

Yang Jia Mi Chuan Tai Chi Chuan

A brief report by John Chow of Tao of Tai Chi Chuan Institute on his Taipei trip, June 2005

This school was founded by Master Wang Yen Nien who is a disciple of the elusive Chang Qin Ling, who was a disciple of Yang Cheng Fu but also reputed to have learnt from Yang Jian Hou. Chang Qin Ling is said to have combined his Tai Chi Chuan with the Nei Gong practices of another elusive Taoist master to produce a synergised art that gave him an edge over others. Chang Qin Lin was the winner of the national Push Hands competition before the 2nd world war, so this may be a testimony to the effectiveness of his training.

Unfortunately, when I got there, Master Wang Yen Nien was recovering from a serious bout of diabetes. Normally, he is healthy and fit, except for old age onset diabetes, but recently, his sodium levels suddenly dropped to dangerously low levels and he was hospitalised.

However, I was well-received at his school, and his senior student of very long standing, Julia Fairchild, took care of me. I attended private 1 to 1 lessons on the special set of Master Wang Yen Nien's Push Hands, as well as the generic class (intermediate and advanced) Push Hands, and also the form exercise classes.

My impressions:-

- This lineage of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan is very different, in fact – totally different, from all the other Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan I have seen prior.
- The form exercise is divided into 3 parts, but each part is about as long as the “normal 108 posture Yang Form”.
- There are many repetitions in the form exercise.
- Some movements bear a slight resemblance, but most do not.
- Movements with the same name, eg., Single Whip, are executed quite differently.
- Push Hands is very different.
- The implementation of spiralling energy is different. Emphasis is placed on spiralling up or down the back leg, in such a way that you spiral up when you rise and spiral down when dropping.
- The coccyx is tilted aggressively forward, so much so that the sacrum seem to be tilted forward. The reason stated for this is that the spine needs to be straight and tilting the coccyx makes it so. Another reason for the seemingly aggressive awkward tilt of the sacrum is to help open the kua.
- Pushes are executed on a back-sitting stance and a aggressively tilted coccyx which gives the observer the impression of a curved and expanded back. The reason given is the energy is exploded via a point about at the back of the mid to high back.
- Pushes to the upper part of the body can be deflected by leaning the upper body backward from the waist while sitting on a back stance with the front knee thrust forward.
- Pushes to the lower part of the body are dissolved by retracting the lower body while leaning the upper body forward.

- Sideward pushes, such as to the shoulders or the back of the shoulders are dissolved by physically spiralling downwards.
- one very distinguishing feature of this style is the echoes of what seem to be “huuu ………” “hsssiiii” to accompany breathing throughout the form exercise.
- Warm-up exercise are longer and more extensive.
- In addition to the usual Yang Style weapons, Master Wang Yen Nien also teaches the fan, which he created as an interim weapon before teaching the sword.
- Master Wang Yen Nien may not be well known throughout the world at this moment, but he has a strong European following for the past 20 years, and his following in USA is growing. Many of his long term Western students speak and write Chinese.
- When I first heard of this lineage, I despaired that such a rare and authentic and effective lineage is so unknown and may die out soon. After seeing his school and their local as well as their international connections, I am confident the lineage will survive.

The above are some of the notable differences.

I found the standard of Pushing Hands of the senior students very high, and they can hold their own against most “challenges”.

I had a long audience with Master at his home. He was so kind to spare his time to entertain me.



Master Wang Yen Nien photo at the school.



My student Kim Fung from Hong Kong came to Taipei at my request to help translate for me. She is shown above with Dudu, an instructor of the school.



Photo taken after a class with some of the instructors of the school.



John Chow with Mr. Chen, an instruct of the school.



John Chow below the photos of Wang Yen Nien and Yang Jian Hou.

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Written by John Chow, a practitioner of Chinese medicine, acupuncturist, masseur, healer and teacher of martial arts and spiritual paths.

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