

Subject: Yang family Qigong

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I believe that the implication that the Dong family did not learn a qigong set from Yang is probably correct. Neither Dong Hu Ling (Ying Jie's son) nor T. Y. Pang (a student of Hu Ling and Ying Jie) taught a "set" of qigong to any classes I was aware of while they were in Hawaii. When Dong Zeng Chen (Hu Ling's son) first came to Hawaii to teach he also did not teach a qigong set as part of the taijiquan practice.

He did teach a separate qigong set which he had learned from someone outside of the family while he was growing up in Hebei. But this was not a "Yang style set".

Having said the above, I would also like to say that Dong Hu Ling did teach me several standing postures which would fall under the heading of qigong. And Hu Ling told us a story of how his father would hold Yang Chen Fu's coat while the master practiced. This was a form of qigong.

It is my opinion that you can do qigong in any physical position and probably at any time. I view qigong as a natural part of any internal martial arts practice. While it can be separated and isolated from taijiquan (for example), it also is totally integrated within the taijiquan movements and energy flows. I do not believe that you can do proper taijiquan without encompassing qigong.

So to look for a Yang style qigong set, all you have to do is to look at the Yang style taijiquan set itself. I'm not sure what is to be gained by trying to isolate the qigong from the taijiquan set. Perhaps you are isolating part of the basic building blocks?

While I'm mouthing off... I think that talk of isolating "silk reeling exercises" falls into a similar vein. The silk reeling is always an integral part of the taijiquan set. While you can isolate it, in order to practice a basic building block, you can do silk reeling in any physical movement. So you can make up your own silk reeling "sets". It doesn't matter.

The important part of qigong sets or silk reeling sets is the quality of the movement and the energy. The outward shape (the physical boundaries within which you confine the movement) is only a container for the internal activity. You can pour the "water" into any shaped vessel.

Back to the subject at hand... Based on my experiences with teachers in the Dong lineage I believe that you can progress quite well without isolating qigong into a set. When you are doing the taijiquan set you are encompassing qigong. If you want to isolate the qigong you could pick any movement in the set, hold it in a static posture, and circulate the qi from that base.

Aloha,

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