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Evolution and Future of Hun Yuan Tai Ji





The Evolution and Future of Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí (混元太極)

By J. Justin Meehan



Féng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強)

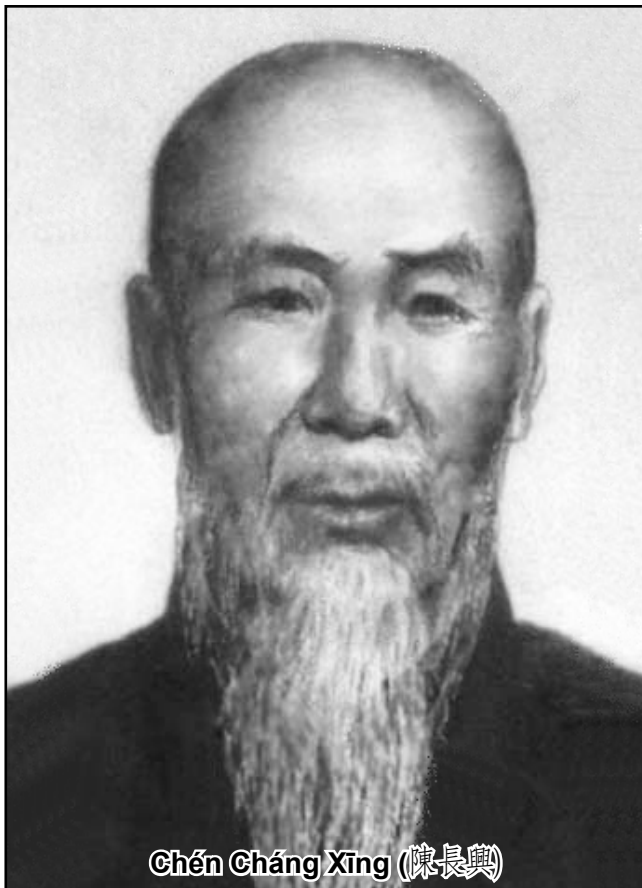
Fate (Karma) allowed me to first study with Grandmaster Féng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強 1928-2012) in 1981 and to observe the growth and evolution of what is now known as Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí Quán (混元太極拳). In more than 30 years of study with Féng and his senior US disciple, Zhāng Xué Xìn (張學信), now based in San Francisco, I have witnessed many changes, additions and discoveries. My belief is that there have been changes in the outward appearance of the original Chén Shì Tàì Jí Quán (陳式太極拳) form taught to Féng by Chén Fā Kē (陳發科 1887-1957). These alterations resulted in students being able to attain a higher level of accomplishment in their health and in their martial and spiritual development.

Evolution of Hùn Yuán Taiji Quan

Change is inevitable in every martial art and Qì Gōng (氣功) practice. Some change is the result of secrecy or loss of information. Many great arts and techniques were lost because masters were unwilling to teach high-level information or taught others who were unable to understand or put forth the necessary hard work to reach the highest level. This is



Chén Wáng Tíng (陳王庭)



Chén Cháng Xīng (陳長興)

especially true with the internal arts where practice of form alone without proper understanding and intent can lead to empty imitation. Féng Zhì Qiáng devoted his life to making the greater levels of understanding and accomplishment available to sincere students who were willing to pay attention and practice diligently and correctly.

Although traditional Chinese martial culture is skeptical about change, it is the right of grandmasters to make changes in order to include new understandings, correct errors and improve achievements. Thus, some change is not change at all but a higher level of practice. The distinction between Lǎo Jià (老架) - Old Style and Xīn Jià (新架) - New Style Chén Shì Tài Jí Quán may be misleading in that it gives the impression of two different Chén Tàijí styles.

It may be more useful to see Xīn Jià as a more sophisticated method of practice that emphasizes spirals over circles, and internal over external. It includes additional martial techniques, especially Qín Ná (擒拿) – the grab and twist movements unique to the Dà Lǚ (大履) - Big Rollback style of Tuī Shǒu (推手) – Push Hands, which is characteristic of Chén Tàijí Quán.

These types of modifications are welcome when they represent the practical advances of accomplished masters. But we must take care to protect and preserve the classical standards, which are deep wells of wisdom from which to derive knowledge and inspiration.

Chén Tàijí is a living history of change. Its approach is a change from so-called “external” Buddhist-orientated Shào Lín (少林) to the more “internal” Dàoist-orientated Chén Tàijí. Chén Wáng Tíng (陳王庭 1580-1660) rearranged and reworked the military manual of General Qī Jì Guāng (戚繼光 1528-1587), which included a section on boxing, thus to create Chén family boxing

By the time of Chén Cháng Xīng (陳長興 1771-1853) the Chén family art had been reorganized into two main boxing routines: Yī Lù (一路) - the First Routine and Èr Lù (二路) - the Second Routine or Pào Chuí (炮捶) - Cannon Fist.

Yáng Lù Chán (楊露禪 1799-1872), his sons, and his grandson Yáng Chéng Fǔ (楊澄甫 1883-1936) revised the First Routine of the Chén family art to become the Yáng family school of Tàijí Quán. Other variant Tàijí styles developed thereafter. Chén Fā Kē is credited with creating the Xīn Jià style, a term he and Féng Zhì Qiáng took great exception to, just as Féng is recognized as

道

冯志强



Féng Zhì Qáng Calligraphy of the Dào



the creator of the Hùn Yuán system of Tàì Jí Quán.

What becomes clear in comparing the differences among the various Tàì Jí forms is that outward appearances may vary but most share the Tàì Jí principles of movement as found in the Tàì Jí Classics, although some emphasize certain principles more than others. It is not enough to be healthy and strong to do well in Tàì Jí Quán.

One must understand the Tàì Jí philosophy of Yīn (陰) and Yáng (陽), the five directions (based on five-element theory) and the eight energies (based on Bāguà (八卦) theory). All these understandings require a good teacher, a willing hard working student, and an ability to teach not just physical movement but also correct mind-intent.

High-level masters are rare and may not always be the best teachers. Yáng Bān Hóu (楊班侯 1837-1890) was very tough on his students and as a result his art is rare today. Having the opportunity to study from one high-level master is a great accomplishment. Féng Zhì Qiáng had the good fortune to study with two such masters: Chén Fā Kē and Hú Yào Zhēn (胡耀貞 1879-1973), and was able to practice with the highly regarded son of





J. Justin Meehan practices while Féng looks on - 1981

Chén Fā Kē, Chén Zhào Kuí (陈照奎 1928-1981), who referred to Féng as his “older brother” in training.

Evolution of Xīn Jià

When I first studied with Féng Zhì Qiáng in Běijīng (北京) in 1981 he taught the Yī Lù form of Chén Fā Kē, which consisted of 83 movements. When I compare what he taught then to films and videos of Chén Fā Kē's other students such, as Gù Liú Xīn (顧留馨), Léi Mù Ní (雷慕尼), or Tián Xiù Chén (田秀臣), I see that the choreography is similar, even if each performer's presentation is different. Unique features include a beginning that does not vertically raise and lower the arms as the opening movement but begins to spiral or circle the arms around the front of the body to lead into Jīn Gāng Dǎo Duì (金刚捣碓) - Buddha Warrior Pounds Mortar. Another is the evident wrist-to-wrist pressing out movement between Lǎn Zhā Yī (懒扎衣) – Lazily

Tying Coat and the movement where the palms push down from both sides of the face like stroking a beard instead of going from left shoulder to right hip. Another difference is in the final position of Lǎn Zhā Yī where the left hand is positioned palm up at waist level instead of palm on left hip.

Féng took great pleasure in demonstrating applications and was willing to show variations in the way movements could be modified for different applications. For example, he demonstrated how an elbow strike could be found hidden between Jī Dì Chuí (击地捶) - Punch Hitting the Ground and turn around to stand on one leg to Turn out Sleeves (also known as Turn Flower under Sea Bottom). Another transition included the possibility of an upward elbow strike after the Yù Nǚ Chuān Suō (玉女穿梭) - Jade Maiden Works at Shuttles series and just before Lǎn Zhā Yī.

Chén Shì Xīn Yì Hùn Yuán Èr Shí Sì Shì (陳式心意混元二十四式) Chén Style Xīn Yì Hùn Yuán 24 Movements Form

Dì Yī Duàn (第一段) - Section I

- 1 Wú Jí Qǐ Shì (無極起式) - Starting Posture
- 2 Jīn Gāng Dǎo Duì (金剛搗碓) - Buddha's Warrior Pounds the Mortar
- 3 Lǎn Zhā Yī (懶扎衣) - Leisurely Tying Coat
- 4 Liù Fēng Sì Bì (六封四閉) - Six Blocking and Four Closing
- 5 Dān Biān (單鞭) - Single Whip
- 6 Bái Hè Liàng Chì (白鶴亮翅) - White Crane Spreads Its Wings

Dì Èr Duàn (第二段) - Section II

- 7 Xié Xíng Ào Bù (斜行拗) - Walk Obliquely and Twist Step
- 8 Tí Shǒu (提收) - Lift Hands and Raise Knee
- 9 Qián Táng Ào Bù (前螳拗步) - Wade Forward and Twist Step
- 10 Yǎn Shǒu Gōng Chuí (掩手肱捶) - Cover Hand Punch
- 11 Pī Shēn Chuí (披身捶) - Shield Body Punch
- 12 Bèi Zhé Kào (背折靠) - Fold and Lean with Back

Dì Sān Duàn (第三段) - Section III

- 13 Qīng Lóng Chū Shuǐ (青龍出水) - Green Dragon Emerges from Water
- 14 Shuāng Tuī Shǒu (雙推手) - Double Push Hand
- 15 Sān Huàn Zhǎng (三換掌) - Three Change Palm
- 16 Dào Juǎn Gōng (倒卷肱) - Reverse Roll Arm
- 17 Tuì Bù Yā Zhǒu (退步壓肘) - Step Back Press Elbow
- 18 Zhōng Pán (中盤) - Middle Winding

Dì Sì Duàn (第四段) - Section IV

- 19 Shǎn Tōng Bèi (閃通背) - Dodge through Back
- 20 Jī Dì Chuí (擊地捶) - Ground Punch
- 21 Píng Xīn Chuí (平心捶) - Chest Level Punch
- 22 Shā Yāo Yā Zhǒu (煞腰壓肘) - Snap Waist Press Elbow
- 23 Dāng Tóu Pào (當頭炮) - Head Punch
- 24 Shōu Shì (收式) - Closing Posture

From Xīn Jià to the 48 and 24 Forms

Soon after I left in 1981 Féng became well known through articles I wrote about him in *Tai Chi Magazine* and *Inside Kung Fu Magazine*. Other students traveled to Běijīng but had only a limited amount of time to study. Therefore Féng created a shorter form, the 48 Form, which contained all the movements from the 83 Form but without repetitions, plus several movements from the Ēr Lù or Pào Chuí form, such as Linking Cannons, Sink Elbow over Knee, and Step Up and Punch. My favorite early (1986) presentation of this form is found on YouTube under “Féng Zhì Qiáng Chén Tàì Jí.”

Féng created a shortened form called the 24 Form which consisted of the first three sections (of six movements per section) and one final section of six movements, which took less time to teach and perform. The 24 form was most suitable for students with time limitations. He also published two books and two DVDs on the 24 and 48 forms. The 24 form took anywhere from five to seven minutes to practice, typically the same time required for Tàì Jí Quán form competitions.

He began traveling to Japan and other countries to give others an opportunity to study and understand. There are at least three DVDs from his early Japanese lecture demonstrations covering form applications and principles (eight methods and five elements), the Tàì Jí stick created by Chén Fā Kē and Chén Zhào Kuí, and the Tàì Jí Ruler Qì Gōng made popular by Hú Yào Zhēn.



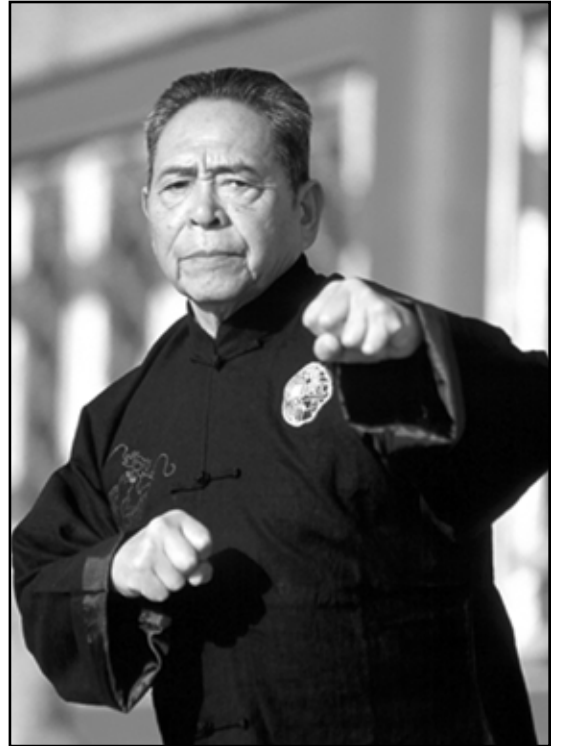
Féng Zhì Qiáng demonstrates sweep on Brian Guan - San Francisco 2001 Retreat

In addition, especially for martial artists, he did a DVD on the Èr Lù Pào Chuí Cannon Fist form and created three new forms: the 32 Form, which is basically the first 32 movements of the Cannon Fist form; the 24 Cannon Fist Form, which contains movements from the second half of the Cannon Fist Form plus a few movements from Xīn Yì (心意) and Tōng Bèi (通背); and the 12 Elbows Sequence. These forms can also be found on YouTube.

The Hùn Yuán Stage

Féng's greatest creation was not actually a new creation but a recovery and reconstitution of all that he found essential in traditional Chinese culture that went into the original creation of Tàì Jí Quán, including some of the same ideas that inspired Chén Wáng Tíng such as traditional Chinese theories of Qì circulation, Dàoist Yīn and Yáng philosophy, and other martial arts techniques and practices. Féng's approach was to include all major influences that pre-existed the creation of Tai Ji and to emphasize the Oneness of the Big Dào before separation into dualities, divisions and styles.

What most distinguishes the Hùn Yuán stage was Féng's desire to assist students in activating the Dān Tián (丹田) and in making the internal rotation visible. Just as a baseball batter takes a few practice swings before stepping up to the plate, Hùn Yuán precedes each major movement with a large introductory practice circle. This circle requires the practitioner to begin each major movement with the proper internal rotation, which leads into and empowers the proper external rotation. These introductory training circles are shown as large movements so that they can be recognized and practiced correctly by the student. The three major rotations are horizontal (like a hula hoop), vertical (like an upstanding bicycle wheel), and lateral (like a steering wheel).



In this regard, Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí is more of an internal training system than a standardized form and style. At a higher level the lead-in circles can be minimized to be almost imperceptible, as they were in the earlier Xīn Jià stage of Féng's practice under Chén Fā Kē.

What marks this period was Féng's public teaching of the Hùn Yuán Qì Gōng system, which, according to what he told me in 2007, was a collaborative creation of his teachers Chén Fā Kē and Hú Yào Zhēn. Originally intended to be practiced in secret, after they passed away and after successfully using this system to cure himself of major illnesses, Féng believed he could no longer justify keeping such a beneficial system secret. He began teaching the system

The 3 major practices of the Hùn Yuán system include:

- 1. Hùn Yuán Qì Gōng (both standing and moving) to cultivate and circulate Qì throughout the body with proper mind intention.**
- 2. Silk Reeling exercises designed to allow the practitioner to combine the various parts of the body to create integrated, unified whole body movement.**
- 3. The practice of martial forms, especially Chén Fā Kē's Xīn Jià Chén Tàì Jí Quán, but also including Xīn Yì, Tōng Bèi, Bā Guà, and other martial arts as well as weapons and applications that emphasize the use of the soft to overcome the hard such as Push Hands (Tuī Shǒu 推手) and other two-person practices.**



Féng Xiù Fāng (馮秀芳)

publicly and published a book and DVD. He offered his Hùn Yuán Qì Gōng as a gift to benefit everyone in their search for physical, mental and spiritual health and to allow them to rediscover and recognize the genius of traditional Chinese accomplishments so that these would not be lost due to conservative secrecy or the contemporary drive of materialism.

The Future

By the 2007 First International Hùn Yuán Meeting in Běijīng, the world witnessed the inauguration of a new system formerly known as “Chén Style, Xīn Yì, Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí Quán” now simplified to “Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí” with the approval of Féng Zhì Qiáng. What makes the Hùn Yuán system so popular and well received can be summarized in the title of Yang Yang’s book, *Taijiquan: The Art of Nurturing, the Science of Power*. Everyone can practice Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí.

The primary focus, especially for beginners, is to nurture one’s health and well being and to promote self cultivation physically, mentally, and spiritually. The focus is no longer primarily on prescribed postures and choreography. The practice is no longer something one does because one should, but because it is enjoyable. The health benefits are immediate and well documented (see Yang Yang’s

scientific evidence-based studies and the Hùn Yuán Qì Gōng article by Ken Cohen in the Winter 2008 issue of *Empty Vessel magazine*). For those who want to go further and explore the wonders of Yīn over Yáng and Yì (意) - Intention, over Lì (力) - Force, Féng designed a step-by-step program based on his lifetime of study and accomplishment.

Of course, martial accomplishment requires a greater effort than what one needs for health benefits. The health benefits are almost immediate once a student begins practice of Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí and Qì Gōng. (Note: I use the word “Tàì Jí” to refer to Tàì Jí Quán practice exclusively for health and relaxation and “Tàì Jí Quán” to refer to Tàì Jí Quán as a martial art.) The most immediate documented health benefits accrued within a short time are improved balance, stress reduction, lowered blood pressure, increased vitality and enhanced quality of life.

Martial accomplishment requires greater time and effort as well as the instruction by an accomplished master and the ability to practice with others to develop one’s skills. Few will reach the highest level attained by Chén Fā Kē, Chén Zhào Kuí, or Féng Zhì Qiáng.

More important than martial accomplishment is a goal every student can and should reach; that is, the highest

level of self-cultivation. In Hùn Yuán, character development and overcoming ego go hand-in-hand with the ability to give up one's self and follow others, as is necessary in Push Hands practice. Hùn Yuán practices and philosophy aid in this effort. The ultimate goal is a self realized and exemplary human being who is not only a good and healthy person but also a benefit to others and to the larger community. In this regard Hùn Yuán combines both the best in Dàoist and Confucian philosophy. Beyond philosophy and ethics there is also a more esoteric spiritual dimension in Hùn Yuán practice; discussion of this, however, is beyond the scope of this article.

One sign of a successful art is not just the number of practitioners but also its diversity. Hùn Yuán has followers throughout the world. In the past, martial arts had been dominated almost exclusively by men. Hùn Yuán

has produced many outstanding women practitioners and masters. In the case of Féng's daughters, Féng Xiù Fāng (馮秀芳) and Féng Xiù Qiàn (馮秀茜), they have helped create a worldwide organization. In a world where “women truly hold up half the sky,” it is both admirable and natural that women share status with men. Tàì Jí philosophy



Féng Xiù Qiàn (馮秀茜)



Féng Xiù Fāng (馮秀芳)



Féng Zhì Qiáng Demonstrating Push Hands

requires equal interplay between men and women, with the ideal being similar in representation to the Tàì Jí Yīn and Yáng diagram. For those of us who appreciate all that Féng accomplished and shared with the world, we can demonstrate our appreciation by showing support for his legacy by working with Féng Xiù Fāng and Féng Xiù Qiàn to continue as one Hùn Yuán family to spread the art for the benefit of all.

Challenges

As Féng continued to develop and share his knowledge, different students have excelled during different periods of evolution. The early followers who primarily studied the Chén Tàì Jí curriculum with some Xīn Yì and Tōng Bèi included often maintain the opinion that it was the early curriculum that led Féng to mastery. These students may not have had the opportunity or interest to have kept up with Hùn Yuán's continuing development.

As the 48 form became popular, less emphasis was paid to Chén curriculum; it seemed that the system was purposefully moving away from the Chén affiliation. One early master who left Běijīng prior to the development of Hùn Yuán stated that he only practiced Hùn Yuán when

Féng was present, and the pre-Hùn Yuán Xīn Jià and 48 curriculum at all other times.

Other masters began studies in the late 1990s whose only exposure was to the Hùn Yuán system. There are few who bridged the early Xīn Jià training of the 1970s and 1980s and continued to master the Hùn Yuán system from the 1990s on. Zhāng Xué Xīn is one of the exceptions. As a result, I see masters giving their lineage through Féng as either 19th generation Chén practitioners or 2nd generation Hùn Yuán practitioners, and on some occasion as both.

The division between Féng's early students and later Hùn Yuán students creates a division that need not exist, just as many of the early training students of Féng excelled, so have the later Hùn Yuán students such as Chén Xiáng (陈翔) whose mastery is acknowledged by most who have met him.

There is the likelihood that Hùn Yuán will grow more popular because of its emphasis on self-nurturing over rigid form adherence, but in doing so it may give rise to various interpretations and masters. To date, there is no

strong organizational effort to certify and regulate the teaching of Hùn Yuán. There may be conflicting claims of who is entitled to teach and who has inherited the authorized lineage to carry on the Hùn Yuán legacy.

An argument can be made that Hùn Yuán is a system of internal training rather than an art based on the mastery of forms. Féng demonstrated this himself by revising the way the forms were done as well as adding movements to established forms. The 32 form was originally just the first half of the Pào Chuí form.

Féng added techniques for Xīn Yì (especially the Bēng (崩) punches) and more movements from the free swinging, body slapping Tōng Bèi style until the form became the 38 Form; then new movements from other styles until it became the 46 Form (available on DVD and YouTube as Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí Quán 46 Pào Chuí). I have heard that the form has expanded to 56 postures, which I can only assume includes many questionable movements.

The ways in which movements are performed are also changing. Except for the 24 form (which is the introduction to the first Chén Form), most open-hand palm strikes and blocks have changed to closed fist strikes. The sweeping horizontal arm movements after Hidden Hand Punch but before Lean with the Back have become hook punches to the head. In an art in which the practitioner is not to even think of attacking someone (primarily because of the emotional imbalance and possible negative effects on mental and physical health), there is now a whole lot of Gōng Fū (功夫) fighting being added to the curriculum.



The Six Principles of Hùn Yuán Practice Enunciated by GM Féng are as Follows:

- 1. Gentle is better than forceful**
- 2. Higher is better than lower**
- 3. Slower is better than faster**
- 4. Longer is better than shorter**
- 5. Curved is better than straight**
- 6. Single weighted is better than double weighted**

Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí Form and Competition

Another challenge is the way Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí is categorized for tournament form competition. The existing category in which Hùn Yuán most logically fits is Chén style, but is this fair to traditional Chén stylists? Chén form competition is often the most vigorous, martial and athletic of all Tàì Jí form events. Hùn Yuán characteristics are the opposite.

Féng stated that Hùn Yuán has both hard and soft aspects but emphasizes the soft. Hùn Yuán has both internal and external aspects but emphasizes the internal. Hùn Yuán has both high and low stances but emphasizes higher stances, primarily for health concerns. Hùn Yuán also prohibits excessive stamping and shaking.

As a result, form requirements for authentic Chén and Hùn Yuán presentation are often in conflict. Although highly qualified judges can focus on Tàì Jí principles of movement common to most if not all Tàì Jí forms, it is understandable that traditional Chén style judges often see Hùn Yuán as too soft, and Hùn Yuán judges might see Chén forms as too hard. For athletes competing for Chén recognition, to be judged below a Hùn Yuán practitioner would not be fair for purpose of national Chén style ranking.

As a result, the Hùn Yuán student must modify the presentation to be more Chén-like or be relegated to “Other Tàìjǐ Forms” competition or, worse, “Other Internal Styles,” which can include styles with completely different approaches and may lead judges to misunderstand the essence of the Hùn Yuán performance.

Recommendations made prior to Féng Zhì Qiáng's passing in May of 2012

- 1. That Féng designate two successors: one being his choice for the person most qualified (probably Chén Xiáng) to represent Hùn Yuán form, technique and application, and the second being someone (preferably a Féng family member) to head the organization.**
- 2. The 24 Form is a beginner form for the same health and safety reasons that Féng eliminated low stances and foot stomping from Hùn Yuán. Remove most leg lifts from the 24 Form except for Buddha's Warrior Pounds the Mortar in order to avoid possible injury, especially to those with age or physical difficulties.**
- 3. Keep the 32 Form in the curriculum as an introduction to Pào Chuí and competition form and separate it from all the other movements following the 32nd movement. The remainder can be a new form not to be confused with Tài Jí Quán. There is a vast difference between the principles and execution of Chén Tài Jí Quán and Tōng Bèi, too many for most to integrate.**
- 4. Separate Hùn Yuán from Chén form in Chinese Martial Arts competitions by giving Hùn Yuán its own category.**
- 5. Separate the designation of Féng's Master Instructors by whether they are 19th generation Xīn Jià masters or 2nd and 3rd generation Hùn Yuán masters. Create a list of authorized teachers worldwide.**

The best solution would be a separate division for Hùn Yuán forms competition. Although Hùn Yuán is still relatively new and unlikely to attract a great many competitors, it may bring additional competitors to tournaments if they know they will be judged by their own standards. Further, in an art that emphasizes internal over external, it is difficult to define standards for judging individual form competition. Efforts have begun in China to create standards for Hùn Yuán performance and judging, such as the Third International Hùn Yuán conference, which hosted form and push hands competition in November 2011 in Běijīng. Clear judging criteria are necessary for the promotion of the art and as a pathway for improving one's own skill. The question is whether standards can be developed that will go beyond external appearance and encourage internal development.

Nothing in this article is meant to detract from or criticize any aspect of the Hùn Yuán system, which I practice and teach, or from my admiration and respect for Féng Zhì Qiáng. I should note that I originally wrote this article prior to Féng's death, at age 85, on May 5, 2012, and before attending the 3rd International Hùn Yuán Conference in November 2011. These are my latest thoughts on the subject:

3rd International Hùn Yuán Tài Jí Quán Exchange Conference and Competition, Běijīng, China, October 31-November 1, 2011

I am concerned about the future of the Hùn Yuán Tài Jí Quán system created by Féng Zhì Qiáng and the Hùn Yuán Association now headed by his oldest daughter, Féng Xiù Fāng. In many ways the conference was a success, drawing more than 1000 participants. My delegation was met at the airport by Féng Yan Bo, Féng's 23-year-old grandson. We were taken to the Jiǔ Huá Resort and Convention Center on the outskirts of Běijīng, the site of the 1st Hùn Yuán Tài Jí Quán Conference in 2007.

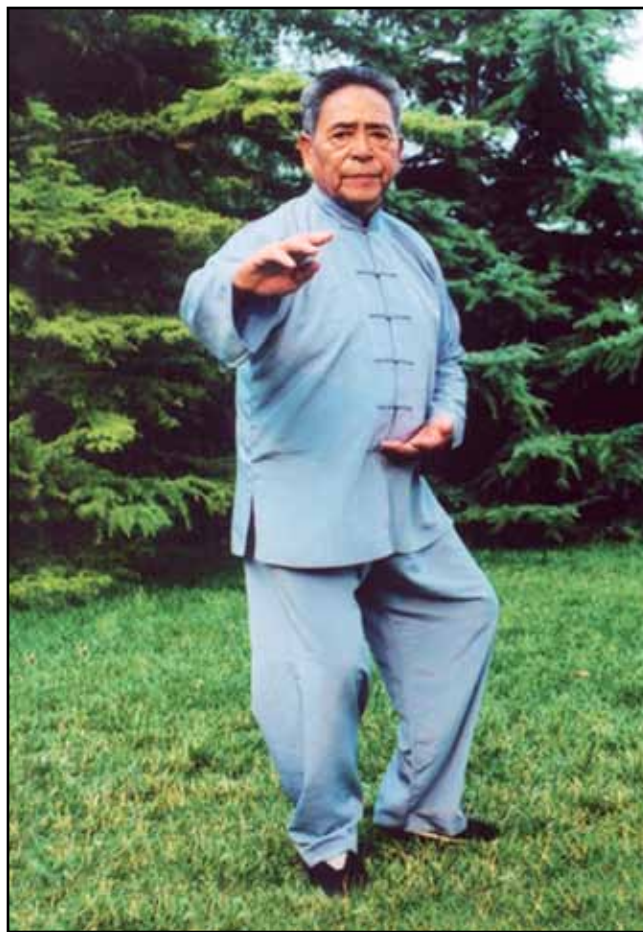
Féng, then 83 years of age, was having some health problems but we had been assured that he would be present. At the opening reception we crowded into the conference lecture room to catch our first glimpse of him. He was accompanied by family members and a group of Chinese disciples. It was clear that he required assistance, but his smile was broad and his eyes beamed with delight as he was greeted by a thunderous welcome. He acknowledged the people he recognized as he walked through the crowd and in a burst of energy bounded up the three metal steps to take his seat on the dais.



There were many welcoming speeches by senior students and dignitaries, but Féng's only words were to declare the Conference officially open. It seemed likely that this magnificent traditional Chinese Martial Arts Master and extraordinary teacher, who could speak extemporaneously for hours on almost any subject related to traditional Chinese wisdom and philosophy, would not have much more to say. Shortly thereafter he returned to his room, in the company of his wife and family.

It was disappointing to realize that this was the extent of his last public address. Féng, whom I call "The Last Dragon," had said all he had to say over a long lifespan that began when China's last emperor was still alive and spanned the Sino-Japanese War, the Communist-Nationalist Civil War, the Communist Revolution, the so-called Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution, the US-China détente, the transformation of society and economy from socialism to free-wheeling capitalism, the Tiananmen Square Massacre, the 2008 Olympics, and the contemporary Chinese Economic Miracle and environmental disaster. His numerous books, articles, lectures and teachings will remain.

Féng accomplished so much during his career, practicing and preserving his martial arts legacy when



From left: Gē Chūn Yàn (戈春艷), Chén Xiǎo Wàng (陳小旺), government official, Féng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強), Chén Yù Xiá (陳豫俠) [Chén Fā Kē's daughter], government official - 1981

doing so often resulted in persecution by the Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution. He created a system of Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí Quán that combined Dàoist Qì Gōng, Traditional Chinese Medicine theory and a modified version of the Chén Tàì Jí Quán of Chén Fā Kē and the Xīn Yì of Hú Yào Zhēn. He turned the emphasis from focus on form choreography to focus on self-nurturing and the practical and efficient development of internal power.

Although he revolutionized the practice of Tàì Jí Quán by combining Tàì Jí Quán and Qì Gōng, few students or disciples inherited his Push Hands skill or martial mastery. The one who probably comes closest is Chén Xiáng, who is most recognized as the successor. However, the way of Chén Xiáng is different in many respects from the Hùn Yuán way of Féng. Partly this reflects Chén Xiáng's own martial background, especially the Bā Jí Quán (八極拳) influence, and partly this reflects his own path of self-development. The study of the Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí Quán of Féng does not equate to the mastery of

Chén Xiáng's approach. It would have been interesting had Féng publicly named his own successor, as Yáng Zhèn Duó (楊振鐸) did at the International Tàì Jí Quán Symposium held in Vanderbilt College in Nashville, Tennessee, in July 2009, but he hadn't.

As for the teachers I have met and observed in China, especially at the 1st (2007) and 3rd (2011) International Hùn Yuán Conferences, each seems to have their own interpretations of how to make Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí Quán work as martial art and although all are accomplished in their own way, I have encountered no one with the skills and ability of Féng. Four other masters who deserve recognition include Zhāng Yǔ Fēi (張禹飛) in Běijīng, Lǚ Bǎo Chūn (呂寶春) in Finland, Wáng Zhǎng Hǎi (王长海) in Zhèngzhōu, and Gē Chūn Yàn (戈春艷) in Singapore.

Although Féng did not further address the Conference, others did. A health component of the Great Masters Lectures was entitled "Methods of Dispelling Diseases

Féng Zhì Qiáng on Tàì Jí: Wisdom from the Master

- **Practicing Tàì Jí is like enjoying a peaceful rest**
- **Practicing Tàì Jí is like experiencing the sensation of Qì flowing smoothly and without obstruction through all the meridians**
 - **Practicing Tàì Jí is like the harmonious balancing of Yīn and Yáng**
 - **Practicing Tàì Jí feels like swimming in air**
 - **Practicing Tàì Jí is like a moving form of standing skill**
- **Practicing Tàì Jí is like using the body to draw beautiful Tàì Jí diagrams**
 - **Practicing Tàì Jí is like drawing in the new (fresh Qì) and expelling the old (stale or turbid Qì)**
 - **Practicing Tàì Jí is like the total relaxation of body and mind**
- **Practicing Tàì Jí is like repairing and healing the mind, body and spirit**
 - **Practicing Tàì Jí is like nourishing the body with the vast, upright Qì of the Universe**
- **Practicing Tàì Jí is achieving the ultimate unification of Heaven, Earth and Man**



Seated from left: 5th J. Justin Meehan, 6th Zhāng Xué Xìn (張學信) with senior students and disciples on his 85th birthday - October 2014

and Health Preservation.” Three masters, Niu Xiu Rong from France, Chen Hong Xing from Běijīng and Tao Rong Qin from Nánjīng, shared their observations regarding the health benefits of Tàì Jí and Qì Gōng practice. Most of their information was anecdotal in nature, based on their own or their students’ experiences. They all agreed that Fàng Sōng (放鬆) - Relax and Zì Rán (自然) - Natural, are the key components in dealing with physical, oncological, or emotional problems. Their presentations were passionate but offered little practical insight.

Unfortunately, none of the presenters provided any real scientific evidence or clinical research findings to support Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí’s role in dispelling disease or in preserving health. According to R. Shawn Tucker of the Brentwood Center of Health in St. Louis, Missouri, and co-founder of Therapeutic Tai Chi for Health, it would have been helpful to have an overview of Hùn Yuán-based clinical research findings, such as Yang Yang’s evidence-based findings with older people using Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí Quán and Qì Gōng. Dr. Tucker also noted that none of the presenters demonstrated any breathing, meditation, Silk Reeling or Qì Gōng applications that they found effective for addressing specific health goals.

The forms competition went well, and it was a great experience to have the opportunity to perform and enjoy a competition where the Hùn Yuán forms were featured, instead of having them grouped with all the other Chén style routines. Competition included the basic 24 Form, the 48 Form, the 38 Cannon Form, the 46 Cannon Form, Broad Sword and Straight Sword.

The Push Hands competition was savage. Although I understood that International rules would apply, it turned out that new rules allowed for dangerous techniques such as neck attacks, double arm grabs, sudden arm bars, grabbing around the waist, tripping, throwing, sweeping, disengagement and sudden strikes. The referees did not allow for preparatory arm circles so that contact could lead to the traditional push hands practice of Péng (棚) – Ward Off, Lǚ (履) – Roll Back, Jǐ (擠) – Press, and Àn (按) – Push.

Fortunately Féng Zhì Qiáng was not witness to this brutal competition in an art designed to overcome force with non-force using Dàoist Yīn-Yáng Tàì Jí theory. Féng’s principles of practice to “emphasize the gentle over the forceful” were ignored. The competition seemed an insult to Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí theory and practice.

While the Hùn Yuán Qì Gōng is likely to have a lasting impact and bright future, primarily due to evidenced based outcomes and user-friendly practices, I have deep concerns about the future of Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí Quán. The classical Tàì Jí Quán forms that will withstand the test of time and interpretations by newer generation teachers are the old Chén family Lǎo Jià and Běijīng Chén Fā Kē Xīn Jià and Féng 48.

The Hùn Yuán ideal of stressing self-nurturing over rigid adherence to form choreography may also lead to even further idiosyncratic variations, unless practiced under the guidance of accomplished Hùn Yuán teachers. But accomplished innovators like Féng may also appear who take will Hùn Yuán to the next level, as Féng, “The Last Dragon”, did transforming Xīn Jià to Hùn Yuán.

Excerpts from interviews with Féng Zhì Qiáng

By J. Justin Meehan

About the origins of Hùn Yuán Qì Gōng. Conducted at Féng's school in Běijīng, in the presence of his daughter, Féng Xiù Fāng. (Kai Hung Lau, translator.)

Note: Chén Fā Kē never taught Qì Gōng to anyone and there is no separate Chén family Qì Gōng system within the Chén Jiā Gōu (陳家溝) - Chén Village curriculum other than standing and the Six Healing Sounds. We assumed the Qì Gōng system was of Dàoist origins and most likely transmitted by Hú Yào Zhēn. According to Féng Zhì Qiáng, there was additional secret information transmitted only to him, not to other students or even sons.

JJM: Master Féng, can you tell me more about the creation or origins of the Hùn Yuán Qì Gōng system? Was it primarily Dàoist in origin?

FZQ: The Hùn Yuán Qì Gōng system was primarily Dàoist in origin and was a collaborative effort by both Chén Fā Kē and Hú Yào Zhēn. They created it together.

JJM: I ask because I have never heard of other students of Chén Fā Kē teaching it or practicing it. Is there a reason why other students of Chén Fā Kē did not practice this system?

FZQ: This is because the two masters did not teach this Qì Gōng to every student. This was not because the teacher would not teach, but for other reasons such as timing or how hard the student practiced. They did not even teach it to their own sons (Chén Zhào Kuí or Hú Yào Zhēn's son). Gōng [Qì Gōng/Nei Gōng] is actually more important than Quán [Fist, as in Tàì Jí Quán]. The teacher would wait to see if the student was qualified during a test period. The reason they taught only me was because they saw I worked hard with diligence and perseverance. Although this was passed along to me privately, I believed it should not be kept secret but passed along to the world for the benefit of people everywhere.

On Hùn Yuán Qì Gōng. Conducted in Finland

JJM: Can you explain the meaning of Hùn Yuán as it relates to the name of Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí?

FZQ: Why do we call this system Hùn Yuán? We call this Hùn Yuán because it is the "Origin" or the "Original." We know that it revolves in circles as well. It is the same as with the sun and the moon. The entirety of the universe is revolving in circles. Also, people are revolving in circles. Everything is revolving in circles together. So this term refers to the interrelated circling of everything in the universe. Hùn Yuán refers to the original movement of the universe, the original meaning of Tàì Jí.

The practice of Tàì Jí involves the idea of expanding our energy and movement so greatly that nothing can contain it; so concentrated that nothing can fit inside it. When you practice like this, you feel as big as the universe. So Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí is the Ultimate Tàì Jí.

Hùn Yuán involves all different kinds of circles. It is the same as automobiles, trains, and bicycles; also planes and boats and rockets. They all rely on engines that depend on circling motions to operate.

It is through circles that "four ounces can defeat one thousand pounds." But this takes time to develop. In Push Hands, if you push me straight, I can turn and make circles to neutralize your force and you will be uprooted. But if you only go straight and your opponent is bigger and stronger than you, he or she can beat you with force. You must be completely relaxed and use circles to overcome the attack.

JJM: I have heard it said that Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí places greater emphasis on circling the Dān Tián than on sinking and standing. Is this true?

FZQ: There is greater emphasis on Dān Tián rotation. It is like the saying: "In stillness there is movement; and in movement there is stillness."

JJM: In classes you have said that we should practice the form with bigger movements, but in application shouldn't the movements be small?

FZQ: It is not necessary to use small movements in application. You can use bigger movements to catch the opponent's movement first, before he or she can get to you. As the Jin energy is getting bigger so are the movements. Tài Jí has the meaning of the "Great" or "Greatest," so every movement should be bigger. You should practice bigger and wider when you practice Tài Jí.

JJM: I have heard it said that you have a ball of Qì that can go anywhere in his body. Is this true?

FZQ: Yes, it is true. It can go anywhere through the Jīng Luò (經絡) - the Qì channels network.

JJM: Is it a ball that someone could see or something that only happens within the body?

FZQ: It is not something that can be seen. It is like water that flows inside the body as a result of long practice.

JJM: Does this mean that when you do an application, the Qì will flow like a ball in the water to the point of contact?

FZQ: That is correct.

JJM: What advice do you have for us on how to practice?

FZQ: You must practice every day. Even more important than the form practice is the Qì Gōng practice. If you want to get to the highest level, you must practice Hùn Yuán Qì Gōng, because it will help you to get to the highest level.

JJM: In the West, people have a strong belief in God. Can one include the concept of God in terms of seeking the highest level? In other words, can one practice Hùn Yuán Tài Jí as if praying to God?

FZQ: Yes, you can include the concept of Shàng Dì (上帝) or God in your practice.



St. Louis - From Left: 1st Liu Baoqi, 2nd Liú Yuán Yì (劉元毅), 3rd Féng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強)
4th Pān Hòu Chéng (潘厚成), 5th unknown.

Féng Zhì Qiáng on the Six Principles of Hùn Yuán Practice

In July of 2001, Féng Zhì Qiáng and his senior disciple Zhāng Xué Xīn held a 4-day workshop in the Santa Cruz mountains near San Francisco, California. He offered explanations on the six basic principles of Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí practice. Since these were aimed at students with intermediate and advanced skills, the editor, Malcolm Dean, added comments in brackets to help beginners. The audio transcript of Féng's remarks were translated by Brian Guan.

The excerpts presented here have been slightly edited by JCMA to conform to our stylistic practices. The original material may be found at <http://sfhunyu.com/likethebodyofadragon.html>, the web site of the San Francisco Hunyuan Tai Chi Academy, headed by Malcolm Dean.

[Please see the table of the six principles on page 13]

Gentle is better than forceful

Féng emphasized that he now recommended the almost complete elimination of Fā Jìn (發勁) during forms practice. [Fā Jìn is the sudden explosive release of energy (Qì) at critical points where martial techniques would be applied if in actual combat. This is a traditional part of many Tàì Jí styles, and is attractive to some beginning students.

Unfortunately Fā Jìn is dangerous if not done correctly: Instead of being issued cleanly, the Qì can bounce back into the body and cause tissue damage. Féng was responding to a trend among Tàì Jí players to exaggerate and embellish Fā Jìn in forms practice and performance; he considered such exaggerated exhibitions to be aesthetically distasteful and physically dangerous.]

In his own demonstrations, he refrained from foot stamping Fā Jìn, and only occasionally issued power through the fist or elbow, and then only with moderation. He emphasized that this is because Fā Jìn, even if done correctly by an experienced player, can cause harm to the body over time by damaging the tissues, especially the joints, soft organs and brain. Stamping can cause long-term harm to the knee and hip joints, as well as the organs, and punching can cause a concussion-like effect on the brain.

He cautioned that the damage may not show up immediately, but may manifest itself later in life and

cause severe health problems. This is contrary to the first rule of Hùn Yuán Tàì Jí practice: Yang Shin Te, nurture the body.

Higher is better than lower

Féng emphasized that constant practice in a stance that is too low can cause long-term damage, especially to the knee joints. There can be an interruption of the flow of Qì that can compromise a movement's effectiveness in martial application. [Again, Féng is responding to a common error in practice; forcing a very low practice stance in the expectation of building strength and martial ability as quickly as possible.]

He stated that in a very low stance the angle at the knee is too sharp, so Qì can't flow down the leg easily. It is important to differentiate between what is good and bad for the body; what is nurturing and what is damaging.

Longer is better than shorter

Féng believed that Tàì Jí was a "long" form of martial arts in that it involved stretching and lengthening, extending your arms, whereas Xíng Yì, in contrast, was a shorter and more compact form, using the body's natural springing power to make up for the lack of distance.

Tàì Jí, as a long form, is like the body of a dragon. Tàì Jí absorbs the strength of some 18 different martial arts styles (including Xíng Yì, Tōng Bèi, Shào Lín, Bā Jí, and others). It also incorporates ideas from Dàoism, Yīn-Yáng theory, the *Yì Jīng* (易經), and the meridians from Chinese Traditional Medicine to form its theoretical foundation.

Slower is better than faster and Curved is better than straight

The ideas that longer is better than shorter, slower is better than faster, and curved is better than straight should be considered simultaneously; in fact, all six principles should be considered simultaneously.

Féng stated that even when your limbs are lengthened, they are also curved. It is the same with the body; it should never be too straight. There should always be a curve somewhere. The Tàì Jí body has five bows, as in bow and arrow: the two arms, the two legs, and the spine. There is a saying from the old martial arts

masters that your body has five bows, and if you can express the springy power in these five bows, there is no opponent who can beat you.

Curving the chest is also a bow [the obverse to curving the back]. Only by practicing in a slow and lengthening manner can you then cultivate the springy energy. Something with springiness is very strong. If you drop it, it won't break. But if it is hard and brittle, when you drop it, it will shatter. So practicing martial arts, you should know the theory. Only by knowing the theory can you grasp the martial aspect.

Single weighted is better than double weighted

[Being double weighted means having the weight evenly distributed on both feet. Being single weighted means having the weight mostly on one foot. Being double weighted stops the flow of Qi between the left and right sides of the body, especially the legs, making it difficult to turn or pivot. Being single weighted is dynamic, promotes the flow of Qi, and makes it easier to turn.]

Féng stated that weight on one side is better than weight that is evenly distributed. Even when standing upright, your weight should be on only one leg. When standing you should be relaxed and shift your weight shifting from one leg to the other, never fifty-fifty. But do not let the movement be too obvious or visible to an observer.

[He practiced this advice constantly for the entire four days of the workshop. He seemed always to be moving, even when he was standing still. It wasn't obvious, because it was so subtle and natural, but it was like watching a sailor on a boat deck, constantly responding to the motion of the waves. It looked like a kind of continuous Qi Gōng; he never stopped practicing, even when he was lecturing or resting.]



Fēng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強) and J. Justin Meehan practising Push Hands - Dec. 1981

Féng Zhì Qiáng's Lecture on Tàì Jí Quán and Body Mechanics **[from 1988 transcript to Instructional 48 Form tape/DVD]**

Tàì Jí Quán is an art form that is all-embracing. It is the union of Yīn and Yáng. Yīn refers to both the Earth and the Moon and Yáng refers to both Heaven and the Sun. According to traditional Chinese philosophy, Tàì Jí is the origin of all that exists in the universe. Tàì Jí Quán was created based upon the philosophical theory of Tàì Jí.

Tàì Jí Quán is an advanced martial art that increases the practitioner's health through a combination of breathing exercises and internal energy practices or Qì Gōng. Tàì Jí Quán Shadow Boxing is not only a superior fighting method but also promotes good health and longevity. For these reasons, Tàì Jí Quán is respected throughout the world. It is also popular as a competitive sport in many countries outside of China.

Chén Style Tàì Jí Quán is an ancient form of martial arts with a history of several hundred years. It is characterized by its spiral-like twisting and turning of the body while simultaneously extending and contracting the limbs. A Tàì Jí Quán practitioner can strike with any part of his body that has come into contact with his opponent. Furthermore, once a Tàì Jí Quán practitioner begins to move, he is on the path of a circle. We can say that every movement is a Tàì Jí circle.

In following the Tàì Jí Quán path we must combine study, practice and usage or applications into one. To practice well one must understand Tàì Jí Quán theory. Without a real understanding of Tàì Jí Quán theory, one cannot practice well.

Another aspect of Tàì Jí Quán practice is that it is so relaxing. Performing Tàì Jí Quán is like swimming in air. The circular movements feel as if we are painting a beautiful picture in the air, tracing the circularity of the Tàì Jí diagram. Practicing Tàì Jí Quán also has the purpose of promoting the flow of one's Internal Qì (vital energy). It assists in making the Internal Qì flow throughout the entire body. In order to accomplish this one must practice in such a manner as to be fully relaxed.

The body posture must be upright with the back straightened and aligned. The movements must be light and sensitive without the use of stiff force. The crotch must be opened and the hips rounded. The movements, whether extending or curving, opening or closing, must

all be natural, and the forces of Yīn and Yáng kept in unified balance.

There are some practitioners of Tàì Jí Quán who have practiced for many years yet still complain that they are unable to feel that their own Internal Qì has started to flow or even do not know what the Internal Qì actually is. They have expressed their hopes that the Master could give them some advice so that they could better understand.

Wú Jí (無極)

My understanding is that Tàì Jí (the Great Ultimate or Unity of Yīn and Yáng) comes from Wú Jí. Wú Jí refers to a State of Nothingness or Empty Space, the Void. This indicates that one must practice Wú Jí standing first. Wú Jí standing is done by standing with feet shoulder width apart and weight equally distributed on both feet. The arms hang down naturally and the mind is in a state of quiescence.

Through the practice of Wú Jí standing the Internal Qì will be cultivated within the body. Vitality will be strengthened. Wú Jí standing will produce and combine the Yīn and Yáng energies. At the same time, Wú Jí standing allows the turbid Yīn energy to descend downward and the pure Yáng energy to ascend upward. Consequently, the Internal Qì in one's five internal organs (kidneys, liver, spleen, heart and lungs) will be strengthened and the Internal Qì will flow smoothly through the Qì meridians and channels. This will achieve the result of the combination of internal and external until the whole body is filled with Internal Qì.

Wú Jí, the state of nothingness, gives birth to Tàì Jí, the union of opposites. Tàì Jí gives birth to Yīn and Yáng. The Yīn and Yáng gives birth to the Three Geniuses. The Three Geniuses give birth to the Four Symbols. The Four Symbols give birth to the Five Directions. The Five Directions give birth to the Six Combinations. The Six Combinations give birth to the Seven Stars (Big Dipper). The Seven Stars give birth to the Eight Diagrams. The Eight Diagrams give birth to the Nine Squares. And the Nine Squares return to Tàì Jí. After this we return to Wú Jí, the State of Nothingness. We both start with Wú Jí and end with Wú Jí. Hopefully, Tàì Jí Quán enthusiasts will someday be able to experience this as a result of their own practice.

Principles of Chén 48 Tai Ji Postures/Movements

In response to requests from many martial arts circles, the 48 posture Chén Style Tàì Jí Quán was completed in 1983 based upon the first routine (Yī Lù) of the original Chén Style Tàì Jí Quán. The 48 form contains all the original postures of the old set while eliminating the many repetitions of postures, and adding some additional postures.

Chén Style Tàì Jí Quán has its own characteristics and requirements. Movements are characterized by: spiral twisting and turning; fullness and roundness of the Internal Qì; the coordinated rotation of the 18 body parts (two shoulders, two elbows, two wrists, two hips, two knees, two ankles, two buttocks, the chest, the waist, the abdomen and the neck). It is through constant practice of the spiral twists and turns of each of the 18 body parts that we achieve the rotation of the body as a whole and the formation of the Tàì Jí Ball inflated by the Internal Qì within the whole body. This is our goal.

The characteristics and requirements of the 48 Posture Chén Tàì Jí Quán form are as follows: Once one part of the body moves, the rest of the body must also move together in coordinated manner. Each movement is a part of the Tàì Jí circle. Everywhere there are spiral twists and turns as well as contracting, bending or extending. And everywhere there is a clear differentiation between Yīn and Yáng.

Every part of the body may be used to strike the opponent. The hand, elbow or shoulder can be used to strike; so too the head, chest and hip. In addition, once one is in contact with one's opponent, any part of the body can be used to neutralize an attack by the opponent. Stick to your opponent wherever you may have engaged at the point of contact. Use spirals and twists.

Another characteristic is that opening and closing is like carefully drawing a strand of silk or thread. Changing our posture is like twisting and spiraling. Through the practice of the Chén Style Tàì Jí Quán we can achieve the result of integrating various body parts into a unified whole and creating a round ball inflated with the Internal Qì within the body.

Therefore, when practicing Tàì Jí Quán we must avoid the use of clumsy (stiff or brute) force. Be sure to use the body as a whole. Be sure to combine both the external and internal. Be sure to keep the body posture upright and avoid leaning. The head must be kept centered and upright as if suspended from above.

The crotch must be rounded and in the shape of the arch in a bridge. If the crotch is pointed (like a pyramid or triangle) it will be without force to the sides and the legs will have no outward strength or lateral support. If the crotch is flattened horizontally like a flat or square bridge, it will have no upward force in the center. So the crotch must be in shape of an arch. It is referred to as "crotch opening and hips rounding." There must also be the hollowing of the chest and the substantiating of the abdomen.

The whole body must have five bows (two arms, the back and two legs). Each part of the body must be slightly bent, bowed or arched. The chest must be tucked in and the back rounded. The arm must be curved and the wrist slightly bent. When you extend your arm outward, drop your shoulder and sink your elbow. As a result, your arm will be curved or bowed. Once you relax your palm, you have an arch. Also, when you bend both legs, you also have an arch. When anything becomes too stiff and straight it is sure to be broken.

When practicing we should pay attention to using the mind and not the Internal Qì to direct our movements. If your focus is on the Internal Qì it will be sluggish; whereas if you practice with the mind, it will flow. When practicing with the Internal Qì do not use force; if you use force it will break. Our forefathers said: "Practicing Tàì Jí Quán is like swimming in air." It all depends on the mind and not on the use of clumsy, stiff or brute force.

The most striking point of this style is the very existence of empty and full; the Yīn and Yáng; and the hardness and softness in opening and closing movements. When demonstrating the form there is the lengthening and shortening; the bending and stretching; the contracting and expanding. We should encounter the secret of opening and closing throughout.

There are circles throughout our practice. They can be categorized as Shùn (順) – clockwise and Nì (逆) – counterclockwise. When the elbow and palm rotate outward we have Nì. When the elbow and little finger of the palm rotate inward we have Shùn. Shùn denotes sinking, closing, relaxing, softness or the Yīn aspect of arm rotation. Nì denotes the opening, expending, rotating outward, hard or Yáng aspect of arm rotation. The same can be said of the legs. (Keep in mind that relaxing is not the same as collapsing or emptying. In Yīn there also is Yáng, and vice versa).

Once we encircle clockwise, the Internal Qì and blood return to the center. And when we circle

counterclockwise, the Internal Qì and blood will flow outward to the extremities. To encircle our opponent, Shùn first and then Nì. First entwine with softness and then send out power, uniting soft and hard, Yīn and Yáng.

Eight Energies

When a posture draws inward it is called Lǚ (履) – Roll Back. When a posture goes outward and forward it is called Jǐ (挤) – Pressing. But even this manner of expression is incomplete. Because in any posture the hand method may transform into eight different applications; eight times eight equals sixty-four (64) different hand methods. The change of hand methods could be endless. Some are open and obvious and others are hidden and secret. The former can be seen and the latter are invisible to outward appearance.

Among the hand methods that cannot be seen are sticking, adhering, joining and following. Also, there are Péng (棚) – Ward Off, Lǚ, Jǐ, Àn (按) – Push, and Liè (掇) – Split, Zhǒu (肘) – Elbow, and Kào (靠) – Shoulder.

The characteristics of Tàì Jí Quán include sticking, adhering, joining and following; its four basic hand methods of Péng, Lǚ, Jǐ, and Àn, and its four auxiliary hand methods of Cǎi (採) – Pluck, Liè, Zhǒu, and Kào. These are the main forces of Tàì Jí Quán.

When practicing Tàì Jí Quán the Internal Qì flows. Opening and closing are performed like drawing silk. In applying these there is the hand method of sticking. Even if the force may break, the mind continues. Should the mind break, then the spirit continues. With regard to the methods of joining and following, when the opponent issues power, I am soft and yielding. When the opponent neutralizes my force, I will follow him. This is the method of following.

There are many responses that are not easily understood. There are no fixed applications in form. For instance, the posture of Buddha's Warrior Attendant Pounds the Mortar has many different possible applications. The upraising fist could be an uppercut or pulling the opponent into an uppercut punch. The two hands hitting together could be punching the opponent's wrist from above while holding below or striking the opponent's arm from both sides. The upward arm movement can attach to the lower groin level or upward to the head. The hand descending could be hitting down on the forehead with the foreknuckles of the fist. It is said that "A fixed method is no method at all."

Standing

When we are practicing Tàì Jí Quán we are really practicing "stance-keeping." The Wú Jí stance practices standing in a fixed position without stepping. Practicing the form we are still practicing stance-keeping, but with moving steps. Push Hands is also a type of stance-keeping. When practicing Push Hands we are practicing the hand methods with the upper body while practicing fixed stance-keeping with the lower body. Both upper and lower body are in a state of quiescence. When practicing the Tàì Jí Quán form both our upper body and our lower body are moving together. This may be called stance-keeping with moving steps or dynamic stance keeping with moving steps. There is also a type of quiescent stance-keeping with moving and fixed steps.

We treat all these movements as practicing stance-keeping, thus achieving greater results. In doing so we may achieve the flow of internal Qì within the body. Through this type of practice, one will understand that Tàì Jí Quán is an exercise that promotes the flow of internal Qì. The movement of the internal Qì combines with the outward manifestation of form. Thus we can call it a combination or union of the internal and external. Otherwise, all you have are hollow postures or showing postures.

Eight Methods

In addition we should master the basic hand methods of Péng, Lǚ, Jǐ and Àn. We should be able to apply these methods flexibly and interchangeably. The force of Péng is upward. The force of Jǐ is outward. The outward force of Jǐ can be done with any hand position using the palms, fists or fingers. Backward movement is called Roll Back or Lǚ. It can be performed with downward or sideward motion or even cross body motion using the forearms. Even the chest can be used to roll back force from side to side.

Downward pushing is Àn and is accompanied by sinking in the Kuà (胯) – the inguinal crease between upper thigh and pelvis). Péng is upward movement and can be accomplished with any part of the body, whether wrists, palms or even elbows. These four basic methods can be done with any part of the body, not just with the hands or arms. Even the feet and legs can be used to apply these forces. The important part is if the direction of the force is clear, the force is the same regardless of what part of the body is used. Only with this understanding can we actually practice Tàì Jí Quán according to Tàì Jí Quán theory. The directions of

forces are always the same; only the form postures are different.

Of course there are all types of elbow attacks including forward, backward, to the side, up, down and outward. Kào is a type of striking, not just limited to the shoulder. Kào can be done striking with shoulder, chest, elbow or even the fist. It can be done with the knee, hip or even the head. Any part of the body can be used to strike.

The eight methods of using force should be used flexibly and interchangeably. We should clearly distinguish these methods when practicing the Tàì Jí Quán form. Another example might be the movement called Lazily Tying the Coat. Here the lead right hand and stance draw backward. The lead hand drawing back could either be used as Lǚ or roll back or even as a strike. While drawing the body backward, the rear hip and outward by [word missing?] could also be striking or pressing to the rear. When shifting forward, the hand and knee could be striking or pressing forward. A Master expects his students to be able to learn more by analogy. If the Master shows three examples and the student cannot even understand one, then, of course, the Master will be upset. There is a saying that if the Master can show you one corner, the alert student can figure out the other three.

Hand Positions

There are many individual hand positions. There is the punch hand position with many variations. The fist can be horizontal with the palm facing down (Yáng fist position) or facing up (Yīn fist position). There is the vertical fist with the thumb facing upward, also called the Yīn-Yáng Fist. The fist can protrude the first finger foreknuckle or the middle finger foreknuckle for pinpoint targeting. There is another fist where all the foreknuckles are extended in a progressive position. This fist, called the “padded fist,” is used for striking the ears or temple to either side of the opponent’s head.

There are many variations to the palm as well. There is the vertical (Lee) palm with the fingers pointing upward and the wrist down. The palm or palm outer edge can be used for striking. If the palm position faces upward it is called the Yīn palm position and if it faces downward it is called the Yáng palm position.

There is a hand called the Ba hand position where only the forefinger and thumb are extended outward and away from each other. It is called the Ba hand because the thumb and forefinger position resembles

the Chinese character for the number eight. If the palm faces upward it is called the Yīn Ba hand position and if facing downward it is called the Yáng Ba hand position.

Other palm positions include the Corrugated or Tile Palm hand position. If the thumb and little finger close toward each other causing a closing of the palm crease in the Láo Gōng (勞宮) or palm center, it is called the Closing Tile Palm position. There is also the Snake Palm and Corrugated Snake Palm used when the palm is cupped and the fingers are pointed outward. If the fingers and hand are fully stretched and the fingers are pointed forward it is called the Snake Palm (as in the movement White Snake Spits Out Its Tongue). [Pinyin and characters for Snake Palm?]

Once again we cannot regard these various hand positions as rigid or fixed. They are interchangeable and flexible in application. A forward punch with a fist could change into a foreknuckle strike for penetration and pinpoint striking. It could also change into a finger extended snake or spear hand formation to reach a more distant target area or a palm strike for a closer target area. In short, when practicing Chen style Tàì Jí Quán we must not be rigid in our applications. We must retain flexibility and rely on the guidance of Tàì Jí Quán theory and principles.



Biography



Féng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強) standing by the portraits of his two teachers

Féng Zhì Qiáng was born in 1928 in He Bei province. According to the Chinese Zodiac, 1928 is the Year of the Dragon. A dragon is a symbol of intelligence, vitality and enthusiasm, one gifted with many talents and leadership qualities. The Feng family was known for its martial arts traditions. Féng's great-grandfather was an expert in the broadsword, archery and horsemanship. Another relative was adept at Shào Lín style.

Influenced by local martial arts culture and family tradition, Féng practiced by imitating his great-grandfather. Although the family's status diminished when the elder Féng died, 8-year-old Feng began formal training in Shào Lín and other locally taught forms. He was a natural martial artist, possessing both physical and intellectual prowess. Always competitive and daring, he was often in the thick of fights with local bullies. Because he had an unusually large head and eyes, he was nicknamed "Tiger with Big Eyes." Other children regarded him as their leader; delinquents learned to avoid him. When he was 12, his parents sent him to stay with relatives in Beijing to try to keep him out of trouble. He became an apprentice in an electric motor manufacturing company.

Féng was accepted to study under Hú Yào Zhēn, famous for his practice of Daoism, martial arts and Traditional Chinese Medicine. Hú was known as "Single Finger Conquering the World" or "One Finger Shakes Heaven and Earth." At first, Féng was disappointed because Hú Yào Zhēn was not as he expected. Hú was not so different from



Fēng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強) year/posture???

an average person. He was not big and even appeared to be somewhat effeminate. His fingers were thin and soft, his face kindly and smiling. This made young Fēng suspicious of the teacher's skills.

After hearing about Fēng's martial arts experiences, Hú said, "You are meant to be a good martial artist but this way of practice will not get you very far." Fēng did not understand. He said, "I learned Shao Lin from childhood and studied Tong Bei very hard, I can lift heavy stones and break rocks and bricks. [The story is told that he could break five bricks with one hand strike.] How can you say this does not work?"

Hú replied, "Chinese martial art encompasses a large repertoire of knowledge. It is not only about brute force. The way you are practicing is destructive to the physical body your parents bestowed upon you." Hú then asked Fēng to hit him. Fēng said that as a student, he did not dare to hit his teacher. Hú insisted. Fēng hit him twice, using only 30 percent of his power.

Hú urged him to hit harder. With the next punch Fēng used a fast punch with all of his power, but when his

fist landed, it was as though he had hit cotton. Then he felt a tremendous force bouncing back at him. When he landed against the wall some three meters, he saw stars and broke into a cold sweat but realized that he was unhurt. Subconsciously, he thought that he had hit a wall of Qì. Hú said, "It's my turn now." Fēng prepared to defend himself. He summoned all his power and saw himself standing as firm as a mountain. Hú stretched out one finger. Although Fēng had gathered his strength, an odd feeling came over him. A force seemed to come out of the tip of Hú's finger. Fēng felt a shock as if he was being electrocuted and his body bounced backward.

"What kind of Gōng Fū is this?" he asked. Hú said, "This is called internal Qì Gōng—the Qì is gathered into one bullet and it comes out to one point." Fēng realized he had heard the name, "Single Finger Conquering the World." This was the real martial arts. He knelt before Hú Yào Zhēn and became his student.

Feng studied internal Qì Gōng and Six Harmony Xīn Yì Quán with Hú Yào Zhēn . He studied the gathering, nurturing, and training of Qì; the Four Limbs, Five Elements and Six Harmonies; and the Four Hands, Twelve Shapes and Twenty-Four Hands. His skill in internal martial arts improved rapidly and his temperament moderated.

By that time Hú had concluded that Chén Shì Tài Jí Quán (Chén Style Tàì Jí Quán) was based on the philosophical theory of Yīn and Yáng with special Qì Gōng methods; other Tàì Jí styles were derivatives of Chén style. Chén style and Xīn Yì Quán were both Nèi Jiā Quán, internal styles, and the theories were the same. He recommended Fēng to his friend Chén Fā Kē , the great promoter of Chén Style Tàì Jí. Chén respected Hú's judgment and he accepted Fēng Zhì Qiáng as a student. Decades later, Fēng became Chén Fā Kē 's successor, carrying on the traditions of Chén Style Tàì Jí .

Fēng graduated as an apprentice and was working for an electric motor company. He was also practicing martial arts seven hours a day, beginning at four o'clock every morning. He worked his internal and external training, Qì Gōng, solo practice, paired training, and push hands. During the period 1950-1957, Chén Fā Kē corrected Fēng's form and through those corrections Fēng came to understand the essence of Tàì Jí Quán. At the same time, Hú Yào Zhēn was reinforcing Fēng's understanding of martial arts theory and technique as well as Traditional Chinese Medicine.

In 1953 the Běijīng Capital Martial Art Society was formed with Chén Fā Kē and Hú Yào Zhēn as president and vice president respectively. The Society combined the research and practice of martial arts into one. Fēng would go

to train every day, and he became the training partner for Chén Fā Kē's son, Chén Zhào Kuí. Féng Zhì Qiáng and Chén Zhào Kuí became best friends. During Chén Fā Kē's last days he asked Féng to look after his son. Féng took his master's last words to heart. He often practiced with Chén Zhào Kuí, and in turn, Chén Zhào Kuí respected his senior training brother. When Chén Zhào Kuí died, while only in his early 50s, Féng Zhì Qiáng blamed himself for not looking after Chén Zhào Kuí well enough.

Féng Zhì Qiáng's skill and reputation were growing, and many stories are told about his abilities. In one incident, a famous martial artist came from northeastern China, demanding to fight him. Féng happily complied. After the fight, the challenger acknowledged that Féng's Gōng Fū was superior. He raised his thumb in praise.

A Qì Gōng master challenged Féng to a fasting duel. The two of them sat in the lotus position in a room behind closed doors with no food, only a little water. Three days later, Féng was able to train with his steel staff, which weighed more than 40 pounds. The challenger did not even have the power to walk.

Another anecdote involves an experience when Féng was working at the Běijīng Electrical Motor Company. In the workshop, motors weighing about 1100 pounds were being transported from one end of the workshop to another via an overhead hoist. A steel cable that held a motor to the hoist came loose and the motor fell off. Féng, who was working nearby, appeared right beneath the hoist, grabbed the falling motor, and placed it on the floor. When the screams and shouts of his fellow workers grew silent, unable to comprehend what they had witnessed.

Normally it took 7 or 8 men to move the motor. With the speed of its fall and its weight, what kind of power would it take to stop it? When they questioned Féng, he said that he did not realize what was happening. He did not know how he came to be under the motor to grab it. "I felt my Dān Tián blow up and a hot gush rush up the back of my spine. I stopped and caught the motor."

Once while Féng was squatting to complete a task in the workshop, a tall young man crept up behind him. This man had served in a military combat unit and had a lot of training in Qín Ná and army combat fighting techniques. He suddenly pushed Féng, hoping to shove him over, but the moment he touched Féng's back he was thrown into the air and landed heavily on the floor.

The factory had its own wrestling team. One day, a dozen young wrestlers saw Féng walk past their training ground and surrounded him, wanting to test his power. He said, "Why don't all of you line up and push me together." They got in line like a train, preparing to push. The person in front put his hands on Féng's stomach and on the count of three everybody pushed. Féng stood still like Tàì Shān (泰山) - Mount Tai of Shān Dōng. Suddenly he rotated his Dān Tián and all twelve wrestlers fell to the ground.

In 1957, Chén Fā Kē passed away and a serious problem presented itself to the members of the 18th generation of the Chén Style Tàì Jí Quán; who would pick up the burden of promoting the art of Chén Fā Kē and the advancement of Tàì Jí? Chén Jiā Gōu (陳家溝) - Chén Village was the birthplace of Chén Style Tàì Jí Quán. As a master of the 17th generation, Chén Fā Kē had become an outstanding representative due to his great skill. But the turbulent years of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), had greatly affected Tàì Jí Quán in Chén Village and throughout China. It was forbidden to practice Tàì Jí. At the risk of his life, Féng had continued to train his best students in secret.

After that period, however, there was a nationwide movement to rediscover and restore the martial arts. The leader of Chén Tàì Jí in Chén Village wrote to Féng Zhì Qiáng, inviting him to come to Chén Jiā Gōu to teach. Féng was mindful of all the training he received from Chén Fā Kē and also of Hú Yào Zhēn's teachings and recommendations. He had promised his teachers to promote the art of his masters. He went to Chén Village to revive the art for the 19th generation disciples of the Chén family. The prosperous development of Chén Tàì Jí in Chén Jiā Gōu today is heavily indebted to the work of Féng Zhì Qiáng.

Féng became famous for the Chén Style 48 Form, which he distilled from traditional Chén Style by omitting repetitive movements and incorporated some explosive movements. Later, based on his knowledge and experience, he modified traditional Chén Style and integrated it with Xīn Yì and Dàoist Qì Gōng for better health benefits, calling it the Chén Style Hùn Yuán system. He also created the 30 Silk Reeling Exercises, Hùn Yuán Primordial Qì Gōng Exercises, Tàì Jí Ruler, and various other Hùn Yuán forms.

In 1981 Féng retired from his job and undertook the work of promoting Chén Style Tàì Jí Quán nationwide and abroad. He started from the ground up, organizing people, locations, news releases and training programs.

In 1983 the Běijīng Chén Style Tài Jí Quán Research Association was established, with Féng as Chairman by unanimous vote. He also became an executive member of the China Martial Arts Association, vice chairman of the Běijīng Municipal Martial Arts Association, and president of Féng Zhì Qiáng Martial Arts Academy.

In July 1982, at a Tài Jí Masters exhibition in Shànghǎi, Féng, then in his 50s, participated in an outdoor push hands demonstration. The first partner was a Tài Jí practitioner. As soon as they touched hands, Féng appeared to shake his body; his opponent flew into the air and was thrown out in a straight line. He hit the chairman's podium and knocked the cups off the head table.

The second push hands partner was a famous martial artist from Shànghǎi who specialized in hard external Qì Gōng and was known to have defeated many people. As soon as they touched hands Féng uprooted him and threw him to the ground. The man tried again and was thrown out several meters. The third time he flew out horizontally! He said, "Féng's Gōng Fū is real Gōng Fū. Féng's Tài Jí is real Tài Jí." And then he asked to become Féng's student.

Another martial artist said he did not believe Tài Jí could be used in fighting. He asked to test Féng by punching him. Féng's body shook just a little but the challenger was thrown out. He said that when he pressed into Féng's body and applied his strength, he heard Féng generate the sounds of "Hēng" (哼) and "Hā" (哈) from his Dān Tián.

During a visit to Japan in the early 1990s, Féng was invited to give a demonstration at a large martial arts event. After his demonstration of Cannon Fist, most of the more than 2000 people in the audience reported that they personally felt the power of his Qì during the demonstration. Japanese Gōng Fū organizations later established a Féng Zhì Qiáng Research Association.

Féng brought his Tài Jí and Qì Gōng to more than 40 countries. When he was teaching a seminar in Europe in the summer of 2000, when he was past the age of 70, he was seen doing some relaxing push hands with an attendee. His eyes were closed and his body relaxed. He was simply flowing with his opponent; it appeared that he was falling asleep. His opponent saw a good opportunity and gave a sudden powerful double-handed push to his chest. Before his hands reached Féng, his eyes opened. His opponent went flying backward and fell against a tree about 10 feet away. The opponent

reported that he was quite sure a beam of light like lightning shot out of Féng's eyes and blew him away.

One morning in the winter of 2001, while Féng was walking with several of his students, they saw him jump about three feet in the air. He was so light and graceful that he did so without the people walking by his side noticing it. He explained that his foot got caught in the cracks of the pebble stones and his body instinctively leaped to avoid a fall. He said it was the springy force that comes from Hùn Yuán Tài Jí. "Why are we doing Tài Jí if we cannot even do that? We don't fall down any more. We have this special energy."

Féng produced dozens of books, instructional videos and other teaching materials. His teachings about the essence, secrets and training methods of Tài Jí have been published in journals and magazines in China and abroad. His articles have stimulated research on Tài Jí theory and practice and serve as a milestone in the development of Tài Jí Quán and Chinese Martial Arts. He often said, "Let Chinese Tài Jí culture serve mankind better; this is my best wish."



GM Féng Zhì Qiáng passed away at 2 p.m. on May 5, 2012 in Běijīng, China. Soon, there were eulogies all over on Internet in memory of this legend, the "Last Dragon."

Photo Gallery

Shǒu Dū Wǔ Shù Yán Jiū Shè (首都武术研究社) - Capital Martial Research Society 1953



2nd row 9th from the left: Hú Yào Zhēn (胡耀贞) Chén Fā Kē (陳發科) to his right!
Last row: 1st from left, Féng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強) - Front row 3rd from right, Chén Zhào Kuí (陳照奎)



1st row seated 4th from left, Chén Fā Kē (陳發科), directly behind him Féng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強)



Shànghǎi (上海) in 1982 - Left to Right: Yáng Zhèn Duó (杨振铎), Wáng Péi Shēng (王培生),
Hóng Jūn Shēng (洪均生), Féng Zhì Qiáng (冯志强), and Chén Xiǎo Wàng (陈小旺)



Left to right: Féng Zhì Qiáng (冯志强), Cē Chūn Yàn (戈春燕), Léi Mù Ní (雷慕尼)



Left to right: Léi Mì Ní (雷慕尼), Chén Zhào Kuí (陈照奎) and Zhāng Xué Xìn (張學信)



From Left - 1st Row: Chén Yù Xiá (陈豫霞), Léi Mì Ní (雷慕尼), Tián Xiù Chén (田秀臣), Lǐ Zhōng Yīn (李中阴)
2nd Row: Zhāng Chūn Dòng (张春栋), Xiào Qīng Lín (肖庆林), Féng Zhì Qiáng (冯志强), Lǐ Líng Quāng (李灵光)



Chén Jiā Gōu (陳家溝 1979) - Seated from left: 2nd Feng Zhiqiang, 3rd Chén Lì Qīng (陳立清);
 Standing from left: 1st Chén Zhèng Léi (陳正雷), 3rd Wáng Xiān (王西安),
 5th Zhū Tiān Cǎi (朱天才) and 6th Zhū Chén Xiǎo Wàng (陳小旺)



From left: Gē Chūn Yàn (戈春艷), Chén Xiǎo Wàng (陳小旺), government official,
 Féng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強), Chén Yù Xiá (陳豫俠) [Chén Fā Kē's daughter], government official
 Back Row: 2nd from left Bryant Fong, 6th J. Justin Meehan and Anthony Chan - 1981



Féng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強) and J. Justin Meehan



Cáo Jǐng Qiáng (曹景強), Xiàng Guó Yuán (項國員), Féng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強), Bào Hóng (薄洪)



Féng Zhì Qiáng Pīnyīn Glossary

Geographical & Historical Names and Places

- Héběi (河北) - Province whose name implies that it is located "North of the Yellow River"
Hénán (河南) - Province whose name implies that it is located "South of the Yellow River"
Fújiàn (福建) Province located on the south east coast of China
Běijīng (北京) - Literally "Northern Capital"
Shànghǎi (上海) - Literally, above the sea, is the most populated city in China
Zhāngzhōu (漳州) - Large city located in Fújiàn Province
Chén Jiā Gōu (陳家溝) - Chén Village located in , birthplace of Tài Jí Quán
Shǒu Dū Wǔ Shù Yán Jiū Shè (首都武术研究社) - Capital Martial Research Society

Martial Arts Styles

- Tài Jí Quán (太極拳) - Grand Ultimate Boxing
Chén Shì Tài Jí Quán (陳式太極拳) - Chén Style Tài Jí
Yáng Shì Tài Jí Quán (楊式太極拳) - Yáng Style Tài Jí
Hùn Yuán Tài Jí Quán (混元太極拳) - Universal Tài Jí created by Féng Zhì Qiáng
Xīn Yì Quán (心意拳) - Heart Mind Boxing, predecessor of Xíngyì Quán
Liù Hé Xīn Yì Quán (六合心意拳) - Six Harmonies Heart Mind Boxing,
Xíng Yì Quán (形意拳) - Shape Intent Boxing
Bā Guà Zhǎng (八卦掌) - Eight Trigrams Palm
Shào Lín Quán (少林拳) - Young Forest Boxing
Qín Ná (擒拿) - The art of Seizing and Controlling

Notable Figures

- General Qī Jì Guāng (戚繼光 1528–1588) - Legendary general of the Míng Dynasty
Chén Wáng Tíng (陳王庭 1580-1660) - Considered the father of Chén Style Tài Jí
Chén Cháng Xīng (陳長興 1771-1853) - 14th generation master of Chén Style Tài Jí
Chén Yán Xī (陳延熙 1820-NK)
Yáng Lù Chán (楊露禪 1799-1872) - Disciple of Chén Cháng Xīng and founder of Yáng Style Tài Jí
Yáng Bān Hóu (楊班侯 1837-1890) - Eldest son of Yáng Lù Chán
Yáng Jiàn Hóu (楊健侯 1839–1917) - Younger son of Yáng Lù Chán
Yáng Chéng Fǔ (楊澄甫 1883-1936) - Son of Yáng Jiàn Hóu and grandson of Yáng Lù Chán
Chén Fā Kē (陳發科 1887-1957) - Grandson of Chén Cháng Xīng and the son of Chén Yán Xī
Hú Yào Zhēn (胡耀貞 1879-1973) - Skilled in martial arts, Chinese medicine and Qì Gōng
Féng Zhì Qiáng (馮志強) - Disciple of Chén Fā Kē and Hú Yào Zhēn. Teacher of countless students
Chén Zhào Kuí (陳照奎 1928-1981) – Son of Chén Fā Kē
Féng Xiù Fāng (馮秀芳) - Older daughter of Féng Zhì Qiáng
Féng Xiù Qiàn (馮秀茜) - Youngest daughter of Féng Zhì Qiáng
Zhāng Xué Xìn (張學信) – Féng's senior US disciple of Féng Zhì Qiáng

Chén Zhào Kuí (陈照奎 1928-1981) – Chén Fā Kē's son
 Chén Yù Xiá (陈豫侠 1924-1986) - Chén Fā Kē's daughter
 Gù Liú Xīn (顧留馨 1908-1990) – Disciple of Chén Fā Kē
 Léi Mù Ní (雷慕尼 1911 -1986) – Disciple of Chén Fā Kē
 Tián Xiù Chén (田秀臣 1917-1984) – Disciple of Chén Fā Kē
 Lǐ Jīng Wù (李经悟 1912-1997) - Disciple of Zhào Tiě Ān (赵铁庵) and Chén Fā Kē
 Pān Yǒng Zhōu (潘咏周 1905 - 1996) - Disciple of Chén Fā Kē
 Hóng Jūn Shēng (洪均生 1907-1996) -Disciple of Chén Fā Kē
 Chén Zhōng Huá (陈中华) - Disciple of Hóng Jūn Shēng and Féng Zhì Qiáng
 Chén Xiǎo Wàng (陳小旺) - Well known 19th Generation Chén Style Tài Jí Master
 Chén Zhèng Léi (陳正雷) - Well known 19th Generation Chén Style Tài Jí Master
 Zhū Tiān Cái (朱天才) - Well known 19th Generation Chén Style Tài Jí Master
 Wáng Xiān (王西安) - Well known 19th Generation Chén Style Tài Jí Master
 Chén Lì Qīng (陳立清 1914-2008) - 1st female ecognized as a master in Chén Tài Jí
 Yáng Zhèn Duó (楊振鐸) - One of the sons Yáng Chéng Fǔ and grandson of Yáng Lù Chán
 Chén Xiáng (陈翔) - Disciple of Féng Zhì Qiáng
 Zhāng Yǔ Fēi (張禹飛) - Disciple of Féng Zhì Qiáng based in Běi Jīng
 Lǚ Bǎo Chūn (呂寶春) - Disciple of Féng Zhì Qiáng based in Finland
 Wáng Zhǎng Hǎi (王长海) - Disciple of Féng Zhì Qiáng based in Zhèng Zhōu
 Gē Chūn Yàn (戈春艷) - Disciple of Féng Zhì Qiáng based in Singapore..
 Niu Xiu Rong, - Student of Féng Zhì Qiáng based in France (**need Chinese**)
 Yang Yang - Well known Chén Style Tài Jí exponent based in the US
 Huáng Lián Shùn (黃連順) - Trained with several masters & holds various martial arts posts

Hùn Yuán Tài Jí Quán and General Martial Arts Terms

Lǎo Jià (老架) - Old Style
 Xīn Jià (新架) - New Style
 Chán Sī Jìn (纏絲勁) - Silk Reeling Energy
 Jīn Gāng Dǎo Duì (金剛搗碓) - Buddha's Warrior Pounds the Mortar
 Lǎn Zhā Yī (懶扎衣) - Lazily Tying Coat
 Jī Dì Chuí (击地捶) - Punch the Ground
 Yù Nǚ Chuān Suō (玉女穿梭) - Jade Maiden Works at Shuttles
 Xiù Liàn (秀練) - Elegant/outstanding practice
 Pào Chuí (炮捶) - Cannon Fist
 Yī Lù (一路) – First Routine
 Èr Lù (二路) – Second Routine
 Tài Jí Chǐ (太極尺)
 Lǎo Jià Yī Lù (老架一路) - Old Frame
 Tuī Shǒu (推手) – Push Hands
 Dà Lǚ - (大履) – Big Rollback
 Péng (棚) – Ward Off
 Lǚ (履) – Roll Back
 Jǐ (挤) - Press
 Àn (按) - Push
 Cǎi (採) – Twist

Liè (捌) - Sudden Strike
Zhǒu (肘) – Elbow
Kào (靠) – Shoulder
Bēng (崩) - Smashing as in Xíng Yì Bēng
Qì Gōng - (氣功) - The art of nurturing internal energy
Nèi Gōng (內功) - Internal Training
Yīn - (陰) - The Negative
Yáng - (陽) - The positive
Fā Jìn - (發勁) - Explosive Force
Yì (意) - Intention
Lì (力) - Force
Fàng Sōng (放鬆) – Relax
Zì Rán (自然) – Natural
Hēng (哼) and Hā (哈) Sounds
Láo Gōng (勞宮) – Palm Center
Shùn (順) - Clockwise
Nì (逆) - Counterclockwise

In the upcoming weeks we will be publishing several features which will supplement this article on the Origins and Future of Hùn Yuán Tài Jí Quán.

- 1 - An Essay on Hùn Yuán Primordial Qi Gong**
- 2- On Push Hands Competition**
- 3 - List of Hùn Yuán Instructors**
- 4- Resources List (Learning Material)**
- 5 - Commentary on the 24 Movement Form**
- 6 - Commentary on the 83 Movement Form**



J. Justin Meehan and his student Jardena Tiger Green, national and international Push Hands champion

J. Justin Meehan has spent more than 45 years studying Tai Ji Quan, Siu Lum, Praying Mantis, Hung Gar, Wing Chun, and weapons. He is President of the Chinese Internal Arts Association and the St. Louis Taoist Research and Resource Forum. He was a member of the first US delegation invited to study the original Chen-style Tai Ji in Beijing, under Feng Zhi Qiang in 1981. Meehan has also studied under Feng's senior US disciple, Zhang Xue Xin. Meehan has written more than 30 articles on Tai Ji for martial arts magazines. He is a nationally recognized tournament judge for Tai Ji forms, weapons, and Push Hands. Several of his students have been national champions in competition. He also teaches Qi Gong and is a certified Medical Qi Gong Instructor and an authorized teacher of the Xin Yi Hun Yuan Qi Gong system of Feng Zhi Qiang. The web site for Meehan's school, St Louis Hun Yuan Tai-Ji, is www.stltaiji.com.

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