

# Amicale

Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan

September 2014

No. 77

**Tuishou  
Course  
in Taiwan,  
April 2014**

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**Ouagadougou,  
next episode...  
but not the end**

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**A Master...  
but which one?**

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**CentrÂge**

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楊家秘傳

# EDITORIAL

Taiji is a flame that every one of us has experienced at some point in our lives. On that very first encounter, we burnt with enthusiasm. Then, it's about making sure it's not just a flash in the pan. We know that out of all the people who one day start Taiji, very few will manage to keep that initial spark, that brightens our days, alive. The *turn-over*, required in our associations, does indicate that "older" long-standing members of the association are very few compared to the total number of newcomers.

So what can we do to keep that flame alive?

The articles in this bulletin already provide us with a convincing answer. Even before I read these articles, I heard various stories of people's stay in Taiwan last spring.

An account that was at times exciting and also moving, precisely because it was describing a rediscovery of this art, in a new light, amazed, just like the first day.

Could one of the secrets to this passion be "to go out and see how things work elsewhere"? I believe that those of you who went beyond their usual training routine, to "wrestle with" the "stranger", whether it was to practice Tuishou in Taiwan, teach in Ouagadougou, or meditate with a master, will agree with me.

Being open to novelty and experience it as a real shaking up of what we hold to be true, being in a mental disposition where the unknown is seen not as a wound, but as a gift: "*Song! Song!*"<sup>1</sup> could sum it up, and this would keep the sacred fire of our practice alive and make sure, as the poet René Char wrote, that "for us, lightning lasts"...

**Françoise Cordaro**

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1. Relax! Relax!

# From the President's Desk ,

IT IS NOW the autumn equinox, a time when the Yin and Yang are in equal measure.

We are also about to gather for our annual Rencontres, which will take place in Sablé-sur-Sarthe from 8 to 11 November. These gatherings are organised by the association Aramis from Le Mans. As usual, many of you will participate in this yearly event.

The new fiscal year started on 1 September. Please remember to pay for your Amicale membership as soon as possible, or with the treasurer during the Rencontres. (Membership form and subscription to the Bulletin, chapter "L'Amicale", on the website).

I wish to thank the Administrative board, the Bureau, as well as all the members of the various Committees and Commissions for all the work they have done this year.

As for the Bulletin, a special thank you to our editor, Françoise Cordaro, and to Michel Ségal, responsible for the lay-out, as well as to the Bulletin Committee and the Translation Commission for making the Bulletin available both in French and in English.

Let's extend our thanks to the Website Committee, for updating day after day all the news concerning events and courses, for uploading bulletins, associations listings, etc.

The Archives' commission also worked very well. This year, five associations were provided with the hard drive containing the Amicale's archives.

Two hundred and ninety three LRB (Little Red Book), in their new edition, were also sold.

If you are interested in purchasing it, contact our treasurer, Alain Coussedière.

Reminder: The "Little Red Book" was newly edited to answer increasing demand, the stock having run out. The names of some of the movements were retranslated and improved by Sabine Metzlé and Claudy Jeanmougin.

This booklet is an extremely useful tool for those who practice our style and can be easily carried around and consulted thanks to its small format.

Two new associations have asked to become members. They will be joining the ninety other members of our dynamic Amicale.

The agenda for the General Assembly that will be held in Sablé on Sunday 9 November at 8.30 p.m. will be communicated to you via the October administrative note.

Make sure your association designates a representative for the General Assembly votes as well as your potential candidacy for the Administrative Council for the year 2014-2015.

I hope you had the pleasure to attend one of the summer courses on offer, and, with autumn on its way, I wish you a regular Taichi practice for the year to come.

*Jean-Michel Fraigneau*

## BULLETIN DU YANGJIA MICHUAN TAIJI QUAN

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# A Few Guiding Marks

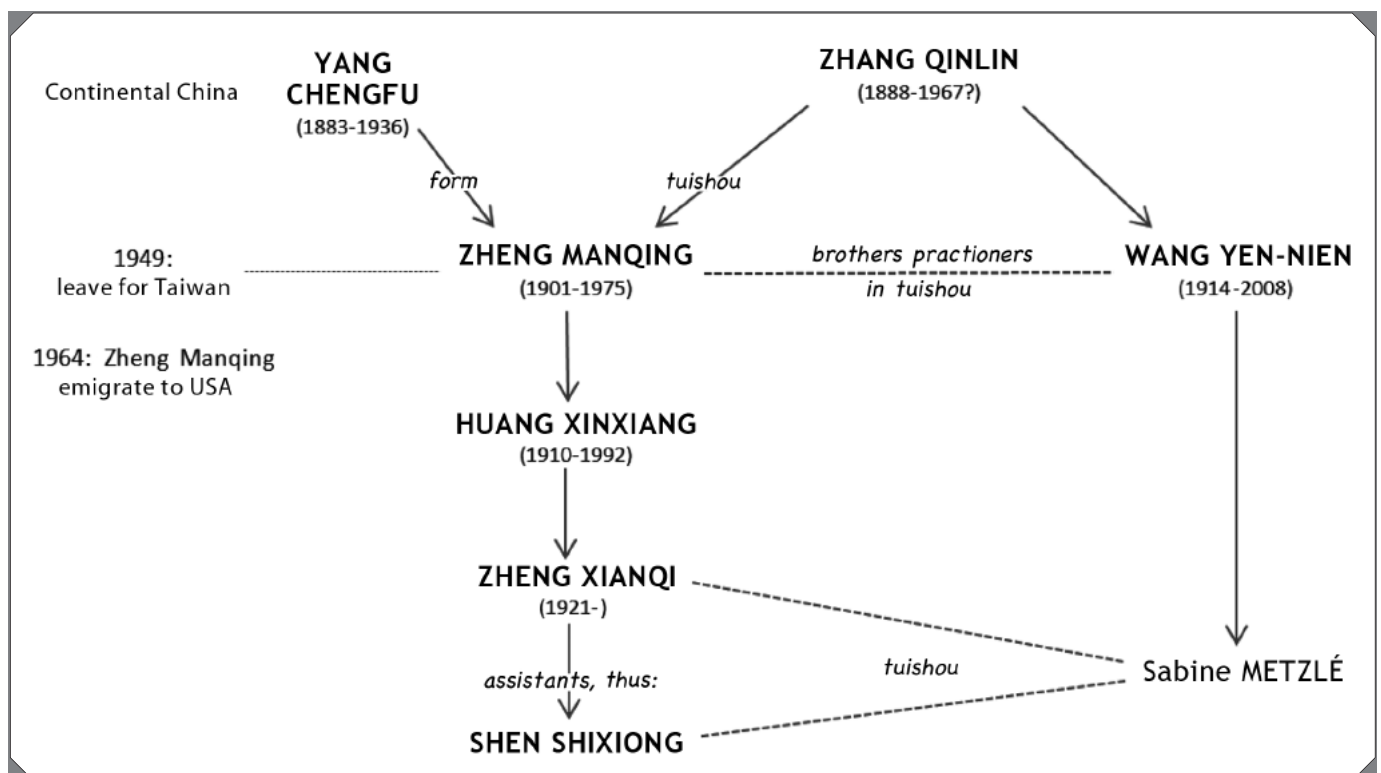
Sonia Sladek

IN TAIPEI, even without speaking a word of Chinese, with the exception of *ni hao* (hello) and *xie xie* (thank you), nor read a character, which is my case, it was easy for us to move around and get our bearings. And to do it fast, even when our guides, Michel Douiller and Sabine Metzlé, were not with us. However, to remember the name of Master Zheng Xianqi, with whom we worked each morning, was almost insurmountable. Never mind, to remember their names, let us write them down: that gets even more complicated, since each person may have several names (one indicating his/her position as a Taiji practitioner and another one being his/her surname). Last, in the Roman alphabet, the same name is declined in two versions (with their variations) because of the difficulty in transcribing the sounds of the Chinese language. That is why we are lost very quickly in the intricacies of the relationships between the styles and schools of Taiji Quan ... names are usually written in *pinyin*, which is the official system of transcription from Mandarin Chinese into the Latin alphabet (thus, the choice of the chart below). But in French, the pronunciation is different, which explains why Zheng Manqing (*pinyin*) and Cheng Man-ch'ing (Wade-Giles) are one and the same person.

Basic exercises to prepare for Tuishou, used by the group Laoshi Zheng Xianqi at the Peace Memorial Park, were created by Huang Xinxian. He was inspired by White Crane Boxing, of which he was a specialist.

Shen Shixiong, who develops the “theory of the five arcs” in his article translated by Sabine Metzlé, worked mostly with Huang XinXian and Zheng Xianqi. He is well known in the family of the Yangjia Michuan: some of you have even worked with him in the past ... as he traveled several times in French-speaking Europe as a guest professor to enliven a course, under his surname of Shen Shen Yan. In fact, the term *Shixiong* (*Shi xiong*) means “brother practioner”, “assistant”, and covers all the assistants of Laoshi Zheng Xianqi.

Below is a chart with some guiding marks of the relationships. It is by no means a genealogical description of styles but solely a simplified formula showing the ties between the authors and the people mentioned in the articles that follow, in particular their ties through the practice of Tuishou.



# Journey to the land of Tuishou

Corinne Zerbib

*Translated by Monique Brodie*



*This article is an adapted version of a dissertation that I wrote during my stay in Taiwan, as part of the Chinese martial art instructor internal certification of the Wushu French Federation. This is a very personal view of this exceptional experience, which is not shared by every participant.*

I HAD heard of this like a journey on Mars, never imagining I would have been part of the next space shuttle. Thus I was lucky, despite my young experience in Taiji Quan, to be among the 15 people Sabine Metzlé and Michel Douiller took for a Tuishou workshop in Taipei, from 10 to 26 April 2014.

On the agenda: Tuishou practice every morning in the aptly named Peace Park in the town center from 7 am to noon. Then, on option: sight-seeing, free time or, or more Tuishou in other schools in the afternoon and the evening.

The way the workshop operated was simple but efficient: every morning, Master Zheng and his assistants, who practice Chen Man Ching's Yang Style, welcome us for a first session of warm-ups and exercises we will repeat tirelessly during the fortnight. Later, more assistants as well as students from the school gradually arrive in the morning and come to do exercises, or free Tuishou with us.

## **Laoshi Zheng Xian Qi**

From time to time, Master Zheng, 93 years old, who watches over the troops from his bench (his assistant cleans it up every morning), gets up and, with difficulty, walks towards us to come and practice with one or a few of us.



Despite his disability, Laoshi has lost none of his Qi. When the exercise is well done, he expresses his satisfaction by saying "Ok, Ok, Ok" laughing out loud, because he always smiles or even burst out laughing regardless of how well we do in the exercise. Even though the greatest respect is required, there is still room for humour and sometimes genuine laughter. Although he looks distant at times, the master always pays continual attention to us, in a very caring way.

In addition, Taiwanese joie de vivre is contagious: Taiji Quan is certainly a serious matter but why should its practice be taken too seriously. It is really about “playing” Taiji. In fact, we were all really surprised to see them talk to each other and burst out laughing during warm-ups.

Sometimes, Professor Shen Shixiong comes to teach more or less informally. Besides, one evening, we went to a playground in another park of the town to practice Tuishou with him and his students in a truly interesting format: he watches over every single student, individually, 10 minutes at a time, one of his assistants carefully timing.

As to both our teachers, Sabien Metzlé and Michel Douiller, they guide and mentor the group of 15, rather different people, with great kindness and availability, people coming from different walks of life and especially of very different levels. During our stay, in all circumstances and when necessary, Sabine would translate from Chinese to French. With her legendary kindness, she always makes herself available to do the exercise again and explain it thoroughly.

In addition to very short nights, pains in the legs are nearly unbearable during the first week then go away progressively but never totally disappear.

The Taiwanese assistants welcome us with great kindness and practice with every one of us, adapting exercises and pedagogy to each according to the level and what needs to be improved.

Most of the Taiwanese practitioners have an acute sense of pedagogy. For every “bad” reaction or push, they do it again carefully and point out the possible answer(s), then do it once again slowly while leaving the other a chance to experiment. Furthermore, when their partner makes the “right” move at last, they fake to be ejected by this formidable transformation, stomp their feet loudly and shout “Yes! It’s OK”. They also compliment easily when the move is correct, compliments we truly understand even in Chinese!

Another specificity of Taiwanese teachers and practitioners is that each of them has their own specialty. Shen Shixiong is specialized in the spin from the wrist to the ankle, and analyses each move through this prism. Another only works the

Corinne.



Fajin, a third one taught us an hour lesson about the fundamental principle of Tuishou, concentration: “Look your partner straight in the eyes!” This hyper-specialisation is surprising and makes us wonder: is our occidental way of taking up all the techniques and principles really the best one?

During practice, we would hear and repeat the same words: *song* (relax), *kua* (hip), *hua* (transform), *kai-he* (opening-closing), *circle* (circular movement), and *centre* (central axis).

We looked at many other techniques and concepts during the course, such as the Fajin, the Fu (the push without pushing)...

My level does not enable me to fully address all those complex notions so here are just a few personal commentaries on the fundamental Taiwanese style.

## ***Song, song, song***

*Song*: “Relax!” These words are repeated endlessly, so much that we chant it non-stop during practice.

*Song* of the arms, *song* of the shoulders, *song* of the spine, *kua*, knees, *song* is everywhere, all the time. Our number one enemy is muscle tension and we must constantly dislodge it from our body.

Although this endeavour is not new to us, many of us were surprised at how the Taiwanese were constantly reminding us of it. “Relax your back”, advised one of the assistants after simply having pressed his hand on my arm.

It isn't that easy. It's a long way before one can go from automatic tension to dynamic relaxation, to the supple, yet firm movement, and apply it to the whole body.

## You said *kua* ?

However, the *Kua(s)* was one of the main discoveries of this course. As a student, and then as a novice teacher, I heard, and in turn, repeated: "Shift your pelvis!" During Sabine Metzlé's summer 2013 course which was focused on the study of Classical texts, the subject had already startled me: a discussion started around the word "waist" (*Yao*) which appears in several texts.

*Kua* refers to the acetabulofemoral joint, which Taiwanese mark by pressing down unhesitatingly on the fold of the groin. Once we know where the *kua* is, we have to mobilise it in every movement. The Taiwanese assistants did not really give us a choice, and besides, the notion of moving the *kua* is omnipresent in their commentaries and practice.

The second stage was even more difficult: We had to relax the *kua*. There is no point bending the articulation if it remains rigid or locked. Taiwanese use the word *kai-he*: opening-closing. Therefore, it's not about bending, but closing and opening. This motion is part of the overall opening and closing of the whole body, from top to bottom, right to left, through the *Dantian*, the fundamental core of the movement.

## Your knee must go "grrr, grrr, grrr"



This commentary on the part of the young assistant, despite his good English, was quite obscure initially. "Your knee must creek", he said. He squatted, grabbed the kneecap of the front leg and tried to move it. Once the knee was somewhat relaxed, the assistant, fully concentrated, pressed the palm of his hand on the kneecap and I felt the "grr grr grr", my knee was creaking! If the muscles are tense, then the knee will be locked. If the tension is released from the muscles, the tendons are then used, producing the slight grinding noise.

## *Hua* : transform

The exchange with the various assistants often starts off with some free Tuishou practice, focusing on a Tuishou exercise or technique: how to transform a push? We explore and repeat an infinity of solutions until we more or less understand the principle of the movement, or until we drop. This research, based on repetition, freeze frames, tiny details, but also long explanations, constitutes in my opinion, the very essence of the Tuishou learning process.

Whatever the solution, we always bring into play the same fundamentals. "Errors" always have the same roots, starting with a lack of relaxation, often provoked by fear, conscious or not, which triggers reflexes of tensing, recoil, or blocks when facing our partner's push, or even at the mere thought of the push.

Searching for a solution is a journey, a unique story that takes place between two people who try to harmonise their respective practices. What a joy it was to share this journey with our Taiwanese partners.

## Pedagogy without the words

Understanding each other wasn't a given, since Taiwanese, just like the French, don't speak much English. Safe for a few exceptions, they only know at best a few words, particularly our morning teacher who teaches warm-up exercises.

We have to find other means to understand each other. Aside from the Chinese expressions such as *song*, *kua*, which we all manage to memorise fast, the teacher finds very imaginative ways to communicate.

He shows us of course, but also touches, makes us do a movement by grabbing the shoulder, the foot or the arm, shows us what not to do, draws on the ground with a stick... In the end, this wordless way of teaching is refreshing compared to our way of teaching, often centred around long monologues. But we are not the only ones: some Taiwanese teachers also do enjoy very long speeches...

This exchange without the words is a path we should definitely explore, interesting both for students and for teachers: we must use our eyes to “detect” the movement, the right detail.



#### **Chen Mingho, our morning teacher**

*He welcomes us every morning and makes us do warm-up exercises, always the same ones, as well as a few other exercises that he then practices with each of us. A former tennis fan, Chen Mingho has (only!) been practicing Taiji Quan for 9 years. He doesn't speak a word of English but always manages to be understood. Our group particularly appreciated his smile, his dedication and availability towards every one of us.*

## **Tuishou or Form?**

*“I only practice Tuishou to improve my health, not to fight” (Chen Mingho).*

In France, Tuishou is often considered as an option of Taiji Quan, reserved to the experienced. Indeed, we often hear the students sigh every time a teacher mentions Tuishou exercises.

This journey to Taiwan confirmed a certainty: the practice of Taiji Quan is not as relevant without Tuishou. Tuishou is what enables us to check and improve the loosening of the body, the quality of the posture, of the centring, and in the end, of the connection with oneself. The relation and the interaction with the partner will help us

to recentre on ourselves. Because Tuishou is not about confrontation with someone else, it's about approaching our own practice, and ourselves, in a more acute way, without concessions.

Without this, Taiji would only be an activity that's just “good for the health”, and its essence would only ever stay theoretical.

I thought that the result of my trip to Taiwan would only be shown in an improved practice of my martial arts techniques. However, what I am taking home above anything else, are numerous questions concerning my practice in general, and the form in particular. ☺

## **Acknowledgements**

*I wish to express my gratitude to my two teachers, Charles Damm and Sabine Metzlé, who taught me and without whom I would have never had this amazing experience. A special thank you also to Michel Douiller, co-organiser, for his efficiency and kindness.*





# The Taiji Quan: How to Maintain and Cultivate Vitale Energy

Shen Shixiong – July/August 2012

*Translated from the Chinese by Sabine Metzlé*

*Translated by Leland Tracy*

*Shen Shixiong lives in Taipei (Taiwan), where he has practised Chen Man Ching style Taiji Quan for almost 50 years. In the course of his practice, his research and his teaching have been focused on Tuishou (Push Hands). A comparison with the bow and arrow can provide some avenues for progress in working with a partner, even if one is not necessarily interested in working on Fajin (the action of the bow as it sends the arrow).*

*Those not familiar with archery will find an illustration with comments at the end of the article.*

When used as a technique for improving health the focus of taiji quan is more on developing one's internal strength than on the external movements, which is why particular attention is paid to the breathing, but the respiration in taiji quan depends on the various phases of the practice: opening (*kai*), closing (*he*), gathering [energy] (*xii*) and releasing [energy] (*fa*). In any case, we are not talking about simple ventilation.

The terms "opening", "closing", "gathering" and "releasing" are to be considered in pairs, the first pair refers to the external aspect of taiji quan and the second pair has an internal signification.

With regards to the external aspects of opening (*kai*) and closing (*he*): when practicing slowly the movement can actually be broken down as follows: opening (*kai*), turning (*zhuan*), closing (*he*), turning (*zhuan*).

With respect to the internal signification of gathering (*xii*) and releasing (*fa*): when practicing slowly the movement actually happens in four

phases: gathering (*xii*), softening (*song*), releasing (*fa*), softening (*song*).

In practice, the internal and external aspects must work together harmoniously.

Let me now present the theory of the 5 arcs. The human body is made of a line, which I will call the 5 arcs (of strength); the spinal column is the central arc and the four limbs are the four lateral arcs. The *Dazhui* (the pressure point below the 7th cervical vertebra), and the coccyx are the extremities of the central arc, while the 'handle' of the arc is situated at the level of the kidneys (*Mingmen*).

The four lateral arcs are the two arms and legs, the shoulders and the wrists being the extremities of the first arc, with the elbow being the 'handle'. The hips and the ankles are the extremities of the arc formed by the legs, with the knee as the 'handle'. The area around the kidneys (*Mingmen*) is the central pivot of the four lateral arcs.

Developing the arcs of the arms is a fundamental part of internal work. A technique called ‘wringing’ is helpful in accomplishing this. In this technique the elbows, shoulders and wrists are extended simultaneously while twisting the length of the arm – wrists to elbows – elbows to shoulders (the elbow being the middle of the arc and the shoulder and the wrist being the extremities). With regular practice, this technique can help develop the sensation of an arc in the arms, which will naturally develop the same sensation in the legs.

With time and practice, the internal and the external will come together to form a whole.

## Five Steps to Mastering the Arc: from stiff to empty

### 1 - Stiff

The five arcs are disjointed, the central arc (the spinal column) is like a rigid pole, there is no string.

### 2 - Stiff, but with a little flexibility

The five arcs are still disjointed, but the central arc now has some flexibility, there is still no string.

### 3 - Relaxed and Rooted

The five arcs now become three (the legs, the arms and the spinal column, which are now connected). The central arc is now flexible, but still without a string.

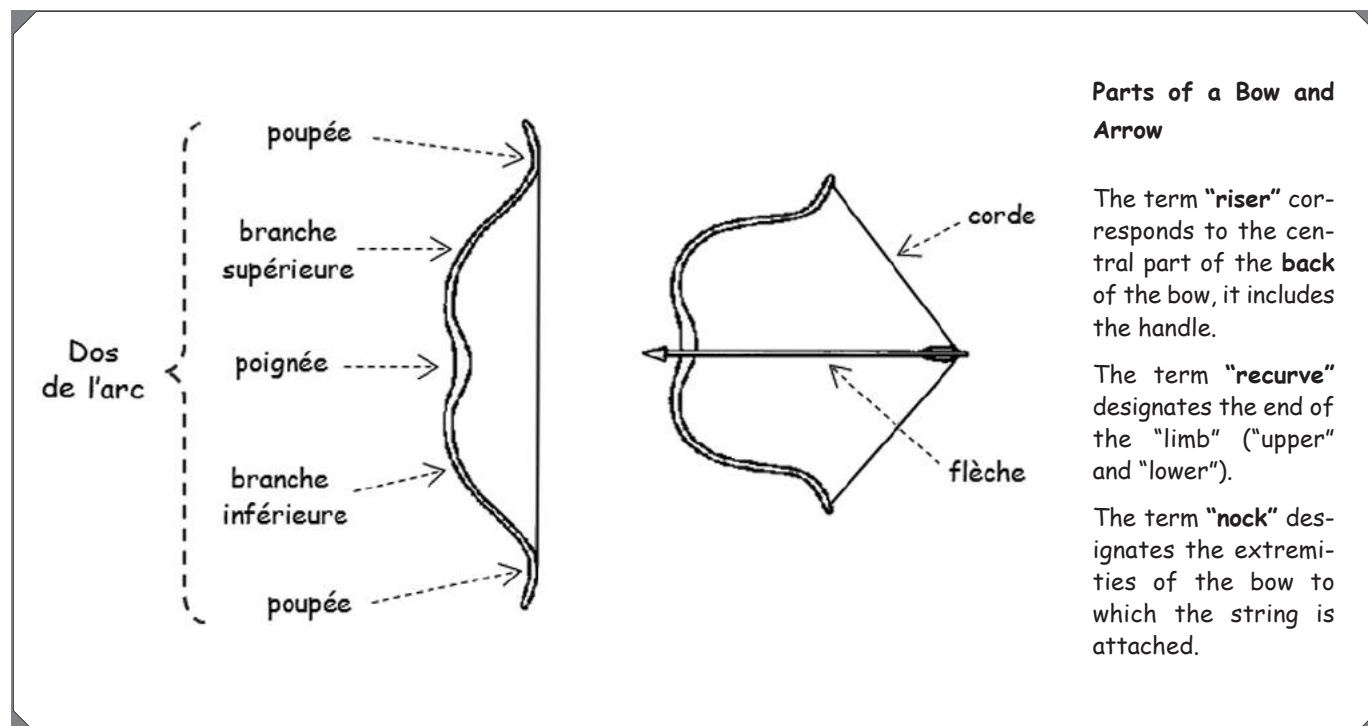
### 4 - Agile

The five arcs form one complete arc, now with a string.

### 5 - Empty

The five arcs together form one complete arc and the string very strong.

**Conclusion:** If you reach the point where your body feels like an arc, you are now truly working on the internal, and your practice will reinforce your vital strength.



# Impressions of a Journey to Taiwan

## Tui Shou Course

with Lao Shi Zheng Xian Qi and his *Shi Xiong*,  
April 11 to 25, 2014

Christophe Lephay

*Translated by Gretchen MacLane*

Thanks to my colleagues, Sabine Metzlé and Michel Douiller, great-sister and great-brother of the practice, I have had the chance to integrate into a group of their students in order to participate in an exceptional Tui Shou course beside Lao Shi Zheng Xian Qi and ten *Shi Xiong* (assistants). Mostly they do the Yang Style with the postures transmitted by Cheng Man Ching (1901-1975), who is called the master of the five excellences (calligraphy, painting in the Chinese art tradition, poetry, medicine, and Taiji Quan). Lao Shi Zheng has a school that is friendly to our Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan, since Lao Shi Wang Yen-nien (1914-2008) studied Tui Shou with Zhang Qinlin (1888-1967) alongside Cheng Man Ching.

The daily practice at Peace Park for 14 mornings, from 7:30 a.m. to 12 noon was infinitely rich, intense and sometimes high-stakes... all of us have tasted the bitter and I have been bitten by the push more than one time.

The repetitive practice of the pure and relatively simple exercises, aligned to application with a partner and play with free Tui Shou, with the *Shi Xiong* of a high level of excellence in Fang Song, has presented many questions about Tui Shou practice. This experience has indicated a real shock both in the literal and figurative sense... In any case, the dense material of the exercises covered in Taipei, and marked here in Laillé, are imprinted each sunrise in my daily morning practice. Their essence softly infuses my spirit, a thread of months, to become better at comprehension and better to transmit to you.

The cohesion of the group, stronger each day, and the budding complicity with some companions of the trip, without forgetting the quality of Sabine and Michel's organization, rendered the sustained rhythm of the stay particularly agreeable.

Memories come through the senses. The first memory of Taiwan that comes to mind, linked to the view is the smile of each inhabitant, young and less young, in the street, the metro, the shops at night. Even the customs officer at the airport who examined my passport did not seem to force his smile and wished me welcome in his country. Thanks to the photos that follow, you will profit from that which has attracted my attention.

The second sense somewhat attacked was that of the sense of smell, tumbled about by the pollution of exhaust gases in Taipei ... thus we searched for the tranquility and green of the parks. Far from the city center and the pollution, in the mountains of Yangming Shan, to bear the strong sulphur smell that reigned at the area of the hot sulfur baths did not presage the delight of relaxing in the waters between 41 and 49 degrees Celsius (106 and 120 degrees Fahrenheit), without forgetting the intervening dips in cold water. We fitted into the time meditation, in a half lotus on a slab of stone, or duan practice in the middle of the misty slopes that abound with vegetation. This place offered us the impression of suspended time, the infinite, an intense consciousness of here and now. Simple happiness shared with companions!

But I will not forget the subtle perfumes of a Tie Guan Yin, of Bao Zong or Da Yue Ling...

To touch on touching, the theme of the journey, a high dose of Tui Shou practice, put us directly in contact with the straightforward and most often kindly touch of the Taiwanese. Nevertheless we have been equally tempted by them to press for foot massages ... all the companions remember, as well as the walls, on occasion how much we could not restrain some cries and whimpers, for the pressure was strong and well-targeted into the zone of weakness.

To touch on hearing and the permanent background sound of Taipei with the jammed main thoroughfares and frequent super temples, a surprise from the garbage men and their trucks that in passing emit an electronically simplified melody of *Für Elise*, and this has been so for decades, Sabine said. But impossible not to mention the great peace and tranquil resources of the teahouses.



Single whip  
at the daily  
training place  
of 50 years  
for my Chinese  
teacher Lao Shi  
Wang Yen-nien  
(1914-2008).

Finally taste and the festival of discoveries over the expanse of Taiwanese cuisine, from the pineapple-filled biscuits or tarts filled with red beans to vegetarian plates already so great to look at, surprising in the texture and subtle tastes, without forgetting the fish and meat cooked in different ways, soup with dumplings and herbs, even the skewers of Peking duck. Moreover, in Taiwan, you may find all the cuisines of mainland China, from the spicy cuisine of Sichuan to specialties of Cantonese cuisine with one-hundred year-old eggs with ginger, their *baozi* (brioches filled with meat and/or vegetables), their steamed *dimsum* (morsels with a base of various stuffings, plump in a pastry of rice or grain), their pork with sweet-sour sauce and many other surprising delights to discover! My mouth is watering...

I wish you good reading and wonderful travel.

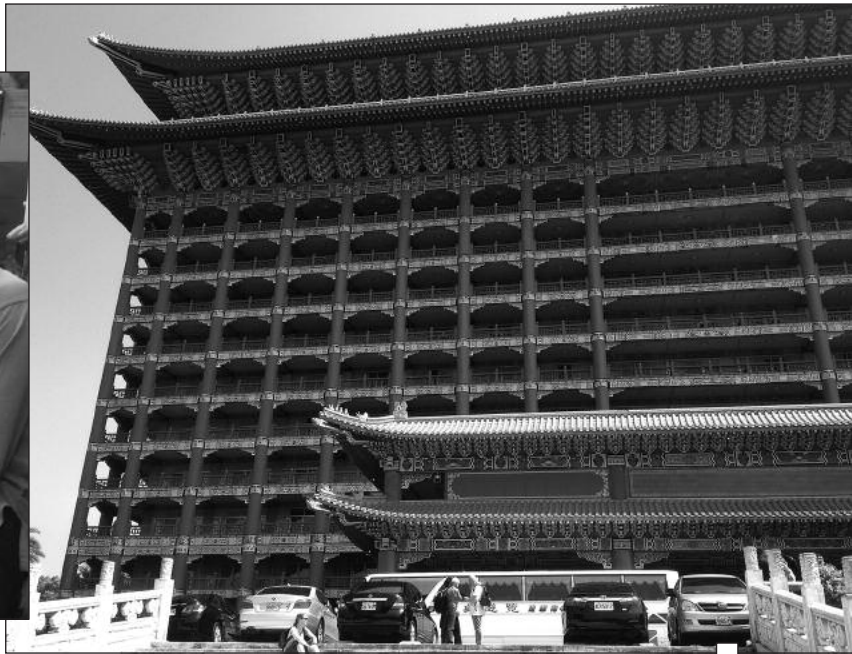
Christophe

The view  
of our hotel  
in the heart of Taipei,  
very polluted  
and rather hideous ...  
with the junctions of  
13 roads.





*But the people are so kind and there is an omnipresent youthfulness! Here, dinner for 2 or 3 Euros in a street stall restaurant.*



*Grand Hotel of Taipei, where we had our most expensive meal.*



*About 60 acres for the memorial of Chang Kai Chek, one of the principal leaders of Kuo Min Tang, who arrived in Taiwan in 1949 to govern the island under the name Republic of China.*



*Peace Park, our practice place every morning from 7 a.m. until noon.*



*Lao Shi Zheng Xian Qi and his smile of 92 years in full push with Michel... In the background, Pascal is attentive to detail!*



Chinese breakfast: Hot soy milk with vegetables and fermented tofu skin, rolled crêpe of vegetable omelet, sesame pancake wrapped in a fritter and a scoop of creamed red bean paté... A little heavy this first morning... but Sabine, my great-sister of practice, who has lived in Taipei for 10 years studying at the side of Lao Shi Wang Yen-nien from 1980 to 1990, wished me to put to the test and to reinforce with high-stakes practice.



Taipei teeming, young and very polluted!



The most modern metro of Asia, extensive enough to go to the mountains, infinitely clean and quiet, much like the Taiwanese who are disciplined, under surveillance of the omnipresent cameras and the always present and helpful metro personnel.



Functional and efficient.



Taiwan is known throughout the world for the famous Wulongs; here Muzha plantation about 20 kilometers from Taipei's center, an overview on one's first trip, in ancient times the highest in the world (509 meters all the same).



A farmer of Muzha and what happiness for a person passionate about tea who holds the terminal bud and first leaves between the fingers, which gives a brew as discerning as that of the wulong.



Degradation of the green leaves infused with Bao Zong 10 percent fermentation, Tie Guan Yin 30-40 percent fermentation and Tie Guan Yin more fermented at 50-60 percent.



Chen Shi Xiong, the oldest of Lao Shi's assistants, a dozen years ago had a workshop in France where we met. (Here with Jean-Pierre, a teaching colleague of Taiji Quan and Qi Gong in Lyon.)

Astonishing and powerful practice with a stick for developing flexibility in the body.



Outdoor drawing and painting for some children in the park where we practiced, and then when the play space for Tui Shou was amiably invaded.





*On occasion, one feels somewhat stupid not reading Chinese... but quickly forgotten in admiration of the chef's dexterity in the open-air restaurants, before eating.*

*Sonia, Michel, Sam and Corinne, HAPPY!*

*The visit to the source of our style Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan at the Daoguan of Lao Shi Wang Yen-nien (1914-2008), third from the right is his photograph, then his teacher, Zhang Qinlin (1888-1967), who learned from Yang Jianhou (1839-1917). To the left is Julia Fairchild, an American who spent 30 to 40 years at the side of my Chinese teacher. Her nomination as successor and head of transmission remains contested...*



*Sculpture of Jiu Ming, a celebrated Taiwanese artist born in 1938, whose works have been much shown in the West in the 1980s, most notably at Paris with his huge bronze sculptures of Taiji Quan.*

*Extract from a site at the city of Montréal on Public Art: "These giants translate in some way the expression of the body linked with the cosmic movements inherent to tai chi practice. Nature, always recurring in the heart of the Oriental arts, is always stated in Jiu Ming's work by human movement, symbolizing vital energy."*

*Huang Jeng Bin Shi Xiong on the left, an extremely talented expert whose push has bitten me more than once... Here with Patrick.*







*After the explosions of energy in Tui Shou, with or without moving steps, this flock of highly skilled assistants lengthen you, stretch you, manipulate you and CRACK CRACK... You must practice Song Song until the end!*



*The striking contrast between the living tradition of the Longshan Temple (Dragon Mountain) and Taipei 101, culminating at 509 meters (1,669.9 feet), that dominates commerce with one fourth of the businesses...*



*Happiness with the travel companions during a well-deserved break at a teahouse of Yongkang Jie.*



*Tea and its intoxicating vapors...*



*Serge Dreyer, friend and colleague Taiji Quan teacher, the first Westerner to transmit our style of Taiji Quan in France in the 1970s and '80s, has lived in Taiwan for some 40 years,*



*who has led me to discover the magnificent wooden temples of the 17th century. We thought we were in Crouching Tiger and Hiding Dragon!*



A calligrapher and tea merchant, alongside a sampling.



Sabine, Xixi, Christophe, Stéphane, Agnès, Michel and Muriel.



Tui Shou is no laughing matter for the women... Incredible Muriel and Catherine.



At the side of the men, after Tui Shou, the good care of Chu Shi Xiong.



Departure day, after the last practice, our delighted expressions, at the side of Chen Minh He Shi Xiong, there every morning from 7 to 10 a.m., to oil our movements and to give us flexibility.



Lao Shi Zheng Xian Qi all smiles, his Shi Xiong who have worked us hard hard, Sabine, great-sister, and Stéphane, little brother and Tui Shou accomplice.

# THE RENCONTRES AMICALES

## MORNING AWAKENING EXERCISES

Just because it had been repeatedly mentioned to answer  
*Zouzou's article published in Bulletin No. 75*

Claudy Jeanmougin

*Translated by Martine Larigauderie*

FEEL all the more involved since I asked to respect the curriculum of our style when practicing the awakening exercises during the Rencontres Amicales. I begged the Board to plead so that in the morning we should know what we have to do without getting a headache. I do insist on the fact that my request dealt with this first workshop, only that one: indeed the other workshops could offer innovative techniques, which are not part and parcel of the Yangjia Michuan curriculum, though they could enrich it.

What we now call the awakening exercises take place in the morning, before breakfast, after a short, sometimes very short, night's sleep. When the two hundred or so morning wanderers stroll towards the meeting hall, there is a latency period before everyone finds their favorite place or the place that is left... When, facing those two hundred people, the organizer of the great event speaks between **their** teeth, to explain a technique that nobody knows, with the best will in the world, we witness nods and head motions to the left and to the right, as well as looks towards other practitioners to discover what should be done since we cannot see the master of ceremonies. The result is some kind of gestural disorder that is the polar opposite of what people like me expect in the morning.

Of course I do not mention the GI exercises we sometimes have had to face. It is no longer gentle awakening; it is waking up with a start wondering if this is not the end of a nightmare. Do I exaggerate? I may. Nevertheless, I do feel it is not the best way to get started. This is the reason why, for years, I have not attended those practices that make coffee sour in my stomach.

The worst point is not doing something new that nobody knows, the worst is doing something that everybody knows though no one recognizes it. Of course, I allude to all the great grub that has become of Master Wang's preparatory exercises.

The morning awakening workshop is divided into two parts: the first half hour deals with basic or preparatory exercises, the next half hour we practice

the form. That is exactly what we did in Taiwan with Master Wang and that we had suggested continuing along those lines during the Rencontres Amicales. Some of us wish to have a common practice of the basic exercises that everyone knows and for others it is a way to evoke the memory of Master Wang.

Furthermore, we have to be logical: if we sweep aside the basic exercises of the style at the awakening workshop, why shouldn't we do a sequence of movements different from that of our style in the second part. I exaggerate, don't I? Well just a little.

Indeed, the exercises may be boring for some practitioners; they would like to have new ones. Why not? Then we have to agree to learn techniques we should be able to recognize in the morning without losing our heads. I mean I am not absolutely against innovation. I feel all the freer as I did not hesitate to enrich our style with the Yang Saber style and *Qi Méi Gun* (or Eyebrow Staff). Neither do I mention what I wrote or said that led to Julia Fairchild's reproach: "What you are doing should not be called Yangjia michuan, but Claudy Jeanmougin style."

I would rather like to know what participants to the next Rencontres Amicale think of the awakening workshop. Wouldn't it be possible to ask everyone (using the Rencontres advanced listing)? The question could be: "Would you prefer the preparatory exercises during the Rencontres awakening workshop to be only those which are part and parcel of our style curriculum, that is to say those which are presented in Volume I of Master Wang's style?" If it seems too complicated to write, maybe a simple questionnaire handed out at the reception would give us an idea and perhaps could put an end to this discussion.

Last but not least, I do not think that there had been any reluctance or opposition concerning the workshops. We can propose whatever we wish, practitioners have the final word when they attend those workshops or vote with their feet.

Pouvet, July 19, 2014

# Visit et revisit the DOORS...

## And first, let us honor *PENG*, this door that allows us to “be home”!

Marie-Christine Moutault

*Translated by Simonette Verbrugge*

**M**Y search for meaning in the practice of Taijiquan led me to investigate how each door makes us live (PENG, LU, AN, JI, CAI, LIE, ZHOU, KAO that animate the duans) and vice versa, how each door is living in us.

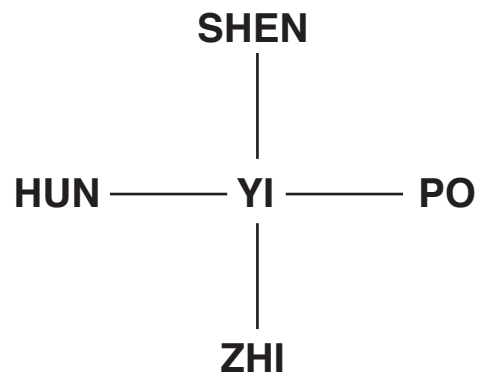
The body is a tool, a very nice tool, essential to our experience of Being. It allows the passage, it is the boat that takes from one bank to another... It is the vehicle that causes the experience of an incessant trip between us and the world, providing only that we allow ourselves to be touched by the experience. To let be touched is to Listen in the full sense of the TING character 聽 (this character comprises the ear, the emperor responsible for the Heaven-Earth link, 10 eyes, unity, and the whole supported by the heart). Karlfried Graf Dürckheim, in his book *Hara*, wrote: “For all practice bearing fruit, the practitioner must always be focused on the still distant goal of final union with the Being...” or more, “Exercise does not give rise to the experience of Being, it only prepares to receive this experience...” These words have a special echo and sent me back to my experience with the Taijiquan.

Practicing Taijiquan is to start Listening, being in Listening, without this, there is no possible way forward because, no doubt, the experience can remain “raw” and produce only very few of these echoes which are generating transformation(s) HUA 化. This assumes letting be touched by the experience: therefore, letting go of mental and physical functions installed as truths and sclerotic, to allow a new experience to happen. To let live the moment of experience without a priori; to experience in its fullness requires to open all the doors of intimate Listening. This is what interests me and has underlied my research in Taijiquan in the past few years.

Before entering directly into the subject, I would like to introduce the background!...

To live a gesture is to experience the HUN 魂 (Hun is a psychological entity related to the Liver and the Gallbladder, Hun is the genius or demon GUI, 傀 it depends!) related to the Wood element and animates it,

linked to knowledge, linked to the rise of Yang. Hun is the energy that drives us to live in relationship, which includes us in the social world. But Hun cannot exist without its Yin counterpart PO 魄, linked to the metal element. Po is related to everything that allows us to replenish the energy, the form (in the structural sense): like sleep, food... The horizontal axis, Hun and Po, passes through the Earth element where resides the Yi 意: the thought, the power of being, ideation.



The vertical axis is composed of ZHI at the base, YI in the center and SHEN 神 above. Zhi related to Water, related to JING 精 energy (consisting of the ancestral energy, the primeval energy and the acquired energy –food and breathing –), related to the Kidneys, related to our will, our decision-making capacity (essential base to the deployment of HUN). ZHI supports the earth, place of YI, which receives the experience of the being in its daily life (the horizontal level of HUN and PO). In this continual friction between the horizontal and the vertical, the Earth, located at the intersection of the two planes, is called to transform (HUA) to allow and let the being happen to its intimate nature XING 性: where the individual becomes a witness of his life based upon his feelings of the world, on the Global Listening, in an attitude of WEI WU WEI (not acting the act). The being then has the ability to fulfill its Heavenly mandate (MING 命) and so let the SHEN 神 flourish in him, this pure consciousness,

the intelligence of the heart... But the Earth can also block the movement, the dynamics, tense the being, freeze and lock him rather than open him; the main responsible for this blockage being the ego that prevents Listening.

It is in the Yi that our choice resides, that we can practice our small part of freedom! In one way it is through Listening to the echoes in ourselves that life will flourish. It can happen on the horizontal mode, that of contingency, of the Posterior Heaven or also let Life in every being meet the vertical axis, that links to the Anterior Heaven, this underlying canvas, find back this link to Unity...

Taiji Quan practice is for me today an art that can teach me to find how, relying on the horizontal axis, I can go step by step on the vertical axis. It is in this sense that I re-examine my practice and my teaching.

Now let's get back to PENG or, as I like to call it during my classes, depending on the day and the educational needs "the Michelin man" or also "being home"...

The Michelin man! Yes, the one that stands in the heart of Clermont-Ferrand, because he represents for me the perfect image of Peng. This tall man, standing on its two supports, well-rounded, highly flexible, who exhibits high stability. If we lean on him he bends "a bit" but remains perfectly stable (Yin aspect of Peng) when you meet him more vigorously! He welcomes us first but almost at the same time he sends us back to ourselves, out of his sphere (Yang aspect of Peng)... So if one becomes the Peng man, the Michelin man, anything can happen to us or almost and we remain "at home", master of ourselves, of our space, of our integrity.



This is why it seems to me important to first develop the awareness of this door, this support indispensable to any other expression, this backdrop that contains all the potentials of expression to come. To develop this basic knowledge, awareness and inner structure, which allows the presence in the here and now. It is nothing and it is all, just a "full" presence, lying in the Heaven-Earth link but becoming, when placed in ourselves, Heaven-Man-Earth. There, the being takes his place and can then develop what lives in him, in all its dimensions.

The PENG door is born on an inhale, it places the Center, in the sense that the inspiration happening at the lower dantian (XIA 下 DAN 丹 TIAN 田), it positions the lumbar spine in a "natural" retroversion.

This movement allows the opening of the space that, in listening, causes a release, a relaxation of the lumbar muscles and, by itself, allows the pelvis to be in retroversion; it allows, in the working of the unitary structure of the individual, to put in place the bottom and the top. The bottom is inscribed in the link to the Earth (DI 地), through the phenomenon of rooting; the top rises up to Heaven (TIAN 天) in the continuity of the curve initiated by the lumbar "release", by this alignment in relaxation, the head finds its place at the top, suspended...

This initial inspiration movement allows the internal deployment of a flexibility linked to a compressible volume. That the PENG door can be supported by an inspiration allows two things, from a mechanical point of view: on one hand this inspiration on a seal it closed movement allows to the structure a greater flexibility, elasticity, rebounding<sup>1</sup>. On the other hand, this inspiration that leads the Breath (QI) to the lower Dan Tian allows the connection to the Vital Principle (JING) present in the Kidneys. But the PENG door contains the circle within the square, or the Heaven(TIAN, expansion movement) within the Earth (DI, compression movement, which contains), it provides a link and encourages ALL potentials, anchoring the Heaven within the Earth, in the wanting-to-live of the Kidneys, in the Xia Dan Tian.

The corresponding trigram to the PENG door is QIAN 乾, consisting of three Yang lines, the corresponding image is the Heaven TIAN, his qualities are creativity, strength, initiative.

This is an upward Yang movement. It is placed to the South, the full Yang, whose future is non other that mutation, transformation, as if this door was a permanent call to go back to our source to tirelessly rise a new creative impulse, open to all possibilities, until... until this climbing to the full Yang no longer calls the mutation but realization...

In the *Yi Jing*, the *Book of Changes*, the creative impetus of this trigram is described as having the four qualities of Heaven-Earth: origin, growth, harvest, land-fill. This is the basic cycle, the Taiji cycle, of the generation and the transformation of Yin-Yang. Starting from the Unity, of the inseparable, this Yin-Yang cycle helped create the three, and the three gave birth to the ten thousand beings<sup>2</sup>. Here we have indeed all the potentials, all possibilities.

In the Chinese song describing Peng it is said:

*Peng is like the water that carries the boat.*

*First lead the Qi down to the Dantian,  
Then hold your head as if it was suspended.*

*The body is full of a bouncing energy;  
Open and close in a single moment.*

*Even if the force is of one thousand pounds,  
It is easy to let flow without difficulty<sup>3</sup>.*

The term water is first used here to develop an inner picture: its has done its job since it is easy to imagine the simple boat to the biggest tanker carried like a walnut by the mass that forms the ocean.

In addition, water evokes this link with the Kidneys, the depth, the life force, the lower Dantian or XIA DAN TIAN; besides, this is what is said in the song after mentioning this image: The Qi must go down to the Dan Tian. Then, in the text, from the depths we go to the top, the head, representing the Heaven, it is held “suspended”, it does not intervene and yet it is there, its presence is like a “right” extension of the underlying placement that allows the Heaven-Earth link without which any harmonious transformation at the Center remains impossible.

Then, still in the text, we go on to the Center, that is full of void since it is flexibility that gives this central availability, which will allow that opening and closing are performed in the same instant. One generating the other, provoking it, in the same movement, like my Michelin man. In the Peng, nothing hard and yet I cannot enter...

As for the two last lines, I admit having difficulties agreeing (but I ask nothing better to get explanations!), as for me, the weight ratio of the partners is a factor that in “listening and equal dexterity” will win... I think that one must, of course, in working with a partner, consider the different forms of pushing and interpret them by Listening: horizontal push, up or down... Listening and the adequacy of response will indeed have the effect of

sending the partner floating, or bouncing after hitting this unitary structure posed in tis Heaven-Earth axis... But I dare maintaining that with equal dexterity, weight makes the difference and that anyone with a weak structure will have to transform his Peng more rapidly into another door (most often LU) while keeping the basic inner structure inscribed in him by Peng... It is this basic positioning which is for me the Yin aspect of Peng, this quality of self-presence; this “being home” no matter what happens, to me, must exist permanently for without this basis, the other doors may not find an appropriate expression and I think that this is even more important for people with a “frail” structure.

The Chinese character PENG has the hand radical *Shou* 扌 followed by *Peng* 朋 sometimes translated by “Phenix”, today by “friendship”. This notion is very much alive for me in the notion of Peng, this door calls for a contact, a relation, but it allows everyone to keep his integrity although the fact of the relation is likely to generate transformations to other doors, which is desirable, otherwise the situation will remain blocked on a reserve of very little interest!

The goal of the practice of the Form is to let the energy flow as freely as possible, without hindrance, it is the water that flows but also transforms. For one should not forget the qualities of the Doors, but live as close and accurately as possible to their energy. So if we go back to PENG, this door offers me this total and centered presence, in the here and now, lying within the Heaven-Earth link, without which this “full” presence could not exist. It is indeed a ZI RAN 自然 presence, full and total that allows the “adjusted” spontaneity to arise. If one forgets one of the three elements of the trilogy Heaven-Man-Earth, the Peng building no longer holds, it dissociates, dislocates and collapses.

That is why in my research and my “current understanding” of the Peng energy, it is essential for me and underlies all other expressions expressed in the other doors,

It is a backdrop that can enable the development of the other doors, it does not create them but it allows them.

Marie Christine Moutault  
Thorigné d’Anjou  
March 3, 2014

1. See Tome 1 of Yangjia Michuan by Claudy Jeanmougin.

2. Laozi, *Dao de Jing*, chap. 42.

3. Traduction of Claudy Jeanmougin, Tome 1 of Yangjia Michuan.

# Why still looking for... a Master?

Marie-Christine Moutault

*Translated by Simonette Verbrugge*

**P**ARTICULARLY since the death of Master Wang Yen-nien, I have been looking how it was possible for me to continue to nourish my practice and, consequently, my teaching. Already, of course, the practice: “Practice, practice! Again and again...” the essential root, unavoidable and necessary to all things. But I had the feeling I was stumbling, hurting myself on the walls that I, alone, was hardly able to push: I needed help.

Where could I find this help?

The Teacher’s College allows us to exchange about our issues (technical, educational...), to share and enrich our look, to work with colleagues of the same level of practice, and not delude ourselves exploring fields of research and developments where, alone, it is possible to go astray... However, while recognizing the importance of sharing with peers, something could not be answered. Like a more intimate quest, and my peers being themselves in research, they could not accompany me on this journey...

Like everyone else, my readings brought enrichments but the necessity of living experience remained essential.

After six years of Zen practice with Jacques Brosse, and following his death and the tearings of the Sanga that followed, I continued to look, knowing that I could not get anywhere alone... So I enrolled in the classes of Jean Marc Eyssalet, whose books remained for me abstruse, so listening to him would eventually enlighten me a bit!

My project remained to broaden my look in order to understand more deeply this thought that ALL the being in its entirety was mobilized, set in motion. I was hoping that my practice would help me reach the written works, and vice versa.

I was happy to be able to follow, in addition to the week-end courses, the week-long seminars that are true teachings. We practiced meditation, Dao Yin, the study of Chinese texts (buddhist, Taoist, confucia-

nist...) with comments and questions and answers, etc. It is always a very intense time, very rich, that I am fortunate to follow quite regularly.

Then by chance (does it exist?) and the wealth of meetings, I met Master Liu Deming. Honestly, at first I went there out of curiosity to see the work of this master. Friends of mine had regularly talked to me about him for quite some time and I must admit that I was quickly seduced by the quality of his work, his simplicity, generosity and kindness.

A priori, Master Liu Deming does not have the profile of the Master I was looking for. He comes from Kung Fu, his masters are Wan Lai Sheng and Hung Zheng Fu (if you are interested you can check “ziranmen.com”). For my part it is the Qi Gong that Master Liu Deming teaches that interested me: Zi Ran Qi Gong.

I had the pleasure to welcome him in Anjou the past season and, during a discussion, I told him my desire to work on Zi Ran Gong but also, if he accepted, to benefit from his experience to enrich and extend the work I started with Master Wang, in Tuishou and Neigong, while desiring not to change my style of Taiji Quan. He declared that he agreed and was interested.

So I got the idea that I am submitting you: to invite Master Liu Deming next season for two week-ends. One will be the extension of the work started last season (meditation and continuation of Zi Ran Qi Gong) on May 29 to 31; the other will be work on meditation, Nei Yang Gong (internal work) and Tuishou, reserved for taiji practitioners, regardless of the style. That’s it! He is invited by Les Nuages du Wudang May 22 to 24 on this theme. Maybe some of you will be interested?...

At this point I do not know if the path that I will follow with Master Liu Deming will meet my wishes but one thing I know is that I have a lot to learn and that his knowledge and generosity are great...

August 2014

# CentrÂge

Zouzou Vallotton

*Translated by Sabine Decosterd*

**A**N old person, an elder, a senior, or an oldster... it has become difficult to find an appropriate name for people when they have aged, especially when a person's life span, in later life, may extend over several decades, from early retirement to a period when they need to be placed in a comprehensive care facility. Life may continue for a time in these facilities; for example, in Switzerland, 20% of the people they care for are over 90. We can then speak of great age or a "fifth age"...

The adjective "old" tends to be perceived as a sort of "insult". How to come to terms with that word when society values the young and future-oriented thinker.

As we age, life becomes more and more difficult with its pains, and its loss of autonomy, when the body becomes impaired and the memory may fail. All due to aging!

Pensioners today, at least many of them, have strong purchasing power compared to young adults. They are offered a large range of activities, cosmetics and paramedical assistance. This age group is a honey pot from which Taiji and Qiqong courses can also benefit.

Taiji and Qiqong teachers regularly welcome beginners that are over 60. They often fail to adapt their teaching to these students who face difficulties due to their age. Some teachers feel helpless but understand that they themselves have to adapt.

When walking through the parks in China, one realizes that most practitioners, even though they may be very old, maintain their flexibility. Let's not forget that most of them have been practising for decades in a culture and life style that integrate such movements into their everyday life. I happened to practice for several weeks in such a group with elderly folks and a few younger practitioners. There was no difference in the teaching, the teaching was the same for everyone. Each person adapted to the teaching according to their own level, personal history and past experiences.

It is, however, difficult to teach Taiji and Qiqong the same way in the West and now they are often suggested to old people by their physicians. They are often taught

at some facilities along with other gym classes, walking and, dance activities.

A group of teachers already experienced with elderly students gathered to share their views and assist other teachers in seeking a better way to respond to the needs of this new generation of students.

CentrÂge has been an association since 2007 and it brings together Taiji and Qiqong teachers experienced with elderly students. It offers a basic training in adapting the teaching of internal Chinese Arts such as Taiji and Qiqong to the elderly, whatever their age and physical condition.

CentrÂge also offers numerous activities in connection with Taiji and Qiqong and/or old people, such as conferences and workshops on various topics (pelvis work, difficulties arising during classes, what is old age, etc). Guest participants may be professionals, experienced teachers, acupuncturists, physical or occupational therapists, anatomists, geriatric nurses, or adult trainers.

The basic training consists of investigating the specifics for the old age as well as mastering the tools to adapt the teaching of Taiji and Qiqong to the elderly. During the training courses, students are expected to visit three different existing courses led by experienced teachers. They give students ideas, information and "tricks" which lead the student to a vast field of study. They learn to question their practice and to find the appropriate answers.

The student must choose early in the program a topic for his or her report. It must be on a subject connected to a course, thoroughly investigated and reflect the student's understanding of the topic. The student then conducts two classes with the supervising teacher in attendance. The supervising teacher is the one who has followed the student throughout his or her research work, and expects the research to be put into practice during the classes.

Both the research work and the two classes are co-assessed by the supervising teacher and student. Both strong and weak points are investigated and CentrÂge issues a training certification with the student doing a final presentation of the research.



The research reflects the richness and the wide variety of students as well as their interests and individual ways to express their questions and discoveries.

Enjoy reading those published in *Wen Wu*:

- Yin Yang, the elderly and Taiji
- Music in Taiji/Qigong teaching to the elderly
- Visualisation and Taiji/Qigong to the elderly
- Inside/outside – teacher, therapist and aids to their relationship

- Taiji/Qigong teacher training aimed at the elderly
- From psychomotricity with children to Taiji/ Qigong teaching to the elderly
- Implementing Taiji/Qigong courses for the elderly

More information at

[www.centrage.ch](http://www.centrage.ch)

Zouzou Vallotton

## TRAINING COURSES CALENDAR

### DECEMBER

#### Stage Tuishou au Mans

Dates : **13 décembre 2014**  
Email : [aramis72.taichi@free.fr](mailto:aramis72.taichi@free.fr)  
Contact : 06 19 82 28 10 ou 02 43 76 88 08  
Animé par : Michel Leclaicie  
Organisé par : Aramis Le Mans, <http://aramis72.taichi.free.fr>

#### Stage « Armes » à Angers

Dates : **7 décembre 2014**  
Association : Les Nuages du Wudang  
Site <http://www.taiji-qigong-anjou.fr>  
Email : [Wudang49@orange.fr](mailto:Wudang49@orange.fr)  
Animateur : Marie-Christine MOUTAULT  
Détail : Apprentissage et approfondissement de l'éventail, l'épée Kun Lun et Wudang. Ouvert aux débutants

### JANUARY 2015

#### Stage «Principes constants» et applications techniques du 1<sup>er</sup> Duan, à Angers

Dates : **11 janvier 2015**  
Détail : Re-visite du 1er Duan et des principes constants. Applications techniques autour des 8 portes  
Email : [cordaro49@hotmail.fr](mailto:cordaro49@hotmail.fr)  
Animé par : Claudy Jeanmougin  
Organisé par : ATA

#### Stage « Armes » à Angers

Dates : **18 janvier 2015**  
Association : Les Nuages du Wudang  
Site <http://www.taiji-qigong-anjou.fr>  
Email : [Wudang49@orange.fr](mailto:Wudang49@orange.fr)  
Animateur : Marie-Christine MOUTAULT  
Détail : Apprentissage et approfondissement de l'éventail, l'épée Kun Lun et Wudang. Ouvert aux pratiquants d'un niveau intermédiaire ou avancé

#### Stage Tuishou au Mans

Dates : **24 et 25 janvier 2015**  
Détail : Notion du yin et du yang, ainsi que du non-agir, à partir du travail sur la spirale et le ressort, à travers des exercices spécifiques de préparation au tuishou.  
Email : [aramis72.taichi@free.fr](mailto:aramis72.taichi@free.fr)  
Animé par : Serge Dreyer  
Organisé par : Aramis Le Mans

### MARCH

#### Stage à Baugé

Dates : **1<sup>er</sup> mars 2015**  
Détail : Adaptation des exercices de base aux saisons. Vocabulaire gestuel de base du Tuishou. Étude des deux premiers gestes de la forme (Yubei shi et Qi shi). Génération de gestes de la forme  
Email : [pabkbenou@hotmail.com](mailto:pabkbenou@hotmail.com)  
Animé par : Claudy Jeanmougin  
Organisé par : Taiji quan en Baugeois

#### Stage Tuishou au Mans

Dates : **14 mars 2015**  
Email : [aramis72.taichi@free.fr](mailto:aramis72.taichi@free.fr)  
Contact : 06 19 82 28 10 ou 02 43 76 88 08  
Animé par : Michel Leclaicie  
Organisé par : Aramis Le Mans, <http://aramis72.taichi.free.fr>

#### Stage à Thorigné d'Anjou

Dates : **21 et 22 mars 2015**  
Détail : Travail de la respiration – Liaisons des gestes des 1<sup>er</sup> et 2<sup>e</sup> duans  
Tél. : 02 41 24 04 13  
Animé par : Claudy Jeanmougin  
Organisé par : Les Nuages du Wudang  
[http://www.taiji-qigong-anjou.fr/](http://www.taiji-qigong-anjou.fr)

### MAY

#### Stage d'épée à deux 2015, au Mans

Dates : **30 et 31 mai 2015**  
Email : [aramis72.taichi@free.fr](mailto:aramis72.taichi@free.fr)  
Animé par : Frédéric Plewniak  
Organisé par : Aramis

### JULY

#### 29<sup>es</sup> Rencontres Jasnieres internationales à Marçon (Sarthe)

Dates : **24-25-26 juillet 2015**  
Email : [aramis72.taichi@free.fr](mailto:aramis72.taichi@free.fr)  
Organisé par : Aramis

# 4<sup>th</sup> Course in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

given by Claudy Jeanmougin and Madeleine Blanchard  
from December 22, 2013 to January 4, 2014

Claudy Jeanmougin – *Translated by Simonette Verbrugge*



Group of teachers. From left to right.

Second line: Germain Tanou, Diana Katakou, Jean-Pierre Pale, Siaka Coulibali, Adama Traore, Claudy, Madeleine, Kabore Edouard, Denis Banhoro

First line: Jean-Jacques Erlich, Marianne Scwheitzer, Youssouf Ouattara, Issiaka Ouedraogo, Zakaria Traore.

**T**HE difference between this course and the previous ones is the presence of two Western people who took part in all the activities. The door is open and I greatly encourage the undecided who are tempted to go through with their desire. The next course is already defined and it is still open to other practitioners than those from Burkina Faso.

The cost for the workshop is only 50€ since the classes are free. This amount covers all the services provided by our hosts: transport to the airport and in town.

To continue this record, I turn to the President Youssouf Ouattara and the Secretary Issiaka Ouedraogo.



## ASSOCIATION TAICHI CHUAN ET ART ÉNERGÉTIQUE BURKINA FASO (ATCAE) Taichi chuan Association and Energy Arts Burkina Faso

### I – INTRODUCTION

Highlight in the activity program of ATCAE, this course took place within schedule between 23/12/2013 and 05/01/2014 in Ouagadougou.

Since the first course in 2010, the Association benefits each year from the support of the Amicale of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan through an annual training course for teachers and students.

For the third consecutive time, ATCAE receives French experts of the Amicale to continue this training program. Aware of the pace set by this new dynamic partnership between our Association and the Amicale, we do our best to make sure that the objectives are achieved. The goal is indeed to complete the program on the corpus of Yangjia Michuan in four years. Ambitious program from the beginning, but that we have just completed together.



The entire team.

This year and for the second consecutive time, we have had the honour to receive Claudy Jeanmougin and his wife Madeleine Blanchard. Claudy, who we don't have to present anymore, is member of the European College of Teachers and also co-founder of :

–The French School of Taiji quan of which he has been the director for 5 years;

–The French Federation of Traditional Taiji Quan, which became now the French Wushu Federation, Chinese energy and martial arts, of which he has been Administrator for two years;

The Amicale of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan of which he was the first president.

## II – PROGRAM

The course program's ambition was to complete the corpus of the Yangjia with the group of teachers from Burkina Faso. After the arrival of Claudy and Madeleine on the Sunday 23 at 1 o'clock, we came together in the afternoon at 16h at the Hotel Liberté to review the program of the course. The practical organization and the training programs were also at the order of the day.

Concerning the practical organization, three groups were formed, the teachers, the intermediates, the beginners. The morning classes were from 6.30 to 9.30 and in the evening from 18.30 to 21.30. The morning practice was at the Parc Urbain Bangr Wéoogo and was reserved exclusively for the teachers. All the groups were together in the evening at the tennis Club Sonabel.

## A – Trainings

\* The first week:

Evening: 18.30 to 21.30

–Staff: One hour

–Basic Exercises for Tuishou: One hour

–Martial Applications of 2nd Duan: One hour

Morning: 6.30 to 9.30

–Warming up exercises with a student: 30 minutes  
+ corrections 30 minutes

–Revising the 1st Duan, 2nd Duan and the 2 first parts of the 3rd Duan and learning of the 3rd part of 3rd Duan: One hour

–Kunlun sword + Fan: One hour

\* The second week:

General revision

Teachers: learning of the staff and of the exercises of the Emperor and corrections on sword, fan, staff and 3 Duans

Intermediates: Learning of 1st and 2nd Duans

Beginners: Learning of the Shi San Shi

Ba Fa: Eight Techniques

Following of the Basic Exercises for Tuishou: 8 to 12.

For the others, the program was defined according to the level of the practitioners.

The workshop was enriched by the introduction of the exercises of the Emperor for the teachers, it is an excellent opening on Qi Gong and Energy.



## B – Theoretical Classes

The theoretical aspect was taking place in the evening at the time of training. One hour was allowed for the theoretical classes. In total, six classes were given.

–First lecture on December 26 was on the Si Yao: How to work on the openings and closings with reference to the Classics.

–Second lecture on December 28 on the seven characters:

**Qi:** bend, **Shen:** stretch (unfold),  
**Kai:** open, **He:** close,  
**Ting:** listen, **Zi (zen):** oneself, **You:** causal origin.

–Third lecture on December 29: class with a skeleton to explain the position of the pelvis suspended. Explanation on the law of Fryette.

–Fourth lecture on December 30 on the San Jiao: the triple warmer.

Basic exercises of Tuishou 1 to 7 (cfr Little Red Book).

–Fifth lecture on January 2 on the three treasures San Bao (cfr book on energy).

–Sixth lecture on January 3 on the 5 elements: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, Water (scf book on energy).

Moreover we were given sessions of exercises to help relieve back pains. The small skeleton borrowed from a local school helped Claudy, who is an osteopath, to better explain his exercises. The following two were taught:

1 – Exercises to relieve back pains:

The main stages are: lift a leg to the vertical, bring back the folded leg on the stomach, posture of the locust, sitting torsion.

2 – Introduction to the banda Uddiyana Banda as a method to fight against prolapse.

## III – THE TRAINSHIP

The training was intense and we had to hang on. The classes began in the morning from 6.30 to 9.30 and in the evening from 18.30 to 21.30 or six hours a day on a period of two weeks.

Yet the atmosphere of the trainings was in good spirit, marked by the great experience that only Claudy has, to imprint a rhythm of rigor and relaxation at the same time over the entire period that the course lasted. Every day, the curtain rose a little more on the Taichi Chuan, to the delight of the students. No question was taboo and Claudy took a lot of pleasure to teach us what is essential to Taichi and provide us with practical advice on the way to the Art.

On the occasion, “Sifu” Jeanmougin assigned to each teacher a Chinese name that is certainly related to his character. A name that each newly baptized received with great dignity and responsibility.

The course was held in excellent conditions. The delegation coming from Europe stayed at the *Hotel Liberté*, in the Paspanga area, only a few meters away from the Sonabel plant. The days were divided between the trainings, visits in the center of the capital and meals hosted by members of the association.

Claudy and his delegation have often been invited by members of the association to share their meals. They were moments of conviviality around a table where we learned to know each other and discover local food.



Marianne and Jacques just received their presents.

On Christmas and New Year days where everyone is welcome by all, the European delegation was invited to share meals in Christian families.

Regarding the press aspect, two newspapers were asked to cover the event. Claudy answered kindly to the questions of the reporters that allowed the public to learn more about Taiji Chuan and its benefits. This intervention was a very fruitful contribution for our association.

The end of the course was marked by a presentation of certificates. And it is with great emotion that the participants, after a comprehensive review session of all the forms of the Yangjia Michuan, received their certificate of participation on Sunday, 5th of January, date of the end of the course.

#### IV – CONCLUSIONS

There were 27 participants to the course in 2013, while they were 22 in 2012, among which 7 were teachers from Burkina, 7 intermediaries, 3 beginners and 5 new students. There came also practitioners from Ivory Coast, Switzerland and France. This growth and openness are a source of satisfaction for us and thus shows that YangjiaTaichi grows roots in Burkina Faso.

At the end of the course, the whole program initially established was executed on time. The whole corpus was reviewed.

The teachers benefited not only from the technical movements, the philosophy behind Taiji in general and in particular the Yangjia, and also the teaching techniques.

The participants from other countries have expressed their total satisfaction regarding the reception, the program, the level of training and their living conditions.

This course of world class allowed us to compare ourselves for the first time with practitioners of the same style coming from elsewhere. The intense moments of daily practice consolidated the level of the older students and provided them with a new motivation.

The expression of satisfaction by Claudy Jeanmougin showed also that the course was a success.

So the course ended on a note of general satisfaction. The outlook for the future course to be held in 2014 was the subject of a meeting between Claudy Jeanmougin, Denis Banhoro and the members of the board of our Association. The work done was made possible through the combined efforts of several persons to whom we want to express our gratitude here:



Morning snack.



Preparation of Christmas meal.

–The Amicale and its President for his constant support and his determination to give us the benefit of a full and effective training.

–Mr Désiré Amoussou, without whom these opportunities would be unexpected.

Our thanks also go to all those who have given us their support for the success of this activity.

*The President, Youssouf OUATTARA  
The Secretary General, Issiaka OUEDRAOGO*



*If our friends from Burkina and Ivory Coast are happy of the course, I must say that the teachers have appreciated the quality of the work of their students. I was very flattered that the hosts from Europe have not missed a single practice session. Marianne Schweitzer and Jean-Jack Ehrlich would not have missed a session for any reason in the world. I must say that in the company of other practitioners, one could not lose face and had to be up to the situation. All this to say that the level of practice is excellent.*

*I am glad Hervé Marest takes after me. He is already a star in Burkina Faso. Indeed, the Burkinabe know by heart his videos on YouTube. Hervé has become the video reference.*

*What is needed now is to encourage Africans to organize themselves to provide the training. They have the required level to develop our style in the best conditions.*

*Claudy Jeanmougin  
Pouvet,  
August 20, 2014*



*Meal has to be earned...  
Madeleine at work.*

*Anaëlle tries to do better than her mother. She made good use of her travel for doing a training course "live" as part of her study as prosthetic technician. Her stay will be unforgettable.*

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