

# Amica e

YANGJIA MICHUAN TAIJI QUAN

N°99

JANUARY  
2022

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21 Meeting in Merlimont  
Networks in the Chinese world  
The feet  
The transformations

# Summary

# EDITO

## Editorial

Claudy Jeanmougin

## A word from the president..... 1

François Schosseler

## Taich'ti meeting in Merlimont..... 2

Corinne Zerbib

## Week-end in Merlimont or tinkering about the last "Rencontres Amicales" ..... 6

Claudy Jeanmougin

## This unceasing flow of change ..... 8

Ted Kardash

## Rooting of the body..... 10

Marc Appelmans et Lucas Limasset

## Taiji Quan in the time of Covid 19..... 14

Jean-Luc Pérot

## The College's articles

## Foot position, change in direction, spirales ..... 15

Henri Mouthon

## "Networking" in Chinese Culture..... 18

Serge Dreyer

## Nous avons lu..... 22

Thank you Françoise for the long hours you have spent to keep this bulletin alive for the great pleasure of its readers, they have appreciated your commitment and your professionalism.

Welcome to you, Corinne, for this unexpected takeover of our bulletin, so long awaited and appreciated by many readers.

A large part of the bulletin will be devoted to the Merlimont Meetings, with some exchanges with old and new participants, the organisers, and other people interviewed by Corinne. I was pleased to share with you my impressions of these last meetings which, personally, I found exceptional.

Marc will come back once again to the topic of rooting, with some nuances, and Henri will share with us his experience as a teacher when students are confronted with the difficulties of changes of direction.

Our poet Jean-Luc will share with us his love of Taiji quan «in the meadow», in the open air, at covid time...

Finally, a bit of philosophy, with a text by Ted Kardash transmitted by Marc Linett, and Chinese culture with Serge Dreyer.

Many thought that this issue would be the last.

Well no, issue 100 will herald a new era, with happy omens.

Claudy Jeanmougin

# A Word from the President

The smiles and laughter were back, old friendships were rekindled, new ones were created, and our Meetings kept their promises. A very big thank you to all the nice team of the Jean Moulin Club for having given us these Meetings after our own hearts. You were simply right and I hope that we will see your faces and your energies again in the Meetingsto come.

There are noticeable signs of renewed energy. The sustainability committee held workshops in Merlimont to discuss the Amicale and its future. These workshops aroused interest and set goodwill in motion. The most immediate result is the presence of a new Editor-in-Chief, welcome to you Corinne, but if you look at the composition of the commissions in the Administrative Note, you will also see some changes.

In addition, two new commissions are being created: one devoted to the reflection on the different forms that local meetings of the Amicale could take, the other aiming at producing a short

video presentation of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan, of its Amicale and its College, to be distributed as widely as possible, and in particular to our practitioners, to make the particularities of our style better known. If you are interested in these themes, there is still time to participate. To do so, visit the forum. Ah, you don't know where the forum is? Go to the Amicale's website, you can't miss it.

There is also talk of several intentions to organise the Meetings. But shhh, it's still a bit shy and undeclared, radio-corridor noises, I can't tell you anything yet. In the meantime, we know that next autumn we'll meet again at the seaside near Saint-Malo.

All this is good news that will help us to hold on during this year, which looks worrying from many points of view. Breathe, smile, practice, exchange. I hope that you will keep and spread the benevolent energy of our Meetings throughout the year.

With kind regards,  
François Schosseler

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# Taich'ti meeting in Merlimont

Corinne Zerbib

2

The meeting involved an ideal setting, an efficient and humorous team organisation, a great variety of workshops and a great dynamic to promote the sustainability of the Amicale, not to mention the memorable people from Bergen. The 2021 Meetings allowed the "family" to meet after this long interruption.

"Hello! Are you coming for the Amicale Meeting? Ah, we're sorry, it's postponed for this weekend, but you can come back next week!"

Hardly had Christian crossed the threshold of the Merlimont holiday village, that the weekend entertainer, showing a serious and distressed face, induced a fit of laughter in the car. And this hysterical laughter he provoked, spread throughout the stay...

In the Pas-de-Calais, between Berck and Le Touquet Plage, two sites, famous for very different reasons, the Miléade de Merlimont holiday village welcomed 172 participants of this new edition of the Meetings in a very beautiful site. However, the setting left more than one confused. "Do you know where bungalow 42 is? No, I'm looking for 7!". The quality of accommodation, a very friendly and efficient hotel team, frugal and varied meals, a very pleasant wooded site... the location was perfect. The weather went along with the agenda, sparing us heavy rains and storms, sometimes even offering some risks of sunny spells. The great team of Taich'Ti section (oups I mean Taichi) of the Jean Moulin Club in Raimbeaucourt, led by the teacher Cécile Frégier, was in charge of all this. Despite her very painful



knee, she travelled for miles every day smiling, to carry out all the chores of the organisation and the tasks to greet everybody with her crack team.

## Reunion

As always, the first workshop of the Meeting is the reunion. This year, the effusions have a particular flavour, after two years of interruption when often, lives have been upset and sometimes ruined. We talk to each other, we talk about those who are not there - or no longer there... Fortunately, and as always at the Amicale, joy prevailed and the group livened things up and even galvanized the event. "This weekend has given me a complete boost, I'm



in great shape!" said, a few days later, a participant who suffered a long Covid.

The restaurant, very comfortable with its large round tables and its buffets, allowed interactions, especially between newcomers. "My teacher never came to the Meetings, but I decided to come on my own to have a try," explained Jean-Paul. Despite everything, beginners weren't as many as it used to be. It seemed quite normal, since the registrations for this session took place during the year when courses were closed.

The most motivated ones would meet early in the morning (6:45 a.m.) for the first body awakening ses-

sion. On a rather cold morning, quite a lot of people came and would take place under the barnum. It was pitch dark, only a projector illuminated Sébastien. The group energy was palpable... A very great start. The following body awakening sessions, with the same conditions, attracted a little less people, especially on the third and last day, the day after the party.

### **The berguenards of the auction**

The climax of the Meetings, which surprised newcomers, was of course the auction, which allowed each participant to request workshop themes which would then be led by volunteer teachers. Still conducted

by Zouzou, with her bell and her assistants, François and Christian, the 2021 auction broke new ground: the umbrellas, (oops, sorry, the berguenards in French from the North) opened at the foot of the stage, would be used to identify each teacher. Each to his own: Indian pink, white, black, purple, rainbow colour, green with a heart... The innovation was meaningful as we could bet that the locals would travel with the bell, from year to year! Participants attended the workshops very seriously and aroused many laudatory comments, in particular those of the College about the spiral.

The evenings followed one another, from one extreme to the other. First, the general assembly, studious, reiterated the essential message of the Amicale which made an urgent appeal to the "succession", a call relayed during the workshops Sustainability which had gathered more people than expected.

And then of course the show, or rather the concert of the music orchestra and singers led by Yves Picard, followed by a parade led by Christian, member of a brotherhood of the Carnival of Dunkirk, then the dancing party until the end of the night...

The YMTJQ "family" met again in Merlimont. The inevitable tensions show an evidence of this: it is still alive and active. Even if some still wish to reconsider the very name of the Amicale, the new generations, which are particularly motivated, prepare the next generation. With all my love.

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**Cécile Fregier**, Taichi teacher from the Jean Moulin de Raimbeaucourt Association, organiser of the 2021 Meetings: "Simple, friendly and warm meetings"

The students in my group went to the Meetings of the Amicale in Sète for the first time and immediately wanted us to organise them. We therefore created a team of five people. For the preparation, it was mainly Marie-Christine and I who worked on the project because we had more free time. We had the same logic, the same aspirations and a common objective: organizing simple, friendly and warm Meetings. Moreover, we could rely on the very dynamic and skillful centre team. Logistics, animation, catering, setting up the arbours... For each request, somebody would come to give a hand.

By and large, I am very happy and proud of the result. We would also like to thank the participants who showed their agreements, which reinforced the feeling of celebration and the sharing of privileged moments. Within our team, this project has created a spirit of mutual aid and solidarity. I delegated the

tasks (group animation, logistics, accommodation, catering, etc) and each group respected its role and our coordination. Then, Marie Christine and I divided up the work during the Meetings so that everyone could take advantage of the workshops and have some free time. What my students liked above all was to practice Taichi with different teachers and discover other aspects of the practice for which we didn't have time to discuss about in class.

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**Emeline Régent**, vice-president of the Amicale: "The level of participants is increasing"

I'm just a student. I started Taichi at 21 and I took part in my first Meetings in 2006. I've been the youngest for 15 years! We organized the Meetings in Annecy in 2015, I joined the Board of Directors just after. I have several missions: I created and manage the new website, I help people who organise the Meetings, I participate in the day-to-day management of the association, in the Sustainability commission. At The Meetings, you meet people of all levels. When I started the Meetings, only a few practised the 3rd duan. Now there are more and more people practising the 3rd, even those who recently started. The new ones are not so doubtful about their practice.

These Meetings were also an opportunity to discuss with people interested in the approach of the Sustainability Commission. People also came to see me outside the workshops to offer their help with various tasks. They are these discreet people you do not hear from the rest of the time. The Meetings promote different questions. This is important because the Amical evolves thanks to these topics.

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**Séverine Flot**, teaching assistant in Angers, member of the Sustainability Commission: "For my first Meetings: I felt at home"

I started Taichi in 2014 and decided to discover The Meetings last year. As they were cancelled, this year was the first time for me.

The greeting, the organisation, the schedule, the auction, the workshops, everything was perfect. So I felt at home. As I was coming for the first time, I was not sure who was a new participant or a regular one. Between the Sustainability Commission, the rehearsals for the evening concert and the walk in the dunes, I didn't do a lot of Taichi. I still discovered the little



stick and Taichi sitting on the floor. On the other hand, I practised the awakening exercise in the cold early in the morning just once! It was very enriching to be able to benefit from such a breeding ground of teachers who wished to share their skills and knowledge. Looking forward to the next Meetings!

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### The Workshops, experienced by **Marie-Claude Millet**

There were very different and varied workshops of excellent quality. Whatever your level, you always learn something. We had the choice between about fifty themes over two days.

\* Workshop of the College of Teachers, spiral of the forearm with Christophe Lephay.

How sensational! During a push on oneself, arms along the body, relaxed and the push on oneself with the hands turned while inhaling. It was then impossible to uproot me! Small gesture, big effect...

\* Another College workshop: spiral in the practice of ancient sword form, with François Besson. It's awesome!

\* Two workshops with the short stick (flute of the eight immortals), with Yves Martin. In addition to memorizing the movements, we had a very good training for the awareness of our axis, on the supports, the weight transfers, the massages of the lao gong, the feet soles.

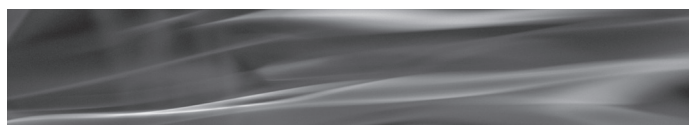
\* Workshop of the 3rd part of the 3rd duan with Jean-Claude Trap. It was very accurate, educational, very good. We wanted to learn some more...

\* Neigong workshop with Sabine Metzlé. What a pleasure to meet her again, with all the explanations and practice. There were moments of calm, appeasement and happiness.

\* Ancient sword workshop with Sébastien. We practised the 1st duan. It was a pity not to have been able to practice the other duans as the explanations were so clear, precise, with such judicious advice to keep the balance and there are a certain number of these moments in our form.

\* Saber workshop with François Besson. I took part in his workshop in order to find out to what extent I could remember, because practising alone with videos is not the easiest thing. Nothing replaces a teacher!

**The next Meetings,**  
organized by  
Nathalie and Christophe Lephay,  
will take place in  
**Saint-Jacut-de-la-mer**  
(Near Saint-Malo)  
**from 10 to 13/11/2022**  
(register on the Amicale  
website in spring 2022).



# Weekend in Merlimont or thinking about the last “Rencontres Amicales”

Claudy Jeanmougin

Nothing comparable with that of Zuydcoote even if it was not so far away ...

A wonderful site with an equally remarkable welcome from the organizers of The Association Jean Moulin de Raimbeaucourt made our stay very enjoyable. Gourmet meals and a great festive meal made me gain no less than 4 kg that I have now just lost and, eventually, a final demonstration that left me dumbfounded.

For almost ten years, I did not take part in the three duans of the closing day because it was too confusing. And, instead of being appeased, I would leave irritated, as if my nervous system needed it... Of course, I would watch it every year. This is what I did in Merlimont, expecting to watch the same pitiful spectacle of the past years. Please understand that I do not judge the practice of “my brothers and sisters in arms”, but of a whole which found itself difficult to harmonize.

What was the cause? The diversity of practice should not spoil general harmony and I had therefore suggested not to link the three duans up in a row but to divide them, this is what was done in Merlimont. Thus everyone can participate without disturbing the group by leaving it. Dividing the duans should be preserved because it allows to refocus and find a good tempo.

Sitting in the corner when I wasn't taking pictures, I could soak up the energy strength that was released

by the group in motion. It was no longer people whom I was looking at but a whole movement made of the lulling ebb and flow of human waves. I was so moved that I couldn't help but share my impression with the group. So, like a drifting ship, I let myself go according to these rhythmic swells by the captain's xi and hou. And I thought to myself that the real secret of Taiji quan was certainly that, quite simply!

Of course I had already experienced the magic, but at very short moments. In other occasions I have noticed the power of our practice with a young public, nursery and primary classes. A primary school director in Angers asked me for our association to give a demonstration on the evening of the school festival. We were in a community centre which had a stage on which the students presented their show. When it was our turn, while we were ready to begin, there was such a noise in the room that we couldn't even hear our music. No matter the noise, we all started our show, not quite knowing what would happen. Little by little, everyone fell quiet and stood silent until the end of our performance. After our salute, we were applauded for a long time. The director came to us and some time later she asked me to organize a class at her school, which we did for four years.

The second experience of this kind took place in our practice room in a small village. The preschool director had asked if she could come with her class to show the students what we were doing. This was not a class that we saw barging in but the whole preschool.

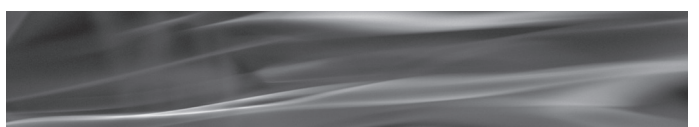




Imagine the hullabaloo while the toddlers were sitting down on the floor. As everyone seemed to settle down, the headmistress asked me if she should make the children quiet. I answered no and we started our demonstration. Once again silence fell like a child in a deep sleep. The silence was complete to the director's astonishment who had never been able to do it without a small rise in her voice.

All that to say that taiji quan has a real power and it would be a shame that, while so many people get together, we cannot get the group to express this harmonious power after which everyone feels good, at peace with the world and with oneself.

I promise I will join the group next year in Saint-Malo.



# This unceasing flow of change



Ted Kardash<sup>1</sup>

8

This unceasing flow of change manifests itself as a natural order governed by unalterable, yet perceivable laws. Paradoxically, it is the constancy of these governing principles (like the rising and setting of the sun and moon and the changing of the seasons) that allows people to recognize and utilize them in their own process of transformation. Gaining an awareness of life's essential unity and learning to cooperate with its natural flow and order enables people to attain a state of being that is both fully free and independent and at the same time fully connected to the life flow of the Universe – being at one with the Tao.

From the Taoist viewpoint this represents the ultimate stage of human existence.

The writings of the legendary Taoist sages, Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, furnish us with specific principles as a guide to attaining this state of oneness. Through understanding these principles and applying them to daily living we may consciously become a part of life's flow.

A key principle in realizing our oneness with the Tao is that of wu-wei, or “non-doing.” Wu-wei refers to behavior that arises from a sense of oneself as connected to others and to one's environment. It is not motivated by a sense of separateness. It is action that is spontaneous and effortless. At the same time, it is not to be considered inertia, laziness, or mere passivity. Rather, it is the experience of going with the grain or swimming with the current. Our contemporary expression, “going with the flow,” is a direct

expression of this fundamental Taoist principle, which in its most basic form refers to behavior occurring in response to the flow of the Tao.

The principle of wu-wei contains certain implications. Foremost among these is the need to consciously experience ourselves as part of the unity of life that is the Tao. Lao Tzu writes that we must be quiet and watchful, learning to listen to both our own inner voices and to the voices of our environment in a non-interfering, receptive manner. In this way we also learn to rely on more than just our intellect and logical mind to gather and assess information. We develop and trust our intuition as our direct connection to the Tao. We heed the intelligence of our whole body, not only our brain. And we learn through our own experience. All of this allows us to respond readily to the needs of the environment, which of course includes ourselves. And just as the Tao functions in a manner to promote harmony and balance, our own actions, performed in the spirit of wu-wei, produce the same result.

1. Ted Kardash is the Assistant Director of the Taoist Sanctuary of San Diego (619-692-1155) where he teaches classes in Tai Chi Chuan and Taoist philosophy. He is also a licensed Marriage, Family, Child Counselor with a practice in the San Diego area. To contact the Taoist Sanctuary, please call (619) 692-1155.

Wu-wei also implies action that is spontaneous, natural, and effortless. As with the Tao, this behavior simply flows through us because it is the right action, appropriate to its time and place, and serving the purpose of greater harmony and balance. Chuang Tzu refers to this type of being in the world as flowing, or more poetically (and provocatively), as “purposeless wandering!” How opposite this concept is to some of our most cherished cultural values. To have no purpose is unthinkable and even frightening, certainly anti-social and perhaps pathological in the context of modern day living. And yet it would be difficult to maintain that our current values have promoted harmony and balance, either environmentally or on an individual level.

To allow oneself to “wander without purpose” can be frightening because it challenges some of our most basic assumptions about life, about who we are as humans, and about our role in the world. From a Taoist point of view it is our cherished beliefs - that we exist as separate beings, that we can exercise willful control over all situations, and that our role is to conquer our environment - that lead to a state of disharmony and imbalance. Yet, “the Tao nourishes everything,” Lao Tzu writes. If we can learn to follow the Tao, practicing non-action,” then nothing remains undone. This means trusting our own bodies, our thoughts and emotions, and also believing that the environment will provide support and guidance. Thus the need to develop watchfulness and quietness of mind.

In cultivating wu-wei, timing becomes an important aspect of our behavior. We learn to perceive processes in their earliest stages and thus are able to take timely action. “Deal with the small before it becomes large,” is a well-known dictum from Lao Tzu.

And finally, in the words of Chuang Tzu, we learn “detachment, forgetfulness of results, and abandonment of all hope of profit.” By allowing the Tao to work through us, we render our actions truly spontaneous, natural, and effortless. We thus flow with all experiences and feelings as they come and go. We know intuitively that actions which are not ego-motivated, but in response to the needs of the environment, lead toward harmonious balance and give ultimate meaning and “purpose” to our lives. Such actions are attuned to the deepest flow of life itself.

To allow wu-wei to manifest in our lives may seem like a daunting task. And yet, if we pause to reflect on our past experiences, we will recall possibly many instances when our actions were spontaneous and natural, when they arose out of the needs of the moment without thought of profit or tangible result. “The work is done and then forgotten. And so it lasts forever,” writes Lao Tzu.

By listening carefully within, as well as to our surroundings, by remembering that we are part of an interconnected whole, by remaining still until action is called forth, we can perform valuable, necessary, and long-lasting service in the world while cultivating our ability to be at one with the Tao. Such is the power of wu-wei, allowing ourselves to be guided by the Tao.



# Rooting of the body

(Developing rooting through sensation, relaxation and focus)

Marc Appelmans et Lucas Limasset

“The activity of the neocortex, the part of the brain most developed in humans compared to other animal species, is so powerful that it eclipses the activity of the more primitive brain. [...] this very developed neocortex is therefore not in service of our vital physiological functions.” Michel Odent, *What future for Homo*.

“Indeed, the first brake to the optimization of our capacities is a lack of access to training, which invokes failing, restarting, seeking, experimenting, failing again, while taking pleasure in the process.” Cristina Cuomo, *Walking, a vital motion*

Rooting: we often hear this word, but how to translate it into reality? Thankfully as far as rooting is concerned there are many different exercises to train by yourself - which does not replace practicing with a partner who can reflect back what they feel. In general, when talking about rooting, we refer to the feet and their placement forward and back, but it is possible to go further. We can believe that the form in Taijiquan is sufficient to develop rooting, but I think that is a mistake. If we take a broader view, rooting is for us humans a collection of actions, sensations, exercises and practice, alone or with a partner, along the path of life. Let's start from the essential: rooting is achieved by relaxing the legs (as well as the pelvis and finally the entire body), in order to create a connection between the body and the ground, between the different parts of the body, and potentially between ourselves and a partner, in order to be stable and structurally strong. Rooting seems to be a condition of the integration of a unified body, a notion we have

discussed previously in an article titled “My practice of TJQJM”. This is what seems to me a reciprocal relationship: the relaxing allows for rooting and to feel it; rooting is important to achieve relaxation of the whole body, to then mobilize this relaxation. In this way the whole body is engaged in the rooting. Rooting is also a matter of structure and body-mechanics; it is necessary to become sensitive to the placement of the body: we could use the metaphor of a stack of plates which need to be vertically aligned, without leaning forward or back, to one side or the other, or risk collapsing.

In this article we start from the principle that this unity of the body which incorporates rooting, and implies connection and integration of the various parts of the body, necessitates a certain degree of sensitivity. It is there that relaxation comes into play: the more relaxed we are, the more sensitive we can be; relaxation is a requirement of internal bodily perception.

We also start from the fact that muscles reflect memory, thought, intent; our system stores perception and information in order to mature them in the long term when attention is regularly brought upon them. This is a fundamental key to the learning of a principle, meaning the body has to be engaged in the long term.

Given the importance of this principle of relaxation, and the interconnectedness of relaxation and grounding, we propose first a preparation both versatile and geared towards the sensations of the body, in order to grow in relaxation, adaptability, mobility and sensitivity, which allows for rooting to be felt as well as its participation in the unified body.

Our second approach will have us insist on the work of visualization, of sensitivity and relaxation.

\*

“Archetypal movements are inscribed in the cellular memory of human beings” Cristina Cuomo, *Walking, A vital motion*.

In order to feel and therefore use the skill of rooting, I propose to stimulate the body in various ways and to increase sensitivity through various means, which also increases relaxation.

We can start by a detailed waking of all of the articulations, from head to foot, first by a static stretching, localized and isolated. I start with the feet, since they carry us, then up to the ankles, knees, pelvis with its iliac and sacrum, the trunk of the body, the spine and the ribs, head, shoulders, arms, forearms, wrists and hands. The activation is done section by section, with the goal of relaxing each area. The whole body is called to participate, high and low, right and left, front and back, lateral and diagonal, in order to measure the quality of the mobility of each part, and integrate it into the whole. This stretching is done in order to review the various body parts, to relax them, to deconstruct the various functions and to bring one's awareness to each zone; though afterwards it is important to seek this relaxation in movement and in a more global, more unified way.

To follow, let me suggest something that might seem a little unusual: ground exercises. They are excellent to develop or regain mobility, as well as enhancing sensitivity. We can, through ground exercises, learn to feel the body in all its volume and thickness, to feel its three dimensions, on top of its gestural amplitude and mobility. It is also how we can reunite the various articulations stretched within a body that is moving in a way which is integrated, relaxed, and natural. Often we move in the same way as children or infants. It is not a matter of regressing, but to rediscover the unlocked body state, free of the restrictions accumulated as we grow older. More precisely, it must be understood that the correct movement is neither given nor instinctive, ease of movement is earned: when the new-born moves, it is building neural connections. As adults, we are no longer aware of the struggle that the baby faced in becoming adult. That struggle can be found in the body, in the tensions, the deficiencies, that are often hidden from us. By doing ground exercises, we can reveal those limitations and work on them directly. Indeed, the virtue of ground work is that it is a form of deprogramming: since it is a puzzle, we decrypt the possibility of body movements by a certain number of basic movements, that we can reconstruct, re-create according to the needs of the situation, the movement to be made, and this in all directions, despite eventual changes in direction; we unlearn habits and

restrictions in order to become more fluid and free, to create a movement adapted to the situation instead of pulling from a catalogue of fixed responses<sup>1</sup>. To become more familiar with the ground also allows for a reduction in the apprehension which we nurture towards it, a fear of falling, in order that it does not bother us while we work standing up. We can do ground work through exercises of various levels of difficulties or parameters – such as the use of a partner, eyes closed or open, etc. It is a beneficial approach on many fronts; the body gains in intelligence, relaxation and sensitivity, and the brain and nervous system are stimulated and gain in neural connections, developing our abilities. We can see a clear increase in the quality of the internal sensations, as long as the practice is regular.

To develop sensitivity, without which we would be unable to apply principles such as rooting, massage is an interesting possibility, as much for the massager as the massaged, as it develops it through touch. I think that awareness must go through touch, and that touch reaches our subconscious, our body memory, in order to pull us out of our torpor and into a greater vigilance. The objective is to reach both a better body awareness as well as a refining of the sensations brought by touch. Through such a bodily awakening, the awareness of the physical feelings can increase progressively, and the sensitivity can become finer and finer. In my opinion, it is necessary to bring that awareness to the body in order to increase rooting. Massage therefore seems like a good approach: we stimulate the muscle memory through localized pressure on the body, small movements, while also relaxing the mind and letting it join the body in gently relaxing.

Finally I also recommend the regular, if not daily, practice of exercises to increase the strength of the body. Whether push-ups, squats, sit-ups, all work: in this way all the large muscular groups of the arms, body and legs are toned; there are many variations on the exercises in order to stimulate the body and the neural network. No need to over do it, it is the quality that counts, as well as relaxing. Without these basic strengthening exercises, it is harder to feel a deep relaxation, and therefore rooting, which have to be done dynamically to be efficient. To

1. “Optimizing one's capacities means stepping out of our usual responses. It means making room for the most appropriate action. This includes our ability to feel  
to create  
to remain curious  
to keep learning  
to self-correct  
to self-regulate  
to be guided by our desire to be alive.”  
HELIX Delphine, *The Feldenkrais Method*.

be relaxed does not mean being drooping, on the contrary. The quality of our mobility will also increase with this increase in strength. In addition, together with breathing and relaxation, these exercises will lead the body to, over time, become denser, which is interesting in the context of rooting where we are concerned with a solidity without rigidity. And more simply, with a regular exercise regimen we slow down the loss of muscular capacity and mobility caused by old age, while also having an impact on health and internal vitality<sup>2</sup>. To address more specifically the exercises to support rooting, we can insist on exercises dedicated to balance – we can easily concede that rooting is synonymous to stability. The simplest way to start working on balance are one-legged exercises, with or without partners. I would save the YMTJQ exercises for later, once the body has been properly reinforced.

Thus, these different propositions give enough guidance to organize exercise sessions, but the important part is to repeat everything in the next session, as well as introducing new elements. Indeed, every time you change exercises, the body changes, it experiments with new feelings and creates new information which will push our body to reorganize itself to become more resilient, more adaptive - once again, which is interesting in the context of developing rooting, to remain grounded despite a diversity of circumstances and their potentially destabilizing and unusual character. Varying the intensity to place ourselves in a slightly more stressful situation is equally important, since we can there test our relaxation, or even determine until which moment can we sustain rooting without tension. This progressive introduction of difficulty is what is called hormesis, a process that allows the body to little by little push beyond its limits and become more resilient.

\*

“Our way of moving is directly linked to the image that we have of ourselves” Cristina Cuomo, Walking, A vital motion

2. “The maintenance of our musculature must be done in harmony with all our organic functions (...) The tonicity of the trunk, the capacities of sheathing, the abdominal strap and the back, the development of the cardiovascular system and the state of the digestive system (...) The musculature of each area of the body reflects both the maintenance of a capacity for movement, and therefore adaptation, but it also reflects the functional state of the deep organs which are stimulated by the contraction of the muscles surrounding them. Whether it is the deep supporting muscles, the peripheral muscles or the cardiovascular capacities, the healthy man must not neglect any aspect of what brings him vitality and longevity.” Jean-Brice Thivent, Néosanté n°107, January 2020, p.21.

I propose to follow with visualization and sensation exercises - the two go together, even if it is not evident at first, in order to further anchor the principles of rooting into our system.

In the basic exercises of the Cheng Hsing, for two and static, one puts his or her hand on the belly of the one doing the work - though in truth both participate and learn - and pushes gently. The partner receiving the push must send it to the feet: without resistance or pushing against the partner, without the push being allowed to enter too deeply, deforming or bending the structure. The effort of visualization, which follows the relaxing of the body, is vital in the internal work of guiding the push: softening the chest (meaning neither too round or too sunken), the ribs and the plexus, the belly and the internal organs, unlock the hips, knees and ankles, relax the legs, especially the quads; as if the body was guiding the push towards the ground, without interference and without being disturbed by it. We can then follow the path in the opposite direction: let the ground rise up through the feet and the legs into the belly and through the hips, a rising energy which should be accompanied by a growing relaxation and a gain in stability. Follow the path a few times, then start the process again with a slight increase in pressure. The one who pushes works just as much, if not more: he or she can follow the path all the way to the shoulders, then by sending this relaxation all the way to the palm and fingers. With the push, we rediscover the importance of touch, of a detailed work, sensitive and conscious that I mentioned above, which awakens the sensations. It is also learning to relax deeply, and to rest on the skeletal structure: visualize that the muscles are heavy and dropping, while the skeleton holds them up. This type of exercise, which should be done with a partner, should be done over a long time in order for its effects to be recorded within the body and not have to think about all these visualizations, to have to seek all these sensations as we move, and reach a simplicity of motion equal to our daily movements, without excess or limitations. We can note, if able to feel it, that whether it is on ourselves or the other, that when we think, we visualize, the results are better, finer: visualizing a part of the body seems to have the effect of relaxing it and to better integrate it within the movement, contributing to the realization of a better connection within the body between various parts, with the ground, and our partner. However, it is better to work with someone who has some experience, able to feel what is happening and to spot any blockages, tension, and incorrect connections.

Furthermore, we can isolate and remember this work of visualization of a vertical pathway of relaxation and re-integrate it in other exercises, for example in balance, while keeping in mind the releasing of the spinal column, or in the performance of the form in order to reactivate it as much as possible. We can apply it notably to the exercises of the Zhang

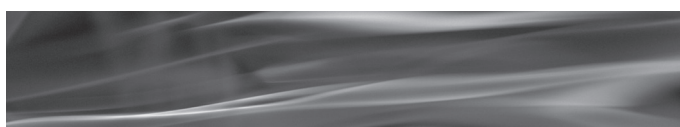
Zhuang, or Post Standing, in particular those with hands held high. As far as the belly is concerned, that the practice of Zhang Zhuang paired with the proposed visualization seems to help to relax it can be felt if one has enough sensibility, especially since during daily life even if we think it is relaxed there is some tension; we can also check the status of belly tension during a greater effort. The tension in the belly seems to have the habit of contaminating the pelvis and tighten the thigh muscles, which unroots us and reduces our mobility, while the rest of the structure is less stimulated. It would be better to rectify this disequilibrium and further integrate the entirety of the body, from the muscles to the finest articulations. In a general way it is possible to believe we are relaxed without it being fully true, hence the interest in developing sensitivity to appreciate what really is. As for relaxing, it is always possible to go further, to sink further into the muscle fibers, to liberate the bones and articulations. The objective when we bring our attention to the sensations and to visualizations is to seek the interior tranquility. When the muscles work more than necessary, they tend to shake. But if we do feel the muscles shake, it becomes a chance to let the muscles be, so that they might relax into the shaking; the goal is to be able to release the muscle, so that it understands that it can complete its work by relaxing even more. This connects to the idea of no-will, of the absence of the urge to do, of simplicity and of non-doing, when we do not hinder the realization of our objectives by taking on unnecessary tensions and limiting ideas. The calm which relaxation provides should also be mental, the internal tranquility which an attentive, slow and relaxed practice provides allowing to place ourselves into a perceptual slow-motion when we are well trained. We cannot insist enough on what state of mind to adopt while practicing: if it is done without attention, with rigidity and tension, this will become fixed within us. The goal of a sensitive training practice as proposed is to liberate oneself of the little parasitic habits, the interference, the slight tensions that can remain and still prevent us from achieving the optimal relaxation of the body in movement, and therefore to root ourselves by letting the unified body be in charge, meaning that it is not being undermined by any pressures we impose on it, and can therefore call upon the ground itself and the entirety of its mass as support. This work is done slowly, through exercises that deconstruct the process sometimes to an extreme of precision and sensitivity. If we get too excited at this very early level, it is not good for the long term. Here are some key words to live by during the practice: calm, softness, neutrality; in a word, serenity. The muscle is an expression of thought, therefore memory. We can anchor information in the deepest layers of our fibers, and start to work on it with our thoughts. We saw that with the participation of the mind, the results change immediately. When we think of a zone, we wake it up, we call upon it, we relax it. So let's be wary and nourish our system

in order to make it more adaptive and resilient, and therefore less and less able to be destabilized.

“Nothing is easy, but everything is possible. If we limit ourselves mentally, we limit ourselves physically.” Seymour Brussel, Fear, the origin of disease

As a final word, I think these sometimes heterodox exercises to develop rooting can in the long term bring several benefits: gain in internal physical density, in sensitivity and therefore adaptability, becoming stable and gain in equilibrium, unify the body in order to use the support of the ground and the weight of the full body in pushing, hitting, or simply in moving in a more relaxed and free way. Sensations, thoughts, relaxation - physical and mental - are necessary to root. This is what we can develop to become unshakeable, and that I can share with you here.

Practice, always and forever, but with intent.



# Taiji Quan in the time of Covid 19

Jean-Luc Pérot

14

The love of Taijiquan in the time of covid 19, not cholera but colera (colère in anger in French) nonetheless.

The first opening that comes to mind is that of the open air. The practice is moving from the halls to the gardens and parks or to the countryside. After the videos during the confinement, I set up shared training sessions at lunchtime. Whoever wants to come, the session follows the pattern: set up, 13 postures, 1st and 2nd duan. The weather since December imposes the dynamic style of the set-up to "warm up" the engine. The basic exercises of tui shou lend themselves well to this, I also use variations on the punches - hands and feet and on the movements. If we play in pairs, we keep the distance and the attacks are signs that lead to parries, placements and movements without contact. In a large circle, the dynamic breath activates the bellows and the rhythm. That being said, we live beautiful moments, the sun sometimes comes to bathe us with a superb light filtering through the clouds and we see more and more blue sky corners. It's a great comfort to see the smiles on each other's faces and the pleasure of the glances and words exchanged between participants. We practice on a large open grassy area within an old quarry. The uneven ground underlines the importance of the adjustment of the feet and the steps to follow the forms, the marks installed in room disappeared and we discover the difficulty of the cohesion "at distance" like that of the hindered movement when we are well covered under the anoraks. We therefore activate our adaptive capacity to manage all these environmental aspects and

we feel the positive effect of the feeling of resistance in the face of political and health constraints; the small group is strengthened. In the register of what we want to do to resist the totalitarian atmosphere and the constraint of regulations, we cultivate the capacity to do otherwise. In the space of what is forbidden, there is always room for innovative solutions, without grumbling.

The weather is getting milder, and in April I was going to take a few more classes for a more regular progression, still in the open air with a limited number of participants of 10. On March 27, new standards were imposed on us. No more than 4 people, but we find in the echoes of the press "immobile events limited to 50 people". We know about immobility; we know about the ability to do a lot in a small space, about slowness and gentleness. If demonstrating can be understood in the sense of bearing witness, we are within the norms.

What to do? ... the rest will come

by the way, THANK YOU reinfo covid TV, full of generous positive ideas and very well documented.



# QUESTIONS REGARDING THE TEACHING OF NEIGONG IN OUR SCHOOL

Jean-Paul Bonhuil

## Introduction

In 1999, a practitioner urged his Michuan Taiji Quan companions to act: *Many did not practise Neigong (or not regularly, which to my mind comes to the same thing...) it is perhaps time that an ad hoc study commission sheds some light on all that... for the safety of the students, since Neigong is a delicate practice, and also for the credibility of our teaching...*<sup>1</sup>

Twenty years later, during the College seminar held in March 2019 at Hattenville (76), the question of the annual theme was raised. Initially the idea of reflecting on Neigong was mentioned but rapidly abandoned since few of the teachers share this knowledge.

In our School there are two strong recurrent statements: *'The curriculum of Yangjia Michuan stands out from that of other schools of Taiji Quan due to the presence of Neigong'* and *'The practice of Neigong contributes to Taiji Quan being an internal art'*.

## My initiation to neigong

I attended three sessions of initiation to Neigong sessions lead by Sabine Metzlé<sup>2</sup>.

Since then, I practise this meditation sporadically. A simple practice using abdominal breathing and consciously following the breath in the body around a predefined circuit and without any particular constraints on the breathing. The way I practise aims to be faithful to the teaching received. That is to say, sitting comfortably on the ischia, the pelvis mobile following the inspiration or expiration, the chin lightly tucked in, the spine 'stretched', abdominal respiration and a conscious following of the breath. I am deliberately summarising my practice very succinctly. In fact, it is not the subject of this article and, moreover, could not possibly constitute an overview of Sabine's teaching

So, why mention my practice? It is not so much the methods used as the results observed which have prompted me to write this article.

Although fluctuating, my Neigong practice is not entirely fruitless. My session takes place between 7 and 8'o'clock in the evening. What do I observe? On the trivial side, not to have succumbed to evening drinks or to surfing the web. More seriously, to have taken time for myself and to have liberated a sense of peace and wellbeing.

1- Laurent Rochat - *Chers compagnons de «pratique»* - Bulletin de l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan n° 32, p. 18.

2- Sabine Metzlé - Former student of Master Wang Yen-nien - Teacher (DEJEPS) of the Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan style in Paris and Versailles.

Perhaps I should be concerned to be able to clear my mind relatively easily; to off-load all anxiety, irritation and frustration. During my practice, I have the feeling of relaxation which results notably in a relaxation of my internal thigh muscles. I observe that the work on the pelvic floor and on the opening of the groin which occurs during the meditation help me in the practice of the form notably with the lunges. Furthermore, I am more attentive to the circuit of my breath whilst carrying out the form and I have the impression that the mobility of the pelvis and the 'Lower Dantien' are more present.

In the light of my modest practice and experience, I evaluate more easily *the consequences on the body of habits or manners that could lead to a deterioration of the organs, wear of the skeleton, a disturbance of the biological functions...*, but equally witness *the capacity of people to overcome physical deficits by mobilising what vitality remains to them to attain that which give meaning to their lives*,<sup>3</sup>, the consequences on the body of habits or manners that could lead to a deterioration of the organs, wear of the skeleton, a disturbance of the biological functions..., but equally witness the capacity of people to overcome physical deficits by mobilising what vitality remains to them to attain that which give meaning to their lives', *'the concern for self'* as an art which cannot be reduced



to the single category of knowledge. The point is not to make a work of knowledge but to make of one's own life a work. Plotinus<sup>4</sup> summarises well this concept, today forgotten: 'Take away all that is superfluous, straighten all that is crooked, purifying all that is dark to make it shiny, and do not cease sculpting your own statue.'<sup>5</sup>

## 1. Neigong, what is it about ?

Taoist meditation carries the Chinese name of Neigong (內功), Nei (內) referring to the internal and Gong (功) to the technique.<sup>6</sup> 'The term Neigong is generally translated by 'internal work' even though a literal translation does not evidence the word 'work'.<sup>7</sup> The definitions found on the internet can be summed up in few words but many suggest that it is a technique reserved for 'advanced' practitioners.

*'What is Neigong? Is it a simple technique to apply, and which entails then waiting for something to happen? The expectation made of miraculous projections of superhuman capacities...'*<sup>8</sup>

For Master Wang Yen-nien<sup>9</sup>, Neigong calls on *'embryonic breathing, or respiration of the anterior Heaven... with respiratory techniques specific to the seasons and inter-seasons'*.<sup>10</sup>

3- Didier Lecordier - *Le corps»: concept ethnosociologique mobilisé dans le soin* - Dans Recherche en soins infirmiers 2009/3 (n° 98), p. 32 à 35.

4- Plotinus (205-270 A.D.), Greco-Roman philosopher of the late Antiquity, is the principal representative of the current philosophy called 'Neoplatonism'.

5- Michel Constantopoulos - *Le souci de soi* de Michel Foucault ou comment faire de sa vie une œuvre - Che vuoi n° 19 - 2013.

6- Philippe Gouédard - *La méditation taoïste* - Comprendre les fondements, s'initier à la pratique et s'épanouir intérieurement - Éditions Eyrolles - 2014.

7- Claudy Jeanmougin - *Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - Cours de Claudy Jeanmougin à partir de l'enseignement de Maître Wang Yen-nien* - Tome 3, p. 71 à 78 - Éditeur École Française de Taiji Quan - 2002.

8- Claudy Jeanmougin - *Pourquoi je n'enseigne pas le Neigong* - Bulletin de l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan n° 36, p. 20-24.

9- Maître Wang Yen-nien (1914-2008) - Heir to the transmission of the School Yang of Taiji Quan (4th generation).

10- Claudy Jeanmougin - *Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - Cours de Claudy Jeanmougin à partir de l'enseignement de Maître Wang Yen-nien* - Tome 3, p. 71 à 78 - Éditeur École Française de Taiji Quan - 2002

11- Ibid..

He specifies that it is appropriate to propel *'the breath into the main cinnabar field when inspiring'* and that *'the creative thought 'Yi (意) directs the breath'*.<sup>11</sup>

Michael A. Timochenkov<sup>12</sup> reports that to a question relating to respiration in Neigong, « Laoshi »<sup>13</sup> responded... « just relax and breath normally ».

Thus, *'The so-called internal Chinese techniques, use respiration as the means of mobilising the energies'*. In Neigong *In Neigong 'there is a mental induction which will guide this mobilisation, this is the power of Yi'*.<sup>14</sup>

## 2. The practice of Neigong, to what end ?

Claudy Jeanmougin<sup>15</sup> challenges us: *'What are we looking for in Neigong ? Better health? Neigong should not only be a quest for better health, we will say that it is just one result of an effort which aims at something other than this sole aim, but this 'other', so what is it? If we cannot answer this question, what is the point of practising Neigong?'*<sup>16</sup>

This questioning, however valid it may be, remains ambivalent since it proclaims the right to state that without an aim, all attempts to 'aim correctly' (to follow the way of wisdom) will be in vain. Meanwhile, on the more abstract plane of Truth, without a common criterion for deciding between right and wrong, is it not legitimate to

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assert that all men are always right? In fact, to affirm that identifying the aim proves right would invalidate the assertion that 'without a common criterion for deciding between right and wrong, all men are always right'.

Nevertheless, Master Wang specified the aim of practising Neigong: *'What is the point of Neigong? ... Those who wish to pursue a practice of self-preservation and the internal arts of alchemy start with the practice of Neigong. Neigong aims to cultivate and nourish the internal organs, to strengthen the interior. One also uses what is called tuna (吐拿) : which is the Taoist*

*art of the respiratory technique.*

*The practice of tuna tends to strengthen and render the internal organs more resistant. We all possess three treasures, three internal elixirs: jing (精), qi (氣) zshen (神)...*

*The practice of an internal alchemical art, with Neigong to develop and strengthen ourselves, and with the Taoist art of respiration, allows us to develop, strengthen and increase these three internal elixirs.'*<sup>17</sup>

Finding the elixir of immortality goes back to ancient times. The first emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang (259-210 B.C.), expressed his wish to *'prolong life by maintaining good health'*<sup>18</sup> and commanded his administration to search for this secret. In 2002, in the province of Hunan (centre), the archaeologists found this imperial decree.<sup>19</sup>

12- Michael A. Timochenkov pratique le TJQ depuis 1980 - Élève de Tak Lai, Chu King Hung, Vlady Stevanovich, Shen Hong Sheu et Kuo Chi (ce dernier ayant été l'élève de Wang Yen-nien)..

13.- Laoshi (老師) signifie 'Teacher' en Chinois, terme adopté pour adresser Wang Yen-nien qui n'a jamais revendiqué un titre dans son art.

14- Claudy Jeanmougin - *Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - Cours de Claudy Jeanmougin à partir de l'enseignement de Maître Wang Yen-nien* - Tome 3, p. 69 - Éditeur École Française de Taiji Quan - 2002.

15- Claudy Jeanmougin, professeur de Taiji Quan depuis 1984, auteur de nombreux ouvrages sur cet art parmi lesquels le Manuel d'énergétique chinoise - Editions la griffe du tigre - 2013.

16- Claudy Jeanmougin - *Pourquoi je n'enseigne pas le Neigong* - Bulletin de l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan n° 36, p. 20-24..

17- *Entretien avec Wang Yen-nien* réalisé par Thomas W. Campbell le 13 juillet 2002 à Madison, Wisconsin, à l'occasion du second festival de Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - Interprète Julia Fairchild - French translation Anne Goudot and Christian Bernapel in 2004 - Yimag n° 1 - Février 2015.

18- Excerpt from the *chant du Sbi San Sbi* de Song Shuming - Livre de poche des bases essentielles du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - 2005.

19- *Trouvez l'immortalité : ordre de l'empereur de Chine !* - Le Point - AFP 2017.

Initially, to obtain immortality or to extend life, Chinese alchemy turned to *'a laboratory alchemy. It is a branch of operating alchemy which aims to form a tangible elixir by using materials external to man, whence its name Waidan (外丹) or 'external alchemy.'* After several deaths by poisoning, *'a psycho-physiological alchemy', which tends to form the Elixir inside the person by means of meditative, speculative, respiratory and gymnastic practices*<sup>20</sup> was preferred. This branch is called Neidan (內丹) or 'internal alchemy'. Neigong stems from this. Today, this 'discipline' could be confused with *'certain practices such as pharmacology, hygiene or magical techniques... but what makes alchemy so singular is above all its spirit. The faith of the alchemists ...' for whom, 'like Nature or even better than her, man can form this Matter in his dispensary even faster. By assimilating the Matter, man can 'refine' himself into an eternal being.*<sup>21</sup>

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### 3. The taoïst practise for immortality, a ritual

To approach Neigong as a Taoist practice, it is good to remember the heterogeneous nature of Taoism. *'The current Taoist cannon, the TaoTsang, numbers more than one thousand works... one finds the best and the worst, that demonstrates its richness'*<sup>22</sup>

However, the main lines stand out. First of all, Taoism is a religion of salvation, that is to say that it leads its faithful to a blissful eternity. Immortal life is not the destiny of the soul after death; it is the deliverance of a body which emanates from the body after its death.

*'Immortality for the Taoists, is the result of an extraordinary spiritual and corporal asceticism; one must enter into contact with the prime mover; united with the eternal Tao one thus participates in his immortality. For most, it is only to preserve, extend life...'*<sup>23</sup>

To render the body immortal, the most important exercise consists in 'nourishing the breath', since for Taoists the world is made of breaths.

Furthermore, the human body and the world are built identically; this is the theory of the macrocosm and the microcosm.<sup>24</sup>

20- Daeyeol Kim - *Métallurgie et alchimie en Chine ancienne* - Eurasie, 2003, p. 155-189.

21- Ibid

22- Isabelle Robinet - *Méditation taoïste* - Collection «Mystiques et religions» - Dervy Livres - 1979

23- Henry Soulard - *Alchimie occidentale et alchimie chinoise* - Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé - Année 1970 - p. 185-198.

24- Isabelle Robinet - *Méditation taoïste* - Collection «Mystiques et religions» - Dervy Livres - 1979.

#### 4. The internal view of the body, the route towards the internal

In Taoist meditation, the practitioner becomes accustomed to seeing inside their body and to walking around it in thought.

The inner vision of the material body, whilst useful for healing ailments is insufficient for obtaining immortality. Whoever wants to see the gods who inhabit the body must adopt a certain state; *'that demands a long preparation, as one must drive out of the spirit (the heart) all external preoccupations'*<sup>25</sup> At this stage of meditation, one must be careful : if the heart is not calm, if the mind is troubled, it is the bad spirits, the wicked and harmful beings that one sees rather than the benevolent and transcendent beings.

As westerners, we are heirs to great currents of thought which subconsciously govern our natural inclination to oppose body and spirit. This is the heritage from Plato and then Descartes. Additionally, our experience of liberty often and subconsciously results in a reflex of protest claiming to be the rational mind.

Our society still considers the body an object of mistrust for its tendency to distract from rational thought, of hindering spiritual fulfilment. Plato qualified the body as 'the tomb of the soul'.<sup>26</sup> For the Chinese, whilst there is still a variety of

approaches regarding the duality or unity of body/spirit, a consensus emerges, that is that the seat of the soul finds its place in the hearts of men and of women. The Chinese join western philosophical thought in recognising that the soul is indispensable for life. Nevertheless, in the west two opposing views remain according to which either the soul, the driving force of life, translates its activity into a movement (flow, heat, ...), or does not move. Ancient Chinese medicine does not reflect any contradiction of this type : the soul moves just like the breath, the blood. The soul brings the body to life since its departure leads to the

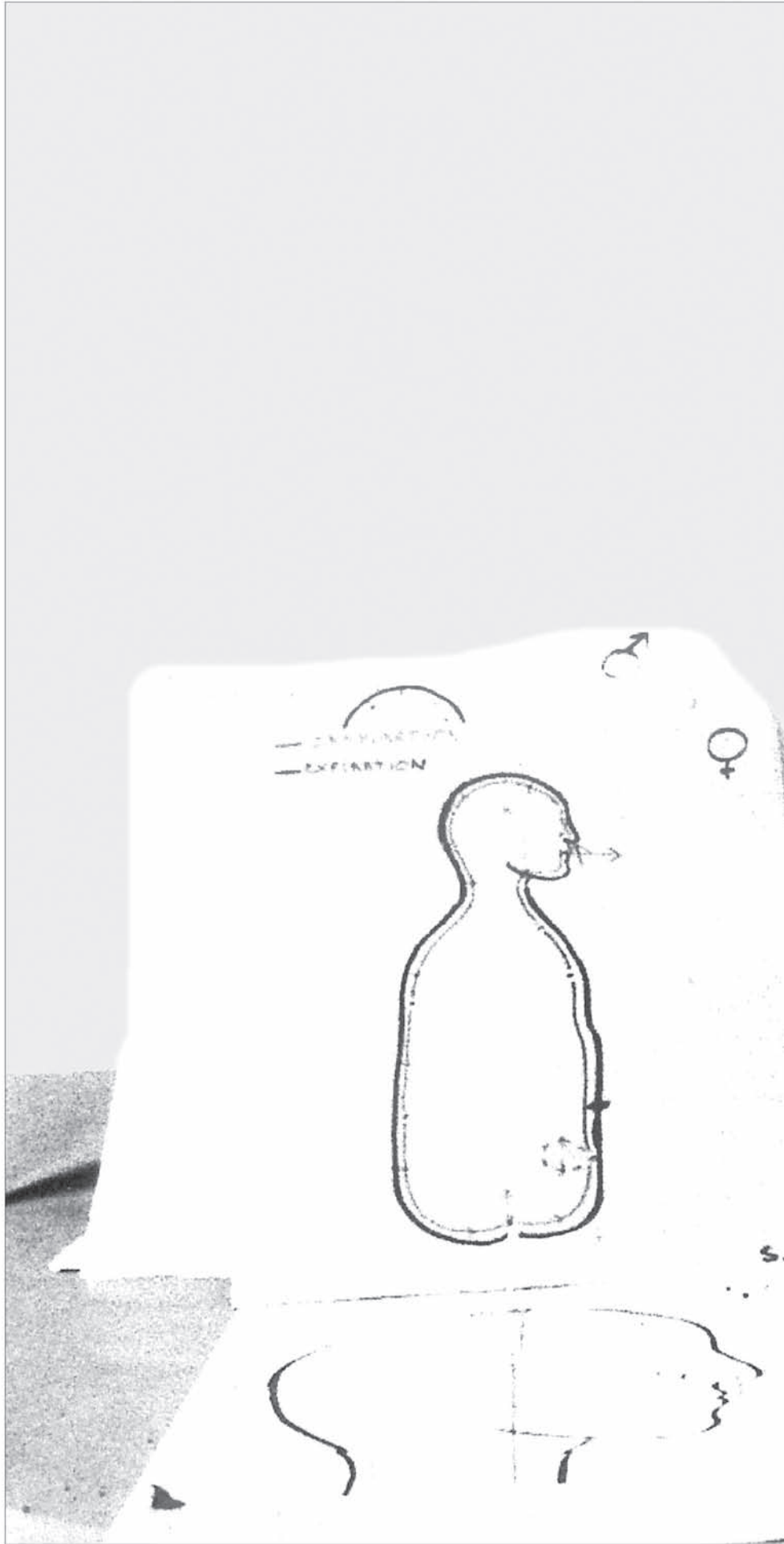
cessation of all movement. In our School, it is reported that practising Neigong requires the respect of, amongst others, *'the Chinese calendar and its periods known as the 'articulations and respirations of the year''*.<sup>27</sup>

25- Ibid.

26- Didier Houzel - *Le corps et l'esprit : quelles relations ?* - Journal de la psychanalyse de l'enfant (Vol. 2), p. 23-48 - 2012..

27- - Wu Tianfou translated to English by Julia Fairchild and to French by Luc Defago - *Les 24 Jieqi et leur importance pour la pratique du Neigong* - Bulletins de l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan n° 29, p. 5 ; n° 38, p. 18-19 ; n° 42, p. 17-18 ; n° 45, p. 44-45..

Just relax and  
breath normally.  
*Laosbi*





## 5. Chinese and western sensitivity

It would be vain to imagine it possible to identify all which could differentiate a Chinese from a Westerner. It might be wise to wonder regarding the ability of both parties to construct and visualise an interior world.

For this one must distinguish between the notion of imagination and that of the imaginary. The imagination is the ability to picture the world using combinations of images which give it meaning; namely the ability to create for oneself one or several 'interior world(s)'. Whereas the imaginary is defined as a production of the mental formalised

*something fake* (假想 *jiǎxiǎng* : *imaginary*, 假 *jiǎ* : *false, simulated, artificial*).<sup>28</sup>

On the other hand, for the Chinese, the imagination is to think in images (想像力 *xiǎngxiànglì* : *imagination, 'power to think in images'*). The imagination needs material to attach itself to and to give it substance; images and daydreams particularly from the imaginary are the supporting elements for the imagination.

Chinese thought remains close to Nature and is not based on discourse or the effects of rhetoric of the West. Whilst the Greeks by means of verbal jousting could demonstrate everything and its op-

# 想像力

in works where image and language form one or several coherent and dynamic collections which derive from a symbolic function. The imaginary is a repository of stories and symbols derived from a heritage specific to each civilisation.

In Chinese, *'the etymology of the word imaginary reveals the notion of a deceptive appearance, of*

*posite, the Taoists bring to the fore other means of expressing themselves through content rich in meaning; Nature inspires them.*

28- Philippe Taupin - *Imaginaires d'ambiance automobile et sémiotique des récits : une approche d'innovation expérimentielle digitale en Chine* - Doctoral thesis directed by Jean-Dominique Polack and Karine Berthelot-Guiet - Université Pierre et Marie Curie - Doctoral school SMAER, ED391 in collaboration with l'Université PSA - 2017.



## 6. The pedagogical approach of Master Wang

According to the accounts of his former pupils, Master Wang considered Neigong inseparable from Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan. He *'had lived in the noisiest part of Taipei, in Shilin, known for its night market. This never prevented him from practising Neigong twice a day.'*<sup>29</sup>

The Neigong practised by Master Wang came from the meditation techniques taught within the brotherhood 'Current of the Golden Mountain' (金山派 Jīn Shān Pài). He had been introduced to this practice by his master Zhang Qinlin<sup>30</sup> *'who excelled in the Taoist techniques of rejection and absorption of breath, and all that constitutes Neigong'*<sup>31</sup>

*'Master Wang Yen-nien was always very brief on the subject ... the only explanation we had is that the child in its mother's womb breathes with its belly, which is why we describe the respiration we use in our technique as embryonic.'*<sup>32</sup>

For his teaching, it seems that Lao-shi wished to favour a pragmatic approach, identifying essentially the benefits of Neigong in the domain of health. Note, Chinese thought is essentially pragmatic: *'it sticks to things such as they appear, change and become'*<sup>33</sup>

Regarding pragmatism, the *raison d'être* of an idea, is action. An idea which works in practice, which withstands the test, is a good one.

In focussing on the sole criterion of health, he provides us with a criterion for appraisal, evaluation of the exercise. At the same time, he closes all possibility for metaphysical debate on the subject, thus taking the risk of generating some frustration.

However, spiritual research is not incompatible with this pragmatic approach *«Mens sana in corpore sano»*.<sup>34</sup>

According to Julia Fairchild, *'Healing starts with the thought'*.<sup>35</sup>

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29- Claudy Jeanmougin - *Maître Wang Yen-nien, une bistoire personnelle* - Ecurat, le 12 août 2008.

30- Zhang Qinlin (1888-1967) - Third generation of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan. Integrated into the brotherhood 'Current of the Golden Mountain', he combined respiratory exercises with the practice of Taiji Quan and the Taoist name 'he without fear' was given him.

31- Wang Yen-nien - *Livre de poche des bases essentielles du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan* - Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - 2005.

32- *Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - Cours de Claudy Jeanmougin à partir de l'enseignement de Maître Wang Yen-nien* - Tome 4, p. 61 - Primary respiratory movement, respiration of the anterior heaven, embryonic respiration - Editor Ecole Française de Taiji Quan - 2002.

33- Philippe Filliot - *L'éducation au risque du spirituel* - Preface by Michel Maffesolli - Desclée de Brouwer - 2011.

34- «Un esprit sain dans un corps sain» : quote from Juvenal, 1st century Roman satirical poet.

35- Julia Fairchild - *L'importance de l'étude du Neigong et du Daoïsme dans le Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan* - French translation: Isabelle Dantzer - Yen-nien Shanghai Publishing Company - 2006-2016.

## 7. The transmission in our school

For a Chinese, it is better to abandon intelligence to strive for the simplicity of a little child, does not the 'truth' come from the mouths of children? Lao-Tseu said: *'To practise learning is to increase day by day, to practise the Tao is to decrease day by day'*.<sup>36</sup> For many Western minds, the Taoist approach is regressive and already in the 4th century it challenged the great thinker Tchouang-Tseu <sup>37</sup>: *'How should I know that what I call 'knowledge' is not ignorance? And how should I know that what I call 'ignorance' is not knowledge?'*

Chinese thought inscribes the thought in the body; the education of the mind is done by listening to the body. The body is the prerequisite of thought, and idea and sensation are but one. This is one of the principals of unity sought in the practice of Neigong.

According to his former pupils, Laoshi was steeped in beliefs which defied 'rationalism'. His culture allowed him to find poetic metaphors and anecdotes offering illustrative value and a back door into the complex experience of Neigong. This does not seem to have been his choice. Come to think of it, he must have considered it of the greatest importance that the pupil seek his 'natural' fulfilment. That is, not to hold as key the act of breathing 'deeply' or of consciously working

the movements of the diaphragm, but rather to disregard 'what we do' preferring to 'allow it to happen'. It is not an 'added' activity interfered with by a daydream generated by the cradling of a Chinese tale, but one 'less' conducive to a perfect relaxation, a clearing of the mind and peace of heart.

*'Not all good practitioners of martial arts understand Neigong; in the same way, not all those who understand Neigong are good practitioners of martial arts.'*<sup>38</sup>

There is however a route that Manuel Solnon reveals to us. At the end of a meditation session led by Master Wang, he reports this citation from Wang Zongyue<sup>39</sup>: *'Through practise one can gradually acquire an understanding of what energy is, ... one is on the path to knowledge. Without long and diligent practice it is not possible to reach a level at which the spirit is suddenly enlightened.'*<sup>40</sup>

Yves Picart, my first teacher, had adopted this precept as his motto *'the secret of practice is the practice'*.

Returning to the friendly injunction made at the beginning of this text destined for the teachers of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan, it remains clear that the latter tend to respect what has been transmitted to them. As such, they remain faithful to the teachings they have received but above all in-

# 神

36- Lao-Tseu - *Le livre de la voie et de la vertu* - Traduit en français par Stanislas Julien, membre de l'Institut et professeur au Collège de France - Imprimerie royale - 1842.

37- Tchouang-Tseu, Chinese thinker of the 4th century B.C, to whom we attribute the authorship of an essential Taoist text called by his name, the Zhuangzi or the 'True classic of Nanhua'.

38- Julia Fairchild - *L'importance de l'étude du Neigong et du Daoïsme dans le Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan* - French translation: Isabelle Dantzer - Yen-nien Shanghai Publishing Company - 2006-2016.

39- Wang Zongyue a figure in Chinese martial arts who is supposed to have lived in the 18th century, considered to be the potential founder of Taiji Quan. He is credited with the authorship of *Traité du Taiji Quan* (太極拳論), a theoretical text on this pugilism, without this being completely proven.

40- Account by Manuel Solnon - Bulletin de l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan n° 45, p. 23.

tegrated. For all that, intellectual honesty is compatible with the curiosity which drives all of us to a continual research to appropriate the Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan, according to our sensitivity, our experience of martial arts and sometimes also our physical limitations.

There is no better example of these individual assimilations of our art than the diverse versions of the execution of our form offered up on the web. More than just versions, I take them as propositions which raise questions and provoke thought on one's own practice.

As to the practice of Neigong, we are not starting from zero, we have the writings of Master Wang, the shared knowledge of those who have been able to follow the teaching of Laoshi and our own research and experience.

Furthermore, resorting to a reflection on the subject within the Collège des Enseignants du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan remains an option. In the current situation, I invite you to meditate on the thought of Jean-Jaurès<sup>41</sup> who said: « *One does not teach what one knows or what one thinks one knows: one teaches and one can only teach what one is.* » For my part, I am convinced that each of us having, at his pace, taken the way of Tao lives daily transformations which can appear more or less trivial but which tend towards a certain spiritual awakening.

*Jean-Paul Bonhuil*

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<sup>41</sup>- Jean Jaurès (1859-1914) is a French politician.



'What is Neigong? Is it a simple technique to apply, and which entails then waiting for something to happen? The expectation made of miraculous projections of superhuman capacities....'

I'm waiting, I'm waiting, but nothing happens. I'm going to read it all over again.

# Foot position, change in direction, spiral

## Half-baked solutions

Henri Mouthon

Whether a student or an instructor, you may have been challenged by the white lines indicating the cardinal directions in Master Wang Yen-nien's, Volume 1. How weight should be distributed in relation to this model has already been thoroughly discussed, and in particular the constraints it imposes to the knee as well as, to a lesser degree, freedom of movement at waist level, and spiralled dynamic.

Given that we must adjust weight whenever the upper body appears vulnerable, everyone seeks to address the difficulty. How to cope with this? Is there a way that meets biomechanical, energetic and martial requirements? Can we reach a consensus on the question?

The videos you find on YouTube show that each practitioner responds in his/her one way, or just ignores the problem. If any at all.

I will try to describe how I reached a tentative resolution.

First and foremost: to what degree should my supporting foot be angled when my front foot is spread outward on the heel-to-heel line. How to find the answer?

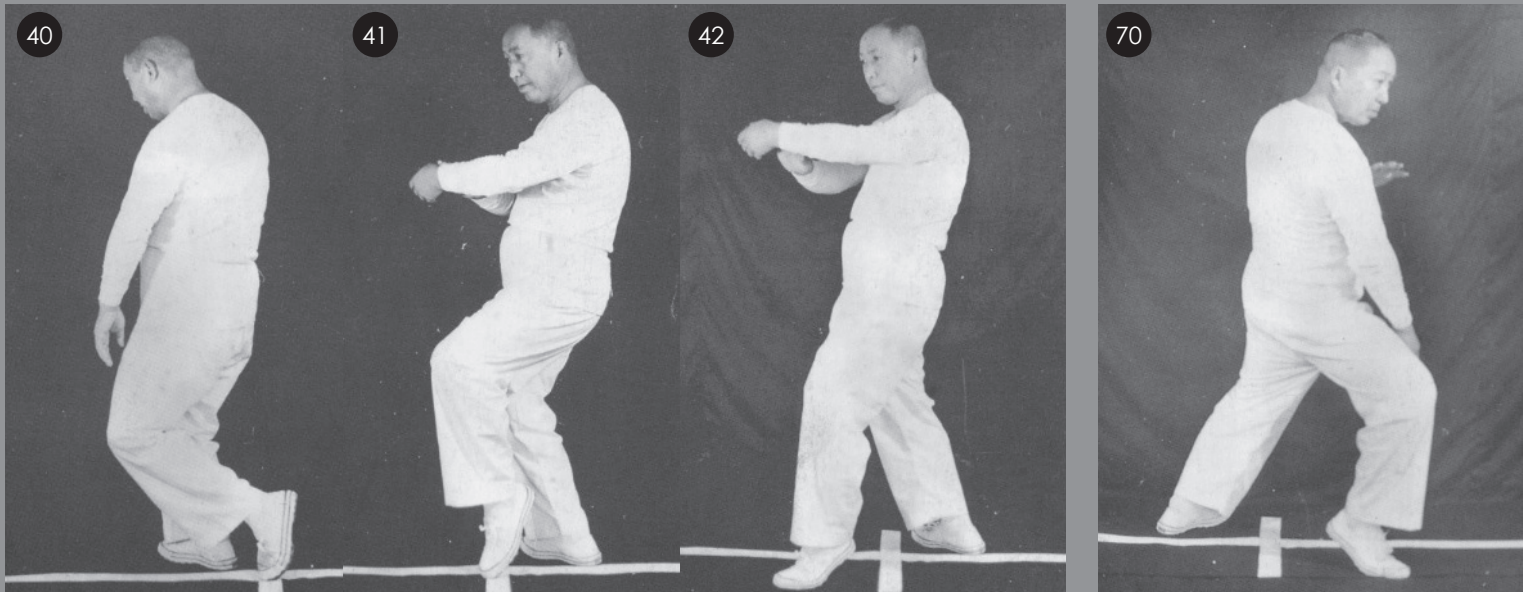
Following Laoshi's example, for me static frontal stretching is unconditional: the heel of the front foot resting on the floor, the two legs at a 90° angle and the torso being brought down upon the front thigh. Taking the posture just for review, I placed my foot without much adjusting its position and then noticed a potential lateral loss of balance as my upper body was sinking. I immediately and instinctively got rid of it by progressively turning in my

foot until my upper body came down more easily. I went over the form, over other basic dynamic movements, and indeed, this angle is best for me. Let's forget the 45° and 37° angles, each one of us must find the right angle that corresponds to his/her own knee condition.

This approach works for static practice, but how can you get there on the first try amidst this dynamic flow of movements we call the form? How do you execute the spirals, allow a complete freedom of the waist, and yet protect your knees while shifting your weight?

The first time the problem occurs is in Section One when you change direction between the two Grasp the Sparrow's Tail.

In the mid-eighties, Master Wang Yen-Nien's ongoing research led him to teach this transition in a curious way. The frontal double hand push An was followed by the parallel lowering of both arms on a double exhalation; this was performed without any particular intention, any martial intention like transforming Yin into Yang in the lower part of the movement in order to grab the opponent's wrists, for example (see photos 40-42). That seemed rather mysterious because the dropping of both arms generated lateral vulnerability. Then the front heel was aligned in diagonal along its axis but not re-adjusted to prepare a change of direction. As a result, you see that most beginners step aside in the new direction without paying attention to the heel-to-heel line because of the constraint imposed on the knee; next they start a completely frontal Peng leading to a Grasp the Bird's tail spiral that is performed without having been properly prepared.



In addition to the neutral lowering of both arms, the modification of the position of the front foot remains difficult. It's not good enough to look for a quick fix. How to generate a frontal Peng in these conditions, and yet make sure we won't do away with the spiral required to express Peng?

OK, our style focuses on this frontal Peng you find everywhere in the form and the corpus (see basic Tuishou exercises, and also the Peng fa jin videos in which he excelled). Other styles would prepare this Peng by spiraling further left, with their right hand performing a Cai at chest level, and their left hand in low protection position so as to execute their "Wild Horse Parts Mane" (24 and 108 Posture Forms). Their Peng is, contrary to our style, expressed across the chest, under the right or left arm of the partner.

Watching others Taiji forms has always helped me understand our own. Since spiraling is of current interest, here is how I operate while trying not to distort the movement.

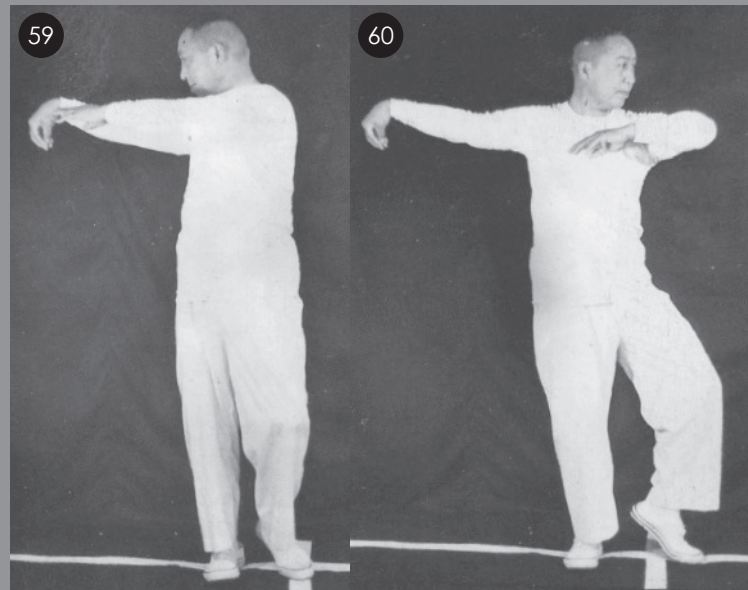
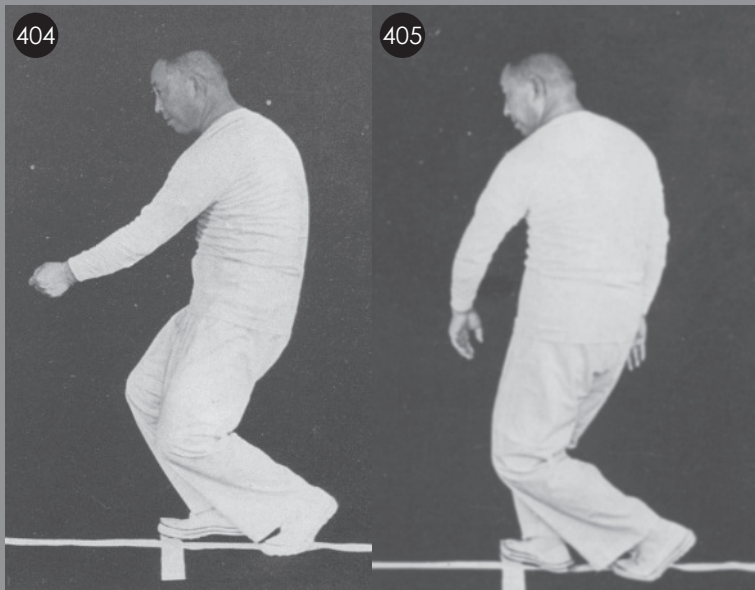
Experience shows that an An hand push with both hands, started from the back leg as we do, will thrust the partner not straight forward in front of me, but on the side because the yin hand opposite the supporting foot will acquire power with the inward rotation of the waist. Knowing that, and in order to avoid the potential vulnerability due to a side attack from the partner while I am empty-handed, I step outside with my front heel but place it inside my comfort zone so as to "empty" my vulnerable side. We do it between the elbow and shoulder strikes, as requested by Master Wang although picture 70 doesn't show it. Next, my right arm draws a circle at chest level, palm facing forward at first as if

to accompany the thrusting of the partner, then palm facing downwards to execute a spiral closer to the simplified forms. My left hand follows the movement in low position and protects my side. I think it fits better with the alternation full/empty, and eliminates the effects of the two arms falling down without further intention and disrupting the fluidity of the movement. Therefore I begin the spiral more obviously on my left. Peng is then twofold, frontal and spiraled. That makes perfect sense: since a spiral in one direction develops from the spiral in the opposite direction, the subsequent Peng combines both aspects, frontal and lateral.

It may well be that other practitioners of our style share my way of coping with the difficulty, but that it is not yet showcased on YouTube. Is it consistent with our style? Is it logic?

The other way to position the foot correctly that some of us have adopted is to place the heel while reloading the rear foot before swiveling the tip of the front foot. The method does not undermine the 13 postures system if it is executed properly. Here again, during a change of direction, especially a 180° turn, the back leg is jeopardised if it remains fully extended after the push instead of being brought back soon enough, but above all if the overhanging hand is not protecting it. If so, we see that, like in the 13 postures when the ball of the foot is not sufficiently brought back, an ulterior correction is needed for comfort, and that disrupts the pace of the sequence.

These two schemes are only examples. To swivel on the balls of both feet is another way of adjusting a shift of weight, and that can also be used in several other movements of the sequence though it is rarely



done. This is explicitly described in Section Two about a downward Lu: step forward and brush the knee (photo 405). Why not use it for a Cai, or the simple whip for example? (Photo 59/60, Section One). The coherence of Yangjia Michuan is such that tools for progressing are all here within reach. We need only find them and be inventive.

The gap that exists between the photos and what we feel we must do according to the Classics is a recurring topic. I have even been confronted to an assistant who used to produce the book as evidence and blurt, his finger on a photo: "Look! Henry does it this way, but in the book it's different"... aargh!

If we fail to consider the book as only a grid, as suggested in the book by the perpendicular lines drawn on the floor, I think we're not going to take the understanding of the style to the next level. My attempt to provide some fine-tuning comes from the feeling that we don't share views on how to create a motive from a given grid. In the very orthogonal example we've been discussing, the grid is: An on a diagonal, Peng on the other diagonal. And the question is: how can you draw a Taiji motive thereof without tangling up your feet? If we can get over it we open up the possibility for each practitioner to choose one of the infinite nuances of the motive.

While sharing these thoughts with you I am aware I've lapsed into explaining the form and its technical applications as if they were a continuum, as if the practitioner was successively attacked from every side. On the other hand, these transitions/ transformations that rely on the correct adjustment of the weight all along the sequence deserve careful examination in the light

of the Classics. Building consensus on the best way(s) to come to grips with the difficulties they cause would increase the coherence of our style. I know it is difficult to describe movements with words or series of photos. Yet I hope these few lines were clear enough for a large number of people, and that they will spark interest and stimulate the desire to work on this question in order to get a better insight into our style.

# “Networking” in Chinese Culture: and its Place in the World of Martial Arts

Serge Dreyer

## Introduction

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Networking is a fundamental process of socialization in Chinese culture, quite different from that practiced in Europe. In the last few decades this question has been studied in France, in particular by journalists, political scientists, economists and even a few sinologists. Unfortunately, in order to make it more accessible to the general public, the discussion is too often simplified and restricted to the idea of *guanxi*, which is only one of two types of networks; *guanxi*, a passive network and *renqing wang* (shortened to *renqing* in the academic article) an active network. In order to fully understand how these networks function, we will have to bring in other concepts in future issues of this newsletter. Many foreigners, for example in the French business and political world, misunderstand these networks, confusing them with the simple address book. It is much more complicated and subtle than that.

I will begin with a rather academic description, based on an article published by the Presses Universitaires de France, which will save me from having to write one myself. I will spare you all the academic references and (...) trim it down some. Then I will turn to my experience in Taiwan (chapters 3 to 8) where I have been living for 40 years, before transitioning into the world of martial arts, in order to give you an idea of how all this applies to the practice of taiji quan. But before reading any further, everyone should remember that there are, fortunately, exceptions to the general trends described below.

## 1. Guanxi

The Ricci Institute dictionary (Chinese-French, 1976) translates *guanxi* (character 2788, p. 534) as: relation, relationship, connection. (relation, rapport, connexion).

Members of all Chinese communities are involved - actively and/or passively - in an extremely dense mesh of social relations, in the form of networks, which are the foundations of Chinese enculturation and which create an interdependence of their participants. The place of each individual in the society is determined by his or her degree of mastery of these networks, which may be encompassing, encompassed<sup>1</sup>, active or inactive, etc<sup>1</sup>.

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1. In theory, the *guanxi* network encompasses the *renqing* network. For the latter, it implies an activated social bond in which a debt relationship has been established. Even if the repayment of the debt is postponed to an unspecified date and even if its importance is minimal, a particular density of intention and attention has been established between the *renqing* partners. The *guanxi*, on the other hand, can be compared to an address book, but its potential and strategic value ostentatiously define the individual's place in society. It can sleep in a drawer while retaining its value, which it derives from its potential and sometimes from its display power. The author of this article, for example, is in many *guanxi* because of his prestigious position (in Taiwan) as a university teacher; he is probably mentioned in conversations as the teacher that everyone should have in their network without being asked for any service. It is only when activated that *guanxi* is often confused with *renqing*.



The *guanxi* plays a central role in this system because of its character of totality. Indeed, the *guanxi* of each member of a Chinese community is established by the sum of all the individuals with whom he or she has more or less familiar relations. He can activate this network to obtain various favors, just as he can be solicited for such favors. It is here that the notion of debt, which forms the basis of the *renqing* network between the solicitor and the solicited, comes into play. When not activated, *guanxi* plays the role of a brand image; it is the individual's social calling card: for those who have a great *guanxi*, fame and credibility necessarily follow.

It should be noted, however, that *guanxi* is not an indistinct mass of social relations. Indeed, the Chinese individual moves through plural identities that allow him to select his affiliations, or even to negotiate them, according to identity markers such as place of birth, kinship, work colleagues, classmates, family name, or teacher-student relationships. By modulating his *guanxi* in this way, he ensures a better social fluidity marked by an economy of means. Two classmates can, for example, invoke *guanxi* based on having the same birthplace to help each other, while simultaneously participating in another *guanxi* based on the criterion of the province in which they were born. But the ultimate and most familiar art for the Chinese is "pulling *guanxi*". Indeed, when no criterion of belonging exists to establish such a relationship, tactics are then put in place, "strings" to build a previously non-existent relationship or to strengthen a relationship that is too loose, in order to attract the coveted partner into a *guanxi*. Gifts and/or favors are particularly effective for this kind of maneuver. What in France would appear to be a self-serving or even hypocritical attitude would in this case be a commonplace aspect of "guanxi pulling" in China.

## 2. Renqing

The Ricci Ricci Institute dictionary (Chinese-French, 1976) translates *renqing* (character no. 2426, p. 464) as:

- 1) Human feelings and natural feelings
- 2) Benevolence, kindness, sympathy
- 3) Manifestations of sympathy: presence at funeral ceremonies, weddings, etc.; participation in the acts of social life, consideration, regard for someone.

*Renqing* is, above all, a network of saturated reciprocity which includes the idea (with an affective connotation) of favor or present. Practically all Chinese and Western authors agree on these three points (reciprocity, favor/gift, affection) and establish a proximity between *guanxi* and *renqing*, sometimes to the point of using them interchangeably.

- In addition, Ho insists specifically on the debt aspect of reciprocity. When a favor is done or a gift offered,

every Chinese person recognizes a debt that must be settled (*renqing zhai*) as soon as possible, although without necessarily specifying a deadline. In Chinese social relationships this obligation is absolute.

- For his part, Gao insists on the dimension of interpersonal resources. *Renqing* functions as an important mechanism for regulating personal relationships. The give and take involved in *renqing* creates a link between individuals. According to Zhu, this bond can be used to express sincere feelings towards others (expressive function of *renqing*, *biaoda qing*) and/or as a "social investment" (instrumental function, *gongju qing*) for personal gain via favor and/or gift. The next step is *bao*, which means "to pay back", "to repay" (but also "revenge"), with how and how much becoming the big questions.

- Participants in a discussion at a conference organized by the Academia Sinica in Taipei had added the dimension of *ganqing*, translated by Ricci (character no. 2529, p. 487): "feelings"; "sentiment" (as opposed to reason), "disposition towards someone". According to these lecturers, *ganqing* is more specifically about feelings between individuals. It also implies a positive disposition towards others. Discussions with our Chinese friends sometimes reveal this affective component included in *renqing*, while for others, the limits is more clearly marked. According to the latter, *ganqing* is comparable to the love for parents, the love between husband and wife, and relations with relatives and very close friends. The difference between *renqing* and *ganqing* can be understood as an opposition between strong and weak affective networks (near/distant).

- Jin sees three main elements: the existence of ordinary feelings between people, the maintenance of good relations, and the imperative for both parties to obtain gains from the interaction. However, for this researcher such a division, which has become classic, is still an unsatisfactory over-generalization.

- Huang closely associates *guanxi*, *renqing* and face in a power game. Similarly, Ye believes that "renqing, power and money are the three most important resources in Chinese society". In this case, we can see that *renqing* is implicitly superimposed on *guanxi*.

- With respect to the interchangeability of *renqing* and *guanxi*, Yeo considers *guanxi* to be divided into economically and socially based examples of *guanxi*. *Renqing* (and its affective component) would therefore be incompatible with economic *guanxi* since the latter is determined by an impersonal and rational market. In contrast, socially based *guanxi*, regulated by the principle of reciprocity, is rather diffuse and non-specific with an affective dimension, hence the central role of *renqing*. This division seems to us to be too rigid, implying an incompatibility between the material and the affective. In China it is common to

express sincere feelings through a gift of money (for example, the red envelope containing money offered to children by their parents for the Chinese New Year,). It seems more relevant to us to characterize the difference between *guanxi* and *renqing*, when it is recognised by the participants, in terms of a static / active opposition. One can be part of a *guanxi* without being involved in an active exchange, whereas such an exchange is an essential part of *renqing*.

### 3. Back to *guanxi*

After reading the first paragraph, one might wonder what the fundamental differences are with the French concept of networking, what is commonly called *l'entregent* (people skills). In my opinion, there are two too important ways in which Chinese *guanxi* is unique<sup>2</sup>.

The strategic aspect: *guanxi* is cultivated by everyone in the Chinese world, regardless of their social position. In France, networks are built up over time through meetings and affinities, and they are not systematically conceived as resources, except in some professional contexts. The *Amicale* association regrouping our style of taiji quan is a good example: most of the participants do not go to the *Amicale* to develop their network. If we were in China, participants would go to the *Amicale*, just like Europeans, to see friends and discover other ways of teaching, but (and this is very important), they would also use it to build their network. This should not be seen as hypocritical, but as a common, self-interested behavior that comes naturally to everyone. Every Chinese<sup>3</sup> person carries business cards, which are distributed whenever possible<sup>4</sup>. After a verbal introduction, this is a first essential step in building *guanxi*. This is a ritual that would surprise most Europeans, being almost nonexistent in our social interactions:

These business cards have a format that allows them to be slipped into the card holders that everyone has at home. Apart from the usual information (name, address, phone number, company or association name), they also include either academic titles and/or the position in the company/association/temple. If the individual is very socially active, you can often see all his titles and the companies/associations to which he belongs on the back of the card. Most cards have the information in Chinese on the front and English on

the back. Even individuals at the bottom of the social ladder often have a business card that mentions, for example, their role in the village religious association or in Communist China their role in the local committee. This card is held out with both hands to the interlocutor who then gives his or her own in the same way. It is good manners to look at the card that is handed to you and to demonstrate your interest in what is on it (I will talk more about this phatic language later). Once this exchange is finished you put the card in your wallet, not in your pocket, which would be a sign of disinterest. When you get home, you put it in a card holder or throw it in the trash, depending on the value you attribute to the encounter. Very often, these cards are stored according to the nature of the network. It is a database that can be activated as needed. It is in this sense that I speak of a 'passive' network, relative to the *renqing wang*, but it constitutes a central resource in socialization. I often compare this strategy to the fisherman's casting of the net; then drawing in the net and then sorting the catch according to his needs.

If, as in the previous example, you go to the *Amicale* and exchange your business card with a doctor, your network will potentially intersect with his or her network in the future, a fact which every Chinese is keenly aware of. If this doctor is a member of the local political party, plays golf, collects antiques, rides a Harley-Davidson on weekends with a motorcycle club or is a member of the parents' association of the most coveted school in town, you will retain not only what may be useful now (priority access to his hospital, for example) but also what might be useful later on (when your child is old enough to enroll in the coveted school...). On the other hand, you will have to think about how your own network can be used as a bargaining chip: you know a lot of people, you are interested in the local political party; you have connections in the hotel business, you dream about weekends on a Harley-Davidson... But you will say to me, that must be exhausting! Not if you are well trained and if no one forces you to react immediately. This is one of the well-known markers to differentiate between a 'suck-up' who is only looking to expand his network and a skilled socializer who considers his cardholder(s) as needed (the most important social skill being a good memory).

In the 'networking' operation, some individuals are more sought after than others. They can be roughly divided into two categories. People associated with any form of power (politician, company director, lawyer, doctor, rich people<sup>5</sup>, etc.) and those associated with different forms of prestige (teacher, celebrity in the world of arts or media, etc.). This distribution does not, however, relegate other people

2. Excluding neighboring countries that have been strongly influenced by China.

3. Chinese in the cultural (not political) sense of the word.

4. Excepting, of course, young people not yet in the workplace, or the wife of a man trying to build his *guanxi* (unless the wife also receives a card). In Taiwan, where the position of women has improved considerably since the 1980s, if a woman is the center of the interaction, it is her husband who doesn't get to give out his cards.

5. Money is worshiped in Chinese culture, but that's another story...

(craftsmen, shopkeepers, farmers, etc.) to the margins of society. Everyone needs a washing machine repairman, a mechanic or an electrician, but the relationship with them will be based mainly on the market criterion, which is more accessible than the previous two categories.

Possessing a 'big guanxi' is thus creates a powerful visibility that could almost be compared to the utility of an effective a social marketing campaign. However, it would be wrong to ignore, as in any other society, the need of gregarious individuals to evolve in an emotionally and spiritually nourishing environment.

Here we must address the relationship between the individuals involved in these networks. Is there a clearly marked boundary between a self-interested approach to a social target and a relationship created by a gesture with no strings attached? I will not have the time here to elaborate on the system of opposition characteristic of socialization (often lacking nuance<sup>6</sup>) in our European societies. Let us say very simply that we tend to reason according to the true-false, negative-positive axis, without any shades of gray<sup>7</sup>. In Chinese socialization, there is always an intermediate state, a blurred zone for us Westerners that is described by the term *mohu*. It is not a purely accidental state nor a state totally left to chance. Since the Chinese tend to reason according to a generative process, transitions are inevitably the result of a thoughtful approach to social situations as they unfold. Consequently, one can engage in "guanxi pulling" while developing a pleasant or even friendly relationship. This requires careful management of the process of creating a relationship. Everything depends on the ability of each person to initiate this *guanxi* pulling in an agreed and appropriate manner (appropriate language and gestures, consideration of the context, presenting oneself favorable but not ostentatiously, as humility is highly valued in Chinese education). The other fundamental element of a successful 'guanxi shot' is the face game, which I will discuss in the next article.

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6. I don't appreciate how socialization in western culture is often reduced to the notion conflict, a stereotype similar to that of a harmonious Chinese culture.

7. This is admittedly something of an oversimplification used here to facilitate this comparison with Chinese culture.



# Nous avons lu...

## Brothers,

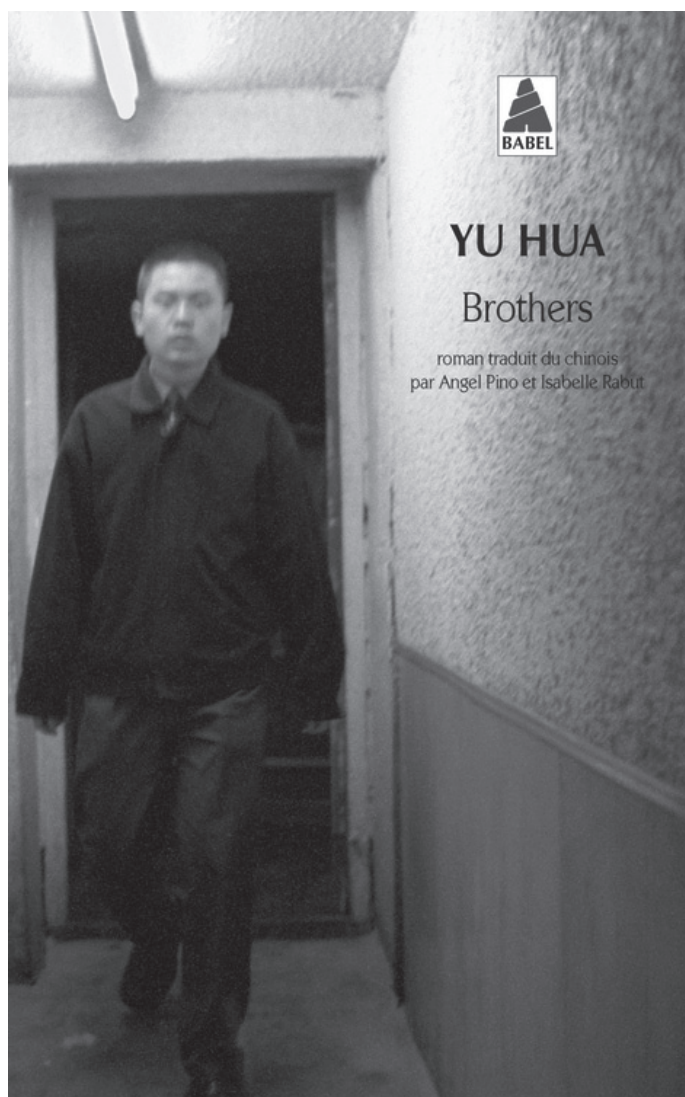
Actes Sud, 2008, 717 p.

Pendant 238 pages vous risquez d'avoir les larmes aux yeux. Vous y trouverez le sordide, le grossier, la crasse, la turpitude, la veulerie, l'hypocrisie, la violence, la rouerie, la pauvreté, autrement dit la misère à son plus haut degré ou, pour être plus précis, la Révolution Culturelle chinoise déclenchée par Mao en 1966. C'est la première partie du livre. On a peine à croire que nombre de nos intellectuels français

aient pu soutenir idéologiquement cette horreur. Puis vient l'ouverture lancée par Deng Xiao Ping. C'est la deuxième partie : les chevaux du capitalisme à la chinoise sont lancés. Les faibles lumières d'émotions et de sentiments positifs qui survivaient dans la première partie vont graduellement émerger mais dans une ambiance de combines, de plans sur la comète, de naïveté, d'ignorance quasi totale du monde extérieur, et de rumeurs incontrôlables. Le tout nage évidemment dans la frénésie du gain, l'une des valeurs centrales de la culture traditionnelle chinoise, mais qui prend ici des proportions inimaginables en raison d'une vie de privations terribles pour plusieurs générations. Dans cette partie vous n'arrêterez pas de trébucher de (sou)rire toutes les 4 ou 5 pages tellement les situations sont énormes. C'est par exemple un charlatan qui vend des hymens artificiels pour que les femmes ayant perdu le leur puissent chercher un mari : une pression un peu forte sur l'appareil et une espèce d'ampoule rouge éclate confirmant la virginité de la propriétaire... sauf si en se retirant l'homme se retrouve avec l'appareil non éclaté accroché à sa " tige de jade ". L'amour et l'amitié profonde survivent quand même çà et là dans cet incroyable charivari.

Je ne comprends pas pourquoi le titre est en anglais pour l'édition française puisque deux frères sont les protagonistes principaux de ce roman (?). En tout cas c'est une œuvre magistrale que j'espère vous procurer (je l'ai acquise récemment dans le rayon Chine des Compagnons d'Emmaüs que je dévalise régulièrement). Et puis vous commencerez à comprendre pourquoi les Chinois sont en train de nous bouffer tout cru...

Serge Dreyer



# Nous avons lu...

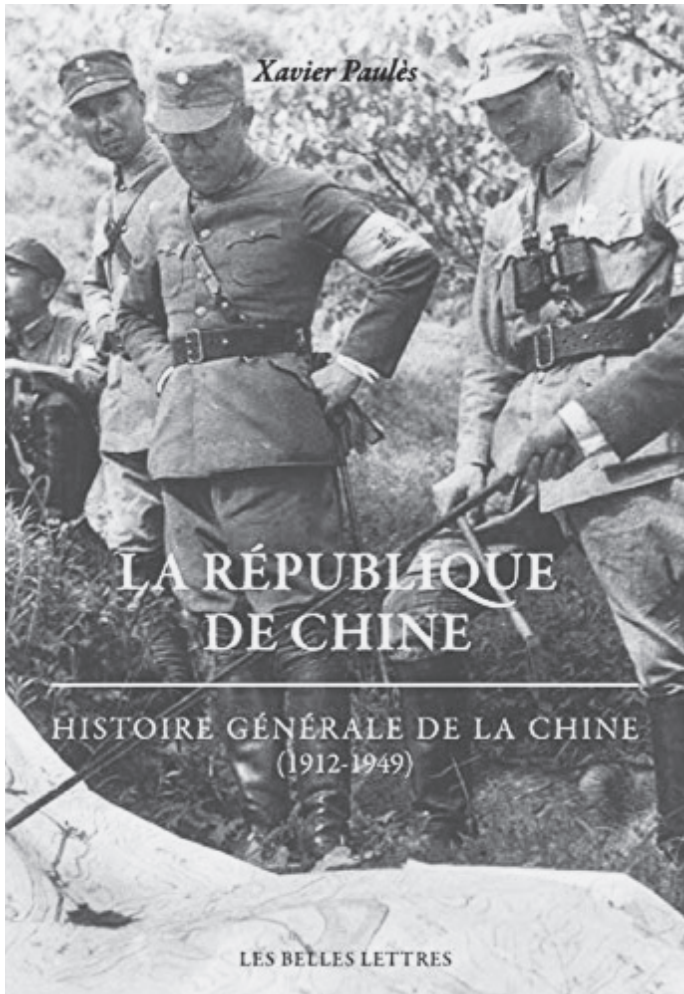
## La République de Chine, Histoire générale de la Chine (1912-1949),

Xavier Paulès, Les Belles Lettres, 2019, ISBN 978 2 251 44945 6, 29,50 euros, 412 p.

Voilà un ouvrage d'histoire remarquable par la qualité de ses références et la pertinence de l'analyse. Il remet radicalement en cause l'histoire chinoise version Chine communiste qui décrit l'avant 1949 comme l'enfer et l'après 1949 comme l'avenir radieux. En fait, à maints égards, c'est une continuité que l'on peut observer entre la politique du

Guomindang et celle du gouvernement communiste chinois. La période analysée est très riche en événements remarquables souvent ignorés du public occidental et évidemment du public chinois contemporain. Fort heureusement, si l'auteur met à mal la version communiste de cette période, il ne tombe pas pour autant dans l'apologie de son adversaire le Guomindang, parti nationaliste installé désormais à Taiwan. Non seulement l'ouvrage permet une réflexion rafraîchissante sur les évolutions de la Chine d'après 1949 mais il éclaire également au niveau anecdotique la personnalité de M. Wang et sa culture, produit typique de cette époque.

Serge Dreyer



# Nous avons lu...

## Le tao de papa, Pérégrinations chinoises d'un taoïste d'Occident,

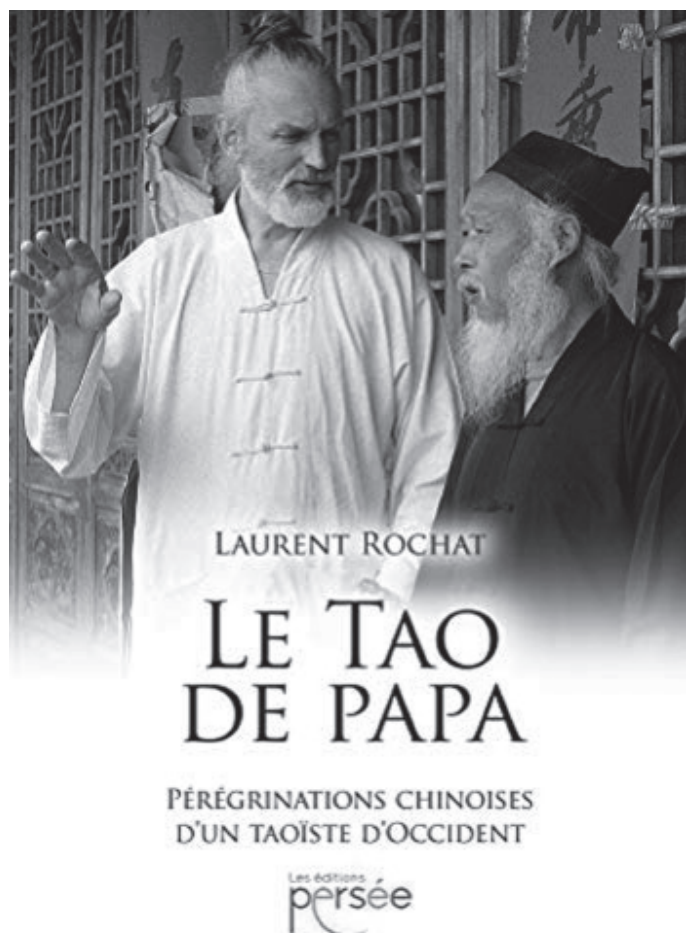
Laurent Rochat,  
Les Editions Persée, 2021, 183 p., 16,50 euros, ISBN:  
978-2-8231-3177-2

Laurent a appris le Yangjia Michuan taiji quan avec Luc Defago et de fil en aiguille s'est passionné pour le taoïsme. Cette passion est devenue une vocation qu'il évoque le plus simplement du monde dans ce petit livre. Pas de grands mystères, pas de rencontre

avec Zhang San Feng réincarné au 21ème siècle ni de déplacement en lévitation. Ce n'est pas le genre de Laurent qui allie de manière subtile la sensibilité d'un musicien, son métier, et une solide prise de terre. Le style est plaisant et vous fera voyager agréablement dans un monde atypique, celui de ces moines taoïstes qui vivent à la marge ce qui en soi est déjà remarquable dans une société chinoise plombée par un hypermatérialisme sans frein et une pensée politique unique qui ne goûte guère les sentiers hors piste. De plus si vous appréciez les paradoxes à la chinoise, vous serez gâtés.

Serge Dreyer

24



# Nous avons lu...

## Chine le grand prédateur,

Pierre-Antoine Donnet,  
Editions de l'Aube, 2021, 332 p.

L'auteur est un fin connaisseur de la Chine, ancien correspondant de presse de l'AFP à Beijing. Je le suis depuis plusieurs années car ses articles, notamment dans Asialyst, sont corroborés par la plupart des chercheurs sinologues de mes connaissances. La description de l'impérialisme chinois est remarquablement documentée, de la complaisance de la région Alsace pour l'installation de Huawei près de Strasbourg (800 000 euros de l'argent des contribuables)

aux terribles répressions du Tibet et des Ouïghours du Xinjiang. Aucun sentiment anti-chinois dans ces lignes mais une accusation forte contre la politique de leur gouvernement, de Xi Jin Ping et du Parti Communiste. Il reste à avaler Taïwan et la génération de nos enfants devra s'agenouiller devant le modèle autoritaire, à moins que...

Serge Dreyer



# Nous avons lu...

## Le mariage en Chine,

Jean-Luc Domenach et Hua Chang-Ming,  
Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Poli-  
tiques, 1987, Paris, 189 p

Si vous croyez comme quelques-unes de nos élites politico-financières (voir les entretiens avec Gaël Giraud sur Thinkerview sur Youtube) que " ça ne ferait pas de mal une bonne dictature à la chinoise en France " ce livre devrait vous ramener à la raison. Il date certes mais sachant que selon les chiffres

officiels chinois récents 600 millions de Chinois vivent avec moins de 125 euros par mois, les conditions de mariage n'ont guère dû changer du moins dans les campagnes. Vous apprendrez que dans certaines régions on vend/marie les filles au kilo et au nombre d'années d'éducation (selon mes récentes informations les prix ont augmenté à cause du déficit de femmes) et que la relation de mariage tourne essentiellement autour des questions financières/matérielles, voire politiques, pour une grande majorité de ruraux. Les citadins sont mieux lotis mais guère mieux sauf évidemment les cadres du parti communiste et les nouveaux riches. C'est l'un des très rares livres dans lequel on ose enfin parler de la passion de l'argent comme une valeur centrale de la société chinoise, passion qui se comprend en partie grâce à la description des rouages du processus de mariage en Chine. J.-L. Domenach est l'un des meilleurs observateurs de la Chine moderne aussi je pense que cet ouvrage vaut le coup d'une recherche sur les réseaux pour le dénicher.

Serge Dreyer





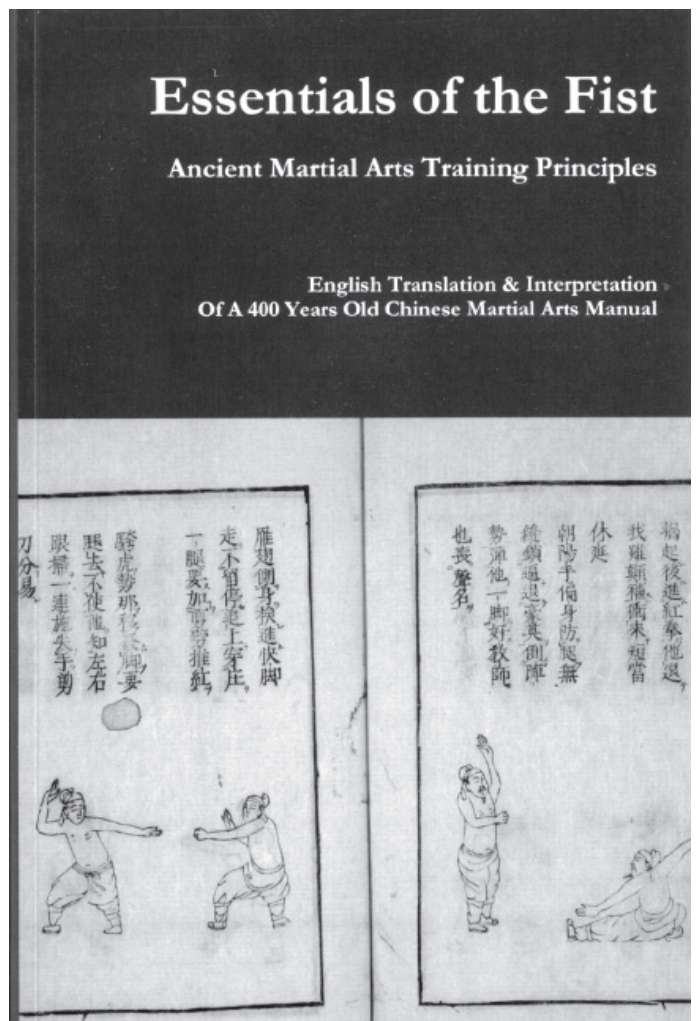
# Nous avons lu...

## Essentials of the fist,

Translated and interpreted by Jack Chen,  
2020, ISBN 978-981-14-5822-4, 290 p,  
Edition Chinese Longsword

Ce livre (Quanjing en chinois) a été écrit en 1560 par le général Qi Ji Guang. Ce n'est en fait que le dernier chapitre de ce livre qui est proposé ici mais qui a une grosse importance car certains mouvements sont passés dans le taiji quan comme le " simple fouet " ce qui a amené certains spécialistes à le considérer comme l'origine du taiji quan. Au-delà de la dimension historique du document, les interprétations de Jack Chen sont tout aussi passionnantes pour ceux qui s'intéressent à la dimension martiale de notre discipline.

Serge Dreyer



## Le Bulletin : informations pratiques

Signe de la vitalité de l'Amicale, le Bulletin est un outil très important d'information et d'échanges entre nous tous, membres de la famille du Yangjia Michuan. Chacun peut y contribuer, quel que soient son niveau, son ancienneté...

Vos propositions de sujets, articles, courriers des lecteurs et autres informations à faire paraître dans le Bulletin sont à transmettre à la rédaction, pilotée par Corinne Zerbib : [redaction.bulletin.ymtjq@gmail.com](mailto:redaction.bulletin.ymtjq@gmail.com)

Adressez vos articles, photos et vos courriers sous les formats suivants :

- Textes : privilégiez les formats .doc, .docx ou .odf
- Photos : résolution minimum de 150 dpi (150 dot per inch) et taille de 10 cm de large minimum
- Montage photos : joindre le fichier photos séparément. Nous sommes obligés de traiter chacune

des photos et nous ôterons celles que vous avez incluses. Nous suivrons au mieux vos consignes de présentation.

Les articles doivent parvenir au plus tard à la rédaction :

- fin novembre pour le numéro de janvier,
- fin mars pour le numéro de mai,
- fin juillet pour le numéro de septembre.

## Sollicitations

Il est possible que vous soyez contactés par la rédaction pour pondre un article ou répondre à quelques questions. Ne soyez pas surpris(e) ! Si ce n'est déjà fait, veillez à communiquer le nom d'un(e) correspondant(e) de manière à établir une communication plus aisée entre le Bulletin de l'Amicale et votre association.

*Merci pour votre participation active !*



**RENOUVELLEMENT de l'ADHESION à L'AMICALE du Yangjia Michuan TJQ**  
**Attention : pour toute nouvelle adhésion contacter : [secrtaire.amicale.ymtjq@gmail.com](mailto:secrtaire.amicale.ymtjq@gmail.com)**

**1er Septembre 2021 au 31 Août 2022**

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 Conformément au Règlement Général de Protection des Données entré en vigueur depuis le 25 Mai 2018, je bénéficie d'un droit d'accès et de rectification des informations me concernant en m'adressant au Secrétariat de l'Amicale.

Fait à :

Le :

Signature :



# A Word from the President

The smiles and laughter were back, old friendships were rekindled, new ones were created, and our Meetings kept their promises. A very big thank you to all the nice team of the Jean Moulin Club for having given us these Meetings after our own hearts. You were simply right and I hope that we will see your faces and your energies again in the Meetings to come.

There are noticeable signs of renewed energy. The sustainability committee held workshops in Merlimont to discuss the Amicale and its future. These workshops aroused interest and set goodwill in motion. The most immediate result is the presence of a new Editor-in-Chief, welcome to you Corinne, but if you look at the composition of the commissions in the Administrative Note, you will also see some changes.

In addition, two new commissions are being created: one devoted to the reflection on the different forms that local meetings of the Amicale could take, the other aiming at producing a short

video presentation of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan, of its Amicale and its College, to be distributed as widely as possible, and in particular to our practitioners, to make the particularities of our style better known. If you are interested in these themes, there is still time to participate. To do so, visit the forum. Ah, you don't know where the forum is? Go to the Amicale's website, you can't miss it.

There is also talk of several intentions to organise the Meetings. But shhh, it's still a bit shy and undeclared, radio-corridor noises, I can't tell you anything yet. In the meantime, we know that next autumn we'll meet again at the seaside near Saint-Malo.

All this is good news that will help us to hold on during this year, which looks worrying from many points of view. Breathe, smile, practice, exchange. I hope that you will keep and spread the benevolent energy of our Meetings throughout the year.

With kind regards,  
François Schosseler

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## BULLETIN DU YANGJIA MICHUAN TAIJI QUAN

Janvier 2022 – N° 99

Publication of the Amicale of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan

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**Postage:** Claudy Jeanmougin.

# Taich'ti meeting in Merlimont

Corinne Zerbib

2

The meeting involved an ideal setting, an efficient and humorous team organisation, a great variety of workshops and a great dynamic to promote the sustainability of the Amicale, not to mention the memorable people from Bergen. The 2021 Meetings allowed the "family" to meet after this long interruption.

"Hello! Are you coming for the Amicale Meeting? Ah, we're sorry, it's postponed for this weekend, but you can come back next week!"

Hardly had Christian crossed the threshold of the Merlimont holiday village, that the weekend entertainer, showing a serious and distressed face, induced a fit of laughter in the car. And this hysterical laughter he provoked, spread throughout the stay...

In the Pas-de-Calais, between Berck and Le Touquet Plage, two sites, famous for very different reasons, the Miléade de Merlimont holiday village welcomed 172 participants of this new edition of the Meetings in a very beautiful site. However, the setting left more than one confused. "Do you know where bungalow 42 is? No, I'm looking for 7!". The quality of accommodation, a very friendly and efficient hotel team, frugal and varied meals, a very pleasant wooded site... the location was perfect. The weather went along with the agenda, sparing us heavy rains and storms, sometimes even offering some risks of sunny spells. The great team of Taich'Ti section (oups I mean Taichi) of the Jean Moulin Club in Raimbeaucourt, led by the teacher Cécile Frégier, was in charge of all this. Despite her very painful



knee, she travelled for miles every day smiling, to carry out all the chores of the organisation and the tasks to greet everybody with her crack team.

## Reunion

As always, the first workshop of the Meeting is the reunion. This year, the effusions have a particular flavour, after two years of interruption when often, lives have been upset and sometimes ruined. We talk to each other, we talk about those who are not there - or no longer there... Fortunately, and as always at the Amicale, joy prevailed and the group livened things up and even galvanized the event. "This weekend has given me a complete boost, I'm



in great shape!" said, a few days later, a participant who suffered a long Covid.

The restaurant, very comfortable with its large round tables and its buffets, allowed interactions, especially between newcomers. "My teacher never came to the Meetings, but I decided to come on my own to have a try," explained Jean-Paul. Despite everything, beginners weren't as many as it used to be. It seemed quite normal, since the registrations for this session took place during the year when courses were closed.

The most motivated ones would meet early in the morning (6:45 a.m.) for the first body awakening ses-

sion. On a rather cold morning, quite a lot of people came and would take place under the barnum. It was pitch dark, only a projector illuminated Sébastien. The group energy was palpable... A very great start. The following body awakening sessions, with the same conditions, attracted a little less people, especially on the third and last day, the day after the party.

### **The berguenards of the auction**

The climax of the Meetings, which surprised newcomers, was of course the auction, which allowed each participant to request workshop themes which would then be led by volunteer teachers. Still conducted

by Zouzou, with her bell and her assistants, François and Christian, the 2021 auction broke new ground: the umbrellas, (oops, sorry, the berguenards in French from the North) opened at the foot of the stage, would be used to identify each teacher. Each to his own: Indian pink, white, black, purple, rainbow colour, green with a heart... The innovation was meaningful as we could bet that the locals would travel with the bell, from year to year! Participants attended the workshops very seriously and aroused many laudatory comments, in particular those of the College about the spiral.

The evenings followed one another, from one extreme to the other. First, the general assembly, studious, reiterated the essential message of the Amicale which made an urgent appeal to the "succession", a call relayed during the workshops Sustainability which had gathered more people than expected.

And then of course the show, or rather the concert of the music orchestra and singers led by Yves Picard, followed by a parade led by Christian, member of a brotherhood of the Carnival of Dunkirk, then the dancing party until the end of the night...

The YMTJQ "family" met again in Merlimont. The inevitable tensions show an evidence of this: it is still alive and active. Even if some still wish to reconsider the very name of the Amicale, the new generations, which are particularly motivated, prepare the next generation. With all my love.

\*\*\*

**Cécile Fregier**, Taichi teacher from the Jean Moulin de Raimbeaucourt Association, organiser of the 2021 Meetings: "Simple, friendly and warm meetings"

The students in my group went to the Meetings of the Amicale in Sète for the first time and immediately wanted us to organise them. We therefore created a team of five people. For the preparation, it was mainly Marie-Christine and I who worked on the project because we had more free time. We had the same logic, the same aspirations and a common objective: organizing simple, friendly and warm Meetings. Moreover, we could rely on the very dynamic and skillful centre team. Logistics, animation, catering, setting up the arbours... For each request, somebody would come to give a hand.

By and large, I am very happy and proud of the result. We would also like to thank the participants who showed their agreements, which reinforced the feeling of celebration and the sharing of privileged moments. Within our team, this project has created a spirit of mutual aid and solidarity. I delegated the

tasks (group animation, logistics, accommodation, catering, etc) and each group respected its role and our coordination. Then, Marie Christine and I divided up the work during the Meetings so that everyone could take advantage of the workshops and have some free time. What my students liked above all was to practice Taichi with different teachers and discover other aspects of the practice for which we didn't have time to discuss about in class.

\*\*\*

**Emeline Régent**, vice-president of the Amicale: "The level of participants is increasing"

I'm just a student. I started Taichi at 21 and I took part in my first Meetings in 2006. I've been the youngest for 15 years! We organized the Meetings in Annecy in 2015, I joined the Board of Directors just after. I have several missions: I created and manage the new website, I help people who organise the Meetings, I participate in the day-to-day management of the association, in the Sustainability commission. At The Meetings, you meet people of all levels. When I started the Meetings, only a few practised the 3rd duan. Now there are more and more people practising the 3rd, even those who recently started. The new ones are not so doubtful about their practice.

These Meetings were also an opportunity to discuss with people interested in the approach of the Sustainability Commission. People also came to see me outside the workshops to offer their help with various tasks. They are these discreet people you do not hear from the rest of the time. The Meetings promote different questions. This is important because the Amical evolves thanks to these topics.

\*\*\*

**Séverine Flot**, teaching assistant in Angers, member of the Sustainability Commission: "For my first Meetings: I felt at home"

I started Taichi in 2014 and decided to discover The Meetings last year. As they were cancelled, this year was the first time for me.

The greeting, the organisation, the schedule, the auction, the workshops, everything was perfect. So I felt at home. As I was coming for the first time, I was not sure who was a new participant or a regular one. Between the Sustainability Commission, the rehearsals for the evening concert and the walk in the dunes, I didn't do a lot of Taichi. I still discovered the little



stick and Taichi sitting on the floor. On the other hand, I practised the awakening exercise in the cold early in the morning just once! It was very enriching to be able to benefit from such a breeding ground of teachers who wished to share their skills and knowledge. Looking forward to the next Meetings!

\*\*\*

### The Workshops, experienced by **Marie-Claude Millet**

There were very different and varied workshops of excellent quality. Whatever your level, you always learn something. We had the choice between about fifty themes over two days.

\* Workshop of the College of Teachers, spiral of the forearm with Christophe Lephay.

How sensational! During a push on oneself, arms along the body, relaxed and the push on oneself with the hands turned while inhaling. It was then impossible to uproot me! Small gesture, big effect...

\* Another College workshop: spiral in the practice of ancient sword form, with François Besson. It's awesome!

\* Two workshops with the short stick (flute of the eight immortals), with Yves Martin. In addition to memorizing the movements, we had a very good training for the awareness of our axis, on the supports, the weight transfers, the massages of the lao gong, the feet soles.

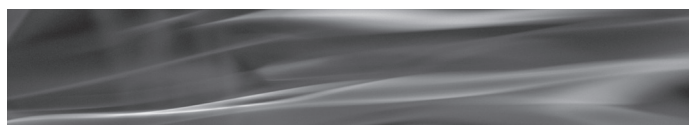
\* Workshop of the 3rd part of the 3rd duan with Jean-Claude Trap. It was very accurate, educational, very good. We wanted to learn some more...

\* Neigong workshop with Sabine Metzlé. What a pleasure to meet her again, with all the explanations and practice. There were moments of calm, appeasement and happiness.

\* Ancient sword workshop with Sébastien. We practised the 1st duan. It was a pity not to have been able to practice the other duans as the explanations were so clear, precise, with such judicious advice to keep the balance and there are a certain number of these moments in our form.

\* Saber workshop with François Besson. I took part in his workshop in order to find out to what extent I could remember, because practising alone with videos is not the easiest thing. Nothing replaces a teacher!

**The next Meetings,**  
organized by  
Nathalie and Christophe Lephay,  
will take place in  
**Saint-Jacut-de-la-mer**  
(Near Saint-Malo)  
**from 10 to 13/11/2022**  
(register on the Amicale  
website in spring 2022).



# Weekend in Merlimont or thinking about the last “Rencontres Amicales”

Claudy Jeanmougin

Nothing comparable with that of Zuydcoote even if it was not so far away ...

A wonderful site with an equally remarkable welcome from the organizers of The Association Jean Moulin de Raimbeaucourt made our stay very enjoyable. Gourmet meals and a great festive meal made me gain no less than 4 kg that I have now just lost and, eventually, a final demonstration that left me dumbfounded.

For almost ten years, I did not take part in the three duans of the closing day because it was too confusing. And, instead of being appeased, I would leave irritated, as if my nervous system needed it... Of course, I would watch it every year. This is what I did in Merlimont, expecting to watch the same pitiful spectacle of the past years. Please understand that I do not judge the practice of “my brothers and sisters in arms”, but of a whole which found itself difficult to harmonize.

What was the cause? The diversity of practice should not spoil general harmony and I had therefore suggested not to link the three duans up in a row but to divide them, this is what was done in Merlimont. Thus everyone can participate without disturbing the group by leaving it. Dividing the duans should be preserved because it allows to refocus and find a good tempo.

Sitting in the corner when I wasn't taking pictures, I could soak up the energy strength that was released

by the group in motion. It was no longer people whom I was looking at but a whole movement made of the lulling ebb and flow of human waves. I was so moved that I couldn't help but share my impression with the group. So, like a drifting ship, I let myself go according to these rhythmic swells by the captain's xi and hou. And I thought to myself that the real secret of Taiji quan was certainly that, quite simply!

Of course I had already experienced the magic, but at very short moments. In other occasions I have noticed the power of our practice with a young public, nursery and primary classes. A primary school director in Angers asked me for our association to give a demonstration on the evening of the school festival. We were in a community centre which had a stage on which the students presented their show. When it was our turn, while we were ready to begin, there was such a noise in the room that we couldn't even hear our music. No matter the noise, we all started our show, not quite knowing what would happen. Little by little, everyone fell quiet and stood silent until the end of our performance. After our salute, we were applauded for a long time. The director came to us and some time later she asked me to organize a class at her school, which we did for four years.

The second experience of this kind took place in our practice room in a small village. The preschool director had asked if she could come with her class to show the students what we were doing. This was not a class that we saw barging in but the whole preschool.

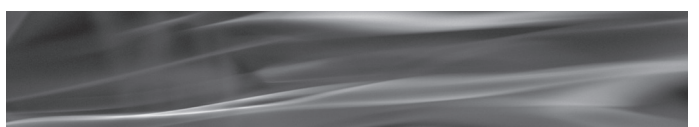




Imagine the hullabaloo while the toddlers were sitting down on the floor. As everyone seemed to settle down, the headmistress asked me if she should make the children quiet. I answered no and we started our demonstration. Once again silence fell like a child in a deep sleep. The silence was complete to the director's astonishment who had never been able to do it without a small rise in her voice.

All that to say that taiji quan has a real power and it would be a shame that, while so many people get together, we cannot get the group to express this harmonious power after which everyone feels good, at peace with the world and with oneself.

I promise I will join the group next year in Saint-Malo.



# This unceasing flow of change



Ted Kardash<sup>1</sup>

8

This unceasing flow of change manifests itself as a natural order governed by unalterable, yet perceivable laws. Paradoxically, it is the constancy of these governing principles (like the rising and setting of the sun and moon and the changing of the seasons) that allows people to recognize and utilize them in their own process of transformation. Gaining an awareness of life's essential unity and learning to cooperate with its natural flow and order enables people to attain a state of being that is both fully free and independent and at the same time fully connected to the life flow of the Universe – being at one with the Tao.

From the Taoist viewpoint this represents the ultimate stage of human existence.

The writings of the legendary Taoist sages, Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, furnish us with specific principles as a guide to attaining this state of oneness. Through understanding these principles and applying them to daily living we may consciously become a part of life's flow.

A key principle in realizing our oneness with the Tao is that of wu-wei, or “non-doing.” Wu-wei refers to behavior that arises from a sense of oneself as connected to others and to one's environment. It is not motivated by a sense of separateness. It is action that is spontaneous and effortless. At the same time, it is not to be considered inertia, laziness, or mere passivity. Rather, it is the experience of going with the grain or swimming with the current. Our contemporary expression, “going with the flow,” is a direct

expression of this fundamental Taoist principle, which in its most basic form refers to behavior occurring in response to the flow of the Tao.

The principle of wu-wei contains certain implications. Foremost among these is the need to consciously experience ourselves as part of the unity of life that is the Tao. Lao Tzu writes that we must be quiet and watchful, learning to listen to both our own inner voices and to the voices of our environment in a non-interfering, receptive manner. In this way we also learn to rely on more than just our intellect and logical mind to gather and assess information. We develop and trust our intuition as our direct connection to the Tao. We heed the intelligence of our whole body, not only our brain. And we learn through our own experience. All of this allows us to respond readily to the needs of the environment, which of course includes ourselves. And just as the Tao functions in a manner to promote harmony and balance, our own actions, performed in the spirit of wu-wei, produce the same result.

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Wu-wei also implies action that is spontaneous, natural, and effortless. As with the Tao, this behavior simply flows through us because it is the right action, appropriate to its time and place, and serving the purpose of greater harmony and balance. Chuang Tzu refers to this type of being in the world as flowing, or more poetically (and provocatively), as “purposeless wandering!” How opposite this concept is to some of our most cherished cultural values. To have no purpose is unthinkable and even frightening, certainly anti-social and perhaps pathological in the context of modern day living. And yet it would be difficult to maintain that our current values have promoted harmony and balance, either environmentally or on an individual level.

To allow oneself to “wander without purpose” can be frightening because it challenges some of our most basic assumptions about life, about who we are as humans, and about our role in the world. From a Taoist point of view it is our cherished beliefs - that we exist as separate beings, that we can exercise willful control over all situations, and that our role is to conquer our environment - that lead to a state of disharmony and imbalance. Yet, “the Tao nourishes everything,” Lao Tzu writes. If we can learn to follow the Tao, practicing non-action,” then nothing remains undone. This means trusting our own bodies, our thoughts and emotions, and also believing that the environment will provide support and guidance. Thus the need to develop watchfulness and quietness of mind.

In cultivating wu-wei, timing becomes an important aspect of our behavior. We learn to perceive processes in their earliest stages and thus are able to take timely action. “Deal with the small before it becomes large,” is a well-known dictum from Lao Tzu.

And finally, in the words of Chuang Tzu, we learn “detachment, forgetfulness of results, and abandonment of all hope of profit.” By allowing the Tao to work through us, we render our actions truly spontaneous, natural, and effortless. We thus flow with all experiences and feelings as they come and go. We know intuitively that actions which are not ego-motivated, but in response to the needs of the environment, lead toward harmonious balance and give ultimate meaning and “purpose” to our lives. Such actions are attuned to the deepest flow of life itself.

To allow wu-wei to manifest in our lives may seem like a daunting task. And yet, if we pause to reflect on our past experiences, we will recall possibly many instances when our actions were spontaneous and natural, when they arose out of the needs of the moment without thought of profit or tangible result. “The work is done and then forgotten. And so it lasts forever,” writes Lao Tzu.

By listening carefully within, as well as to our surroundings, by remembering that we are part of an interconnected whole, by remaining still until action is called forth, we can perform valuable, necessary, and long-lasting service in the world while cultivating our ability to be at one with the Tao. Such is the power of wu-wei, allowing ourselves to be guided by the Tao.



# Rooting of the body

(Developing rooting through sensation, relaxation and focus)

Marc Appelmans et Lucas Limasset

“The activity of the neocortex, the part of the brain most developed in humans compared to other animal species, is so powerful that it eclipses the activity of the more primitive brain. [...] this very developed neocortex is therefore not in service of our vital physiological functions.” Michel Odent, *What future for Homo*.

“Indeed, the first brake to the optimization of our capacities is a lack of access to training, which invokes failing, restarting, seeking, experimenting, failing again, while taking pleasure in the process.” Cristina Cuomo, *Walking, a vital motion*

Rooting: we often hear this word, but how to translate it into reality? Thankfully as far as rooting is concerned there are many different exercises to train by yourself - which does not replace practicing with a partner who can reflect back what they feel. In general, when talking about rooting, we refer to the feet and their placement forward and back, but it is possible to go further. We can believe that the form in Taijiquan is sufficient to develop rooting, but I think that is a mistake. If we take a broader view, rooting is for us humans a collection of actions, sensations, exercises and practice, alone or with a partner, along the path of life. Let's start from the essential: rooting is achieved by relaxing the legs (as well as the pelvis and finally the entire body), in order to create a connection between the body and the ground, between the different parts of the body, and potentially between ourselves and a partner, in order to be stable and structurally strong. Rooting seems to be a condition of the integration of a unified body, a notion we have

discussed previously in an article titled “My practice of TJQJM”. This is what seems to me a reciprocal relationship: the relaxing allows for rooting and to feel it; rooting is important to achieve relaxation of the whole body, to then mobilize this relaxation. In this way the whole body is engaged in the rooting. Rooting is also a matter of structure and body-mechanics; it is necessary to become sensitive to the placement of the body: we could use the metaphor of a stack of plates which need to be vertically aligned, without leaning forward or back, to one side or the other, or risk collapsing.

In this article we start from the principle that this unity of the body which incorporates rooting, and implies connection and integration of the various parts of the body, necessitates a certain degree of sensitivity. It is there that relaxation comes into play: the more relaxed we are, the more sensitive we can be; relaxation is a requirement of internal bodily perception.

We also start from the fact that muscles reflect memory, thought, intent; our system stores perception and information in order to mature them in the long term when attention is regularly brought upon them. This is a fundamental key to the learning of a principle, meaning the body has to be engaged in the long term.

Given the importance of this principle of relaxation, and the interconnectedness of relaxation and grounding, we propose first a preparation both versatile and geared towards the sensations of the body, in order to grow in relaxation, adaptability, mobility and sensitivity, which allows for rooting to be felt as well as its participation in the unified body.

Our second approach will have us insist on the work of visualization, of sensitivity and relaxation.

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“Archetypal movements are inscribed in the cellular memory of human beings” Cristina Cuomo, *Walking, A vital motion*.

In order to feel and therefore use the skill of rooting, I propose to stimulate the body in various ways and to increase sensitivity through various means, which also increases relaxation.

We can start by a detailed waking of all of the articulations, from head to foot, first by a static stretching, localized and isolated. I start with the feet, since they carry us, then up to the ankles, knees, pelvis with its iliac and sacrum, the trunk of the body, the spine and the ribs, head, shoulders, arms, forearms, wrists and hands. The activation is done section by section, with the goal of relaxing each area. The whole body is called to participate, high and low, right and left, front and back, lateral and diagonal, in order to measure the quality of the mobility of each part, and integrate it into the whole. This stretching is done in order to review the various body parts, to relax them, to deconstruct the various functions and to bring one's awareness to each zone; though afterwards it is important to seek this relaxation in movement and in a more global, more unified way.

To follow, let me suggest something that might seem a little unusual: ground exercises. They are excellent to develop or regain mobility, as well as enhancing sensitivity. We can, through ground exercises, learn to feel the body in all its volume and thickness, to feel its three dimensions, on top of its gestural amplitude and mobility. It is also how we can reunite the various articulations stretched within a body that is moving in a way which is integrated, relaxed, and natural. Often we move in the same way as children or infants. It is not a matter of regressing, but to rediscover the unlocked body state, free of the restrictions accumulated as we grow older. More precisely, it must be understood that the correct movement is neither given nor instinctive, ease of movement is earned: when the new-born moves, it is building neural connections. As adults, we are no longer aware of the struggle that the baby faced in becoming adult. That struggle can be found in the body, in the tensions, the deficiencies, that are often hidden from us. By doing ground exercises, we can reveal those limitations and work on them directly. Indeed, the virtue of ground work is that it is a form of deprogramming: since it is a puzzle, we decrypt the possibility of body movements by a certain number of basic movements, that we can reconstruct, re-create according to the needs of the situation, the movement to be made, and this in all directions, despite eventual changes in direction; we unlearn habits and

restrictions in order to become more fluid and free, to create a movement adapted to the situation instead of pulling from a catalogue of fixed responses<sup>1</sup>. To become more familiar with the ground also allows for a reduction in the apprehension which we nurture towards it, a fear of falling, in order that it does not bother us while we work standing up. We can do ground work through exercises of various levels of difficulties or parameters – such as the use of a partner, eyes closed or open, etc. It is a beneficial approach on many fronts; the body gains in intelligence, relaxation and sensitivity, and the brain and nervous system are stimulated and gain in neural connections, developing our abilities. We can see a clear increase in the quality of the internal sensations, as long as the practice is regular.

To develop sensitivity, without which we would be unable to apply principles such as rooting, massage is an interesting possibility, as much for the massager as the massaged, as it develops it through touch. I think that awareness must go through touch, and that touch reaches our subconscious, our body memory, in order to pull us out of our torpor and into a greater vigilance. The objective is to reach both a better body awareness as well as a refining of the sensations brought by touch. Through such a bodily awakening, the awareness of the physical feelings can increase progressively, and the sensitivity can become finer and finer. In my opinion, it is necessary to bring that awareness to the body in order to increase rooting. Massage therefore seems like a good approach: we stimulate the muscle memory through localized pressure on the body, small movements, while also relaxing the mind and letting it join the body in gently relaxing.

Finally I also recommend the regular, if not daily, practice of exercises to increase the strength of the body. Whether push-ups, squats, sit-ups, all work: in this way all the large muscular groups of the arms, body and legs are toned; there are many variations on the exercises in order to stimulate the body and the neural network. No need to over do it, it is the quality that counts, as well as relaxing. Without these basic strengthening exercises, it is harder to feel a deep relaxation, and therefore rooting, which have to be done dynamically to be efficient. To

1. “Optimizing one's capacities means stepping out of our usual responses. It means making room for the most appropriate action. This includes our ability to feel  
to create  
to remain curious  
to keep learning  
to self-correct  
to self-regulate  
to be guided by our desire to be alive.”  
HELIX Delphine, *The Feldenkrais Method*.

be relaxed does not mean being drooping, on the contrary. The quality of our mobility will also increase with this increase in strength. In addition, together with breathing and relaxation, these exercises will lead the body to, over time, become denser, which is interesting in the context of rooting where we are concerned with a solidity without rigidity. And more simply, with a regular exercise regimen we slow down the loss of muscular capacity and mobility caused by old age, while also having an impact on health and internal vitality<sup>2</sup>. To address more specifically the exercises to support rooting, we can insist on exercises dedicated to balance – we can easily concede that rooting is synonymous to stability. The simplest way to start working on balance are one-legged exercises, with or without partners. I would save the YMTJQ exercises for later, once the body has been properly reinforced.

Thus, these different propositions give enough guidance to organize exercise sessions, but the important part is to repeat everything in the next session, as well as introducing new elements. Indeed, every time you change exercises, the body changes, it experiments with new feelings and creates new information which will push our body to reorganize itself to become more resilient, more adaptive - once again, which is interesting in the context of developing rooting, to remain grounded despite a diversity of circumstances and their potentially destabilizing and unusual character. Varying the intensity to place ourselves in a slightly more stressful situation is equally important, since we can there test our relaxation, or even determine until which moment can we sustain rooting without tension. This progressive introduction of difficulty is what is called hormesis, a process that allows the body to little by little push beyond its limits and become more resilient.

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“Our way of moving is directly linked to the image that we have of ourselves” Cristina Cuomo, Walking, A vital motion

2. “The maintenance of our musculature must be done in harmony with all our organic functions (...) The tonicity of the trunk, the capacities of sheathing, the abdominal strap and the back, the development of the cardiovascular system and the state of the digestive system (...) The musculature of each area of the body reflects both the maintenance of a capacity for movement, and therefore adaptation, but it also reflects the functional state of the deep organs which are stimulated by the contraction of the muscles surrounding them. Whether it is the deep supporting muscles, the peripheral muscles or the cardiovascular capacities, the healthy man must not neglect any aspect of what brings him vitality and longevity.” Jean-Brice Thivent, Néosanté n°107, January 2020, p.21.

I propose to follow with visualization and sensation exercises - the two go together, even if it is not evident at first, in order to further anchor the principles of rooting into our system.

In the basic exercises of the Cheng Hsing, for two and static, one puts his or her hand on the belly of the one doing the work - though in truth both participate and learn - and pushes gently. The partner receiving the push must send it to the feet: without resistance or pushing against the partner, without the push being allowed to enter too deeply, deforming or bending the structure. The effort of visualization, which follows the relaxing of the body, is vital in the internal work of guiding the push: softening the chest (meaning neither too round or too sunken), the ribs and the plexus, the belly and the internal organs, unlock the hips, knees and ankles, relax the legs, especially the quads; as if the body was guiding the push towards the ground, without interference and without being disturbed by it. We can then follow the path in the opposite direction: let the ground rise up through the feet and the legs into the belly and through the hips, a rising energy which should be accompanied by a growing relaxation and a gain in stability. Follow the path a few times, then start the process again with a slight increase in pressure. The one who pushes works just as much, if not more: he or she can follow the path all the way to the shoulders, then by sending this relaxation all the way to the palm and fingers. With the push, we rediscover the importance of touch, of a detailed work, sensitive and conscious that I mentioned above, which awakens the sensations. It is also learning to relax deeply, and to rest on the skeletal structure: visualize that the muscles are heavy and dropping, while the skeleton holds them up. This type of exercise, which should be done with a partner, should be done over a long time in order for its effects to be recorded within the body and not have to think about all these visualizations, to have to seek all these sensations as we move, and reach a simplicity of motion equal to our daily movements, without excess or limitations. We can note, if able to feel it, that whether it is on ourselves or the other, that when we think, we visualize, the results are better, finer: visualizing a part of the body seems to have the effect of relaxing it and to better integrate it within the movement, contributing to the realization of a better connection within the body between various parts, with the ground, and our partner. However, it is better to work with someone who has some experience, able to feel what is happening and to spot any blockages, tension, and incorrect connections.

Furthermore, we can isolate and remember this work of visualization of a vertical pathway of relaxation and re-integrate it in other exercises, for example in balance, while keeping in mind the releasing of the spinal column, or in the performance of the form in order to reactivate it as much as possible. We can apply it notably to the exercises of the Zhang

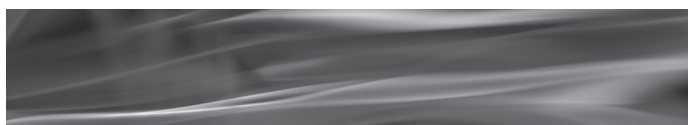
Zhuang, or Post Standing, in particular those with hands held high. As far as the belly is concerned, that the practice of Zhang Zhuang paired with the proposed visualization seems to help to relax it can be felt if one has enough sensibility, especially since during daily life even if we think it is relaxed there is some tension; we can also check the status of belly tension during a greater effort. The tension in the belly seems to have the habit of contaminating the pelvis and tighten the thigh muscles, which unroots us and reduces our mobility, while the rest of the structure is less stimulated. It would be better to rectify this disequilibrium and further integrate the entirety of the body, from the muscles to the finest articulations. In a general way it is possible to believe we are relaxed without it being fully true, hence the interest in developing sensitivity to appreciate what really is. As for relaxing, it is always possible to go further, to sink further into the muscle fibers, to liberate the bones and articulations. The objective when we bring our attention to the sensations and to visualizations is to seek the interior tranquility. When the muscles work more than necessary, they tend to shake. But if we do feel the muscles shake, it becomes a chance to let the muscles be, so that they might relax into the shaking; the goal is to be able to release the muscle, so that it understands that it can complete its work by relaxing even more. This connects to the idea of no-will, of the absence of the urge to do, of simplicity and of non-doing, when we do not hinder the realization of our objectives by taking on unnecessary tensions and limiting ideas. The calm which relaxation provides should also be mental, the internal tranquility which an attentive, slow and relaxed practice provides allowing to place ourselves into a perceptual slow-motion when we are well trained. We cannot insist enough on what state of mind to adopt while practicing: if it is done without attention, with rigidity and tension, this will become fixed within us. The goal of a sensitive training practice as proposed is to liberate oneself of the little parasitic habits, the interference, the slight tensions that can remain and still prevent us from achieving the optimal relaxation of the body in movement, and therefore to root ourselves by letting the unified body be in charge, meaning that it is not being undermined by any pressures we impose on it, and can therefore call upon the ground itself and the entirety of its mass as support. This work is done slowly, through exercises that deconstruct the process sometimes to an extreme of precision and sensitivity. If we get too excited at this very early level, it is not good for the long term. Here are some key words to live by during the practice: calm, softness, neutrality; in a word, serenity. The muscle is an expression of thought, therefore memory. We can anchor information in the deepest layers of our fibers, and start to work on it with our thoughts. We saw that with the participation of the mind, the results change immediately. When we think of a zone, we wake it up, we call upon it, we relax it. So let's be wary and nourish our system

in order to make it more adaptive and resilient, and therefore less and less able to be destabilized.

“Nothing is easy, but everything is possible. If we limit ourselves mentally, we limit ourselves physically.” Seymour Brussel, Fear, the origin of disease

As a final word, I think these sometimes heterodox exercises to develop rooting can in the long term bring several benefits: gain in internal physical density, in sensitivity and therefore adaptability, becoming stable and gain in equilibrium, unify the body in order to use the support of the ground and the weight of the full body in pushing, hitting, or simply in moving in a more relaxed and free way. Sensations, thoughts, relaxation - physical and mental - are necessary to root. This is what we can develop to become unshakeable, and that I can share with you here.

Practice, always and forever, but with intent.



# Taiji Quan in the time of Covid 19

Jean-Luc Pérot

14

The love of Taijiquan in the time of covid 19, not cholera but colera (colère in anger in French) nonetheless.

The first opening that comes to mind is that of the open air. The practice is moving from the halls to the gardens and parks or to the countryside. After the videos during the confinement, I set up shared training sessions at lunchtime. Whoever wants to come, the session follows the pattern: set up, 13 postures, 1st and 2nd duan. The weather since December imposes the dynamic style of the set-up to "warm up" the engine. The basic exercises of tui shou lend themselves well to this, I also use variations on the punches - hands and feet and on the movements. If we play in pairs, we keep the distance and the attacks are signs that lead to parries, placements and movements without contact. In a large circle, the dynamic breath activates the bellows and the rhythm. That being said, we live beautiful moments, the sun sometimes comes to bathe us with a superb light filtering through the clouds and we see more and more blue sky corners. It's a great comfort to see the smiles on each other's faces and the pleasure of the glances and words exchanged between participants. We practice on a large open grassy area within an old quarry. The uneven ground underlines the importance of the adjustment of the feet and the steps to follow the forms, the marks installed in room disappeared and we discover the difficulty of the cohesion "at distance" like that of the hindered movement when we are well covered under the anoraks. We therefore activate our adaptive capacity to manage all these environmental aspects and

we feel the positive effect of the feeling of resistance in the face of political and health constraints; the small group is strengthened. In the register of what we want to do to resist the totalitarian atmosphere and the constraint of regulations, we cultivate the capacity to do otherwise. In the space of what is forbidden, there is always room for innovative solutions, without grumbling.

The weather is getting milder, and in April I was going to take a few more classes for a more regular progression, still in the open air with a limited number of participants of 10. On March 27, new standards were imposed on us. No more than 4 people, but we find in the echoes of the press "immobile events limited to 50 people". We know about immobility; we know about the ability to do a lot in a small space, about slowness and gentleness. If demonstrating can be understood in the sense of bearing witness, we are within the norms.

What to do? ... the rest will come

by the way, THANK YOU reinfo covid TV, full of generous positive ideas and very well documented.



# QUESTIONS REGARDING THE TEACHING OF NEIGONG IN OUR SCHOOL

Jean-Paul Bonhuil

## Introduction

In 1999, a practitioner urged his Michuan Taiji Quan companions to act: *Many did not practise Neigong (or not regularly, which to my mind comes to the same thing...) it is perhaps time that an ad hoc study commission sheds some light on all that... for the safety of the students, since Neigong is a delicate practice, and also for the credibility of our teaching...*<sup>1</sup>

Twenty years later, during the College seminar held in March 2019 at Hattenville (76), the question of the annual theme was raised. Initially the idea of reflecting on Neigong was mentioned but rapidly abandoned since few of the teachers share this knowledge.

In our School there are two strong recurrent statements: *'The curriculum of Yangjia Michuan stands out from that of other schools of Taiji Quan due to the presence of Neigong'* and *'The practice of Neigong contributes to Taiji Quan being an internal art'*.

## My initiation to neigong

I attended three sessions of initiation to Neigong sessions lead by Sabine Metzlé<sup>2</sup>.

Since then, I practise this meditation sporadically. A simple practice using abdominal breathing and consciously following the breath in the body around a predefined circuit and without any particular constraints on the breathing. The way I practise aims to be faithful to the teaching received. That is to say, sitting comfortably on the ischia, the pelvis mobile following the inspiration or expiration, the chin lightly tucked in, the spine 'stretched', abdominal respiration and a conscious following of the breath. I am deliberately summarising my practice very succinctly. In fact, it is not the subject of this article and, moreover, could not possibly constitute an overview of Sabine's teaching

So, why mention my practice? It is not so much the methods used as the results observed which have prompted me to write this article.

Although fluctuating, my Neigong practice is not entirely fruitless. My session takes place between 7 and 8'o'clock in the evening. What do I observe? On the trivial side, not to have succumbed to evening drinks or to surfing the web. More seriously, to have taken time for myself and to have liberated a sense of peace and wellbeing.

1- Laurent Rochat - *Chers compagnons de «pratique»* - Bulletin de l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan n° 32, p. 18.

2- Sabine Metzlé - Former student of Master Wang Yen-nien - Teacher (DEJEPS) of the Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan style in Paris and Versailles.

Perhaps I should be concerned to be able to clear my mind relatively easily; to off-load all anxiety, irritation and frustration. During my practice, I have the feeling of relaxation which results notably in a relaxation of my internal thigh muscles. I observe that the work on the pelvic floor and on the opening of the groin which occurs during the meditation help me in the practice of the form notably with the lunges. Furthermore, I am more attentive to the circuit of my breath whilst carrying out the form and I have the impression that the mobility of the pelvis and the 'Lower Dantien' are more present.

In the light of my modest practice and experience, I evaluate more easily *the consequences on the body of habits or manners that could lead to a deterioration of the organs, wear of the skeleton, a disturbance of the biological functions...*, but equally witness *the capacity of people to overcome physical deficits by mobilising what vitality remains to them to attain that which give meaning to their lives*,<sup>3</sup>, the consequences on the body of habits or manners that could lead to a deterioration of the organs, wear of the skeleton, a disturbance of the biological functions..., but equally witness the capacity of people to overcome physical deficits by mobilising what vitality remains to them to attain that which give meaning to their lives', *'the concern for self'* as an art which cannot be reduced



to the single category of knowledge. The point is not to make a work of knowledge but to make of one's own life a work. Plotinus<sup>4</sup> summarises well this concept, today forgotten: 'Take away all that is superfluous, straighten all that is crooked, purifying all that is dark to make it shiny, and do not cease sculpting your own statue.'<sup>5</sup>

## 1. Neigong, what is it about ?

Taoist meditation carries the Chinese name of Neigong (內功), Nei (內) referring to the internal and Gong (功) to the technique.<sup>6</sup> 'The term Neigong is generally translated by 'internal work' even though a literal translation does not evidence the word 'work'.<sup>7</sup> The definitions found on the internet can be summed up in few words but many suggest that it is a technique reserved for 'advanced' practitioners.

*'What is Neigong? Is it a simple technique to apply, and which entails then waiting for something to happen? The expectation made of miraculous projections of superhuman capacities...'*<sup>8</sup>

For Master Wang Yen-nien<sup>9</sup>, Neigong calls on *'embryonic breathing, or respiration of the anterior Heaven... with respiratory techniques specific to the seasons and inter-seasons'*.<sup>10</sup>

3- Didier Lecordier - *Le corps»: concept ethnosociologique mobilisé dans le soin* - Dans Recherche en soins infirmiers 2009/3 (n° 98), p. 32 à 35.

4- Plotinus (205-270 A.D.), Greco-Roman philosopher of the late Antiquity, is the principal representative of the current philosophy called 'Neoplatonism'.

5- Michel Constantopoulos - *Le souci de soi* de Michel Foucault ou comment faire de sa vie une œuvre - Che vuoi n° 19 - 2013.

6- Philippe Gouédard - *La méditation taoïste* - Comprendre les fondements, s'initier à la pratique et s'épanouir intérieurement - Éditions Eyrolles - 2014.

7- Claudy Jeanmougin - *Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - Cours de Claudy Jeanmougin à partir de l'enseignement de Maître Wang Yen-nien* - Tome 3, p. 71 à 78 - Éditeur École Française de Taiji Quan - 2002.

8- Claudy Jeanmougin - *Pourquoi je n'enseigne pas le Neigong* - Bulletin de l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan n° 36, p. 20-24.

9- Maître Wang Yen-nien (1914-2008) - Heir to the transmission of the School Yang of Taiji Quan (4th generation).

10- Claudy Jeanmougin - *Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - Cours de Claudy Jeanmougin à partir de l'enseignement de Maître Wang Yen-nien* - Tome 3, p. 71 à 78 - Éditeur École Française de Taiji Quan - 2002

11- Ibid..

He specifies that it is appropriate to propel *'the breath into the main cinnabar field when inspiring'* and that *'the creative thought 'Yi (意) directs the breath'*.<sup>11</sup>

Michael A. Timochenkov<sup>12</sup> reports that to a question relating to respiration in Neigong, « Laoshi »<sup>13</sup> responded... « just relax and breath normally ». Thus, *'The so-called internal Chinese techniques, use respiration as the means of mobilising the energies'*. In Neigong *In Neigong 'there is a mental induction which will guide this mobilisation, this is the power of Yi'*.<sup>14</sup>

## 2. The practice of Neigong, to what end ?

Claudy Jeanmougin<sup>15</sup> challenges us: *'What are we looking for in Neigong ? Better health? Neigong should not only be a quest for better health, we will say that it is just one result of an effort which aims at something other than this sole aim, but this 'other', so what is it? If we cannot answer this question, what is the point of practising Neigong?'*<sup>16</sup>

This questioning, however valid it may be, remains ambivalent since it proclaims the right to state that without an aim, all attempts to 'aim correctly' (to follow the way of wisdom) will be in vain. Meanwhile, on the more abstract plane of Truth, without a common criterion for deciding between right and wrong, is it not legitimate to

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assert that all men are always right? In fact, to affirm that identifying the aim proves right would invalidate the assertion that 'without a common criterion for deciding between right and wrong, all men are always right'.

Nevertheless, Master Wang specified the aim of practising Neigong: *'What is the point of Neigong? ... Those who wish to pursue a practice of self-preservation and the internal arts of alchemy start with the practice of Neigong. Neigong aims to cultivate and nourish the internal organs, to strengthen the interior. One also uses what is called tuna (吐拿) : which is the Taoist*

*art of the respiratory technique.*

*The practice of tuna tends to strengthen and render the internal organs more resistant. We all possess three treasures, three internal elixirs: jing (精), qi (氣) zshen (神)...*

*The practice of an internal alchemical art, with Neigong to develop and strengthen ourselves, and with the Taoist art of respiration, allows us to develop, strengthen and increase these three internal elixirs.'*<sup>17</sup>

Finding the elixir of immortality goes back to ancient times. The first emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang (259-210 B.C.), expressed his wish to *'prolong life by maintaining good health'*<sup>18</sup> and commanded his administration to search for this secret. In 2002, in the province of Hunan (centre), the archaeologists found this imperial decree.<sup>19</sup>

12- Michael A. Timochenkov pratique le TJQ depuis 1980 - Élève de Tak Lai, Chu King Hung, Vlady Stevanovich, Shen Hong Sheu et Kuo Chi (ce dernier ayant été l'élève de Wang Yen-nien)..

13.- Laoshi (老師) signifie 'Teacher' in Chinese, term adopted to address Wang Yen-nien who never claimed a title in his art.

14- Claudy Jeanmougin - *Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - Cours de Claudy Jeanmougin à partir de l'enseignement de Maître Wang Yen-nien* - Tome 3, p. 69 - Éditeur École Française de Taiji Quan - 2002.

15- Claudy Jeanmougin, teacher of Taiji Quan since 1984, author of numerous works on this art amongst which the Manuel d'énergétique chinoise - Editions la griffe du tigre - 2013.

16- Claudy Jeanmougin - *Pourquoi je n'enseigne pas le Neigong* - Bulletin de l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan n° 36, p. 20-24..

17- *Entretien avec Wang Yen-nien* conducted by Thomas W. Campbell the 13 July 2002 at Madison, Wisconsin, on the occasion of the second festival of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - Interpreter Julia Fairchild - French translation Anne Goudot and Christian Bernapel in 2004 - Yimag n° 1 - February 2015.

18- Excerpt from the *chant du Sbi San Sbi* de Song Shuming - Livre de poche des bases essentielles du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - 2005.

19- *Trouvez l'immortalité : ordre de l'empereur de Chine !* - Le Point - AFP 2017.

Initially, to obtain immortality or to extend life, Chinese alchemy turned to *'a laboratory alchemy. It is a branch of operating alchemy which aims to form a tangible elixir by using materials external to man, whence its name Waidan (外丹) or 'external alchemy.'* After several deaths by poisoning, *'a psycho-physiological alchemy', which tends to form the Elixir inside the person by means of meditative, speculative, respiratory and gymnastic practices*<sup>20</sup> was preferred. This branch is called Neidan (內丹) or 'internal alchemy'. Neigong stems from this. Today, this 'discipline' could be confused with *'certain practices such as pharmacology, hygiene or magical techniques... but what makes alchemy so singular is above all its spirit. The faith of the alchemists ...' for whom, 'like Nature or even better than her, man can form this Matter in his dispensary even faster. By assimilating the Matter, man can 'refine' himself into an eternal being.*<sup>21</sup>

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### 3. The taoïst practise for immortality, a ritual

To approach Neigong as a Taoist practice, it is good to remember the heterogeneous nature of Taoism. *'The current Taoist cannon, the TaoTsang, numbers more than one thousand works... one finds the best and the worst, that demonstrates its richness'*<sup>22</sup>

However, the main lines stand out. First of all, Taoism is a religion of salvation, that is to say that it leads its faithful to a blissful eternity. Immortal life is not the destiny of the soul after death; it is the deliverance of a body which emanates from the body after its death.

*'Immortality for the Taoists, is the result of an extraordinary spiritual and corporal asceticism; one must enter into contact with the prime mover; united with the eternal Tao one thus participates in his immortality. For most, it is only to preserve, extend life...'*<sup>23</sup>

To render the body immortal, the most important exercise consists in 'nourishing the breath', since for Taoists the world is made of breaths.

Furthermore, the human body and the world are built identically; this is the theory of the macrocosm and the microcosm.<sup>24</sup>

20- Daeyeol Kim - *Métallurgie et alchimie en Chine ancienne* - Eurasie, 2003, p. 155-189.

21- Ibid

22- Isabelle Robinet - *Méditation taoïste* - Collection «Mystiques et religions» - Dervy Livres - 1979

23- Henry Soulard - *Alchimie occidentale et alchimie chinoise* - Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé - Année 1970 - p. 185-198.

24- Isabelle Robinet - *Méditation taoïste* - Collection «Mystiques et religions» - Dervy Livres - 1979.

#### 4. The internal view of the body, the route towards the internal

In Taoist meditation, the practitioner becomes accustomed to seeing inside their body and to walking around it in thought.

The inner vision of the material body, whilst useful for healing ailments is insufficient for obtaining immortality. Whoever wants to see the gods who inhabit the body must adopt a certain state; *'that demands a long preparation, as one must drive out of the spirit (the heart) all external preoccupations'*<sup>25</sup> At this stage of meditation, one must be careful : if the heart is not calm, if the mind is troubled, it is the bad spirits, the wicked and harmful beings that one sees rather than the benevolent and transcendent beings.

As westerners, we are heirs to great currents of thought which subconsciously govern our natural inclination to oppose body and spirit. This is the heritage from Plato and then Descartes. Additionally, our experience of liberty often and subconsciously results in a reflex of protest claiming to be the rational mind.

Our society still considers the body an object of mistrust for its tendency to distract from rational thought, of hindering spiritual fulfilment. Plato qualified the body as 'the tomb of the soul'.<sup>26</sup> For the Chinese, whilst there is still a variety of

approaches regarding the duality or unity of body/spirit, a consensus emerges, that is that the seat of the soul finds its place in the hearts of men and of women. The Chinese join western philosophical thought in recognising that the soul is indispensable for life. Nevertheless, in the west two opposing views remain according to which either the soul, the driving force of life, translates its activity into a movement (flow, heat, ...), or does not move. Ancient Chinese medicine does not reflect any contradiction of this type : the soul moves just like the breath, the blood. The soul brings the body to life since its departure leads to the

cessation of all movement. In our School, it is reported that practising Neigong requires the respect of, amongst others, *'the Chinese calendar and its periods known as the 'articulations and respirations of the year''*.<sup>27</sup>

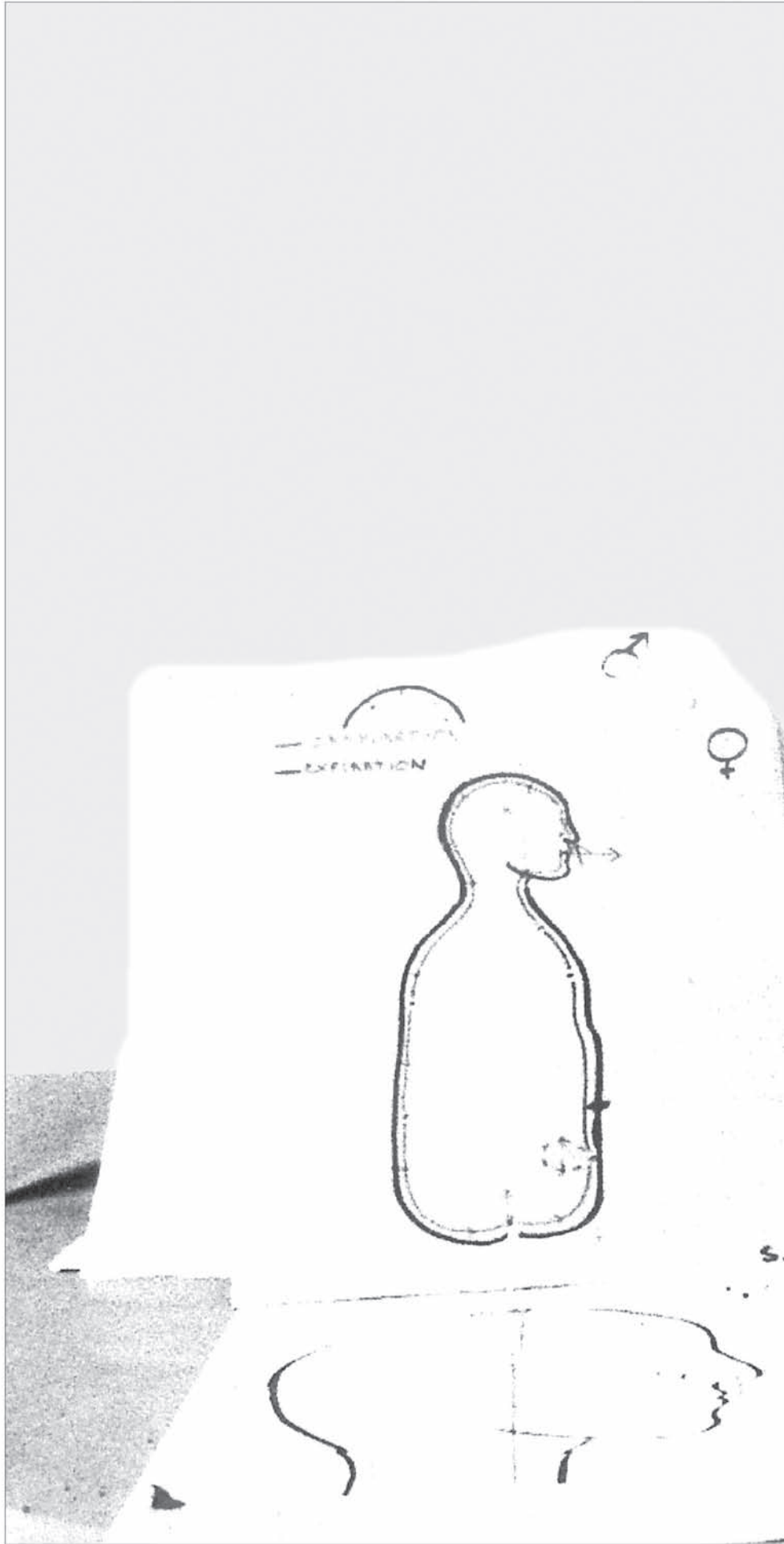


25- Ibid.

26- Didier Houzel - *Le corps et l'esprit : quelles relations ?* - Journal de la psychanalyse de l'enfant (Vol. 2), p. 23-48 - 2012..

27- - Wu Tianfou translated to English by Julia Fairchild and to French by Luc Defago - *Les 24 Jieqi et leur importance pour la pratique du Neigong* - Bulletins de l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan n° 29, p. 5 ; n° 38, p. 18-19 ; n° 42, p. 17-18 ; n° 45, p. 44-45..

Just relax and  
breath normally.  
*Laosbi*





## 5. Chinese and western sensitivity

It would be vain to imagine it possible to identify all which could differentiate a Chinese from a Westerner. It might be wise to wonder regarding the ability of both parties to construct and visualise an interior world.

For this one must distinguish between the notion of imagination and that of the imaginary. The imagination is the ability to picture the world using combinations of images which give it meaning; namely the ability to create for oneself one or several 'interior world(s)'. Whereas the imaginary is defined as a production of the mental formalised

*something fake* (假想 *jiǎxiǎng* : *imaginary*, 假 *jiǎ* : *false, simulated, artificial*).<sup>28</sup>

On the other hand, for the Chinese, the imagination is to think in images (想像力 *xiǎngxiànglì* : *imagination, 'power to think in images'*). The imagination needs material to attach itself to and to give it substance; images and daydreams particularly from the imaginary are the supporting elements for the imagination.

Chinese thought remains close to Nature and is not based on discourse or the effects of rhetoric of the West. Whilst the Greeks by means of verbal jousting could demonstrate everything and its op-

# 想像力

in works where image and language form one or several coherent and dynamic collections which derive from a symbolic function. The imaginary is a repository of stories and symbols derived from a heritage specific to each civilisation.

In Chinese, *'the etymology of the word imaginary reveals the notion of a deceptive appearance, of*

*posite, the Taoists bring to the fore other means of expressing themselves through content rich in meaning; Nature inspires them.*

28- Philippe Taupin - *Imaginaires d'ambiance automobile et sémiotique des récits : une approche d'innovation expérimentielle digitale en Chine* - Doctoral thesis directed by Jean-Dominique Polack and Karine Berthelot-Guiet - Université Pierre et Marie Curie - Doctoral school SMAER, ED391 in collaboration with l'Université PSA - 2017.



## 6. The pedagogical approach of Master Wang

According to the accounts of his former pupils, Master Wang considered Neigong inseparable from Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan. He *'had lived in the noisiest part of Taipei, in Shilin, known for its night market. This never prevented him from practising Neigong twice a day.'*<sup>29</sup>

The Neigong practised by Master Wang came from the meditation techniques taught within the brotherhood 'Current of the Golden Mountain' (金山派 Jīn Shān Pài). He had been introduced to this practice by his master Zhang Qinlin<sup>30</sup> *'who excelled in the Taoist techniques of rejection and absorption of breath, and all that constitutes Neigong'*.<sup>31</sup>

*'Master Wang Yen-nien was always very brief on the subject ... the only explanation we had is that the child in its mother's womb breathes with its belly, which is why we describe the respiration we use in our technique as embryonic.'*<sup>32</sup>

For his teaching, it seems that Lao-shi wished to favour a pragmatic approach, identifying essentially the benefits of Neigong in the domain of health. Note, Chinese thought is essentially pragmatic: *'it sticks to things such as they appear, change and become'*.<sup>33</sup>

Regarding pragmatism, the *raison d'être* of an idea, is action. An idea which works in practice, which withstands the test, is a good one.

In focussing on the sole criterion of health, he provides us with a criterion for appraisal, evaluation of the exercise. At the same time, he closes all possibility for metaphysical debate on the subject, thus taking the risk of generating some frustration.

However, spiritual research is not incompatible with this pragmatic approach *«Mens sana in corpore sano»*.<sup>34</sup>

According to Julia Fairchild, *'Healing starts with the thought'*.<sup>35</sup>

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29- Claudy Jeanmougin - *Maître Wang Yen-nien, une bistoire personnelle* - Ecurat, le 12 août 2008.

30- Zhang Qinlin (1888-1967) - Third generation of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan. Integrated into the brotherhood 'Current of the Golden Mountain', he combined respiratory exercises with the practice of Taiji Quan and the Taoist name 'he without fear' was given him.

31- Wang Yen-nien - *Livre de poche des bases essentielles du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan* - Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - 2005.

32- *Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan - Cours de Claudy Jeanmougin à partir de l'enseignement de Maître Wang Yen-nien* - Tome 4, p. 61 - Primary respiratory movement, respiration of the anterior heaven, embryonic respiration - Editor Ecole Française de Taiji Quan - 2002.

33- Philippe Filliot - *L'éducation au risque du spirituel* - Preface by Michel Maffesolli - Desclée de Brouwer - 2011.

34- «Un esprit sain dans un corps sain» : quote from Juvenal, 1st century Roman satirical poet.

35- Julia Fairchild - *L'importance de l'étude du Neigong et du Daoïsme dans le Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan* - French translation: Isabelle Dantzer - Yen-nien Shanghai Publishing Company - 2006-2016.

## 7. The transmission in our school

For a Chinese, it is better to abandon intelligence to strive for the simplicity of a little child, does not the 'truth' come from the mouths of children? Lao-Tseu said: *'To practise learning is to increase day by day, to practise the Tao is to decrease day by day'*.<sup>36</sup> For many Western minds, the Taoist approach is regressive and already in the 4th century it challenged the great thinker Tchouang-Tseu <sup>37</sup>: *'How should I know that what I call 'knowledge' is not ignorance? And how should I know that what I call 'ignorance' is not knowledge?'*

Chinese thought inscribes the thought in the body; the education of the mind is done by listening to the body. The body is the prerequisite of thought, and idea and sensation are but one. This is one of the principals of unity sought in the practice of Neigong.

According to his former pupils, Laoshi was steeped in beliefs which defied 'rationalism'. His culture allowed him to find poetic metaphors and anecdotes offering illustrative value and a back door into the complex experience of Neigong. This does not seem to have been his choice. Come to think of it, he must have considered it of the greatest importance that the pupil seek his 'natural' fulfilment. That is, not to hold as key the act of breathing 'deeply' or of consciously working

the movements of the diaphragm, but rather to disregard 'what we do' preferring to 'allow it to happen'. It is not an 'added' activity interfered with by a daydream generated by the cradling of a Chinese tale, but one 'less' conducive to a perfect relaxation, a clearing of the mind and peace of heart.

*'Not all good practitioners of martial arts understand Neigong; in the same way, not all those who understand Neigong are good practitioners of martial arts.'*<sup>38</sup>

There is however a route that Manuel Solnon reveals to us. At the end of a meditation session led by Master Wang, he reports this citation from Wang Zongyue<sup>39</sup>: *'Through practise one can gradually acquire an understanding of what energy is, ... one is on the path to knowledge. Without long and diligent practice it is not possible to reach a level at which the spirit is suddenly enlightened.'*<sup>40</sup>

Yves Picart, my first teacher, had adopted this precept as his motto *'the secret of practice is the practice'*.

Returning to the friendly injunction made at the beginning of this text destined for the teachers of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan, it remains clear that the latter tend to respect what has been transmitted to them. As such, they remain faithful to the teachings they have received but above all in-

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36- Lao-Tseu - *Le livre de la voie et de la vertu* - Traduit en français par Stanislas Julien, membre de l'Institut et professeur au Collège de France - Imprimerie royale - 1842.

37- Tchouang-Tseu, Chinese thinker of the 4th century B.C, to whom we attribute the authorship of an essential Taoist text called by his name, the Zhuangzi or the 'True classic of Nanhua'.

38- Julia Fairchild - *L'importance de l'étude du Neigong et du Daoisme dans le Yangjia Michuan Taijiquan* - French translation: Isabelle Dantzer - Yen-nien Shanghai Publishing Company - 2006-2016.

39- Wang Zongyue a figure in Chinese martial arts who is supposed to have lived in the 18th century, considered to be the potential founder of Taiji Quan. He is credited with the authorship of *Traité du Taiji Quan* (太極拳論), a theoretical text on this pugilism, without this being completely proven.

40- Account by Manuel Solnon - Bulletin de l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan n° 45, p. 23.

tegrated. For all that, intellectual honesty is compatible with the curiosity which drives all of us to a continual research to appropriate the Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan, according to our sensitivity, our experience of martial arts and sometimes also our physical limitations.

There is no better example of these individual assimilations of our art than the diverse versions of the execution of our form offered up on the web. More than just versions, I take them as propositions which raise questions and provoke thought on one's own practice.

As to the practice of Neigong, we are not starting from zero, we have the writings of Master Wang, the shared knowledge of those who have been able to follow the teaching of Laoshi and our own research and experience.

Furthermore, resorting to a reflection on the subject within the Collège des Enseignants du Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan remains an option. In the current situation, I invite you to meditate on the thought of Jean-Jaurès<sup>41</sup> who said: « *One does not teach what one knows or what one thinks one knows: one teaches and one can only teach what one is.* » For my part, I am convinced that each of us having, at his pace, taken the way of Tao lives daily transformations which can appear more or less trivial but which tend towards a certain spiritual awakening.

*Jean-Paul Bonhuil*

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<sup>41</sup>- Jean Jaurès (1859-1914) is a French politician.



'What is Neigong? Is it a simple technique to apply, and which entails then waiting for something to happen? The expectation made of miraculous projections of superhuman capacities....'

I'm waiting, I'm waiting, but nothing happens. I'm going to read it all over again.

# Foot position, change in direction, spiral

## Half-baked solutions

Henri Mouthon

Whether a student or an instructor, you may have been challenged by the white lines indicating the cardinal directions in Master Wang Yen-nien's, Volume 1. How weight should be distributed in relation to this model has already been thoroughly discussed, and in particular the constraints it imposes to the knee as well as, to a lesser degree, freedom of movement at waist level, and spiralled dynamic.

Given that we must adjust weight whenever the upper body appears vulnerable, everyone seeks to address the difficulty. How to cope with this? Is there a way that meets biomechanical, energetic and martial requirements? Can we reach a consensus on the question?

The videos you find on YouTube show that each practitioner responds in his/her one way, or just ignores the problem. If any at all.

I will try to describe how I reached a tentative resolution.

First and foremost: to what degree should my supporting foot be angled when my front foot is spread outward on the heel-to-heel line. How to find the answer?

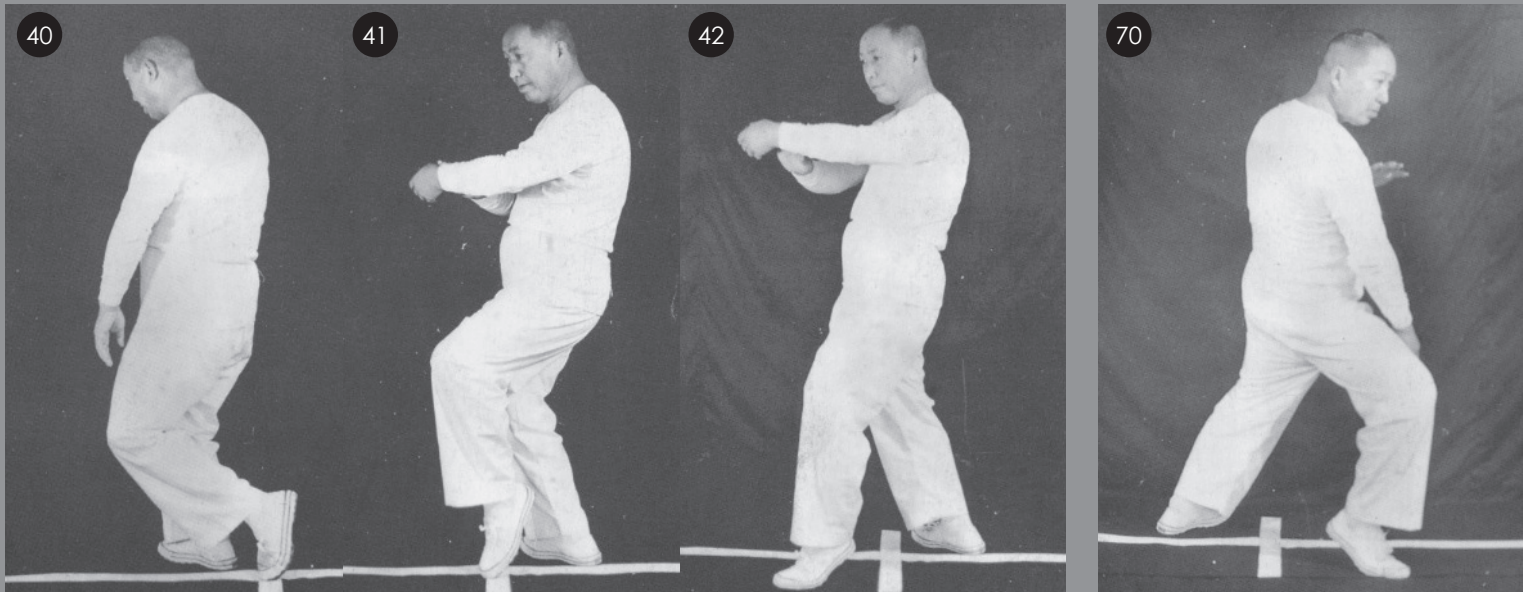
Following Laoshi's example, for me static frontal stretching is unconditional: the heel of the front foot resting on the floor, the two legs at a 90° angle and the torso being brought down upon the front thigh. Taking the posture just for review, I placed my foot without much adjusting its position and then noticed a potential lateral loss of balance as my upper body was sinking. I immediately and instinctively got rid of it by progressively turning in my

foot until my upper body came down more easily. I went over the form, over other basic dynamic movements, and indeed, this angle is best for me. Let's forget the 45° and 37° angles, each one of us must find the right angle that corresponds to his/her own knee condition.

This approach works for static practice, but how can you get there on the first try amidst this dynamic flow of movements we call the form? How do you execute the spirals, allow a complete freedom of the waist, and yet protect your knees while shifting your weight?

The first time the problem occurs is in Section One when you change direction between the two Grasp the Sparrow's Tail.

In the mid-eighties, Master Wang Yen-Nien's ongoing research led him to teach this transition in a curious way. The frontal double hand push An was followed by the parallel lowering of both arms on a double exhalation; this was performed without any particular intention, any martial intention like transforming Yin into Yang in the lower part of the movement in order to grab the opponent's wrists, for example (see photos 40-42). That seemed rather mysterious because the dropping of both arms generated lateral vulnerability. Then the front heel was aligned in diagonal along its axis but not re-adjusted to prepare a change of direction. As a result, you see that most beginners step aside in the new direction without paying attention to the heel-to-heel line because of the constraint imposed on the knee; next they start a completely frontal Peng leading to a Grasp the Bird's tail spiral that is performed without having been properly prepared.



In addition to the neutral lowering of both arms, the modification of the position of the front foot remains difficult. It's not good enough to look for a quick fix. How to generate a frontal Peng in these conditions, and yet make sure we won't do away with the spiral required to express Peng?

OK, our style focuses on this frontal Peng you find everywhere in the form and the corpus (see basic Tuishou exercises, and also the Peng fa jin videos in which he excelled). Other styles would prepare this Peng by spiraling further left, with their right hand performing a Cai at chest level, and their left hand in low protection position so as to execute their "Wild Horse Parts Mane" (24 and 108 Posture Forms). Their Peng is, contrary to our style, expressed across the chest, under the right or left arm of the partner.

Watching others Taiji forms has always helped me understand our own. Since spiraling is of current interest, here is how I operate while trying not to distort the movement.

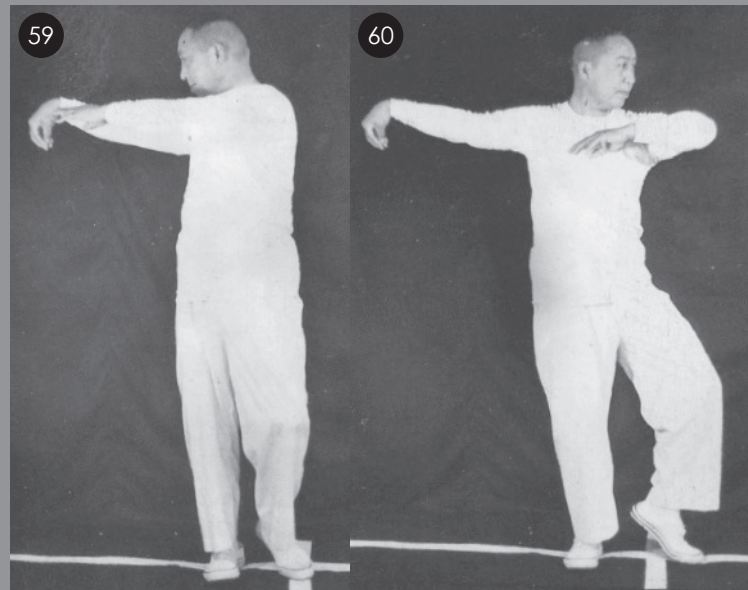
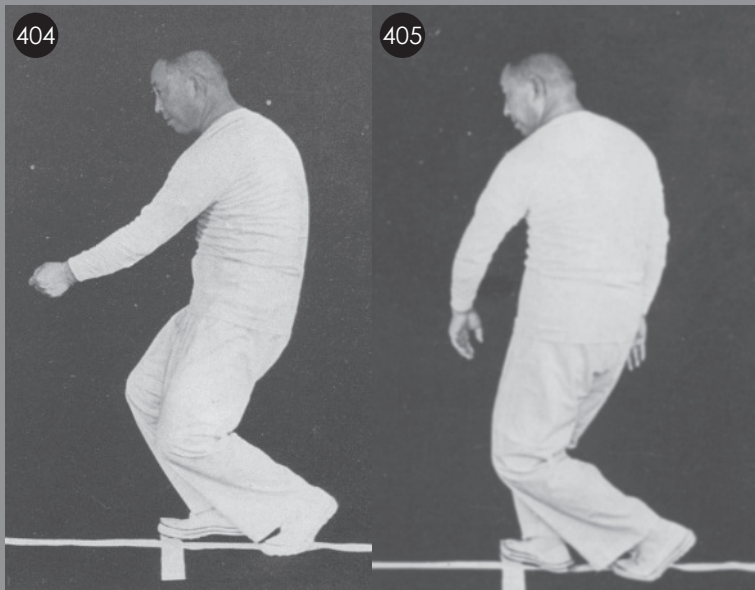
Experience shows that an An hand push with both hands, started from the back leg as we do, will thrust the partner not straight forward in front of me, but on the side because the yin hand opposite the supporting foot will acquire power with the inward rotation of the waist. Knowing that, and in order to avoid the potential vulnerability due to a side attack from the partner while I am empty-handed, I step outside with my front heel but place it inside my comfort zone so as to "empty" my vulnerable side. We do it between the elbow and shoulder strikes, as requested by Master Wang although picture 70 doesn't show it. Next, my right arm draws a circle at chest level, palm facing forward at first as if

to accompany the thrusting of the partner, then palm facing downwards to execute a spiral closer to the simplified forms. My left hand follows the movement in low position and protects my side. I think it fits better with the alternation full/empty, and eliminates the effects of the two arms falling down without further intention and disrupting the fluidity of the movement. Therefore I begin the spiral more obviously on my left. Peng is then twofold, frontal and spiraled. That makes perfect sense: since a spiral in one direction develops from the spiral in the opposite direction, the subsequent Peng combines both aspects, frontal and lateral.

It may well be that other practitioners of our style share my way of coping with the difficulty, but that it is not yet showcased on YouTube. Is it consistent with our style? Is it logic?

The other way to position the foot correctly that some of us have adopted is to place the heel while reloading the rear foot before swiveling the tip of the front foot. The method does not undermine the 13 postures system if it is executed properly. Here again, during a change of direction, especially a 180° turn, the back leg is jeopardised if it remains fully extended after the push instead of being brought back soon enough, but above all if the overhanging hand is not protecting it. If so, we see that, like in the 13 postures when the ball of the foot is not sufficiently brought back, an ulterior correction is needed for comfort, and that disrupts the pace of the sequence.

These two schemes are only examples. To swivel on the balls of both feet is another way of adjusting a shift of weight, and that can also be used in several other movements of the sequence though it is rarely



done. This is explicitly described in Section Two about a downward Lu: step forward and brush the knee (photo 405). Why not use it for a Cai, or the simple whip for example? (Photo 59/60, Section One). The coherence of Yangjia Michuan is such that tools for progressing are all here within reach. We need only find them and be inventive.

The gap that exists between the photos and what we feel we must do according to the Classics is a recurring topic. I have even been confronted to an assistant who used to produce the book as evidence and blurt, his finger on a photo: "Look! Henry does it this way, but in the book it's different"... aargh!

If we fail to consider the book as only a grid, as suggested in the book by the perpendicular lines drawn on the floor, I think we're not going to take the understanding of the style to the next level. My attempt to provide some fine-tuning comes from the feeling that we don't share views on how to create a motive from a given grid. In the very orthogonal example we've been discussing, the grid is: An on a diagonal, Peng on the other diagonal. And the question is: how can you draw a Taiji motive thereof without tangling up your feet? If we can get over it we open up the possibility for each practitioner to choose one of the infinite nuances of the motive.

While sharing these thoughts with you I am aware I've lapsed into explaining the form and its technical applications as if they were a continuum, as if the practitioner was successively attacked from every side. On the other hand, these transitions/ transformations that rely on the correct adjustment of the weight all along the sequence deserve careful examination in the light

of the Classics. Building consensus on the best way(s) to come to grips with the difficulties they cause would increase the coherence of our style. I know it is difficult to describe movements with words or series of photos. Yet I hope these few lines were clear enough for a large number of people, and that they will spark interest and stimulate the desire to work on this question in order to get a better insight into our style.

# “Networking” in Chinese Culture: and its Place in the World of Martial Arts

Serge Dreyer

## Introduction

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Networking is a fundamental process of socialization in Chinese culture, quite different from that practiced in Europe. In the last few decades this question has been studied in France, in particular by journalists, political scientists, economists and even a few sinologists. Unfortunately, in order to make it more accessible to the general public, the discussion is too often simplified and restricted to the idea of *guanxi*, which is only one of two types of networks; *guanxi*, a passive network and *renqing wang* (shortened to *renqing* in the academic article) an active network. In order to fully understand how these networks function, we will have to bring in other concepts in future issues of this newsletter. Many foreigners, for example in the French business and political world, misunderstand these networks, confusing them with the simple address book. It is much more complicated and subtle than that.

I will begin with a rather academic description, based on an article published by the Presses Universitaires de France, which will save me from having to write one myself. I will spare you all the academic references and (...) trim it down some. Then I will turn to my experience in Taiwan (chapters 3 to 8) where I have been living for 40 years, before transitioning into the world of martial arts, in order to give you an idea of how all this applies to the practice of taiji quan. But before reading any further, everyone should remember that there are, fortunately, exceptions to the general trends described below.

## 1. Guanxi

The Ricci Institute dictionary (Chinese-French, 1976) translates *guanxi* (character 2788, p. 534) as: relation, relationship, connection. (relation, rapport, connexion).

Members of all Chinese communities are involved - actively and/or passively - in an extremely dense mesh of social relations, in the form of networks, which are the foundations of Chinese enculturation and which create an interdependence of their participants. The place of each individual in the society is determined by his or her degree of mastery of these networks, which may be encompassing, encompassed<sup>1</sup>, active or inactive, etc<sup>1</sup>.

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1. In theory, the *guanxi* network encompasses the *renqing* network. For the latter, it implies an activated social bond in which a debt relationship has been established. Even if the repayment of the debt is postponed to an unspecified date and even if its importance is minimal, a particular density of intention and attention has been established between the *renqing* partners. The *guanxi*, on the other hand, can be compared to an address book, but its potential and strategic value ostentatiously define the individual's place in society. It can sleep in a drawer while retaining its value, which it derives from its potential and sometimes from its display power. The author of this article, for example, is in many *guanxi* because of his prestigious position (in Taiwan) as a university teacher; he is probably mentioned in conversations as the teacher that everyone should have in their network without being asked for any service. It is only when activated that *guanxi* is often confused with *renqing*.



The *guanxi* plays a central role in this system because of its character of totality. Indeed, the *guanxi* of each member of a Chinese community is established by the sum of all the individuals with whom he or she has more or less familiar relations. He can activate this network to obtain various favors, just as he can be solicited for such favors. It is here that the notion of debt, which forms the basis of the *renqing* network between the solicitor and the solicited, comes into play. When not activated, *guanxi* plays the role of a brand image; it is the individual's social calling card: for those who have a great *guanxi*, fame and credibility necessarily follow.

It should be noted, however, that *guanxi* is not an indistinct mass of social relations. Indeed, the Chinese individual moves through plural identities that allow him to select his affiliations, or even to negotiate them, according to identity markers such as place of birth, kinship, work colleagues, classmates, family name, or teacher-student relationships. By modulating his *guanxi* in this way, he ensures a better social fluidity marked by an economy of means. Two classmates can, for example, invoke *guanxi* based on having the same birthplace to help each other, while simultaneously participating in another *guanxi* based on the criterion of the province in which they were born. But the ultimate and most familiar art for the Chinese is "pulling *guanxi*". Indeed, when no criterion of belonging exists to establish such a relationship, tactics are then put in place, "strings" to build a previously non-existent relationship or to strengthen a relationship that is too loose, in order to attract the coveted partner into a *guanxi*. Gifts and/or favors are particularly effective for this kind of maneuver. What in France would appear to be a self-serving or even hypocritical attitude would in this case be a commonplace aspect of "guanxi pulling" in China.

## 2. Renqing

The Ricci Ricci Institute dictionary (Chinese-French, 1976) translates *renqing* (character no. 2426, p. 464) as:

- 1) Human feelings and natural feelings
- 2) Benevolence, kindness, sympathy
- 3) Manifestations of sympathy: presence at funeral ceremonies, weddings, etc.; participation in the acts of social life, consideration, regard for someone.

*Renqing* is, above all, a network of saturated reciprocity which includes the idea (with an affective connotation) of favor or present. Practically all Chinese and Western authors agree on these three points (reciprocity, favor/gift, affection) and establish a proximity between *guanxi* and *renqing*, sometimes to the point of using them interchangeably.

- In addition, Ho insists specifically on the debt aspect of reciprocity. When a favor is done or a gift offered,

every Chinese person recognizes a debt that must be settled (*renqing zhai*) as soon as possible, although without necessarily specifying a deadline. In Chinese social relationships this obligation is absolute.

- For his part, Gao insists on the dimension of interpersonal resources. *Renqing* functions as an important mechanism for regulating personal relationships. The give and take involved in *renqing* creates a link between individuals. According to Zhu, this bond can be used to express sincere feelings towards others (expressive function of *renqing*, *biaoda qing*) and/or as a "social investment" (instrumental function, *gongju qing*) for personal gain via favor and/or gift. The next step is *bao*, which means "to pay back", "to repay" (but also "revenge"), with how and how much becoming the big questions.

- Participants in a discussion at a conference organized by the Academia Sinica in Taipei had added the dimension of *ganqing*, translated by Ricci (character no. 2529, p. 487): "feelings"; "sentiment" (as opposed to reason), "disposition towards someone". According to these lecturers, *ganqing* is more specifically about feelings between individuals. It also implies a positive disposition towards others. Discussions with our Chinese friends sometimes reveal this affective component included in *renqing*, while for others, the limits is more clearly marked. According to the latter, *ganqing* is comparable to the love for parents, the love between husband and wife, and relations with relatives and very close friends. The difference between *renqing* and *ganqing* can be understood as an opposition between strong and weak affective networks (near/distant).

- Jin sees three main elements: the existence of ordinary feelings between people, the maintenance of good relations, and the imperative for both parties to obtain gains from the interaction. However, for this researcher such a division, which has become classic, is still an unsatisfactory over-generalization.

- Huang closely associates *guanxi*, *renqing* and face in a power game. Similarly, Ye believes that "renqing, power and money are the three most important resources in Chinese society". In this case, we can see that *renqing* is implicitly superimposed on *guanxi*.

- With respect to the interchangeability of *renqing* and *guanxi*, Yeo considers *guanxi* to be divided into economically and socially based examples of *guanxi*. *Renqing* (and its affective component) would therefore be incompatible with economic *guanxi* since the latter is determined by an impersonal and rational market. In contrast, socially based *guanxi*, regulated by the principle of reciprocity, is rather diffuse and non-specific with an affective dimension, hence the central role of *renqing*. This division seems to us to be too rigid, implying an incompatibility between the material and the affective. In China it is common to

express sincere feelings through a gift of money (for example, the red envelope containing money offered to children by their parents for the Chinese New Year,). It seems more relevant to us to characterize the difference between *guanxi* and *renqing*, when it is recognised by the participants, in terms of a static / active opposition. One can be part of a *guanxi* without being involved in an active exchange, whereas such an exchange is an essential part of *renqing*.

### 3. Back to *guanxi*

After reading the first paragraph, one might wonder what the fundamental differences are with the French concept of networking, what is commonly called *l'entregent* (people skills). In my opinion, there are two too important ways in which Chinese *guanxi* is unique<sup>2</sup>.

The strategic aspect: *guanxi* is cultivated by everyone in the Chinese world, regardless of their social position. In France, networks are built up over time through meetings and affinities, and they are not systematically conceived as resources, except in some professional contexts. The *Amicale* association regrouping our style of taiji quan is a good example: most of the participants do not go to the *Amicale* to develop their network. If we were in China, participants would go to the *Amicale*, just like Europeans, to see friends and discover other ways of teaching, but (and this is very important), they would also use it to build their network. This should not be seen as hypocritical, but as a common, self-interested behavior that comes naturally to everyone. Every Chinese<sup>3</sup> person carries business cards, which are distributed whenever possible<sup>4</sup>. After a verbal introduction, this is a first essential step in building *guanxi*. This is a ritual that would surprise most Europeans, being almost nonexistent in our social interactions:

These business cards have a format that allows them to be slipped into the card holders that everyone has at home. Apart from the usual information (name, address, phone number, company or association name), they also include either academic titles and/or the position in the company/association/temple. If the individual is very socially active, you can often see all his titles and the companies/associations to which he belongs on the back of the card. Most cards have the information in Chinese on the front and English on

the back. Even individuals at the bottom of the social ladder often have a business card that mentions, for example, their role in the village religious association or in Communist China their role in the local committee. This card is held out with both hands to the interlocutor who then gives his or her own in the same way. It is good manners to look at the card that is handed to you and to demonstrate your interest in what is on it (I will talk more about this phatic language later). Once this exchange is finished you put the card in your wallet, not in your pocket, which would be a sign of disinterest. When you get home, you put it in a card holder or throw it in the trash, depending on the value you attribute to the encounter. Very often, these cards are stored according to the nature of the network. It is a database that can be activated as needed. It is in this sense that I speak of a 'passive' network, relative to the *renqing wang*, but it constitutes a central resource in socialization. I often compare this strategy to the fisherman's casting of the net; then drawing in the net and then sorting the catch according to his needs.

If, as in the previous example, you go to the *Amicale* and exchange your business card with a doctor, your network will potentially intersect with his or her network in the future, a fact which every Chinese is keenly aware of. If this doctor is a member of the local political party, plays golf, collects antiques, rides a Harley-Davidson on weekends with a motorcycle club or is a member of the parents' association of the most coveted school in town, you will retain not only what may be useful now (priority access to his hospital, for example) but also what might be useful later on (when your child is old enough to enroll in the coveted school...). On the other hand, you will have to think about how your own network can be used as a bargaining chip: you know a lot of people, you are interested in the local political party; you have connections in the hotel business, you dream about weekends on a Harley-Davidson... But you will say to me, that must be exhausting! Not if you are well trained and if no one forces you to react immediately. This is one of the well-known markers to differentiate between a 'suck-up' who is only looking to expand his network and a skilled socializer who considers his cardholder(s) as needed (the most important social skill being a good memory).

In the 'networking' operation, some individuals are more sought after than others. They can be roughly divided into two categories. People associated with any form of power (politician, company director, lawyer, doctor, rich people<sup>5</sup>, etc.) and those associated with different forms of prestige (teacher, celebrity in the world of arts or media, etc.). This distribution does not, however, relegate other people

2. Excluding neighboring countries that have been strongly influenced by China.

3. Chinese in the cultural (not political) sense of the word.

4. Excepting, of course, young people not yet in the workplace, or the wife of a man trying to build his *guanxi* (unless the wife also receives a card). In Taiwan, where the position of women has improved considerably since the 1980s, if a woman is the center of the interaction, it is her husband who doesn't get to give out his cards.

5. Money is worshiped in Chinese culture, but that's another story...

(craftsmen, shopkeepers, farmers, etc.) to the margins of society. Everyone needs a washing machine repairman, a mechanic or an electrician, but the relationship with them will be based mainly on the market criterion, which is more accessible than the previous two categories.

Possessing a 'big guanxi' is thus creates a powerful visibility that could almost be compared to the utility of an effective a social marketing campaign. However, it would be wrong to ignore, as in any other society, the need of gregarious individuals to evolve in an emotionally and spiritually nourishing environment.

Here we must address the relationship between the individuals involved in these networks. Is there a clearly marked boundary between a self-interested approach to a social target and a relationship created by a gesture with no strings attached? I will not have the time here to elaborate on the system of opposition characteristic of socialization (often lacking nuance<sup>6</sup>) in our European societies. Let us say very simply that we tend to reason according to the true-false, negative-positive axis, without any shades of gray<sup>7</sup>. In Chinese socialization, there is always an intermediate state, a blurred zone for us Westerners that is described by the term *mohu*. It is not a purely accidental state nor a state totally left to chance. Since the Chinese tend to reason according to a generative process, transitions are inevitably the result of a thoughtful approach to social situations as they unfold. Consequently, one can engage in "guanxi pulling" while developing a pleasant or even friendly relationship. This requires careful management of the process of creating a relationship. Everything depends on the ability of each person to initiate this *guanxi* pulling in an agreed and appropriate manner (appropriate language and gestures, consideration of the context, presenting oneself favorable but not ostentatiously, as humility is highly valued in Chinese education). The other fundamental element of a successful 'guanxi shot' is the face game, which I will discuss in the next article.

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6. I don't appreciate how socialization in western culture is often reduced to the notion conflict, a stereotype similar to that of a harmonious Chinese culture.

7. This is admittedly something of an oversimplification used here to facilitate this comparison with Chinese culture.



# Nous avons lu...

## Brothers,

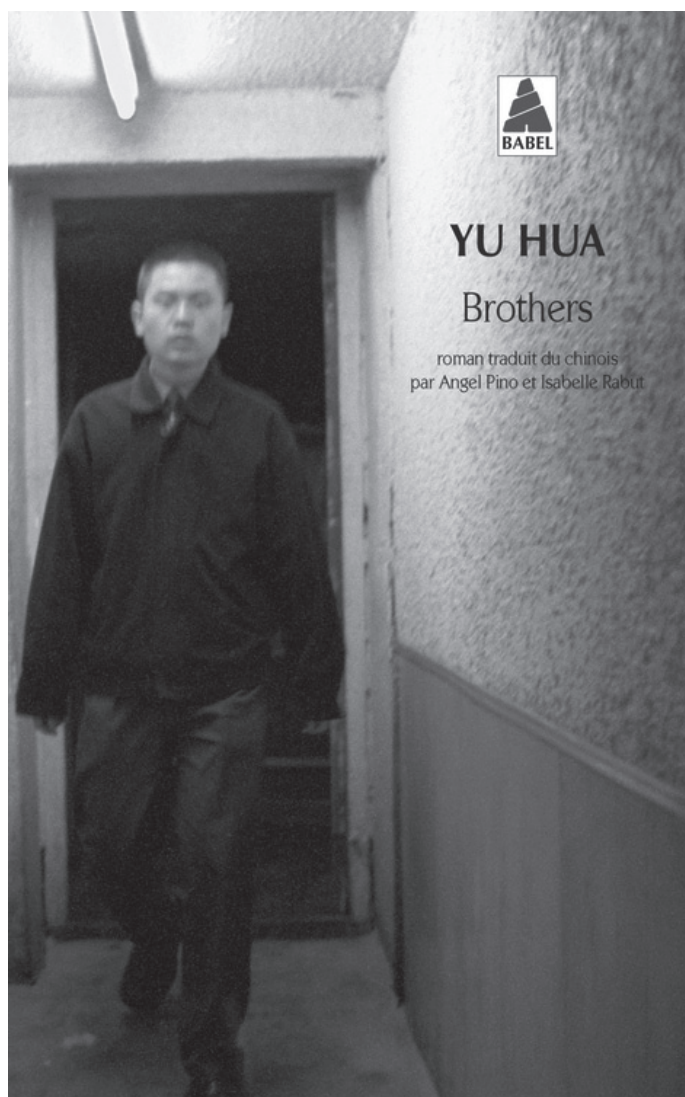
Actes Sud, 2008, 717 p.

Pendant 238 pages vous risquez d'avoir les larmes aux yeux. Vous y trouverez le sordide, le grossier, la crasse, la turpitude, la veulerie, l'hypocrisie, la violence, la rouerie, la pauvreté, autrement dit la misère à son plus haut degré ou, pour être plus précis, la Révolution Culturelle chinoise déclenchée par Mao en 1966. C'est la première partie du livre. On a peine à croire que nombre de nos intellectuels français

aient pu soutenir idéologiquement cette horreur. Puis vient l'ouverture lancée par Deng Xiao Ping. C'est la deuxième partie : les chevaux du capitalisme à la chinoise sont lancés. Les faibles lumières d'émotions et de sentiments positifs qui survivaient dans la première partie vont graduellement émerger mais dans une ambiance de combines, de plans sur la comète, de naïveté, d'ignorance quasi totale du monde extérieur, et de rumeurs incontrôlables. Le tout nage évidemment dans la frénésie du gain, l'une des valeurs centrales de la culture traditionnelle chinoise, mais qui prend ici des proportions inimaginables en raison d'une vie de privations terribles pour plusieurs générations. Dans cette partie vous n'arrêterez pas de trébucher de (sou)rire toutes les 4 ou 5 pages tellement les situations sont énormes. C'est par exemple un charlatan qui vend des hymens artificiels pour que les femmes ayant perdu le leur puissent chercher un mari : une pression un peu forte sur l'appareil et une espèce d'ampoule rouge éclate confirmant la virginité de la propriétaire... sauf si en se retirant l'homme se retrouve avec l'appareil non éclaté accroché à sa " tige de jade ". L'amour et l'amitié profonde survivent quand même çà et là dans cet incroyable charivari.

Je ne comprends pas pourquoi le titre est en anglais pour l'édition française puisque deux frères sont les protagonistes principaux de ce roman (?). En tout cas c'est une œuvre magistrale que j'espère vous procurer (je l'ai acquise récemment dans le rayon Chine des Compagnons d'Emmaüs que je dévalise régulièrement). Et puis vous commencerez à comprendre pourquoi les Chinois sont en train de nous bouffer tout cru...

Serge Dreyer



# Nous avons lu...

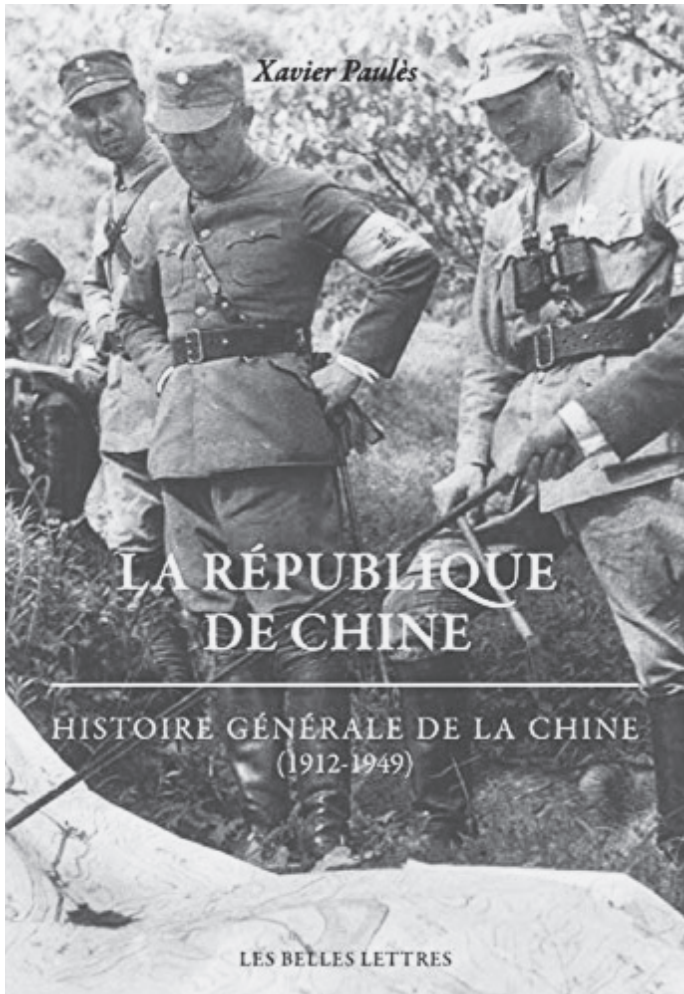
## La République de Chine, Histoire générale de la Chine (1912-1949),

Xavier Paulès, Les Belles Lettres, 2019, ISBN 978 2 251 44945 6, 29,50 euros, 412 p.

Voilà un ouvrage d'histoire remarquable par la qualité de ses références et la pertinence de l'analyse. Il remet radicalement en cause l'histoire chinoise version Chine communiste qui décrit l'avant 1949 comme l'enfer et l'après 1949 comme l'avenir radieux. En fait, à maints égards, c'est une continuité que l'on peut observer entre la politique du

Guomindang et celle du gouvernement communiste chinois. La période analysée est très riche en événements remarquables souvent ignorés du public occidental et évidemment du public chinois contemporain. Fort heureusement, si l'auteur met à mal la version communiste de cette période, il ne tombe pas pour autant dans l'apologie de son adversaire le Guomindang, parti nationaliste installé désormais à Taiwan. Non seulement l'ouvrage permet une réflexion rafraîchissante sur les évolutions de la Chine d'après 1949 mais il éclaire également au niveau anecdotique la personnalité de M. Wang et sa culture, produit typique de cette époque.

Serge Dreyer



# Nous avons lu...

## Le tao de papa, Pérégrinations chinoises d'un taoïste d'Occident,

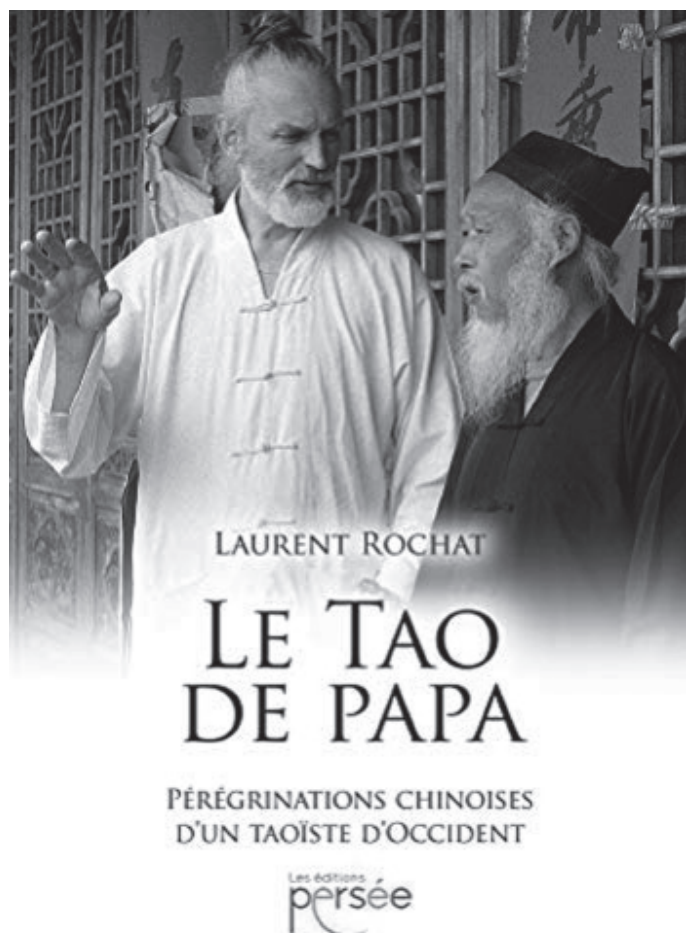
Laurent Rochat,  
Les Editions Persée, 2021, 183 p., 16,50 euros, ISBN:  
978-2-8231-3177-2

Laurent a appris le Yangjia Michuan taiji quan avec Luc Defago et de fil en aiguille s'est passionné pour le taoïsme. Cette passion est devenue une vocation qu'il évoque le plus simplement du monde dans ce petit livre. Pas de grands mystères, pas de rencontre

avec Zhang San Feng réincarné au 21ème siècle ni de déplacement en lévitation. Ce n'est pas le genre de Laurent qui allie de manière subtile la sensibilité d'un musicien, son métier, et une solide prise de terre. Le style est plaisant et vous fera voyager agréablement dans un monde atypique, celui de ces moines taoïstes qui vivent à la marge ce qui en soi est déjà remarquable dans une société chinoise plombée par un hypermatérialisme sans frein et une pensée politique unique qui ne goûte guère les sentiers hors piste. De plus si vous appréciez les paradoxes à la chinoise, vous serez gâtés.

Serge Dreyer

24



# Nous avons lu...

## Chine le grand prédateur,

Pierre-Antoine Donnet,  
Editions de l'Aube, 2021, 332 p.

L'auteur est un fin connaisseur de la Chine, ancien correspondant de presse de l'AFP à Beijing. Je le suis depuis plusieurs années car ses articles, notamment dans Asialyst, sont corroborés par la plupart des chercheurs sinologues de mes connaissances. La description de l'impérialisme chinois est remarquablement documentée, de la complaisance de la région Alsace pour l'installation de Huawei près de Strasbourg (800 000 euros de l'argent des contribuables)

aux terribles répressions du Tibet et des Ouïghours du Xinjiang. Aucun sentiment anti-chinois dans ces lignes mais une accusation forte contre la politique de leur gouvernement, de Xi Jin Ping et du Parti Communiste. Il reste à avaler Taïwan et la génération de nos enfants devra s'agenouiller devant le modèle autoritaire, à moins que...

Serge Dreyer



# Nous avons lu...

## Le mariage en Chine,

Jean-Luc Domenach et Hua Chang-Ming,  
Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Poli-  
tiques, 1987, Paris, 189 p

Si vous croyez comme quelques-unes de nos élites politico-financières (voir les entretiens avec Gaël Giraud sur Thinkerview sur Youtube) que " ça ne ferait pas de mal une bonne dictature à la chinoise en France " ce livre devrait vous ramener à la raison. Il date certes mais sachant que selon les chiffres

officiels chinois récents 600 millions de Chinois vivent avec moins de 125 euros par mois, les conditions de mariage n'ont guère dû changer du moins dans les campagnes. Vous apprendrez que dans certaines régions on vend/marie les filles au kilo et au nombre d'années d'éducation (selon mes récentes informations les prix ont augmenté à cause du déficit de femmes) et que la relation de mariage tourne essentiellement autour des questions financières/matérielles, voire politiques, pour une grande majorité de ruraux. Les citadins sont mieux lotis mais guère mieux sauf évidemment les cadres du parti communiste et les nouveaux riches. C'est l'un des très rares livres dans lequel on ose enfin parler de la passion de l'argent comme une valeur centrale de la société chinoise, passion qui se comprend en partie grâce à la description des rouages du processus de mariage en Chine. J.-L. Domenach est l'un des meilleurs observateurs de la Chine moderne aussi je pense que cet ouvrage vaut le coup d'une recherche sur les réseaux pour le dénicher.

Serge Dreyer





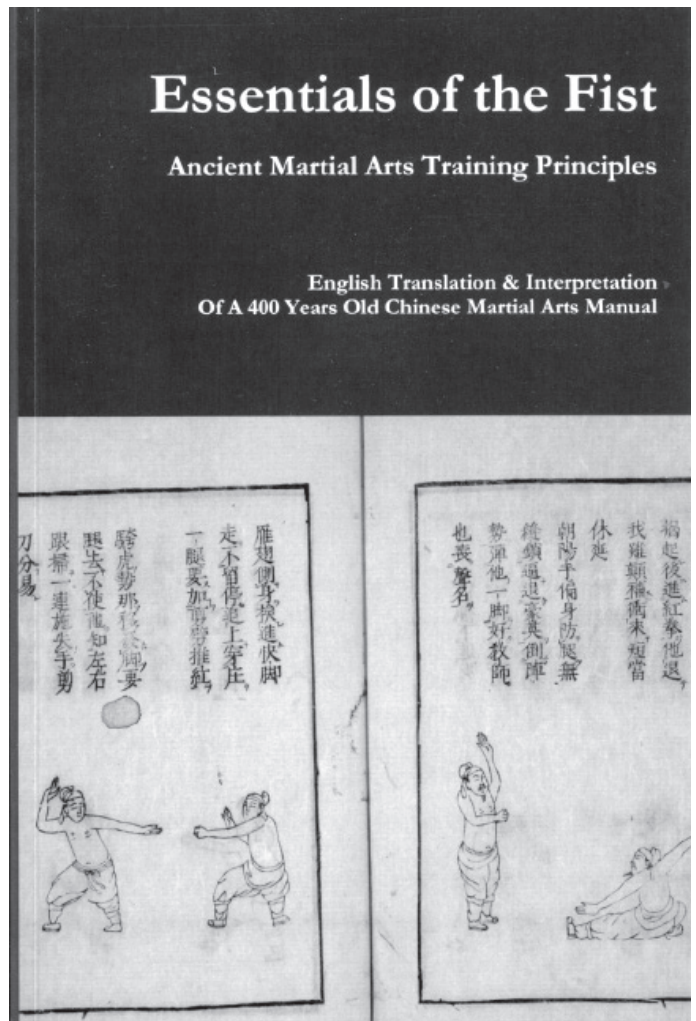
# Nous avons lu...

## Essentials of the fist,

Translated and interpreted by Jack Chen,  
2020, ISBN 978-981-14-5822-4, 290 p,  
Edition Chinese Longsword

Ce livre (Quanjing en chinois) a été écrit en 1560 par le général Qi Ji Guang. Ce n'est en fait que le dernier chapitre de ce livre qui est proposé ici mais qui a une grosse importance car certains mouvements sont passés dans le taiji quan comme le " simple fouet " ce qui a amené certains spécialistes à le considérer comme l'origine du taiji quan. Au-delà de la dimension historique du document, les interprétations de Jack Chen sont tout aussi passionnantes pour ceux qui s'intéressent à la dimension martiale de notre discipline.

Serge Dreyer



## Le Bulletin : informations pratiques

Signe de la vitalité de l'Amicale, le Bulletin est un outil très important d'information et d'échanges entre nous tous, membres de la famille du Yangjia Michuan. Chacun peut y contribuer, quel que soient son niveau, son ancienneté...

Vos propositions de sujets, articles, courriers des lecteurs et autres informations à faire paraître dans le Bulletin sont à transmettre à la rédaction, pilotée par Corinne Zerbib : [redaction.bulletin.ymtjq@gmail.com](mailto:redaction.bulletin.ymtjq@gmail.com)

Adressez vos articles, photos et vos courriers sous les formats suivants :

- Textes : privilégiez les formats .doc, .docx ou .odf
- Photos : résolution minimum de 150 dpi (150 dot per inch) et taille de 10 cm de large minimum
- Montage photos : joindre le fichier photos séparément. Nous sommes obligés de traiter chacune

des photos et nous ôterons celles que vous avez incluses. Nous suivons au mieux vos consignes de présentation.

Les articles doivent parvenir au plus tard à la rédaction :

- fin novembre pour le numéro de janvier,
- fin mars pour le numéro de mai,
- fin juillet pour le numéro de septembre.

## Sollicitations

Il est possible que vous soyez contactés par la rédaction pour pondre un article ou répondre à quelques questions. Ne soyez pas surpris(e) ! Si ce n'est déjà fait, veillez à communiquer le nom d'un(e) correspondant(e) de manière à établir une communication plus aisée entre le Bulletin de l'Amicale et votre association.

*Merci pour votre participation active !*



**RENOUVELLEMENT de l'ADHESION à L'AMICALE du Yangjia Michuan TJQ**  
**Attention : pour toute nouvelle adhésion contacter : [secrtaire.amicale.ymtjq@gmail.com](mailto:secrtaire.amicale.ymtjq@gmail.com)**

**1er Septembre 2021 au 31 Août 2022**

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Nous rappelons que le bulletin est accessible à tout public sur le site de l'Amicale.  
L'abonnement tirage papier (3 numéros/an) n'est accessible qu'aux membres de l'Amicale.

**Renouvellement d'Adhésion Individuelle**

Vous n'êtes pas membre d'une Association adhérente à l'Amicale et vous souhaitez vous ré-adhérer à titre individuel, le tarif est de 20,00 €.

Je soussigné(e) Nom et Prénom

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désire renouveler mon adhésion individuelle à l'AMICALE du Yangjia Michuan TJQ.

Téléphone	Portable	Adresse Mail

**Règlement pour l'Adhésion individuelle**

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- Il (Elle) règle 30,00 € directement au trésorier en lui communiquant son adresse personnelle et le nom de son association d'appartenance.

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Email : [tresor.ymtjq@gmail.com](mailto:tresor.ymtjq@gmail.com) Site Web : [www.amicale-yangjia-michuan-tjq.org](http://www.amicale-yangjia-michuan-tjq.org)

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En adhérant à l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan TJQ ou en m'abonnant à son bulletin à titre individuel, j'accepte que mes données personnelles recueillies fassent l'objet d'un traitement informatique en vue de tenir à jour le fichier des adhérents / abonnés de l'Amicale. Elles sont destinées aux membres du bureau de l'Amicale.  
Conformément au Règlement Général de Protection des Données entré en vigueur depuis le 25 Mai 2018, je bénéficie d'un droit d'accès et de rectification des informations me concernant en m'adressant au Secrétariat de l'Amicale.

Fait à :

Le :

Signature :



# Le Site Web fait peau neuve



## Le site fait peau neuve

nouveau design, nouvelles fonctionnalités

[www.amicale-yangjia-michuan-tjq.org](http://www.amicale-yangjia-michuan-tjq.org)

Nous espérons qu'il vous donnera satisfaction et que vous y trouverez les informations utiles qui vous intéressent. N'hésitez pas à nous faire part de vos remarques et suggestions afin de l'améliorer et nous vous remercions de votre compréhension pour les éventuels bugs qui pourraient persister pendant les premiers temps de fonctionnement.

### De nouvelles fonctionnalités sont disponibles :

Une carte interactive pour localiser les associations facilement ;

## Où pratiquer ?



Un forum plus fonctionnel ;  
La mise en avant des commissions de l'amicale pour mieux comprendre son fonctionnement ;  
Un formulaire simplifié pour informer de vos prochains stages ;  
Des vidéos pour approfondir votre pratique ;  
L'indexation de la rubrique « Nous avons lu ».

### Inscrivez-vous pour recevoir les informations :

Afin de faciliter le lien entre l'Amicale et les membres des associations adhérentes, vous pouvez dès à présent vous inscrire sur le site à titre personnel pour recevoir toutes les informations importantes de l'Amicale mises en ligne sur le site. Ainsi, vous pourrez être informé directement, par exemple, de l'ouverture des inscriptions aux Rencontres, de la mise en ligne du Bulletin et d'autres informations à ne pas manquer.

La volonté de ce nouveau site est aussi de le rendre plus convivial et dynamique et de mieux communiquer entre tous les membres.

Vous pouvez vous inscrire via le formulaire en bas de page du site.

**POUR RECEVOIR  
LES ACTUALITÉS DE L'AMICALE,  
INSCRIVEZ-VOUS À LA NEWSLETTER !**

Prénom

Nom

Nom de votre association

E-mail

Vous êtes :  
 Responsable d'association  
 Enseignant  
 Pratiquant  
 non adhérent à l'amicale

### Le forum

Un outil pour échanger facilement avec les autres membres sur des sujets qui peuvent être proposés par l'Amicale ou par vous-même.

Soyez acteur de ce forum, ouvrez la discussion sur la forme, sur des techniques, sur des sujets plus généraux concernant le fonctionnement de l'Amicale ou un sujet à débattre en AG.

Afin de préserver le bon fonctionnement du forum, vous serez obligé de vous identifier pour y accéder, avec les identifiants de votre choix.

### Donnez-nous votre avis :

Si vous souhaitez apporter une pierre à l'édifice dans la construction de ce nouveau site, vous pouvez prendre contact avec le comité Web : [amicale.yangjia.web@gmail.com](mailto:amicale.yangjia.web@gmail.com)

## Agenda des Agendas

Tous les stages organisés par les différentes associations sont disponibles sur notre site à la rubrique « Stages ».

[www.amicale-yangjia-michuan-tjq.org](http://www.amicale-yangjia-michuan-tjq.org)

Si vous souhaitez annoncer un stage, vous pouvez désormais le faire grâce à un formulaire directement sur la page dédiée.

Bien amicalement à tous,

Rédac' Chef et le CA de l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan.

