing that I owned. This was no hasty maneuver, as many of the days required me to drape almost the entire contents of the pack over my body.

Fortunately, the gathering site in Anjou, France had a humungous (and heated) sports center on the premises. Having such a center at our disposal became quite crucial to the whole event. Aside from going to the dining hall to eat and the bungalows to sleep, the better part of three and a half days were spent in the sports center.

Each day featured eight different one-and-a-half hour workshops four times a day around the sports center. There was never any pre-arranged workshop schedule to be found. The days were divided into morning and afternoon sessions. The program for each session was drawn up on a chalkboard at the end of breakfast and lunch. There were many teachers on hand; some of them wished to present material they had been working on for months; others simply heard the suggestions of others and went from there. Considering that

there were 250 people in attendance, with quite a range of skill levels, I think this approach to scheduling gave satisfaction to just about everyone. Since I have yet to master the gongfu technique for being in eight places at once, I looked for workshops that seemed the most unique.

One example would be Marc Appelman's (Belgium) two-part workshop on the human skeleton: I found this workshop to be top-notch—as proper skeletal alignment is so essential to any taiji practice. For many of us, this workshop really opened our inward-focused eyes to just how intricately assembled is the needle inside the cotton.

Another example is Jean-Luc Perot (Belgium). It seemed like every time I turned around he was standing in front of a very animated group of people. All sorts of expanding and contracting

movements focused around the spiral. He even had one session entitled "rib cage or rib prison?"

These are but two examples of the diversity than can be offered at a 104-workshop buffet. As a glutinous tourist I tried

to sample an eyeful of every dish.

Aside from being studious, a bigger chunk of time was spent at my highest and favorite priority, hobnobbing. As there was never any sort of formal meeting between Amicale folks and myself, hobnobbing became the avenue by which to catch a little history and future hopes. Many a meal-time chat featured various teachers sharing their stories of Amicale with the birth and benefits of the Teachers College.

The Teachers College (College Européen de Enseignants du Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan) was founded 13 years ago when Wang Yen-nien was teaching in France. He got many of the European teachers together to discuss ways of working together in a more cohesive fashion.

At this meeting Wang Yen-nien would select one teacher at a time to stand in front of the others and demonstrate the form. At certain points he would ask the demonstrator to pause the movement so the others could give a critique. This was, as one might guess, just a little bit on the challenging side. But now, 13 years later, those teachers can say with a comfortable smile that they regard each other as equals. Every teacher still has his or her version of the form and in any setting where someone is the host, the host's version is correct. So nobody gets too hung up on the different accents and they have seen the benefits that a common YMT language can yield.

Nothing stated above should be considered a first look at a foreign substance. Personally, I have had the opportunity to visit several different AYMTA teachers and schools: I feel there is a conscious effort to respect individual opinions while being committed to preserving the integrity of the form. In this, I have found a lot of similarity between European and American teachers. There are also some differences, perhaps the biggest being the issue of government support.

Amicale, like many other associations in France, receives financial support from the French government. I never got clear as to the specifics of the extent of the support. One outstanding biggie is free access to rooms in public facilities (schools, community centers, etc). As any American teacher can attest, having an actual place to practice can be the most challenging aspect of running a taiji school. Also the Teachers College has the capacity to formally test and certify up-and-coming teachers so they can also receive these benefits. Such a supportive government policy stands in contrast to that of my government, which I feel would actually prefer it if all of us crawled off to a corner and died.

So, while Amicale enjoys financial benefits, I feel that there is also a morale booster that comes when your government feels that your organization is a benefit to people and worth supporting. Things are a little different in America.

Each night of the gathering offered a special event. Saturday night was reserved for the general assembly meeting. At the start of the meeting I was informed that I was to give a short speech about why, as an exchange representative, I had come to the gathering. Hmmm ... I had to think about that one for a moment.

In the span of just a few minutes I loosely put together what might be construed as a speech. But I felt that this speech had about the same sincerity as a politician standing on the caboose pitching campaign promises to a crowd of some Smalltown, U.S.A., voters. This was not the way I like to share myself with others, but where was I going to find words of heartfelt expression when the hand at the podium was waving me up to the stage?

When I stepped up to face the crowd of all-attentive and enthusiastic eyes, whatever verbal mumbo-jumbo it was that I was toying with back in my seat had disappeared. I was then left open to recall the many good feelings that I had been having those first two days. So, after a few moments of visually panning my audience, I paused, dropped my shoulders and laughed. I then stated to everyone, "There is such a wonderful feeling in this room tonight. If you are all wondering why it is that I have come here, it is to steal this good feeling and bring it back to America!" I don't know quite how that ended up being translated but the room immediately filled with laughter. I think that all the laughing got blood circulating to my head and gave the politician's voice a chance to rise up once more. I made a few comments about the need for a worldwide YMT



community and, as there were no babies to kiss for the press cameras, I made for my seat.

So what was this good feeling that I was willing to risk the perils and pitfalls of intercontinental travel to make off with? Well, you really can't steal anything that is being voluntarily stuffed into your arms. At every turn people were spouting their best English to include me in conversation, to make sure I was finding everything all right, to inquire about YMT in America, to translate a workshop, to call underneath the table asking if I needed another glass of wine. Even when I wasn't directly involved in a conversation, it was a pleasure to just observe all the friendly gestures and bright-eyed expressions that folks shared with each other. The Amicale folks seem to really enjoy each other's company. This to me is the bottom-line reason for why so much bend-over-backwards effort goes into making events like this happen.



Sunday night was the big dinner party. This article would be grossly out-of-balance if I did not mention at least once how much Amicale folks love to party.

The evening started off with a performance-art piece done by the local Kunlun Taiji Association. Considering that this was the same group that was hosting the gathering, I was amazed that time was found to choreograph lights, music and movement into a flawless 10-minute piece.

The rest of the evening was for dining and dancing. Before we ate we danced some traditional French folk dances. (That title alone should let you know just how gracefully I participated.) When dinner was over and the deejay had finished setting up, people moved like a great river back towards the dance floor. I was all set to join the current until I heard the first notes of the deejay's selection: the "Saturday Night Fever" sound track. I instantly became as still and immovable as the French Alps. To think, all those hours trying to root my intention into the earth and all it really takes is the music of the BeeGees. For some strange reason this didn't seem to affect others the same way and many continued on until dawn.

The Amicale 2004 gathering will be taking place on a little island off the west coast of France. AYMTA will again be looking to send a representative. It's not going to be me; maybe it will be you?

I would like to use the last of my allotted article space to plug a workshop happening this summer in lovely Benicia, California. Longtime YMT teacher Serge Dreyer will be coming from Taiwan to present four days of push hands (see page 32 for more details.) I see this not only as a great educational opportunity but also as a chance for us AYMTA folks to spend a little time together in sunny California. Thanks.

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Photographs provided by Philippe Guesnay and Marie-Christine Moutault of KunLun.



# 節氣 中氣

## Jiéqi and Zhōngqi for 2004

In his talks on Taoist neigong Wang Laoshi especially recommends sitting for 20 minutes before and after the times the sun enters a new 15 degree ecliptic, called *Jiéqi* (minor or sectional term) and *Zhōngqi* (major or principal term).

### “The meeting of heaven and earth

There are places where spiritual atmosphere remains such as rivers with clear water and the springs in the mountains. If there are no moss or other plants and no creatures on a stone, the stone is not shrouded in spiritual atmosphere. A place having tall trees with luxuriant branches and leaves is replete with spiritual atmosphere. A place with spiritual atmosphere usually has water, mountains and clean air. In such a place, auspicious light comes down from heaven. You know there is convection of atmosphere between heaven and earth to produce atmospheric pressure and wind. According to the lunar calendar, there are two days marking the beginning of solar terms in each month (solar term or *Jiéqi*: one of the 24 periods, of approximately 15 days each, into which the lunar year is divided, corresponding to

the day on which the sun enters the 1st or 15th degree of one of the 12 zodiacal signs; each period being given an appropriate name indicating the obvious changes in nature at the time it comes round). On these two days in each month, the meeting or convection of the atmosphere of heaven and earth is most obvious. Meditation practitioners like to sit meditation on those days because the effect of meditation is especially strong then. But those who do not practice meditation, particularly older people or sick people, are more vulnerable on those days than on the other days. It is because at the meeting of atmospheres, the *qi* in nature is withdrawn in a flash. As a result, the *qi* outside our body is stronger than that within our body and the *qi* outside thus draws the *qi* inside away. If you practice meditation and know the way of breathing, the *qi* inside your body will be stronger than the *qi* outside. Moreover, you can make use of the spiritual atmosphere of heaven and earth to nourish your body.”<sup>1</sup>

Zhōngqi and Jiéqi for 2004 <sup>2</sup>			
	Chinese Name	English Name	UTC (GMT)
23	Xiǎo Hán	Small Cold	01/06/04 00:19
24	Dà Hán	Great Cold	01/20/04 17:42
1	Lì Chūn	Beginning of Spring	02/04/04 11:56
2	Yǔ Shuǐ	Rain Water	02/19/04 07:50
3	Jīng Zhé	Awakening of Insects	03/05/04 05:56
4	Chūn Fēn	Division of Spring (Spring Equinox)	03/20/04 06:49
5	Qīng Míng	Pure Brightness	04/04/04 10:43
6	Gǔ Yǔ	Corn Rain	04/19/04 17:50
7	Lì Xià	Beginning of Summer	05/05/04 04:02
8	Xiǎo Mǎn	Ripening Grain	05/20/04 16:59
9	Máng Zhōng	Corn in Ear	06/05/04 08:14
10	Xià Zhì	Arrival of Summer (Summer Solstice)	06/21/04 00:57
11	Xiǎo Shǔ	Small Heat	07/06/04 18:31
12	Dà Shǔ	Big Heat	07/22/04 11:50
13	Lì Qiū	Beginning of Autumn	08/07/04 04:20
14	Chù Shǔ	Limit of Heat	08/22/04 18:53
15	Bái Lù	White Dew	09/07/04 07:13
16	Qiū Fēn	Division of Autumn (Autumn Equinox)	09/22/04 16:30
17	Hán Lù	Cold Dew	10/07/04 22:49
18	Shuāng Jiàng	Hoar Frost	10/23/04 01:49
19	Lì Dōng	Beginning of Winter	11/07/04 01:59
20	Xiǎo Xuě	Small Snow	11/21/04 23:22
21	Dà Xuě	Big Snow	12/06/04 18:49
22	Dōng Zhì	Arrival of Winter (Winter Solstice)	12/21/04 12:42

Add your Time Zone to UTC to arrive at local time and date:  
+8 for Taipei (Standard Time), -5 For EST, -4 for EDT, -8 for PST, -7 for PDT

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.uta.edu/student\\_orgs/zen/J/J\\_4.htm](http://www.uta.edu/student_orgs/zen/J/J_4.htm).

<sup>2</sup> See <http://service.cwb.gov.tw/docs/V3.0/astronomy/calendar/cal2003.htm> for this and other material including solar and lunar calendars, and holidays.

There are downloadable spreadsheet versions of this table that will calculate the date and time for any time zone:  
Excel: <http://aymta.org/Journalh/jieqi.xls>. Open Office: <http://aymta.org/Journalh/jieqi.sxc>.



## 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.

### ☉ BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

Stephen Merrill  
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Todos Santos, BCS, 23305 Mexico  
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# Summer 2004 West and East Coast Push Hands Workshops With AYMTA Adviser Serge Dryer

*I will share aspects of Push Hands seldom addressed in our style: the wave, short steps pushing, connection between the form and Push Hands, "bow of strength," "let it go," "inner and outer space." I hope to open new avenues about the importance of Push Hands in understanding the Yangjia Michuan style of Taijiquan.*

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## ❖ July 10<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup> Benicia, California

**Serge Dryer is an enthusiastic student of Taijiquan, Bagua and Xingyi Push Hands.  
He has been teaching for over a quarter of a century.**

"I consider my experience of pushing in free push hands with Wang Yen nien and his senior students my most precious asset . . ."

**Serge has been teaching and competing in Europe, Taiwan and China and is willing to share his valued experience.**

This is a four-day workshop beginning with basic YMT techniques and progressing to freestyle. You are encouraged to attend the entire workshop, learning pushing hands as a child learns how to first crawl, then walk and run. Depending on the group's ability, we may be able to push hands with Bagua and Xingyi techniques. There will be no discount for attending one, two or three days. Taijiquan is a strenuous martial art and you will be required to sign a consent and release form, understanding and accepting responsibility for your health and any injury.

**Location: 1150 1<sup>st</sup> St.  
Benicia, Calif.**

**Sponsor: John Cole & Daoist Martial Arts**

**Cost: \$250 for four-day workshop  
Discounted Cost: \$200  
if paid by June 1<sup>st</sup> 2004  
for current members of AYMTA**

**Send your check payable to:  
John Cole  
535 Whitecliff Dr.  
Vallejo, CA 94589**

**Phone: 707/319-9876  
email: John Cole <[johnacole@scronline.com](mailto:johnacole@scronline.com)>  
Web: <http://www.johncole.com/>**

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## ❖ July 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> Washington D.C.

The workshop will focus on applications of the First Duan in push hands, the notion of *wuwei* or "non action" applied to an efficient push hands, the concept of the "wave" in push hands, and short energy pushing. We will investigate Tuishou (push hands) from the perspectives of Baguazhang and Xingyiquan.

**Location: 1325 18<sup>th</sup> Street NW Suite 210  
Washington, D.C.**

**Sponsor: Great River Taoist Center**

**Cost: \$135 for two-day workshop**

**Send your check payable to:  
Great River Taoist Center  
1325 18th Street, NW  
Suite 210  
Washington, D.C. 20036**

**Phone: 703/846-8222  
email: Dante Gilmer <[dantegilmer@hotmail.com](mailto:dantegilmer@hotmail.com)>  
Scott M. Rodell <[srodell@cox.net](mailto:srodell@cox.net)>  
Web: <http://www.grtc.org/>**

# AYMTA CATALOG

Member Price	Non- Member Price
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## 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. 174 pages.		
	\$40	\$50
<b>LITTLE RED BOOKLET 2003 (3RD EDITION)</b>		
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.		
	\$5	\$10
<b>YMT BASIC SWORD METHODS</b>		
Photos and Text on the 8 Basic Sword Cuts; list of WuDang & KunLun Forms in Chinese, Pinyin, English. 56 Pages.	\$10	\$15

## FANS

<b>BAMBOO FANS</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 audiotape 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</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 [ymtaitaipei@yahoo.com](mailto:ymtaitaipei@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  
Grand Haven, MI 49417

# 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

AMERICAN YANGJIA MICHUAN TAIJIQUAN ASSOCIATION  
PO Box 173, Grand Haven, MI 49417 USA