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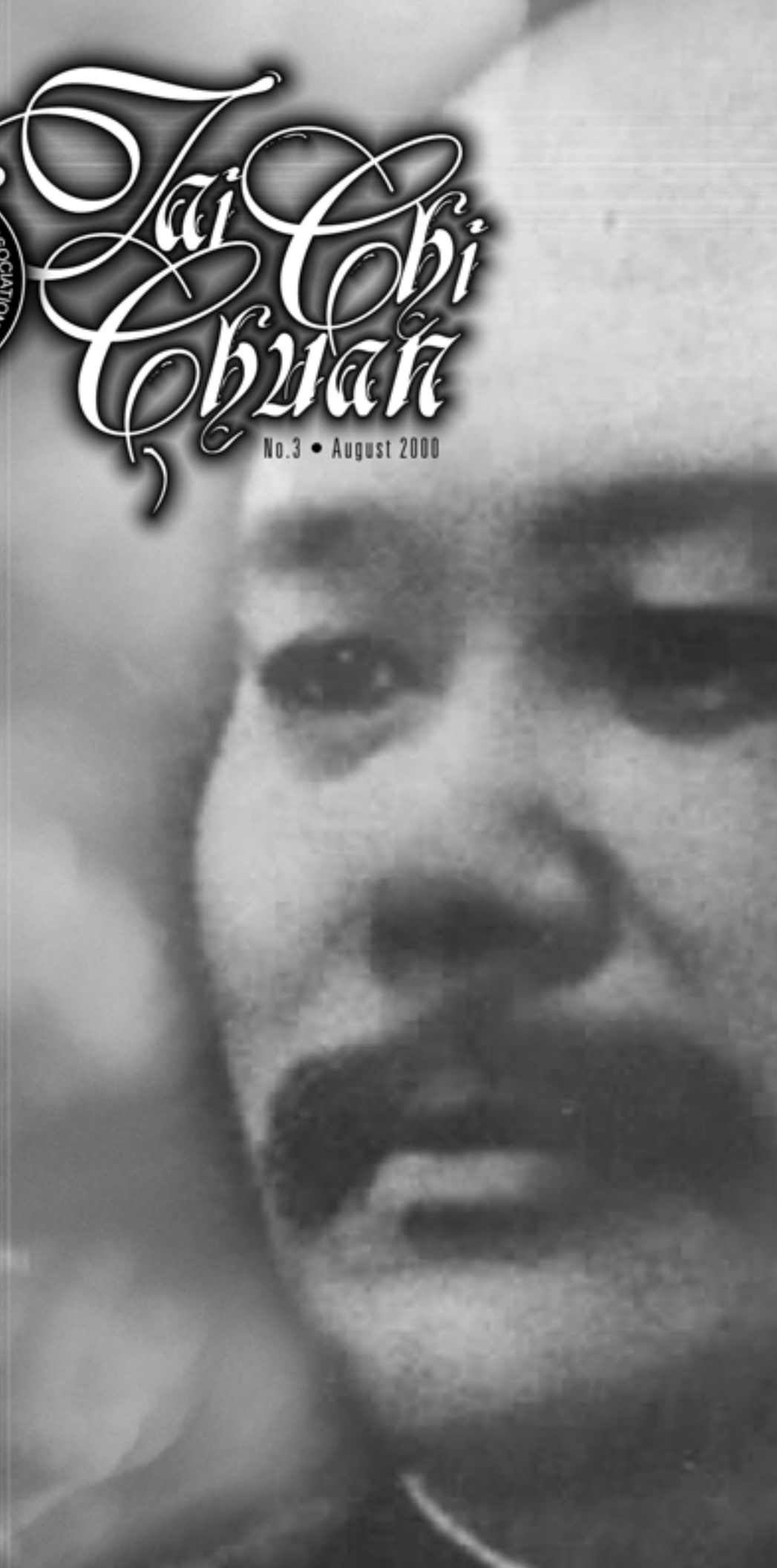
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Tai Chi Chuan

No.3 • August 2000

The Newsletter of the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association





Working Together *in* *New Directions*

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FROM THE

by Yang Jun
President

With your effort and support, this is already the third issue of the association newsletter. In the second newsletter, with the very professional help of Marco Gagnon, we were able to vastly improve the quality of the printing as well as the structure and design. I'd like to express my thanks to all those who worked on the newsletter and to all those members who so enthusiastically submitted content.

At the end of February the International Association established the first ranking committee, and this month we successfully finished the assignment of ranks for the first group of participants (the Directors and other important members of the Association). The conclusion of this work paves the way for the Association to begin ranking the members. It also creates the framework necessary for the future development of our own judges for competitions here in the international association. At the same time this will encourage members to improve their own level of practice. Finally, this work establishes a foundation upon which the Association can develop and organize competitions.

This summer, we continued to hold our annual Tai Chi Chuan seminars in Europe and North America. I believe these are a very good opportunity to

learn and practice for anyone who loves traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, and I hope that, to the extent that they can, members will participate in and support association activities.

In our administration of the association and management of the relations between the International Association, the Yang Chengfu Centers and the members, we are still gaining experience and haven't quite got it all systematized yet. This has caused us to make some errors. To all those members and Centers who have been inconvenienced, let me express my sincere apologies. Finally, I want to encourage the members at large and the center directors to provide feedback to help the International Association improve and better develop. ▸



Tai Chi Chuan
August 2000

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All Tai Chi Chuan enthusiasts are invited to submit articles, letters, and pictures for publication.

Both critical and complimentary letters concerning the form and content of this newsletter are welcome.

Please send correspondence in electronic format to: editor@yangfamilytaichi.com or mail to: International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association, 606 Maynard Ave. So. Suite 107, Seattle WA 98104 USA

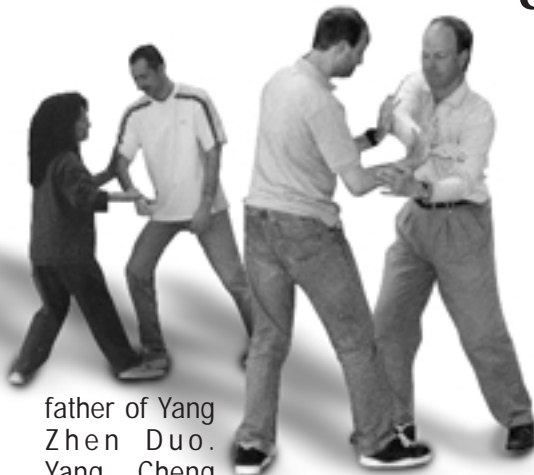
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New Switzerland Center



On May 21st, the Yang Cheng Fu Tai Chi Chuan Center Switzerland first appeared publicly and opened its doors to visitors and guests, some of which were old students. The 103 and 49 posture Tai Chi Chuan forms were exhibited, as well as the sword and saber forms. A new beginning was celebrated in everyone's Tai Chi experience. Center Director Dr. Jean-Marc Geering wrote the following text that was given to the attendees.

The great success of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan is due to the commitment of 6 generations of grandmasters, originating with Yang Lu Chan whose 200th birthday was celebrated in 1999. The Yang Family first began making Tai Chi known in Beijing, and then gradually throughout the rest of China. Now, with the 4th generation Master Yang Zhen Duo and 6th generation Master Yang Jun, the family is making it known throughout the whole world.

From a martial practice once restricted to specialists, Tai Chi has evolved into an exercise with significant health benefits in addition to its other functions. This has been able to convince millions of practitioners of all ages to take up the practice of Tai Chi. The popularity is largely due to the undertaking of Yang Cheng Fu,

father of Yang Zhen Duo. Yang Cheng Fu finalized a form that his son has dedicated his life to scrupulously preserving and teaching. Yang Jun, who also perfectly masters the sword and saber, shall shoulder this cause in the future.

What are the benefits that can be expected from a regular practice of Tai Chi Chuan? In a world of stress and sedentary lifestyles, Tai Chi enables one to recover fitness without the drawbacks often associated with modern sports (injury, expense, limited venue etc.) It can be practiced at all ages and at a pace agreeable to everyone. The idea of perform-

ance or competition can be used to foster better practice.

It is actually a game with one's vital forces, providing increased self-recognition, balance and the development of personal potential that the modern world tends to restrict. The physical and mental aspects are inseparably linked. The unity of these two aspects constitutes the spiritual aim of Tai Chi Chuan, or rather its way, the Tao. The inner stillness it creates is similar to the effects of meditation and frees the individual from the annoyances of everyday life.

Each individual can find in Tai Chi Chuan what he or she is personally lacking, but for all of us it is an irreplaceable contribution to a richer and fuller humanity. ▀



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by
Dr. Jean-Marc
Geering
Center Director Switzerland

Following The Yang Style *Vison*



Therese Teo Mei Mei, a Chinese born in Singapore, started her spiritual journey at the age of eleven. While other children trained sports, she practiced Yoga and later Tai Chi Chuan and Qigong. For many years she traveled the world studying with different teachers of various methods of Qigong and styles of Tai Chi Chuan. Her search finally ended when she met Master Yang Zhen Duo for the first time in Winchester Virginia in 1990. She found everything she needed in a teacher in Master Yang and since then he has been her only Yang style teacher. About the same period, she met and studied Chen style with Master Feng Zhi Qiang. Today, both Master Yang and Master Feng are her teachers and mentors.

As one of the first close students of Master Yang in the West and living in Sweden, Mei Mei organized the first international Yang style seminar in Sweden in 1995. Other seminars then followed in 1996, 1998 and this year. Through these seminars other practitioners and instructors from numerous countries in Europe came. Many of these individuals went on to form other Yang Cheng Fu Centers in Europe.

As Director of the Centers in the UK and Sweden and the Vice President of Europe for the Association, Mei Mei follows the vision of Masters Yang Zhen Duo and Yang Jun in spreading and reuniting practitioners of the Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan. She believes that Tai Chi Chuan is not only a martial art with great health benefits, but a practice for one's spiritual development. ▀



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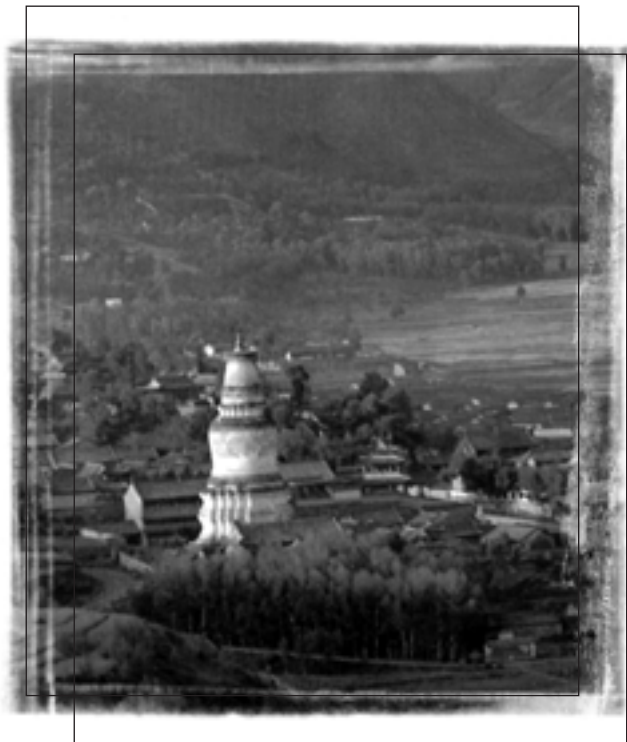
**INTERNATIONAL YANG STYLE
TAI CHI CHUAN ASSOCIATION**

The International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan.

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Wu *Tai* Shan

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In the summer of 2002, the Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association will celebrate the 20th anniversary of its establishment. Founded in 1982 by Master Yang Zhen Duo, the Shanxi Association has been hugely successful with over 30,000 member and 70 sub-associations in Shanxi Province alone.

In Chinese custom, each five-year anniversary has been commemorated with a celebration. The 20th anniversary will be the biggest yet with practitioners throughout the world being invited. The first part of the event will be held in Taiyuan, hometown of Masters Yang Zhen Duo and Yang Jun, with the feature being a tournament where Chinese and international guests compete together. But, the tournament is more about demonstrating for one another than competing.

One highlight will be a 100 person demonstration of the 49 form made of up groups of about 6 people from various centers around the world. Each group will wear tai chi silks in their own center's colors and participate in this truly international exhibition.

The second part of the event, seminars held by Masters Yang Zhen Duo and Yang Jun, will be held in the incredible Wu Tai Shan mountains. Meaning Five Plateau Mountain in Chinese, Wu Tai Shan is one of the four sacred Buddhist

mountains in China. Now just a four-hour bus ride north from Taiyuan, secluded Wu Tai Shan is in stark contrast to the congested streets and air of Taiyuan. The cool mountain getaway for Chinese tourists provides relief from the hot Taiyuan summer in a place of amazing beauty and energy. A short plane flight is also available directly between Beijing and Wu Tai Shan.

Over a thousand years old and with 42 monasteries, Wu Tai Shan is a thriving center of Buddhism in China. Monks from around the country wear their colored robes unique to their home province and hike alongside the tourists. One of the famous hikes is straight up the 1,000 carved granite steps leading to the Da Luo Ding - a temple whose name means Great Spiral Shell Peak. During the seminars, ample time will be set aside for enjoying the sights of Wu Tai Shan.

It is likely that the anniversary celebration will be held in July of 2002 with from 10 days to two weeks of scheduled events. ▀



A Brief Biography of the Yang Family

PART TWO

(Please refer to the March newsletter or homepage for the part one, including the family tree)

The momentum created in the Tai Chi world by Yang Lu Chan throughout his lifetime did not stop with his death in 1872. Yang Lu Chan transmitted all of his knowledge to his two sons, Yu, nicknamed Ban Hou, and Jian, nicknamed Jian Hou, who became the 2nd generation representatives of the Yang Family.

Yang Yu, also named Yang Ban Hou, but referred to as the "2nd Son" by all, was born in 1837 and died in 1892. From an early age he and Jian Hou followed their father studying Tai Chi Chuan. All day long Ban Hou would practice hard, undeterred by winter's cold or summer's heat. Yang Ban Hou had a hard and fierce disposition. He was skilled at sparring, and especially adept in using the staff (made of bai la wood, over three meters long, and used in the same way as the spear). One day in Yongnian City, inside the stalls located at the East Gate, a fire started due to carelessness. Water surrounded all of Yongnian City and it teemed with reeds. It was late fall, after the harvest, and inside the stall bundles of reeds were piled up into a small mountain. Once one of the stalls caught fire, if it was not put out quickly it would turn into an inferno. At this time, Yang Ban Hou rushed to the scene wielding a spear, lifting and throwing the fiery bundles of reeds. The burning bundles flew through the air like a string of fish, and almost instantly they were all in the water. With the fire extin-

guished and conflagration avoided, the word of his deed spread quickly through the city. Later, Yang Ban Hou followed his father to Beijing to teach and once defeated famous master Xiong Xian Liu (called Meng Jiao). Because he went on to defeat numerous other top martial artists in Beijing, the fame of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan swelled and many marvelous stories were left for future generations.

Although Yang Ban Hou had consummate skill, his temperament was too fiery. He would show no mercy when sparring, even striking his own disciples. He would frequently draw blood with his hands, making it difficult for students to accept his teachings. So, many students kept a respectful distance from him. Although the skill he obtained was first-class, the students who received his skill were quite few. Yang Ban Hou had one daughter, and a son called Shao Peng. Shao Peng studied with Yang Cheng Fu and then opened a school in Guangxi, where he later passed away.

Yang Jian, called Jian Hou, was nicknamed Jian Hu and called "3rd Son" until his later years when he was referred to as just "old man".

Born in 1842, he started studying Tai Chi Chuan with his father at a young age. Under the strict requirements of his father he would practice hard all day. Frequently feeling that he could not endure it any longer, he tried several times to run away. It was

clear that working hard daily at practicing gongfu under his father's watchful eye caused his skill to greatly improve. Finally he became a man of great talent. Jian Hou took his father's old frame and revised it into the medium frame. He also mastered the saber, spear, sword and other weapons. His sword skill was renowned

for combining softness and hardness. Jian Hou even mastered using pellets (dan4). He would hold three or four in his hand at one time and when thrown simultaneously each would strike a different bird in flight. He earned the fame of not wasting one pellet when thrown. Jian Hou was mild mannered and introverted, just the opposite of Ban Hou. Because of this his students were numerous. Jian Hou died without disease in the sixth year after the founding of Nationalist China (1911). Legend has it that several hours before his death, he had a dream foretelling his fate and



Yang Jian Hou →

by
Yang Jun
translated by
Jeremy Blodgett

PART TWO

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF THE YANG FAMILY

summoned his family and students, having a final conversation with each of them. When the time came, Jian Hou bathed himself and dressed in formal clothes - smiling until the very end. He had three sons: the eldest was named Zhao Xiong; the second, called Zhao Yuan, died young; and the youngest was called Zhao Qing.

Yang Zhao Xiong was born in 1862 and died in 1930. Also named Meng Xiang, and later called Shao Hou, most just called him "Mr. Big". From very young he studied with his father and his uncle. He learned the greater part of his skill from Ban Hou. His nature was forceful and he would stand up for injustices suffered by others. Shao Hou enjoyed sending people flying, rather like his uncle's style. When he was young he taught the middle frame established by his father, but later changed direction. He developed a form that was high with small movements done in a sometimes slow and sometimes sudden manner. His releasing of energy (fajin) was hard and crisp, accompanied with sudden sounds. The spirit from his eyes would shoot out in all directions, flashing like lightning. Combined with a sneer, a sinister laugh, and the sounds of "Heng!" and "Ha!", his imposing manner was quite threatening. Shao Hou taught students to strike quickly after coming into contact with the opponent, wearing expressions from the full spectrum of emotions when he taught them. Students of lesser skill had a difficult time studying with him; hence he did not have many. Shao Hou had a son called Zhen Sheng who later studied with Yang Cheng Fu.

Yang Zhao Qing, called Cheng Fu, or just "3rd Son", was born in 1883 and died in 1936. He started receiving his father's teachings at

an early age. During his youth he worked hard at making a careful study of Tai Chi, practicing hard through both summer and winter with his skill increasing daily. Eventually he became a celebrated martial artist. In order to adapt to the changing needs of society, Yang Cheng Fu began with his father's revised middle frame, and made further revisions. He gradually established the Yang family large frame, becoming the most widespread of today's Yang styles. The large frame postures established by Yang Cheng Fu in his older years are open and extended, simple and direct. The structure is compact and precise, with body alignment maintained in movement. The movements are gentle and flowing, and performed at an even speed. There is combined hardness and softness, lightness and heaviness. All of these characteristics make it the representative standard form for Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, serving as the pattern for all those who would follow in its study. The form established by Yang Cheng Fu can be performed in a high, medium, or low stance. Thus, the degree of difficulty can be adjusted according to the one's requirements and condition. The form retains the martial arts aspects of attack and defense, and is suitable for strengthening the body, improving health, and curing illness. Because of this, it has deeply received the love of the vast Tai Chi Chuan practitioners.

Yang Cheng Fu had a large physique. His natural disposition was gentle and kindhearted,



Yang Cheng Fu

simple and honest, faithful and sincere towards people. In the martial arts world, his morals were high and his prestige was great. His skill at pushhands was exquisite. Excelling at releasing (fa1) and dissipating (hua4) energy, he had no equal in his time. His arms felt like the outside was made of cotton, but the inside was made of steel.

His movements could be very small, yet significantly lead the opponent before he then abruptly released energy. Those who felt it could not tell that he had moved, yet they were already rising high into the air and then falling to the ground. Therefore, students at once loved his skill and were overjoyed to study with him. In 1928 Yang Cheng Fu started from Beijing and went south teaching Tai Chi Chuan in Nanjing, Shanghai, Hankou, Hangzhou, and Guangzhou. While in Nanjing he held the post of Director of Training at the Central Martial Arts Academy. His students were numerous, spread all over regions north and south of the Yangtze River. In order to promote the development of Tai Chi Chuan, Yang Cheng Fu in 1925 dictated to his disciple Chen Wei Ming the book *The Art of Tai Chi Chuan* (Taijiquan Shu). In 1934 he again dictated *The Complete Principles and Applications of Tai Chi Chuan* (Taijiquan Tiyong Quan Shu), containing the quintessential skill of Tai Chi Chuan and leaving a precious legacy for later students. Yang Cheng Fu had four sons: Zhen Ming; Zhen Ji; Zhen Duo; and Zhen Guo.

Yang Zhen Ming, called Shou Zheng, was born in 1911 and died

PART TWO

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF THE YANG FAMILY

in 1986. From a young age on he followed his father in studying the art of Tai Chi Chuan. By age 14 he had comprehended the Tai Chi Chuan energies and was thoroughly proficient in the techniques of the saber, sword and spear and had become the assistant of his father, Yang Cheng Fu. Shou Zheng at age 19 went to Anhui Province and later taught Tai Chi in Nanjing. After that he traveled with his father, passing through Zhejiang, Fujian, and Guangdong Provinces. After Yang Cheng Fu passed away, Shou Zhong stayed in Guangzhou (Canton) to teach. In 1949 he moved to Hong Kong and opened a martial arts school where he taught. In Hong Kong and Macao, and countries in Southeast Asia, there are quite a few of his disciples. Yang Shou Zhong took the book written by his father before he died, *The Complete Principles and Applications of Tai Chi Chuan*, and reprinted several editions of it. He also compiled pictures of Yang Cheng Fu and published *Illustrated Two Man Applications and Variations For Tai Chi Chuan (Shuang Ren Tujie Taijiquan Yongfa Ji Bianhua)*, which then became available worldwide. In 1986 he succumbed to illness, leaving his three daughters in Hong Kong to carry on his cause and continue to teach Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan.

Yang Zhen Ji, born in 1921, started studying with his father and elder brother at age 6. He studied very hard, grasping the essence of Tai Chi Chuan. In the late 1940's he began teaching Tai Chi Chuan.



Yang Zhen Ji -->

He traveled from Guangzhou (Canton) to Beijing, to Tianjin, to Guangxi, and to Handan to teach. Because he teaches very earnestly, his students are quite numerous and he once visited the United States. Zhen Ji, after several decades of practice and teaching, has gained a deep understanding of the skill passed on by his father. Zhen Ji once served as the Chairman of the Handan Wushu Association and is now a committee member of the Hebei Wushu Association and President of the Handan Wushu Association. He wrote *The Tai Chi Chuan of Yang Cheng Fu (Yang Cheng Fu Shi Taijiquan)*.

Yang Zhen Duo, born in 1926, began studying the art of Tai Chi Chuan at age 6 with his father and elder brothers. He studied assiduously and was good at research, and was able to grasp the essence of Tai Chi. His Tai Chi skill is consummate and demonstrated with a natural poise. Yang Zhen Duo's disposition is tolerant and kind, simple hearted and honest. He teaches patiently, carefully and meticulously. Modest and unassuming as was his father, he has come to receive the deep admiration and esteem of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan enthusiasts. Zhen Duo carries on the aspirations of his ancestors, dedicating himself to the popularization and spread of Yang Style Tai

Chi Chuan. Since the early 1960's on, he has lived in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, teaching Tai Chi Chuan. In 1982 he founded the Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association, now with students in Shanxi Province alone numbering in the tens of thousands. Many times he has been invited and traveled to America, France, Italy, Germany, England, Sweden, Canada, Brazil, Singapore, and other countries to hold seminars. Making an impression at home and abroad, Yang Zhen Duo has helped allow Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan to promote the ties of friendship between the citizens of China and the rest of the world.

Currently, Yang Zhen Duo is a member of the Chinese Wushu Association's Training Committee and the Shanxi Province Sports Association. He is the Vice-Chairman of the Shanxi Province Martial Arts Association, President of the Shanxi Province Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association, and Chairman of the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association. In 1995 he was recognized by the Chinese Wushu Academy as one of the top 100 Wushu masters in China. During 1996, while in San Antonio Texas, U.S.A. he was recognized as honorary mayor. The City of Troy Michigan, U.S.A. presented the key to the city to Yang Zhen Duo in 1999. In the same year, in a province of France, the governor personally presented the province's commemorative medal to him.



Yang Zhen Duo -->

Useful Chinese Phrases

举一反三 Chinese Saying
Ju Yi Fan San

This Chinese idiom is frequently used by Master Yang Zhen Duo in his teachings. Literally, its meaning is to raise one corner of a subject, and then the pupil can infer the other three. Thus, it is desirable for the student to understand emphasis placed on certain shapes or principles in a move, and then be able to apply this to other moves in the form.

沉肩 Chen Jian
Sink the Shoulders

坠肘 Zhui Zhou
Pull the Elbows Down

坐腕 Zuo Wan
Sit the Wrists

松腰 Song Yao
Loosen the Waist

松胯 Song Kua
Loosen the Hips

弓步 Gong Bu
Bow Step

虚步 Xu Bu
Empty Step

马步 Ma Bu
Horse Step

精神 Jing Shen
Spirit

与肩同宽 Yu Jian Tong Kuan
Shoulder Sidth Apart

Yang Zhen Duo has an English edition of his book entitled Yang Style Taijiquan, and a Chinese edition entitled Yang Style Taijiquan, Sword, and Saber, as well as an edition written in traditional Chinese characters entitled Chinese Yang Style Taijiquan. He also has a set of video tapes produced by the Yellow River Television Station called Yang Style Taijiquan, Sword, and Saber. The Publishing House of the Chinese Sports Ministry has also produced a two-video tape set called Yang Style Taijiquan. Yang Zhen Duo has two sons, the eldest named Yang Dao Fang and the youngest named Yang De Fang.

Yang Zhen Guo, born in 1928, started studying at an early age the Tai Chi passed on by his family. He lives in Hebei Province, Handan City, and for many years looked after his mother. He has ceaselessly taught Tai Chi Chuan all around the local area. He once visited Taiwan, and has made a fairly significant contribution towards the development of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan. Zhen Guo has three daughters and two sons, Yong Fang being the first and Zhi Fang the second son.



Yang Zhen Guo

a final resting-place. In order to memorialize the origin of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, the Yang family gravesite in Yongnian County, Hebei Province, was then established as a historical relic and protected by the State in 1991. In addition, contributions were raised to complete the restoration of Yang Lu Chan's historical residence, allowing practitioners to continue enjoying the site with reverence.

In summary, people who practice Tai Chi Chuan today invariably point to the Yang Family. It was Yang Lu Chan who first introduced it to the general public in Beijing. Then, after undergoing three generations of change, it was Yang Cheng Fu who finalized the form and extensively popularized it. Now, the 4th generation of the Yang family, Zhen Ming, Zhen Ji, Zhen Duo and Zhen Guo and Yang Cheng Fu's disciples together have spread Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, making it today's most widespread style. History and countless factual evidence have shown that Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan has made a remarkable contribution towards the health and longevity of mankind. In order to carry on this important part of ancient Chinese culture, I hope our generation and future generations can work as one making it possible for Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan to shine even more magnificently.

Chinese *Martial* ARTS RANKING SYSTEM

Following the needs and development of martial arts, the Chinese Martial Arts Institute formally implemented the "Chinese Martial Arts Ranking System" in 1997 in order to evaluate the skill level and contributions of practitioners and people working in the field of martial arts. Within the last three years of development, it has already achieved success among the practitioners and professional martial artists. The International Association, in order to adapt to the current state of the Chinese martial arts and to better coordinate with its future development, has specially created the Tai Chi Chuan ranking system for Tai Chi Chuan practitioners. The structure of the Association's ranking system is based on that of the "The Chinese Martial Arts Ranking System". A general introduction of the ranking system, Ranking System for Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, as well as Ranking Committee Scoring Method and Standards, can be seen on the homepage.

YANG STYLE TAI CHI CHUAN RANKING SYSTEM

METHOD OF ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

ARTICLE I

Ranking

The International Association is responsible for organizing and implementing the Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Ranking System. The Department of Training and Competitions and the Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Ranking System Ranking Committees are created under the International Association.

ARTICLE II

Department of Training and Competitions

A) Directing and supervising the ranking work of the International Association;

- B) Being responsible for advancement within the intermediate and advanced ranks;
- C) Examining and approving topics for the martial arts theory portion of testing;
- D) Evaluating the technical content of the ranking tests.

ARTICLE III

Ranking Committees

A) Continental Ranking Committees will be formed in each continent where the Association has Centers. An Officer of the Association who resides in the given continent will be responsible for organizing the committee and will invite 5 Directors of Rank 6 or above to form the Continental Ranking Committee;

- B) Each participating Yang Cheng Fu Tai Chi Chuan Center will establish a ranking committee by inviting not less than 3 Directors of the intermediate rank to form the Center Ranking Committee;
- C) All of the ranking committees are established under special terms. The committees are formed once each year prior to the ranking activities. All committees report to the Department of Training and Competitions of the International Association. If a committee fails to meet the set forth criteria, a request must be made of the Department of Training and Competitions for consideration.



by Yang Jun
translated by
Jeremy Blodgett

- Yang Zhen Duo, Chairman
- Yang Jun, Vice Chairman
- Jerry Karin

- Horacio Lopez
- Pat Rice
- Therese Teo Mei Mei

- Bill Walsh
- Han Hoong Wang

This first ranking committee has ranked the first group of Center Directors and other important members of the Association. These members will then comprise the first Continental and Center Ranking Committees which will then begin ranking the other members. Ranking applications will be distributed to all members.

ARTICLE IV

Ranking Applicants

- A) Ranking applications may be submitted each year from February 1st to March 31st. Forms received after March 31st will not be processed;
- B) Application Requirements:
 - 1) Applicants for entering the ranking system must possess basic skills in Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan and have received standard instruction concerning the morals inherent in the practice of martial arts as well martial arts theory;
 - 2) Applicants for advancement in the ranking system must abide by the morals inherent in the practice of martial arts and possess the necessary form skills and the theoretical foundation for the rank sought;
 - 3) Applicants may apply for a rank only after reaching its age requirements.
- C) Application Procedures:
 - 1) Applicants must complete the ranking form and provide 3 passport size photos;
 - 2) Applicants for advancing in the ranking system must provide a copy of the certificate for the current rank held;
 - 3) Ranking fees for the rank applied for, as set forth by the International Association, must be turned in with the application.

ARTICLE V

Method of Examination and Approval for Rankings

- A) Each ranking committee may convene once per year, at a date determined by the ranking committee. Each applicant for entering or advancing in the ranking system must submit an application to the corresponding level of ranking committee within the required time limit. Ranking occurs yearly in November and December;
- B) Only the International Association has the authority to approve and award rankings;
- C) For testing content, standards, and methods, refer to the Ranking System for Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan;
- D) Each member of the Ranking Committees is required to timely submit materials for qualified applicants to the International Association.

ARTICLE VI

Examination Limits of Authority

- A) Approval to enter the ranking system, or advance to ranks 1, 2 and 3 is obtained from the Ranking Committees of the Yang Chengfu Tai Chi Chuan Centers following the examination and approval of the International Association;
- B) Approval for advancing to

- ranks 4 through 6 is obtained from the Continental Ranking Committees, following the examination and approval of the International Association;
- C) Ranking Committees are not allowed to test for ranks above their set forth limits.

ARTICLE VII

Training for Entering and Advancement within the Ranking System

Each Ranking Committee may, according to its assigned authority, hold training based on the requirements and specifics of the corresponding rank.

ARTICLE VIII

Certificates and Medals

Ranking certificates and medals are designed, produced, and issued by the International Association. Individuals and groups are not allowed to produce any sort of substitute materials.

ARTICLE IX

General

These methods are in effect from the date published. The Association retains the right to interpret and explain the above articles. ▶

International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association
December 4, 1999





A Day of Tai Chi *Demonstrations*

The calendar said April 8, 2000. What should have been a nice spring day for the National Day of Tai Chi Demonstrations, turned out to be a cruel lesson from Mother Nature – snow, wind and bitter cold.

However, at Dondero High School, in Royal Oak, Michigan over 300 family members, friends and interested community residents braved the weather to watch a two-hour demonstration of the ancient art of Tai Chi Chuan, one of the great cultural heritages of China.

Students of the Yang ChengFu Tai Chi Chuan Michigan Center, came from Southfield, Royal Oak, Detroit, Sterling Heights, Warren, Ann Arbor, Grosse Pointe, Rochester, West Bloomfield, Utica, Troy, Ferndale Birmingham, Mount Clemens, and White Lake to participate in the demonstration.

The demonstration consisted of Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan – Sections one, two and three; Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Saber, Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Sword, Push Hands, Tai Chi 24 Form, Fan, Staff and Wu Ji Health Ball Exercise.

This was our seventh year for doing a student demonstration. Each year more students have

come to perform and our audience has grown as well. This year we had more new students and many students who were once just as new have now become more experienced. Their skill has increased and their love of the art gives them a desire to perform for an audience.

Three special guests were also included in the demonstration.

Steve Harrigan, a teacher from Ann Arbor, Michigan and his students demonstrated five very interesting push hand exercises.

The students of teacher Mike Lee, demonstrated Shao Lin Gong Fu. The three students supplied a very dramatic presentation.

Deno Cain, a five-time martial arts National Champion, brought student members of his special Storm Team who demonstrated Karate and WuSu.

It was delightful to watch these three different demonstrations. It showed the audience that there are many varieties of Martial Arts. It also helps strengthen the friendship and understanding within the Martial Arts community.

It is very gratifying to the students when the audience turnout grows each and every year. With the growing interest in Tai Chi Chuan

more and more people are coming to the demonstrations and then making the commitment to begin studying Tai Chi for themselves.

Toward the end of the demonstration Han Hoong Wang led the audience in many Tai Chi moves. As Master Yang ChengFu says, "For learners, the guidance of a good teacher and discussions of the skills and techniques with friends are necessary, but the most important thing is persistent and untiring practice. Indeed, there is nothing like practice, and learners of Tai Chi Chuan, men and women, young and old, will get the best possible results if they keep at it all the year round."

A lifetime member of Tai Chi Chuan, Cathy Straffon, brought 40 Mount Clemens Adult Community Center senior citizen students to the demonstration. They were very pleased with the audience participation portion of the demonstration.

A great time was had by all and we look forward to participating in the National Tai Chi Demonstration Day again next year! ▶

Submitted by:
Marilyn Ickes

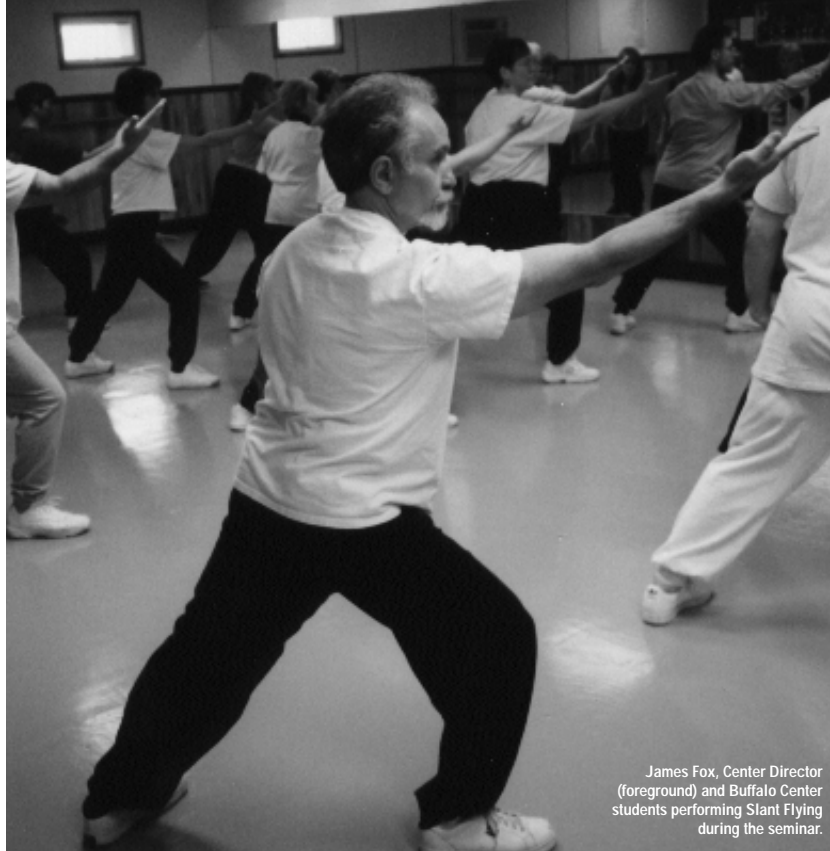


1st Anniversary

The Buffalo Center will celebrate its first year anniversary in September, 2000, having made several achievements. First, the Center has expanded the number of classes taught and increased the number of students over the past year, as well as the number of International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association members. Currently, we have nearly fifty students, with approximately 30 having membership in the International Association. Secondly, the Center opened a new studio location on the popular "Elmwood Strip" close to downtown Buffalo that is attracting a growing number of urban students.

During this time we continued to expand our classes at the East Aurora studio which serves students from the southern suburbs and towns. In addition, the Center is now offering classes at a Wellness Center located in the northern suburbs, giving the Center a strong profile across the Buffalo Metropolitan area. This Fall, we will be continuing ongoing classes at two branch campuses of Erie Community College, reaching students who would not otherwise enroll at our studio locations. Overall, we are pleased with our growth and development of student enrollment reflecting a new interest in traditional Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan.

Our most appreciated achievement, however, was the successful presentation of



James Fox, Center Director (foreground) and Buffalo Center students performing Slant Flying during the seminar.

seminars conducted by Master Yang Jun during the last weekend of March. Approximately 20 advanced students attended the traditional Yang family Tai Chi Chuan seminar, and Master Yang Jun's seminars on the sword, saber, and push hands were well attended given the number of students who have advanced to these levels.

Master Yang Jun also made a presentation to a larger audience of interested persons at the Buffalo State College, Campus School Gym. His presenting on the family lineage and characteristics of the Yang Family form held the attention of all those attending over a 40 minute period. At the conclusion of his presentation, Master Yang Jun performed the 49 Posture Family Competition form and received a standing ovation for his demonstration of skill and knowledge. Among the attendees of the presentation and demonstration were members of the Buffalo State College Asian-American Student Association who have since expressed an interest in having

Tai Chi Chuan classes at Buffalo State College.

We are grateful for Master Yang Jun's contributions to the Center, and are also very appreciative of Han Hoong Wang's service as translator during the seminar series. While students were physically and mentally tired from the weekend events, they reported that an "internal glow of renewed energy and serenity" settled over them for some time after the seminars concluded.

Student responses to the seminar series were extremely positive, with nearly everyone reporting having new insights and having plenty of refinements of their forms to work on over the coming months. Overall, students saw Master Yang Jun as an extremely good teacher, who made the features of the forms easy to understand and presented corrections in a way that gave students greater confidence in their practice and appreciation of traditional Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan. ▾

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James Fox,
Buffalo Center

PRODUCTS

AVAILABLE AT THE YANG CHENG FU TAI CHI CHUAN CENTERS

See Web page for more information

PRODUCTS



T-Shirt of the Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan

New full colors design, featuring Yang Zhen Duo and Yang Jun in action.

You can see it on our web site!

White, 100% heavy-weight cotton
S. M. L. XL. XXL

members \$15
non-members \$20



Grooved Sword

Made of combat steel with a ridge running down the blade, this is the possibly the finest-mass produced tai chi sword available. Regular (blade 76 cm) and Long (blade 78 cm).

members \$75
non-members \$80

Tassels

The standard tassel for Yang Style sword.

members \$8
non-members \$10



T-Shirt

White, 100% heavy-weight cotton, featuring 4-color Association logo.
S. M. L. XL. XXL

members \$10
non-members \$12



Saber

The official saber for Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi. Made to the Yang Family specifications at the famous Long Chuan factory.

Regular (blade 78 cm - back-ordered) and Long (blade 80 cm).

members \$55
non-members \$60



Sword

The official sword for Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi. Made to the Yang Family specifications at the famous Long Chuan factory. Regular (blade 76 cm) and Long (blade 78 cm).

members \$50
non-members \$55

Sword Bag

For carrying and protecting your sword and saber. Velvet, silk or denim in various colors. In single and double (for both a sword and saber) sizes.

members \$14
non-members \$16



Yang Zhen Duo Poster Set

4 large (106 cm by 77 cm) color prints with pictures of Yang Zhen Duo for each move and transition. Chinese caption. 499 total pictures! A must for someone learning the form.

members \$40
non-members \$45



Yang Cheng Fu Poster

Large (83 cm by 58 cm) high quality black and white poster showing poses of only Yang Cheng Fu. Collectors item.

members \$10
non-members \$12



Book (in Chinese)

The latest book by Master Yang Zhen Duo. Includes Sword and Saber Forms, 49 Form, Applications, Yang Cheng Fu pictures, and much more. 431 pages. English version due out next year.

members \$15
non-members \$17

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CENTERS

All Association members who have practiced Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan for at least three years, who possess the ability to be teachers of Traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan, and who have the necessary skill level may inquire about establishing a Yang Cheng Fu Tai Chi Chuan Center.



Turn this completed form into your Center Director, or mail to the Association address listed below.
"Please allow up to 6 weeks for processing of new memberships."

Individual Membership Application

Yes, I wish to become a member of the International Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan Association

Yes, I wish to receive copies of Tai Chi Chuan Newsletter

Yes, I wish to receive a 10% discount on Seminar tuition

Yes, I wish to receive a discount on Association products

Yes, I wish to be eligible for ranking

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City, State: _____

P.C.: _____ Country: _____

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E-mail: _____

Local Center, if applicable: _____

Birthday: ___/___/___ Language of Preference: _____

Please check method of payment and membership type.

Cheque Visa MC

Individual: \$30 first year Renewal \$25

Family: \$45 first year Renewal: \$35

Senior: \$25 first year Renewal: \$20

Card #: _____

Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

INTERNATIONAL YANG STYLE TAI CHI CHUAN ASSOCIATION
606 Maynard Ave. So. Suite 107, Seattle, WA 98104 U.S.A.



TEN ESSENTIALS *of* TAI CHI CHUAN

Orally transmitted by Yang Chengfu, recorded by Chen Weiming

1. EMPTY, LIVELY, PUSHING UP AND ENERGETIC *

'Pushing up and energetic' means the posture of the head is upright and straight and the spirit is infused into its apex. You may not use strength. To do so makes the back of the neck stiff, whereupon the chi and blood cannot circulate freely. You must have an intention which is empty, lively (or free) and natural. Without an intention which is empty, lively, pushing up and energetic, you won't be able to raise your spirit.

2. HOLD IN THE CHEST AND PULL UP THE BACK

The phrase 'hold in the chest' means the chest is slightly reserved inward, which causes the chi to sink to the cinnabar field (dan1 tian2). The chest must not be puffed out. If you do so then the chi is blocked in the chest region, the upper body becomes heavy and lower body light, and it will become easy for the heels to float upward. 'Pulling up the back' makes

the chi stick to the back. If you are able to hold in the chest then you will naturally be able to pull up the back. If you can pull up the back, then you will be able to emit a strength from the spine which others cannot oppose.

3. RELAX THE WAIST

The waist is the commander of the whole body. Only after you are able to relax the waist will the two legs have strength and the lower body be stable. The alternation of empty and full all derive from the turning of the waist. Hence the saying: 'The wellspring of destiny depends on the tiny interstice of the waist.' ** Whenever there is a lack of strength in your form, you must look for it in the waist and legs.

4. SEPARATE EMPTY AND FULL

In the art of Tai Chi Chuan, separating full and empty is the number one rule. If the whole body sits on the right leg, then the right leg is deemed 'full' and the left leg 'empty'. If the whole body sits on the left leg, then the left leg is

deemed 'full' and the right leg 'empty'. Only after you are able to distinguish full and empty will turning movements be light, nimble and almost without effort; if you can't distinguish them then your steps will be heavy and sluggish, you won't be able to stand stably, and it will be easy for an opponent to control you.

5. SINK THE SHOULDERS AND DROOP THE ELBOWS

Sinking the shoulders means the shoulders relax open and hang downward. If you can't relax them downward, the shoulders pop up and then the chi follows and goes upward, causing the whole body to lack strength. Drooping the elbows means the elbows are relaxed downward. If the elbows are elevated then the shoulders are unable to sink. When you use this to push someone they won't go far. It's like the 'cut off' energy of external martial arts. ***

Continued in the next issue

Notes:

* This four-character phrase is probably the most difficult one in all of tai chi literature to translate. I have chosen to regard each of the four words as filling the function of a predicate or verb-phrase. Another fairly obvious approach would be to take the first two as adverbial and the last two as subject-predicate: "Empty and lively, the apex is energetic." Many other interpretations are possible.

** In Chinese thought the waist tends to be regarded as the space between two vertebrae, rather than a circle girdling the middle of the body.

*** External martial arts such as Shaolin are thought to use energy from parts or sections of the body, as opposed to the 'whole-body' energy of tai chi.

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