

Traditional Yang Family Taijiquan and Xing / Wudang Qigong

This article is about the 'tradition' of Taijiquan and Qigong. I emphasise the word tradition rather than style, since their meanings are wholly different. A tradition is something which is orally transmitted, and directly experienced from Master to disciple throughout generations. A style is something which is concerned with outward appearance and prevailing fashion, and is subject to allkinds of varied and often hasty interpretation.

A tradition withstands the test of time if it is founded in truth and simplicity. If it is thus founded, it embodies presence. If it embodies presence, it is alive, dynamic and evolving. A tradition is not merely concerned with techniques, which are as numerable as the stars in the sky and which promise the fruit before the flower. Rather, a tradition offers a way or method of gentleness and power to penetrate the depths of being, the fullness of the mystery of life with its varying degrees of reality.

If Taijiquan or Qigong were simply a series of techniques for the protection of a divided self centred ego conciousness, or a series of exercises for bodily health, they would not be worthy of their own titles. The very meaning of Taijiquan is the way of penetrating the Supreme Ultimate mystery, and Qigong is the mastery of conciousness. The way of Taijiquan and Qigong is simplicity itself. My Masters, who handed down the traditions to me, were very clear that primacy be given to the healing of mind, body and spirit.

In the beginning, it is necessary to practice, and be faithful to the practice with gentleness and openness. Then, one begins to experience Taijiquan and Qigong. Much later, one begins to enter into the experience. It is at this time when one truly understands the wisdom of tradition, and the importance of being faithful to that understanding. A common characterisitic of any mystery, is that it cannot be analysed, it has to be experienced to be understood. The perennial presence of an authentic living tradition is not subject to the comings and goings of prevailing fashions. Rather, it endures in the midst of a changing world since its foundations are in the perpetual now, and in the deepening clarity of true understanding.