

## Paul Brennan is God sent

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Recently I exchanged email messages with TC Moses of Kentucky. He recommended Chen Yanlin's [Taiji Compiled: The Boxing, Saber, Sword, Pole, and Sparring](#) translated by Paul Brennan. I googled Paul Brennan and was pleasantly surprised to come across [Brennan Translation](#) that I consider a translated treasure of [Tai Chi](#) (Taiji) classics.



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*Brennan Translation*



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At *Brennan Translation*, you can find out Tai Chi classics written by Tai Chi sages Huang Baijia, Yang Banhou, Li Yiyu, Sun Lutang, Wu Tunan, Chen Yanlin, Yang Chengpu, and many others. The oldest book was *Biography of Wang Zhengnan*, also known as *Boxing Methods of the Internal School*, penned in 1676. Yang Banhou's *Explaining Taiji Principles* was written in 1876. Li Yiyu's *Hao Weizhen to Cherish* was authored in 1881. Most were scripted in the early 20th century. Paul Brennan started to publish online in Feb. 2011 at WorldPress.com. His first publication was Jin Yiming's [Dragon Shape Sword](#). His latest work was also Jin Yiming's [Single Defense Saber](#) on Sept. 19, 2015. Currently, there are 40 translated books online.

Tai Chi classics were written mostly in [wenyan wen](#) or Classical Chinese, a formal way of writing Chinese since ancient time. Wenyan wen is very economical with words, reads like poetry, and hard to understand unless a reader is well trained. Today, most Chinese cannot read or write wenyan wen. It is remarkable that Paul Brennan can fully understand it and translate it into English without losing the meaning. Wenyan wen started about 700 B.C.E. and went through a few progressions and the older it is, the harder it is to comprehend. In some of the Tai Chi classics, authors referred to ancient literature or writings transcribed in really old wenyan wen, which makes the translation even more daunting. Paul was still able to provide good renditions in English. Some of the volumes are expansive and I imagine that it would have taken months or even years to complete. Below is the current list of the published manuals:

1. [Biography of Wang Zhengnan by Huang Baijia](#), 1676
2. [Explaining Taiji Principles by Yang Banhou](#), 1875

3. [For Hao Weizhen to Cherish handwritten by Li Yiyu, 1881](#)
4. [A Study of Xingyi Boxing by Sun Lutang, 1915](#)
5. [A Study of Bagua Boxing by Sun Lutang, 1917](#)
6. [Illustrated Handbook for Tantui by He Guangxian & Hu Jian, 1917](#)
7. [The Art of Xingyi Boxing by Li Jianqiu, 1920](#)
8. [Selected Subtleties of the Xingyi Boxing Art by Liu Dianchen, 1920](#)
9. [A Study of Taiji Boxing by Sun Lutang, 1921](#)
10. [Taiji Boxing Postures with Drawings and Explanations by Xu Yusheng, 1920](#)
11. [Authentic Explanations of Martial Arts Concepts by Sun Lutang, 1924](#)
12. [The Art of Taiji Boxing by Chen Weiming, 1925](#)
13. [Simple Introduction to Taiji Boxing by Xu Zhiyi, 1927](#)
14. [A Study of Bagua Sword by Sun Lutang, 1927](#)
15. [Taiji Sword by Chen Weiming, 1928](#)
16. [Answering Questions About Taiji by Chen Weiming, 1929](#)
17. [Bafan Boxing of the Yue School by Wang Xinwu, 1930](#)
18. [Methods of Applying Taiji Boxing by Yang Chengfu, 1931](#)
19. [Footwork-Training Set by Wu Zhiqing, 1931](#)
20. [Boxing Methods of the Zhao School: Illustrated Cannon Boxing Set by Wu Zhiqing, 1931](#)
21. [Essentials of the Wudang Sword Art by Huang Yuanxiu, 1931](#)
22. [Dragon Shape Sword by Jin Yiming, 1932](#)
23. [Single Defense-Saber by Jin Yiming, 1932](#)
24. [A Detailed Look at the Theories of Xingyi, Bagua, and Taiji by Sun Lutang, 1932](#)
25. [Authentic Zimen Boxing by Hu Yisheng, 1933](#)

26. [Taiji Boxing Illustrated by Cai Yizhong, 1933](#)
27. [The Taiji Unfathomable Saber of the Internal School by Wu Tunan, 1934](#)
28. [Kunwu Sword Manual by Li Lingxiao, 1935](#)
29. [The Taiji Boxing of Mr. Wu Jianquan by Chen Zhenmin & Ma Yueliang, 1935](#)
30. [Skills & Essentials of Yang Style Taiji / Martial Arts Discussions by Huang Yuanxiu, 1936](#)
31. [Taiji Boxing by Gu Ruzhang, 1936](#)
32. [Taiji Compiled: The Boxing, Saber, Sword, Pole, and Sparring by Chen Yanlin, 1943](#)

## [Parts 1-6: \[Introductory Material, Solo Set, Pushing Hands\]](#)

### [Part 7: Taiji Sword](#)

### [Part 8: Taiji Saber](#)

### [Part 9: Taiji Thrusting Pole](#)

### [Part 10: Taiji Two-Person Sparring Set](#)

## [Appendix: Breakdown Chart of Taiji Boxing Theory](#)

33. [Descended from Wudang – The Taiji Boxing Art by Li Shoujian, 1944](#)
34. [Taiji Boxing by Sun Jianyun, 1957](#)
35. [Fitness Techniques on a Bed & Scientific Baduanjin by Yin Qianhe, 1958](#)
36. [Taiji Saber by Fu Zhongwen & Cai Longyun, 1959](#)
37. [Shaolin Boxing Manual by Long Zixiang \[with comparison text\], 1960](#)
38. [The Art of the Startling-Rainbow Sword by Yin Qianhe, 1960](#)
39. [Prolonging Life by Yin Qianhe, 1961](#)
40. [Wu Yuxiang Style Taiji Boxing by Hao Shaoru, 1963](#)

Aside from the translation, Paul Brennan painstakingly took the time to scan covers and inside pages of some books and posted them online. There are precious photos of Grandmasters posting the movements. He also typed Chinese characters and placed them on top of the English version

paragraph by paragraph. It is great for anyone who wants to further research these manuscripts. Most of the books contain valuable Tai Chi principles and detailed descriptions of Tai Chi movements, including some with illustrations. It is a great resource for someone who is interested in finding the deeper meaning and techniques of Tai Chi chuan or internal [martial arts](#).

I was overjoyed by this website. I would like to report how the creative process was done and what type of the challenges that Paul encountered. But he courteously declined my interview request with a graceful message that “The whole point of my translation blog is to allow the original authors to speak for themselves, and so to do them justice I ought to try to stay in the background. “ No wonder T C Moses called Paul Brennan “God sent”.

## SUGGESTED LINKS

- [Grandmaster Zhong Zhenshan on “You Yi Qiu Rou, Wu Yi Cheng Gang”](#)
- [Tai Chi, Parkinson’s disease, calligraphy, and harp](#)
- [Active Parks – the Birmingham way](#)
- [B2R is a great free tool to reduce stress](#)
- [Meditation can improve your brain health](#)



**Violet Li**

Tai Chi Examiner