

Style and the entirety of Fu Style forms. At the age of 13, I won the Canton Province Traditional Wushu competition for my demonstration of our family's Tiger Chuan and BaGua Cyclone Broadsword forms. While my father grew up much the way I did, surrounded by martial arts and the highest-level practitioners in China, there were many people who did not want to learn from Fu Wing Fay. My grandfather's students felt they were learning 'the real' Fu Style from the original grandmaster; so they would not dare to take a lesson from my father. After my grandfather passed away, no one had attained the experience and qualifications of my father, but that did not change their minds. Then after 1949, the government in China was completely different. This changed the overall picture of martial arts in China, making it even more difficult for people to seek out qualified instructors.

### Differences

All of these facts bring me to a unique understanding of the "Old Fu Style" and the "New Fu Style." Other people can say something about the difference, but they don't have the experience to really know what they're talking about. Thus, when others try to differentiate between old and new Fu Style, it's just meaningless babble.

Because I am uniquely qualified to discuss new and old, I can start by posing the question: were the changes made to the original Fu Style good or bad?

The original Fu Style of my grandfather was about innovation. Fu Zhen song studied every style of Tai Chi (though most were not separated by family names at that point); he studied BaGua from and with most of the best practitioners in China; he studied iron body techniques from

hard styles, strikes and movements of the top martial artists, joint locks, take-downs, throws, weapons, you name it, and combined every valuable piece of information into his style. This was the precipice of martial arts innovation!

Because my father changed Fu Style, and many other second generation Fu Style practitioners (Sun Pao Kung, Liang Qiang Ya, Lin Chao Zhen) also made changes, the changes have to be analyzed as to whether they were good for the style or bad for the style. The original Fu Style could be compared to the innovation of the first computer. There had never been



anything like it. It was huge and complicated, and exceptionally capable of getting a job done. But when the second-generation computer came out, it was so much better that it made the first generation look oafish and lumbering. The second-generation computer was smaller, smarter and even more capable. We call that

### "development."

My father was taught how to innovate by the greatest martial arts innovator in the world, my grandfather Fu Zhen song. After training with him for 40 years, my father was certainly qualified to innovate the style himself. My father changed Fu Style to further **develop** it into something smarter, smaller and even more capable. Fu Wing Fay's first major change was in the use of **Waist Skill**. This is the flexible bending forward, backward and sideways, and the use of the waist to not only create power but to move, slip and control both one's self and his opponent.

My father also made Fu Style **much softer** than the way my grandfather taught. Fu Wing Fay eliminated the iron body training, and also developed the recoiling fa jing. For example, a Fu Style punch should go from soft to hard, and instantly back to soft; this delivers a whip-like punch that cannot be easily ceased by the opponent. It

also takes a special teacher and much practice to acquire this special skill. Understanding that the internal martial arts are very difficult to learn, my father worked for many years to systematize the learning into **beginner, intermediate** and **advanced**. He changed some of the postures in the forms so they made more sense for applications, and he smoothed out many details that needed development.

Because I learned a great deal about the "old" Fu Style, and learned all of the 'developed' Fu Style from my father, I too have made some changes to my family's art. I have made some changes to postures, tried to further develop the softness in Fu Style, and worked even more diligently on the beginner's skill progression in Tai Chi, BaGua and Hsing-Yi. I have also separated power in our style into four levels:

1. Arm Power – this is the power of external strength
2. Arm & Waist – this is the beginning level of internal power, but mostly still external strength
3. Arm, Waist and Opposite Movement – this level of power comes mostly in the intermediate level, when students can coordinate opposite movement (waist turns right and the right arms moves left) and breathing
4. Arm, Waist, Opposite Movement and Flying Power – this is the advanced level of power issue, when internal power is manifested with the feet off the ground

An important point both my father and I have worked into Fu Style is that of **time**. As the times change, which they will always do, the martial arts must change with them. In 2006, people do not have five or ten hours each day to practice. This leads to a different type of martial arts study. Also, people carry more ambient tension in their bodies than before; so merely the

development of relaxation techniques to be widely used becomes very important.

Here's a little story to emphasize the difference between my grandfather and me:

When my grandfather was in his 50's, he was a very powerful and famous martial artist in China. One day he was walking down a path when he faltered just a little because of a tree root growing out of the path. My grandfather was incorrigible to say the least, and would not be overpowered by anyone or anything, much less a stupid tree root. So he mustered up his anger and kicked the tree root hard, snapping it in half. This may have satiated his overbearing mind for the time being, but Fu Zhen song had problems in that leg for the rest of his life. He walked with a limp from that day until he died.

My grandfather had hands like knives—he could chop a wooden table in two. His fingers were like iron rods—he could poke them right through a person.

As one gets older, the body gets stiff. If one chooses to practice hard kung fu and iron body training, it will damage the body, making it older than the years it already has. I'm not interested in hard kung fu practice. If someone wants to chop a table in half, they should use a hatchet or an ax.

My focus is on health in martial arts. We practice softness so that our bodies are younger than their age. Instead of practicing to make our hands like iron, we should use that time instead to promote health, wellness and flexibility. This is smarter, hence it should be considered "developed."

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