

**THE LEGEND**

The mastery of the Kung-Fu system knows as the Northern Shaolin Mi Zong is the guarded legacy of the Foh’s clan. Also known as the Foh’s Fist, which, by the time it developed upon Foh Yuan-Chia of the last era, had bequest for seven generations. Like the Northern kung-fu styles of Tai Chu, Erh Long, Fan Tze, Pah Kwa, Cha Tsuan and Tan Tui, it belongs to the “long-fist” form of martial arts. The viability of the Mi Zong School lies in the alacrity and shrewd precision of its movements, which, precipitous while in attack, the perception of vulnerable spots it often puts the opponent on a hard line of self-defense.

The Mi Zong Luo Han Style is a branch of the Mi Zong School and is characterized by the peculiar versatility of the hand movements and footwork involved. With markedly fleeting movements and nimble jumps, a typical Mi Zong Luo Han forms metamorphoses from a side-blow to a flying kick in the mid-air, or to a sweeping stroke beneath the legs. In the face of such unpredictable moves, now upwards, now downwards, the opponent is often left at his wits’ end. To top it all, every maneuver is so minutely devised that is transcends prediction. With the hands, eyes, body, and feet in one coordinated motion of agility and swiftness, the practitioner can deal far-reaching blows. Designed to strike from a wide range, the form has a flexible and extensive stretch. Beneath the ostensibly fragile stance lurks a tremendous force from which the very potency and strength generate. This is what truly makes Mi Zong Luo Han a renowned style of kung-fu of Northern China.

The Mi Zong Luo Han Style dates back to time immemorial. Its origin has traced to Chuong Hsien and Nan Pei of the Hopeh Province. In those days teachers and students alike treasured and confined the art to themselves. Consequently, it became a family inheritance and was rarely taught to outsiders. There were numerous followers of the arts in northern China, but it was the Grand Master Ye Yu-Ting who first brought and revealed this art to the people in the south.

Grand Master Ye Yu-Ting, alias Chuk-Chuan Ye, came from Chuong Hsien of Hopeh Province in northern China and was born in the times of Emperor Kwang Shui of the Ching Dynasty. He started learning Mi Zong Luo Han, the family legacy, from his father at the age of seven. By the time he was fourteen, he had achieved great stability in stature and immense versatility in body and limbs. In furtherance of his skills, he practiced Mi Zong Luo Han under the pupilage of his uncle, Ye Sheh-tsun of the Ye’s clan. Endowed with high intelligence and evincing sheer dedication, which made practice of the art all weather, night and day preoccupation, he won the favor of his uncle. Intensely gratified that he had found a successor, the old man unreservedly taught Grand Master Ye all his skills within a few years.

When Grand Master Ye reached the age of twenty, he started teaching martial arts in his hometown, Chuong Hsien, and neighboring Nan Pei County. Upon the instructions of his uncle, he became the chief of guards in the All Victory Security Service of the East Gate at the age of twenty-four. It was a time of segmentation of the country by the warlords after the collapse of the Ching Dynasty. A civil war was rife. Across the northeastern parts and within and beyond the Great Walls, bandits spread like a plague. They robbed all over the place; plundering and wreaking havoc with unsurpassed vehemence.

Viewing Master Ye as a fledgling, they were filled with spite and tried to waylay his guarded consignment. As they soon found out, the debut of Master Ye on horseback was a stunning shock. His mastery of Mi Zong Luo Han sent them fleeing under the grass. It took them little time to learn to scurry away at the mere sight of the “All Victory” banner, less still to fall to pieces at the mere mention of Grand Master Ye’s name. After the proprietor of the All Victory Security died, and the highway robberies dwindled away, Grand Master Ye grew tired of his job. It so happened the General Huang Wei-hsin of Peking was reorganizing his troops to fight the northern warlord at the time and was determined to make martial arts part of the army training. He came to hear of Grand Master Ye and secured as the chief martial arts instructor of the first Company.

On his promotion to Commander of the Peking Army, he appointed Grand Master Ye as the army instructor in martial arts. Grand Master Ye was given three promotions within a span of three years, after which he stayed on in his job for another seven years. General Huang subsequently quit working under General Chang Hsieh-liang, son of General Chang Jor-Lin. having held his job for another three years; Grand Master Ye resigned on the pretext of family commitments. After a while, however, he was again courted by General Chang Chung-chuang of the Shantung Provincial Army, who appointed him as army instructor. Having served there for two years he resigned upon General Chang’s death, and migrated southwards to Shanghai on his own. He became allied to the central Chin Woo Athletic Association of Shaolin class in the South China Athletic Association.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, Grand Master Ye moved on to Guongzhou Wan, located 242 nautical miles to the southwest of Hong Kong, where he taught at the Cosmopolitan Lion Dance Institute and Sze Yeng New Martial Arts Center. After the war, he was invited by members of the South China Athletic Association to return to his post in Hong Kong. Moved by their earnestness he made a comeback. From then on the remaining Head Instructor of Shaolin Class at the South China Association for nearly thirty years, within which period he turned out a stream of students. His end, alas all too soon at the age of seventy. He died after a brief illness in December 1962, surrounded by his devoted and heartbroken students at his bedside. He was buried in the Tsuen Wan Chinese Permanent Cemetery. Buried with him was the life he had as a renowned Master of Mi Zong Luo Han, but never our profound grief at the loss of this great master.

Grand Master Ye’s death did not mark his end to posterity. Together with their students, his devout disciples Chi-hung Marr, Johnny Kwong Ming Lee, and Raymond Wong have since proudly shouldered the responsibility of propagating the art of Mi Zong Luo Han at home and aboard.