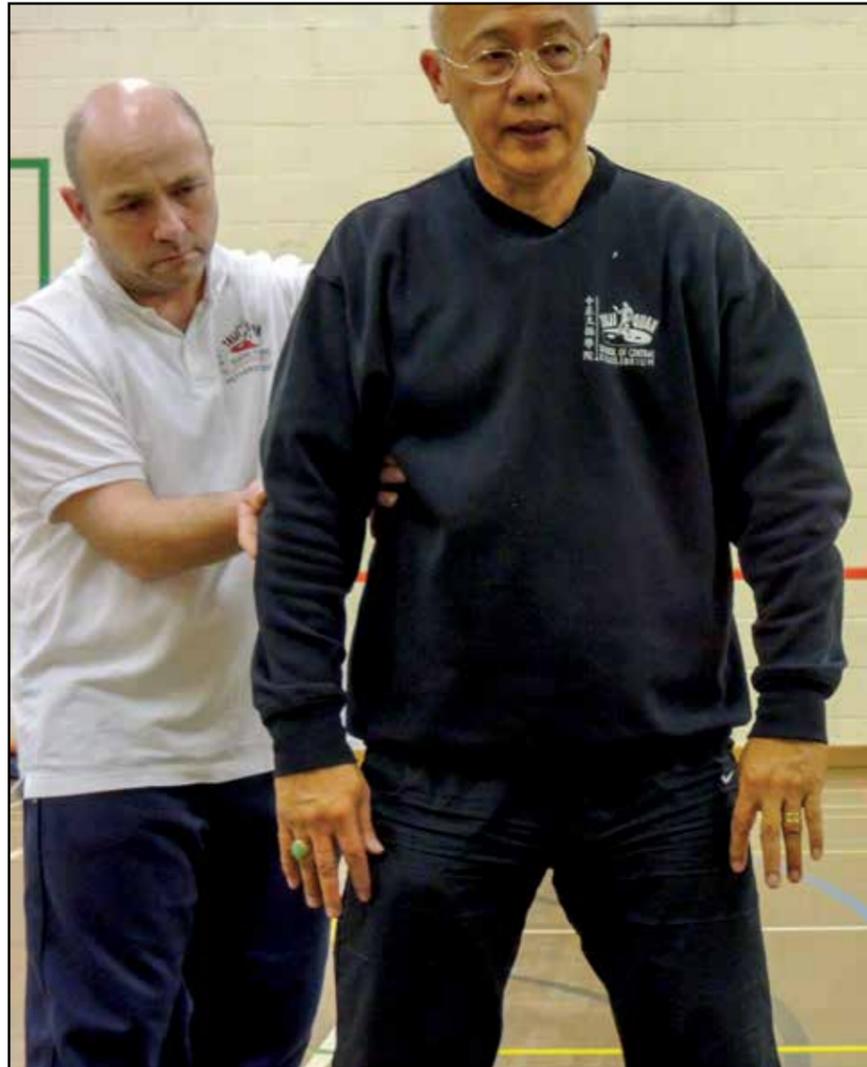


The work of Wee Kee Jin

by Allan Cunningham

Wee Kee Jin is the chief instructor of the Taijiquan School of Central Equilibrium. Wee Kee Jin was first brought to the U.K by Peter Dobson in 1997. Jin was born in Singapore and now teaches workshops and camps in various places across Australia and Europe as well as his now home country New Zealand. Jin was one of only four people lucky enough to be a full-time live-in student of Huang Sheng Shyan. Huang was a Fujian White Crane Master before he met Professor Cheng Man-Ching in 1947. He was amazed by the Professor's skill so Huang started his study of Taijiquan.



Fujian White Crane is also a soft internal art with similar principles to taiji. Huang would say that White Crane was like a rough diamond compared to taiji being a polished diamond. When Huang had finished his studies, the Professor said that within 7 years Huang would progress past his ability. Huang progressed in his taiji until his death in 1992 when, at the age of 82, and was considered one of the world's best taiji practitioners. Many people have asked Wee Kee Jin if Master Huang could really do what was shown. Jin says "If you believe it's true then it's true if you don't believe it's true it is not." He also added "I lived and trained full-time with Master Huang 8 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year for 4 years, many people could not stand the training." Jin would start his training at 4:30am. Jin added, "Do you really think I would do that if Master Huang did not have skills he showed?" The

training of traditional taiji was hard to say the least. Huang would say to his students "If you can still stand at the end of the day then you haven't trained hard enough."

"No matter what style of taiji you study," Jin says "The principles are still the same. The taiji form is just a set of movements for you to practice the principles held within the taiji." The principles of taiji are contained in the taiji classic text. They are the Chang San Feng Taiji Classics, the understanding of the 13 postures, the Wang Tsung Yueh Taiji Classics, "The Song of the 13 Postures," "The Song of Substance and Function", "The Song of Pushing Hands and the 10 Important Points of the Yang Family for the Yang Style. Jin says "that all taiji practitioners must read the Taiji Classics, not only read them once, but constantly re-read the Classics because as you progress in

taiji your understanding of the classic texts and will deepen." He says that "Sometimes what you think it means can change to be the opposite of what you thought before, is that wrong? No. It was correct at your level of taiji at the time." Jin has written two books both of which have the Classics written and discussed in them. He said by the time his first book came to press his understanding of the classic texts had already changed slightly as his understanding of taiji was deepening. Jin studied classical Chinese texts, which helped him with his understanding of the Classics. One aspect which Jin says is often mistaken is that of double-weighted which he translates as double-heaviness and it states is more to do with the force distribution than weighting. He suggests the meaning concerns the force from the right foot being issued through the left hand and the force from the left foot is



issued from the right hand. Also if there is a force coming into you, then you must go in the same direction of the force, then lead the force in another direction, which is also the meaning of 4 oz leads 1,000 lb. I believe that it is Jin's understanding of the Taiji Classics and his understanding of the way that movement is created in taiji that led him to be one of the best practitioners of taiji today. When Jin teaches he is an honest and open teacher. Master Huang told him to teach all that he knew and not to hold anything back. The only thing that Jin asks of a student is that they must train. "If you do not train," Jin says "Then how can I teach?"

One of the unique methods of Master Huang's system of teaching taiji is that he created five exercises to help people understand the different ways you move in taiji. They are called the Five Loosening Exercises and simply referred to as exercises 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. There is also an exercise called the up and down movement, which Huang said contained the essence of taiji. It is a fundamental exercise in his system. He would say that "Everything in taiji was contained in the up and down movement, if you understand it you must look for it in everything you do in taiji. It is easier to find the way that you move and use the mind in the exercises then you must put what you understand of them into the form"

Standing postures or standing meditation is also a fundamental practice of the Huang

system. Helping you to understand how the body is connected and to practice relaxing and sinking in taiji as well as other aspects "When standing you should not become wood." Jin says meaning you are not just standing doing nothing but trying to relax, sink and open the joints of the body. Practicing letting go of all unnecessary tension in the body legs and arms. Jin would say "The more relaxed you are the more connected you will be and the more sinking the more rebounding force that comes up through the body.

You could say that what you understand in standing postures you take to the exercises. What you understand in the exercises you take to the form. What you understand in the form you take to pushing hands it can also sometimes be reversed what you understand in pushing hands you need to make sure you move the same way in the form and look for the same feeling in the exercises then ultimately look for the same feeling in the up and down movement.

Jin was lucky to have trained with master Huang right until his death because Huang was refining his art up until his last days he would slightly change the exercises or the form. Some of the other students may not have seen some of the changes that Huang did and would say to Jin that is not how Huang did it. Jin said "You can only tell people something, if they take it then good if not unfortunately they will be left behind."



I see Wee Kee Jin at least twice a year and can see and feel that he is constantly refining his art. One of the best teaching methods that Jin uses is letting you feel what is happening in his body, legs and arms. This, in my opinion helps me to understand what he is doing in his body. At first you can't do what you feel from Jin but you have a much better understanding of what you should be doing. He says "At first you have to visualise, then in the end the body gets the message from the brain and starts to do what the mind is asking." One of Jin's saying is "When the mind asks the body must respond." Another is "The base moves the body the body moves the arms." You can feel this happening in Jin's body.

I feel lucky and privileged to have Wee Kee Jin as a teacher. His system is simple, take a few movements and go deeper and deeper in what you understand. Huang said "If you understand one movement of the form you understand every movement." This is because although the arms and legs might be in different positions the same thing is happening inside the body.

I have the privilege of bringing Wee Kee Jin to Scotland in November 2015 for the first time. I think it will be great to have such an accomplished teacher of taiji teach in Scotland.

For details of Wee Kee Jin's forthcoming visit to the UK please contact Alan Cunningham at allan.cunningham@blueyonder.co.uk