



Newsletter

of the
International Tai Chi Chuan Symposium
on Health, Education and Cultural Exchange

Issue 3 November 2008

Welcome to the third issue of the Newsletter of the International Tai Chi Chuan Symposium on Health, Education and Cultural Exchange. In this issue you will find the latest information and announcements on Symposium development along with information of interest on the Symposium venue, Vanderbilt University and the host city, Nashville Tennessee. Please visit www.taichisymposium.com for more detailed information on Symposium development. Thank you for your continued interest in this historical event which will bring together the wisdom of Chinese culture with the precision of modern science.

We continue to have many new requests for the newsletter. Consequently, in each issue you may find some items of interest repeated in order to assist Symposium attendees in planning their trip to Nashville.

Cost & Schedule

Cost and schedule information is still in development. Vanderbilt University has released the cost information for the residence halls and meal plan. You will find that information on page 4 of this newsletter. There you will also find web references where you can tour the residence halls and dining facility for information on the available amenities. Academic content, schedule and cost information will be posted to our website as soon as they become available.

Pre-register and Save \$50

Pre-register before 31 January 2009 and save \$50 off the Symposium registration fee.

Pre-registration information is needed to better facilitate Symposium planning. No fees are required during pre-registration.

Pre-registration form available at www.taichisymposium.com in the last week of November

SYMPOSIUM THEME

TRADITIONAL TAI CHI CHUAN
A VIEW THROUGH THE LENS OF SCIENCE

LOCATION

Vanderbilt University
Nashville, Tennessee

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

Symposium dates: 5 - 10 July 2009

Saturday, July 4 *July 4th in Nashville ROCKS!*
Kick off your Symposium experience by attending the free Music City July 4th celebration. No Symposium activities scheduled.

Sunday, July 5 Registration/Check-in, Pre-Symposium Activities, Opening Sessions, Reception, Trade Show

Monday, July 6 Morning Practice, Workshops, Lectures, Welcome Celebration/Reception, Trade Show

Tuesday, July 7 Morning Practice, Workshops, Lectures, Special Events, Panel Discussions, Trade Show

Wednesday, July 8 Morning Practice, Workshops, Lectures, Special Events, Panel Discussions, Trade Show

Thursday, July 9 Morning Practice, Workshops, Lectures, Special Events, Trade Show

Friday, July 10 Morning Practice, Workshops, Lectures, Trade Show, Closing, Friendship Party

NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE with Master's Interview

May 2008 – Master Chen Zhenglei (*Complete*)

August 2008 – Master Yang Zhenduo (*Complete*)

November 2008 – Master Wu Wenhan (*This Issue*)

February 2009 – Master Ma Hailong

May 2009 – Master Sun Yongtian



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SYMPOSIUM MISSION STATEMENT

The International Tai Chi Chuan Symposium on Health, Education and Cultural Exchange combines the wisdom of Chinese culture with the precision of modern science. We seek to provide unique insight into Traditional Tai Chi Chuan for Tai Chi practitioners, healthcare professionals, educators and the public. We also seek to promote the understanding and practice of the art as a means to support creative, healthy, and active lifestyles.

A FOCUS ON TRADITIONAL TAI CHI CHUAN

Tai Chi is one of the fastest growing fitness and health maintenance activities in the world today. A growing body of scientific research supports anecdotal claims of health benefits for practitioners of the art. Consequently, Tai Chi is endorsed by a number of health-promoting organizations, which include the Arthritis Foundation, the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, National Institute of Health and the Mayo Clinic.

The Symposium provides a forum for presenting and discussing the latest research and scientific evidence that examines the use of Traditional Tai Chi Chuan as a means of intervention and prevention for many diseases as well as a means of promoting health and functional well-being. It is also designed to provide networking opportunities for the masters, scientists, instructors, practitioners, educators, and for everyone interested in exploring the full benefits and best practices of Traditional Tai Chi Chuan.

ACADEMIC SESSIONS

Academic sessions will feature credentialed speakers in the fields of health, fitness, and education. The primary goal of the academic sessions is to provide evidence-based information to healthcare professionals, educators and the public about the potential benefits of the art of Tai Chi Chuan.

ACADEMIC STEERING COMMITTEE

The Academic Steering Committee is staffed by well respected members from several prestigious Universities and Medical Centers. Academic sessions at the Symposium will be developed and taught by professionals with diverse backgrounds and a multitude of skills. Speakers will be carefully selected for their unique and highly professional level of expertise in the scientific study and examination of Tai Chi and Qigong.

Meet the Academic Steering Committee:

Center for Taiji and Qigong Studies

Yang Yang Ph.D. (Academic Committee Chair)

Appalachian State University

Bob Schlagal, Ph.D.

Beth Israel Continuum Center for Health and Healing

Roberta Lee M.D.

D'Youville College

Penelope J. Klein, PT, Ed.D.

Harvard Medical School

Ted Kaptchuk OMD

Peter Wayne Ph.D.

Gloria Yeh M.D., M.P.H.

Mayo Clinic

Brent A. Bauer M.D., FACP

Mary Jurrison M.D.

Oregon Research Institute

Fuzhong Li, Ph.D.

University of Arizona

Ruth E. Taylor-Piliae, Ph.D., RN, CNS

University of California at Irvine

Shin Lin Ph.D.

University of Illinois

Wojtek Chodzko-Zajko, Ph.D.

University of Maryland School of Medicine

Kevin W Chen Ph.D., M.P.H.

University of Vermont

Ge Wu, Ph.D.

Vanderbilt Medical Center

Stephen Deppen M.S., M.A.

Roy Elam M.D.

Jay Groves Ed.D.

David Robertson M.D.



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CALL FOR PAPERS

The themes of the 2009 International Tai Chi Symposium are art, culture, and education. Its purpose is to foster continuing interest in and growth of the art and science of Tai Chi Chuan. This Symposium will offer opportunities to observe the highest levels of skill and performance of this art as well as to learn about the evidence-based foundation and best practices of Tai Chi Chuan for art and health promotion. Knowledge of the research- and theory-based foundation of practice is considered critical for both the acceptance of Tai Chi Chuan as a health-promoting modality within the Western paradigm of medicine and health care as well as for the modern validation of Eastern health and health maintenance theory. Anyone interested in submitting a proposal to present a topic at the Symposium may do so via the downloadable forms on the website.

There are two tracks to be developed.

Researcher Track of the Academic Arm

In addition to more traditional practical education sessions conducted by master teacher/practitioners, daily educational sessions are planned within an Academic/Research Track as part of the Symposium. At these sessions, presenters will share the latest research analyzing Tai Chi Chuan practice. Presentations will be offered in two formats: oral and poster.

Researchers are invited to submit proposals designated within one of the following categories: research, theory, or demonstration project.

Tai Chi/Qigong Practitioner Track of the Academic Arm

It is a mission of the International Tai Chi Symposium to bring together leading researchers and master instructors/practitioners to promote evidence-based Tai Chi research of the highest academic standards. In order for researchers to develop valid hypotheses and efficiently design studies, it is imperative that master practitioners share their knowledge of

Tai Chi practice with the scientific community. Presentations will be offered in two formats: oral and poster.

Teachers and practitioners are invited to submit proposals for poster and/or oral presentations at the symposium.

Vanderbilt University Residence Halls

Symposium participants (and accompanying family members) who chose to stay on campus will be housed in Hank Ingram Hall, Gillette Hall and Murray Hall. Room rates for the summer Symposium are now available (see caption). Vanderbilt University will provide a clean, attractive and safe place to live while you are housed on the campus. All Residence Halls are secure 24 hours a day. Each participant will receive an access card to enter their building. All rooms are furnished and air conditioned.

We anticipate registration for Residence Hall accommodations to begin in (or about) February 2009. The February Newsletter (as well as our website) will provide all registration information and forms.

Residence Halls for Symposium Attendees

*Click on the Residence Hall below for
information about amenities unique to
each:*

Hank Ingram House

Gillette House

Murray House



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Vanderbilt University Dining Facility

The Commons Center is the hub of The Commons and serves as both town square and state-of-the-art dining facility. The building includes a main dining hall, private dining rooms, community space for relaxation or social activities, and a fitness facility. The Commons Center is also home to The Common Grounds, a 24 hour coffee shop and campus market conveniently located very close to all Commons Residence Halls. The Commons Center dining facility includes a salad bar with sizzle station, Chef's Table, specialty pizza oven, deli, wok, grill, and vegan/vegetarian food.

Learn more about these restaurants at:
http://www.vanderbilt.edu/dining/rest_commons.php

Vanderbilt University Residence Hall Room Rates for the Summer of 2009

Double room = \$22 per person, per night.
Single room = \$30 per person per night.
Linen available for \$4 per night extra.

The Summer Symposium Meal Plan Cost

Breakfast:	\$8.25	(7am – 9am)
Lunch:	\$10.25	(11am- 1pm)
Dinner:	\$10.25	(5pm-6:15pm)

Total daily cost is: \$ 28.75 per day

ARRIVE EARLY/STAY LATE

Vanderbilt University will reserve space for both pre- and post-symposium participants to reside in the residence halls if they want to attend the July 4th Celebration before the Symposium begins or stay to tour the Nashville area after the Symposium ends.

Giving Back To Community, Giving Back To China

Annabelle's Wish Support to a Worthy Cause

We all want to help our community, other people, and our world. Now in its tenth year, Annabelle's Wish is a Nashville based non-profit organization that has provided love and basic necessities along with clothing, medical care, education, facility improvements and much more too over 2,000 orphans living in China. The International Tai Chi Chuan Symposium will donate a portion of each registration fee to Annabelle's Wish to help with their mission of providing direct support to as many children in Chinese orphanages as possible. Annabelle's Wish is an organization that changes lives forever.

For more information please visit
www.annabelleswish.info



Master Wu Wenhan

A Brief Introduction

Translated by Mui Gek Chan

Wu Wenhan was born in 1928 in Nanhe County, Hebei. He was a Communist Party member and worked in politics and law for a long time. In 1989, he left his position for some rest and relaxation. When he was young, he studied with martial arts teacher, Li Shengduan of Xingtai National Arts Research Institute. He went through many years of training, research, and learned a great deal. In 1986, 1989, and 2006 he represented the Wu/Hao style of Taijiquan and participated in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd National Taijiquan Symposium. The papers he represented were published in the Wulin magazine. In early December 2001, he participated as the Wu/Hao style specialist in the "Taiji Great Performances" organized by the Hongkong government. This work made it into the Guinness Book of Records. In September 2002, he led and participated in a Taiji friendship meet organized by China's Martial Arts Institute for the countries of China, Japan, and Korea. In December 2003, being the leading Wu/Hao style Taijiquan expert, he was invited to Guangdong's Huanan Shifan University's "Taijiquan

International Forum", and in July 2006 the "Taijiquan International Forum" held in Canada. In the late September, 2006 he attended the "2006 International Taijiquan Friendship Meet" in Handan. The meeting was organized by China's Sports and Martial Arts Department, China's Wu Association, Handan government, Hebei Sports Department, and Hebei Martial Arts Association. In addition, he has been invited many times to participate in Taijiquan friendship meets and forums organized by various provinces. He was Wu/Hao style's coach for the 2nd and 3rd World Taijiquan Meet. He is the honorary president of the Wu style Research Institute of Beijing, Jilin, and Zhengzhou. He is Shijiazhuang, Hebei Wu/Hao style Taijiquan special committee's coach, North America's Wu/Hao style Taijiquan association's honorary president, and other Taijiquan styles' organizing consultant. He is the special editor to "Wushu Jianshen" magazine and an editing staff member of "Wuhun" magazine. On occasions, for "Zhongguo Taijiquan" he has served as the magazine's editing staff member, "Taiji" magazine's special editing staff member, "Yongnian Taijiquan" magazine's consultant, and Hongkong's "Zhongguo Gongfu", a Chinese/English magazine's consultant. His contacts with qualified writers both domestic and overseas enable him to edit and publish a great number of specialized works, thereby nurturing a cadre of younger writers. He has published close to two hundred essays in major magazines and newspapers relating to martial arts history, Taiji's historical facets, Wu/Hao style research, famous experts, anecdotes, and ethical philosophy. In doing so, he has helped the development of Chinese culture and the popularization of Chinese martial arts; thereby, earning himself the name, "Wulin Yizhibi". His published works include "The Complete Wu Style Taijiquan Manual" and "Wu Wenhan Wushu Wencun". His students and their students have taught domestically and overseas and have achieved good results in various competitions. In 1998, in the 5th Yongnian International Taijiquan Friendship Meet, he was awarded the "Special Teacher" title. In 2002, he

received the “Meritorious Service” award at the Yongnian International Taijiquan Friendship Meet.

The Birth of Taijiquan

A conversation with Master Wu Wenhan

Dave Barrett: In America many people are unfamiliar with the Wu/Hao style of Taijiquan. I wanted to begin by asking you to describe the differences between Yang style and Wu/Hao style Taijiquan.

Wu Wenhan: Let me answer your question in two parts. First let me tell you why our style is called Wu/Hao. In the middle of the Qing dynasty in Hebei Province, Yongnian County, Guangfu town had two famous Taiji masters; one was Yang Luchan (1799-1873), and the other Wu Yuxiang (1813-1880). Let me tell you how Wu Yuxiang created his style. Master Wu’s family was in service to the government and Wu Yuxiang had placed highly in the Imperial examination. In the Wu family, both my grandfathers were highly placed civil servants, almost like generals. At that time Yang Luchan returned from his studies with

Chen Changxin. So Yang Luchan’s job was teaching Taijiquan in his hometown and he and Wu Yuxiang became good friends. At this time there was no special term for Taijiquan. The Chen style was referred to as Long Fist, in Yongnian County the term was Cotton Fist or Sticking Fist. So after Master Wu Yuxiang learned from the Yang family, he went back to Wenxian County, Zhaobao town and found a master named Chen Qingping (1795-1868). During that time Wu Yuxiang’s brother, Wu



Changxin found a book in a salt shop by Wang Zongyue called the Taiji Classics. So he gave this book to Wu Yuxiang and he brought it back to our hometown. From this point both Yang Luchan and Wu Yuxiang began to follow the theories in this book, also they brought their local culture and martial styles together. Actually, they also combined what they had learned from Chen Changxin and Chen Qingping, they combined many things together with the theory of Wang Zongyue to create a new martial art we now call Taijiquan. Later on Yang Luchan went to Beijing and began teaching and from this point Taijiquan began to spread out. For the second part of my answer I’d like to talk about the differences between the Yang and Wu/Hao styles.

Masters Yang Luchan and Wu Yuxiang were very good friends, studied and practiced together, sharing their knowledge. Using Wang Zongyue’s theories, they created Taijiquan. Using what they learned in Chenjiagou and Zhaobao, combined with local Yongnian techniques, guided by Wang Zongyue’s theories they began to change these styles by taking out the jumping and stamping techniques, hard and fast movements. They replaced

these with an emphasis of softness.

DB: Was it at this time that the motions became much slower?

WW: Yes. This was a gradual process, it didn’t happen overnight. At the beginning both Yang and Wu styles had some jumping movements but they had already taken out the stamping techniques.

DB: Why did they take these type of motions out?

WW: They were influenced by Wang Zongyue’s concepts, which formed a new base and foundation for the motions. Of course they learned from the Chen style but at that time

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Wang Zongyue's book was unknown to the Chen masters. This is an important point: martial arts need a theoretical base for the practice to develop. Secondly how do you show it? Perform it? Both the Yang and Wu styles developed here in Yongnian County started by using the Chen form, "Lazy about Tying the Coat" which evolved into our Grasping the Bird's Tail and finished with Bend the Bow Shoot the Tiger, so they are similar in structure from start to finish. The old Chen style started from Warrior Pounds the Pestle and it was a different sequence. Later Wu Jianquan (1870-1942) and Sun Lutang (1861-1932) developed their styles from a Yang family foundation so their forms sequences are somewhat similar. The third point I'd like to make concerns Push Hands. In the Chen style, when they used this in the old days it was a very basic technique: just moving back and forth.

Bringing this basic exercise back to Guangfu town, Yang Luchan began to develop more detailed techniques. The Yang family made it's living from teaching martial arts, they had a very rich experience and effective training methods. The Wu/ Hao style also developed more complex Push Hands patterns. They contributed a good deal to the development of Push Hands and weapons training. We should say that Wu Yuxiang and Yang Luchan founded Taijiquan.

DB: These two gentlemen were close friends, they lived in the same town, did they work together to create the form sequences we have today?

WW: Yes. They worked together and used many of the same form names and although the two styles are different they share many similarities.

DB: The reason I ask is that many students might think Taijiquan came just from Yang Luchan and we should recognize and

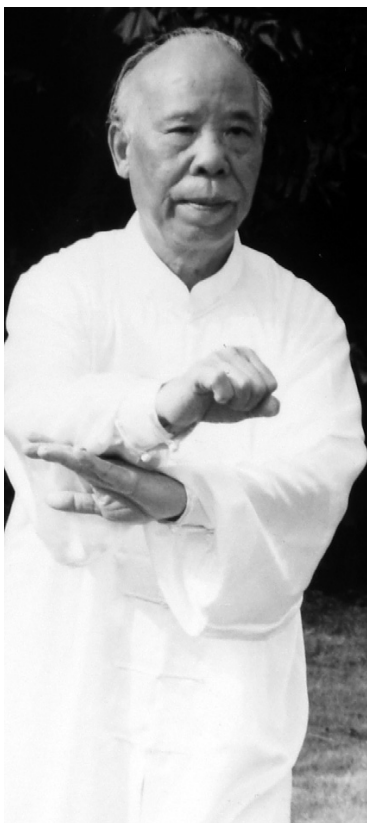
celebrate the contributions of the Wu family to Taijiquan's development.

WW: The reason perhaps why the contributions of the Wu family are not so well known is that the Yang family were professional martial arts teachers. The Wu family was not dependent on teaching for their livelihood. The relationship between the families was quite close. Because of this friendship actually when Yang Luchan went to Beijing to teach he was introduced by Wu Yuxiang's brother.

DB: Was that how Yang Luchan gained entry into the Forbidden City?

WW: Actually Wu Yuxiang's brother worked in the legal system and introduced him to the Imperial Guards as a martial arts teacher; without this family friendship there would have been no such introduction.

DB: This is a very important part of the history of Taijiquan's development.



WW: Let me tell you about why our style is called Wu/Hao Taijiquan. The Wu family was quite rich and part of the local aristocracy. They didn't teach Taijiquan for a living. They were well educated and came from a long line of military men. Because of this background Wu Yuxiang loved to research martial arts. Later on during the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864) many towns had to organize protective forces against the rebels. Wu Yuxiang led this organizing effort in Guangfu town.

DB: During the Taiping Rebellion did the Wu family train the townspeople of Guangfu using these new techniques?

WW: According to historical records we have no clear picture as to whether this training was done. One of Wu Yuxiang's nephews was in the military and trained his soldiers. The Qing government

gave Wu Yuxiang a special title for his service during the Taiping Rebellion. So this was Wu Yuxiang's special character, he loved to research martial arts and he was a leading figure in Yongnian. Later on he had three disciples. The first was Li Yiyu (1832- 1892), his oldest nephew, the second was also his nephew Li Qishen, they were brothers and also Yang Banhou (1837-1892), Yang Luchan's second son. Because Yang Luchan was in Beijing, his family remained in Guangfu town. Yang Banhou was tutored by Wu Yuxiang who also taught him Taijiquan. This is why the Yang family historically had two styles one called the large frame and the other small frame. When Yang Banhou was twenty he went to Beijing and he also was a military instructor who rose to the sixth rank out of seven. Wu Yuxiang remained in Guangfu town and continued to research and develop Taijiquan Theory. Taiji's theory comes from three sources; first is Wang Zongyue, second is Wu Yuxiang and the third is Li Yiyu. Li Yiyu was not a professional martial arts person but he had a disciple: Hao Weizhen (1849-1920). Hao He was his styled name. He spread Wu style to the public.

DB: Was he the same generation as Yang Chengfu, teaching at the same time?

WW: Yes they were the same generation but Hao Weizhen was a bit older than Yang Chengfu. So this is why our style is called Wu/Hao because Hao Weizhen was the one who taught publicly also we needed a way to distinguish this in English from the other Wu style developed by Wu Jianquan. The first Wu style Taijiquan manual was written by Hao Weizhen's grandson, Hao Shaoru. The difference between the Yang and Wu families is that the Yang Family taught from generation to generation and the family developed this art. Wu Yuxiang's style or the Wu/Hao style was not passed through this family process, because they did not teach for a living. Actually, the Wu style developed by Hao Weizhen passed through three generations. The second generation teacher was Hao Yueru (1877-1935), he first taught in Yongnian and later he went to

Shanghai. The third generation master, Hao Shaoru (1907-1983) also went to Shanghai. So this Wu style was spread by the Hao family. This is my answer to your first question. The reason Taijiquan is so popular and successful comes from the collaboration between Wu Yuxiang and Yang Luchan. Since Yang Luchan, the Yang style has developed practical training methods which work quite well. The Wu/Hao contribution has been to develop the theories of Taijiquan. The latter generations of these two families also worked together to combine practice and theory and improve the level of training. Here in Yongnian County, Taijiquan developed not just by continuing Chen style techniques. They learned from the Chen system but they redesigned and created new forms. This is of particular interest to me and I spend my time researching the development of Taijiquan. How do we distinguish between different martial arts? First we examine theory. Secondly, the performance of the forms is considered. Thirdly, what are the teaching methods? These three points help us evaluate the differences. For example, many sports use balls: basketball, baseball, and ping pong, what are the differences? The rules are different, the games are different and the training is different. This is what I mean, there are so many types of Chinese martial arts but how do we say one is Ba Gua and the other is Shaolin? Because of these three points. From my point of view Taijiquan was not simply originated in Chenjiagou. After our two ancestors came back from studying Chen style they created a new martial art called Taijiquan and Guangfu town was its birthplace. Of course there is a relationship with the Chen style but it was not just a simple transition. Later on, when Chen Fake was teaching in Beijing in the 1950's, there were debates as to whether his style was really Taijiquan because the three criteria were so different. What was missing from the Chen style were any of the 13 kinetic energies and theories from Wang Zongyue.

DB: I just have one more question: in your research, Wu Laoshi, what have you learned about Wang Zongyue? Where was he from? Do

we know anything about his background and training?

WW: The question cannot be answered clearly. We know only a few basic facts. He was from Shanxi Province. He lived during the Qianlong era of the Qing Dynasty (1736-1796). His theories were based on local Shanxi martial arts. What we have today is only his theory, nothing about the actual performance of his techniques. Yang Luchan and Wu Yuxiang used these theories, combined with what they had learned from the Chen family to create Taijiquan. They continued to develop this new style using Wang Zongyue's theories.

DB: Thank you so much for your time and insight into the history of Taijiquan!

The Evolution of Taijiquan

Further Conversations with Master Wu Wenhan

DB: Can you tell us about the importance of Wang Zongyue and why his theories helped create Taijiquan?

WW: I am very happy to see you again and talk with you. Your question covers three points. First concerns the history of Taijiquan. Last time we spoke about Yang Luchan's return to Guangping town from Chenjiagou. At this time at Chenjiagou and Zhaobao town they did not use this term Taijiquan to describe their techniques. It was called the Long Fist or 13 postures. Who created Taijiquan? At that time no one could say for sure. According to Yang Lu Chan, his teacher was Chen Changxing and his teacher was Jiang Fa, and his teacher was Wang Zongyue. Beginning in 1911, with the creation of Chinese National Government, research began into the question of who created Taijiquan. One of these early theories was that Taijiquan was created by Zhang Sanfeng.



DB: Who started the story about Zhang Sanfeng? Now it seems that modern research has discredited this theory.

WW: Around 1910 a scholar named Guan Baiyi found a chapter in a book which reported that someone named Wang Zong taught internal martial arts in Shaanxi during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). Guan Baiyi supposed that this Wang Zong was the same person as Wang Zongyue. But the problem here is that Wang Zong and Wang Zongyue were two different people. So that this misunderstanding lead to the belief that Taijiquan should be traced back to Wu Dang Mountain. This is still a question debated by historians; maybe Taijiquan should be traced to the Taoist practices of Wu Dang Mt., maybe not. In 1921 Mr. Xu Yusheng published a book. He was a student of Yang Jianhou and a study/brother of Yang Chengfu. He described a carved funeral inscription on a stone. Hong Junshi was an important philosopher during the Song Dynasty (960-1279) and his funeral stone describes a Taoist from Wu Dang Mt., Zhang Sanfeng, who dreamed that an immortal taught him the form motions. Later this style was spread in Shaanxi by Wang

Zong. They called this an internal martial arts style. In his 1921 book Mr. Xu Yusheng supposed that this art was Taijiquan. He also proposed that Wang Zong and Wang Zongyue were one and the same. From this theory emerged the idea that Taijiquan's founder was Zhang Sanfeng. The problem is that some 600 years separate Zhang Sanfeng from the Qing Dynasty and the careers of Chen Changxing and Yang Luchan. At the beginning of the Ming dynasty there was another Zhang Sanfeng, their names sound the same but are written differently. So also some people think this Zhang Sanfeng created

Taijiquan. So this confusion stems from 1921. There are many loose ends to this theory, too many questions to have a clear picture.

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DB: What is the current understanding of Zhang Sanfeng among historians?

WW: From the tourist's point of view, many consider Zhang Sanfeng the founder of Taijiquan. Before 1949, most people also believed this. In the 1930's the central martial arts university professor, Tang Hao, went to Chenjiagou three times during 1930-31. He thinks Taijiquan was founded by Chen Wangting and nothing at all connects back to Zhang Sanfeng. But there are many areas of debate about this. After liberation the government position also reflected this approach, and the Henan provincial officials have promoted this line as well. So many feel Chenjiagou is the hometown of Taijiquan but my feeling is that this is not correct. Who is the true founder of Taijiquan? Actually this was a gradual evolution. During the 1840's Yang Luchan, after his return to Guangping from Chenjiagou did not teach exactly what he had learned from Chen Changxing. He made many changes, for example the names of the motions were different.

DB: We talked about this in our last conversation and at this point historically there was a very interesting intersection between Yang Luchan, Wu Yuxiang and the writings of Wang Zongyue.

WW: Let me tell you about this. Up to this point we have not found anything about the personal history of Wang Zongyue, what his background was or what type of martial arts he practiced or who he studied with. We can only examine his writings. Firstly he lived during the Qianlong era of the Qing dynasty (1735-1796). His writing style, the structure and phrases he used are also found in books written during this era. This is how we have placed him historically. If he was alive during the Ming dynasty he could not have referenced Qing dynasty phrases in his

writings. Secondly, his writings referenced Confucius and Mo Tzu, so we can infer that he was educated and literate. This special style of writing called "the eight legged essay" is divided into 8 sections; every section requiring the same number of words and is organized thematically. I have written an article analyzing the style and structure of his writing. It is clear that he was a scholar and prepared for the imperial examinations. One aspect of his theory reflects the importance of a vertical or upright posture and equilibrium in balance; this comes from the Chuang Tzu and the Warring States period (475-221 BC). There was actually an imperial department during the Han dynasty (206BC-9AD) that enforced a leveling balance of economic factors and Wang Zongyue references this in his writings. This type of terminology shows us that he was highly educated.

DB: We are talking now about clues to the mystery of Wang Zongyue.

WW: Yang Luchan says that his teacher was Chen Changxing, Chen Changxing's teacher was Chen Fa, and Chen Fa's teacher was Wang Zongyue. From these comments we can place Wang Zongyue in the Qing dynasty. What kind of martial arts did Wang Zongyue teach at Chenjiagou? Not a sequence as we understand form practice today. He used Peng, Lu, Ji, and An to create a two-person exercise called Da Shou. All of his writings reference the interaction

between two opponents. Yang Luchan and Wu Yuxiang used what they learned from the Chen system and combined these with local Yongnian techniques to create Taijiquan. From the form names, practice methods and theory we can see differences between Chen style and the Taijiquan of Yang Luchan and Wu Yuxiang.



My earliest exposure to Chen style was seeing Chen Fake in the 1950's. When he practiced it was quite external. The Yang and Wu/Hao styles are more inwards and reserved, expressing a very different flavor. For example, in the Chen style the stamping and explosive motions are quite apparent but in the other two styles these are much more internally expressed and hidden. There are many examples of this difference. Before Yang Luchan went to Beijing nobody knew these three words: Tai Ji Quan. The earliest use of this term can be found in the writing of Wang Zongyue.

DB: Why did he use this term Taijiquan in his writing?

WW: Because of his education, his martial training he picked this. Generally speaking in Chinese martial arts there are 3 factors in naming a style: first is the location, where it was developed. A second source is animal names, thirdly, folkloric legends. Why did he pick the term Taijiquan? During the Qing dynasty Confucian ideals were foremost among intellectuals. There was a very popular author during the Qianlong era that began to use this term "Taiji" and his writings and Wang Zongyue's are quite similar. The yin/yang philosophy pervades the "Song of Pushing Hands" and the "13 Chapters" authored by Wang Zongyue. We are talking about 160 years of development from the time of Yang Lu Chan and no matter what style of Taijiquan, they all follow these foundations laid down by Wang Zongyue.

DB: One last question. Why did the performance of the forms change? Was this because of Wang Zongyue's theoretical contributions?

WW: Of course the theories were one important factor in this change. But also we must consider the Wu family's background. At that time in Guangpingfu, the Wu's were the richest family in the town. There is a class distinction at work here. In traditional Chinese society, the educated elite had a personal sense of decorum and this was reflected in their posture and bearing. How they carried themselves was different than a merchant or a farmer. The

expressed gentility and the reserve of the aristocracy also began to affect the performance of strictly martial techniques. They didn't want to jump around and slap themselves like common fighters. Old time martial arts were quite rough and raw, angry and intense.

DB: This is a fascinating idea that the social status of the players affected the motions of the forms and changed them. When Yang Luchan taught in the Forbidden City he was teaching the aristocrats and had to modify his style to fit their station in life?

WW: Yes, of course, the common slapping and kicking and jumping techniques were not suitable for this class of people. The motions became gentler and the energy more inwardly refined. We have no record of Yang Luchan's practice style at that time, no photographs, but certainly his practice began to be affected by his station in the Forbidden City. We have a saying in China, "If you work with red dye you become red, if you work with ink you become black." So today's Yang style is open and gentle, reserved and calm. This is a result of these social pressures. The same holds true for the styles developed by Wu Yuxiang and Wu Jianquan. As I was watching Chen Zhenglei perform yesterday, his motions are more subtle than Chen Fake's, so in modern Chen style we can also see this evolution from overt martial techniques to more refined motions.

DB: I want to tell you how much I appreciate our time together, I always learn so much from you and I look forward to speaking with you again about Taijiquan.

Articles by Dave Barrett, translated by Master Yang Jun.

Nashville Highlights

The Country Music Hall of Fame



Just a few steps from the historic Ryman Auditorium and the honky-tonks of Lower Broadway, the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum works to identify and preserve the evolving history and traditions of country music. Inside, the Museum presents the crown jewels of its vast collection to illustrate country music's story as told through the turns of two centuries. A treasure trove of historic country video clips and recorded music, dynamic exhibits and state-of-the-art design, regular menu of live performances and public programs, museum store, live satellite radio broadcasts, on-site dining and fabulous public spaces all contribute to an unforgettable museum experience.

Country music is still devoted to the lyric and to the telling of stories, which people love and people need. Country music artists took what they heard around them, material that was in the air and that was common currency, and they made something entirely new. This is a museum that preserves their memory so that they can continue to inspire creators in the future. It's also a museum that honors the people who their music was made for. Those people are all of us, people who've ever been lost or confused or sad or felt excluded. This museum helps to preserve these tributes to our condition.



For more information on the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum click on the icon above.

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