

Amicale

YANGJIA MICHUAN TAIJI QUAN

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It is difficult, between the ambient gloom and the energy that always irrigates the articles that we publish, to write an editorial that can find the right balance. Taking a higher profile to have a broader, more «historical» vision of the crisis, and thus to put a damper on the difficult situation that some people are going through, is easier said than done when the short and medium-term perspectives offer little light.

Marc Appelmans offers us a synthesis of his 50 years of practice and teaching, and many of us can today also boast (I don't like this word but I can't find another one...) of a few decades in the world of martial arts and teaching. These long experiences find themselves today as amputees of their development, simply because the experience, if it is not a source of mutual enrichment and transmission, looks very much like a navel that one would look at in the simple satisfaction of oneself. «It is my students who taught me everything,» we often hear; we cannot help but notice, in the crisis of isolation we are going through, the truthfulness of these words.

More than ever, teachers of Yangjia Michuan Taiji quan should encourage their students to take full advantage of the absence of classes to read the articles in the Bulletin, past and present, so that, as they continue to «nourish» themselves, they do not lose motivation and enrich their practice in one way or another. Who knows if this silent «maturation» in reading will not be a source of new enrichments to be shared later.

The authors of the articles «speak to us», listen to their voices, stay together.

Françoise Cordaro

A Word of the President

At the time of writing, the outlook is not good. We are told of a new uncontrolled outbreak of this epidemic that has been occupying us for almost a year now. All our collective practice remains blocked, clandestine or in visio. Those who are autonomous and have a little space or a mild climate can continue an individual practice. But all our links are distended, narrow. It is quite simply very difficult, if not impossible, to maintain all the contacts that naturally occur in a regular course. A simple greeting exchanged with a real smile at the beginning or end of a class, complemented by a shared practice, maintains a contact that can lead to a denser exchange from time to time. Since last spring, we have lost this contact and our bearings. Teachers and students have lost track of each other. It is possible that this situation will continue until late spring or even summer. It seems hopeless.

We often hear the term “resilience” about this crisis. But resilience, in the literal sense, simply characterizes the ability of a material to withstand a shock elasti-

cally without breaking and to return to its original state. This is not enough.

We have learned a little and various initiatives have been developed to try to maintain the link. The new website of the Amicale will probably be online when you read this word. The forum already existing on the old site will be easier to animate and we intend to make it a place for discussion and exchange. It will be possible for us to solicit association leaders and the first question we will address to them will be to share the consequences of this crisis on their group and the possible solutions proposed to maintain contact with their members. Practitioners will also be able to intervene, give their point of view and their ideas.

Even if this crisis is not over, 2021 will necessarily be better. And together we can help to do better than passively returning to the initial state.

Sincerely
François Schosseler

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Publishing director: François Schosseler

Editor in chief: Françoise Cordaro

Assistant chief editor: Claudy Jeanmougin

Writers (for this issue): Claudy Jeanmougin, Danièle Chevallier, Serge Dreyer, Marc Appelmans, Hervé Marest, Jean-Luc Perot, Paule-Annick Ben Kemoun (Bénou).

Correction (for this issue): Françoise Cordaro, Anne-Marie Guibaud, Sonia Sladek, Claudy Jeanmougin.

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Translations: Chris Nelson, Sylvain Maillot, Simonette Verbrugge, Denis Gaugry.

Lay out: Sophie Cornueil, **Cover:** Emmanuel Leblanc

College leaflets, graphic artist: Jean-Claude Issenmann

Postage: Claudy Jeanmougin.

A few thoughts about Taiji Quan/Qi Gong online during the lockdown

Jean-Luc Perot

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Schools and public spaces are closed? We keep practicing anyway! In a small park on the university campus in the evening, at home in the morning.

Mandatory masks and a group limit of 5 people? What should we do?

An enthusiastic student asks: "What about online classes?"

I had not thought of that. I love the students' enthusiasm!

I had previous experience. I had been quarterly shooting in a studio a half-hour sequence intended for gym-goers.

I used the Shi San Shi as a unifying theme for a series on "Principles and tools for the practice of TaiJiQuan".

So on March 23, I find myself starting a series of 15 mn meetings on Facebook called 'Taichi à Perot' to encourage people to take care of themselves.

But how to do it without referring to the former dual?

For years I have been using the same guiding thread: posture, stature, bearing, signature.

Together with confident, happy, mindful.

Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan Lian Hui

Posture

An invitation to have some rest, as in getting someone to stop their frantic race. Take it easy, calm down, settle down. Let the agitation go down and assume your situation of earthling: both feet on the ground, subject to the law of gravitation and atmospheric pressure. Have some rest before composing your...

Stature

Do not slump. Gather the anti-gravitational forces under the emblem of light, of solar tropism that makes plants emerge from the ground, pointing their top toward the sky.

Stand up! There are two ends and two poles, one in the earth with relaxation, releasing and falling, the other in heaven with a solar, radiating, expansive tension.

Verticality is at the heart of this double invitation to strength and flexibility.

Bearing

The horizontality of our relation to the horizon.

Let me breathe! The breath that inflates and deflates us, drives us, presides over all our exchanges, inside/outside, around and about.

Our senses and our sensations are summoned as well as our breathing.

The elastic ball expands and contracts, the gesture spreads and resumes, intent materializes and transforms.

Signature

Everyone of us is here, with their body and breath, their age and wishes. No place for pretending. The importance of feeling and sensing in all simplicity and innocence.

The adventure starts with the smile and reaches its climax with the THANKS.

Laying down the basics. I try to find one or two exercises per session, with one clear goal.

Animal locomotion is always lurking in the background: the earthworm, the tiger, the turtle, the lizard, the birds, the pedestrian, the bear, and, as a synthesis: "roll your ball".

Twenty sessions, fifteen minutes each. It's a lot—and it's not much.

Thankful comments by students, but also by visitors, encourage me to take things further.

So the following month I expand the format to 30 mn, taking up the same themes again, but linking them more clearly to Taiji Quan using moves taken from the form. I also work on mobility using templates: the point, the line, the triangle, the square and the rhombus—the conquest of space.

On the last week, at the suggestion of Yumma Mudra¹, I broaden the scope to include Danza Duende (see note 1 below), inviting dancers to complement my proposition. In my opinion, this confirms that the fundamentals of TJQ can also be found in the spirit and in various conceptions of the dancing body.

Feeling that the end of the lockdown is near, I put an end to the sessions wishing to go back to practicing

in small groups in parks and gardens, which I did until the end of August.

Voilà! Apart from my practice companions, I didn't get much feedback on these presentations, but to this day I meet people who tell me they followed these little morning sessions regularly and with great pleasure, and several of them say they're ready to join us again in September... Wait and see!

For my part, I took pleasure in this journey and I draw some satisfaction from reading my notes again and integrating them into a global plan.

By myself, facing the camera, besides dealing with technical problems — sound, lighting, framing, placement... I was amazed at the liberation of speech, once engaged in developing the sequence. It was like a tale where I spoke of feeling or the symbolic contribution with purpose and simplicity.

I also realized that some "easy" notions which I thought were self-evident actually aren't. Axis, centre, verticality, relaxation, orientation...

Taking this into account enabled me to last the distance. Over time, I felt the need to break things down, to clarify the steps or inner workings of the movement in order to find their meaning.

From the general perspective of Qigong I borrow the attention to detail and sensation to activate the ability to read the movement or posture. As in a grammatical analysis, we highlight the components and articulation that bind words and sounds together in order to produce meaning.

I didn't take the time to watch all forty sessions over again, but I'll tell beginners to go look for a complement there to enrich their research.

I hope that these videos will be widely shared and generate critical feedback, questions and comments.

1. Yumma Mudra, aka Myriam Szabo is the daughter of Hungarian sculptor Lazlo Szabo. She started studying ballet at age 3. At 12, back to France, she joined Irina Grjebina's dance company, and later Ecole des enfants du spectacle. As a teenager, she discovered buddhism with a book she found in a parisian bookshop. Beyond Chogyam Trungpa's spiritual materialism, while busking with her then-boyfriend, a musician....Since 2005 she has been living in Brussels where she founded Danza Duende, a school of "philosophy through dance". In her autobiography, "La voie qui danse" (literally, the path that dances) published in January 2005, she describes this way of life between buddhist creed and liberating dance.
<https://www.babelio.com/auteur/Yumma-Mudra/231135>



50 years of experience – towards a synthesis

Marc Appelmans

(This article invites responses from the readers to be addressed to the editor)

“What you think, you create” Albert Einstein.

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Preface

First and foremost, I must say that not everything has yet been set to paper regarding my own practice; I simply propose certain alleys of inquiry, some experiences and some observations. My process consists of creating a synthesis of what I have learned from my numerous teachers and the martial art studies that I have made along my path, with over fifty-one years of experience. Even if you have already acquired some knowledge of the body through reading or observation, by the practice of Taijiquan or other discipline, this synthesis should still generate new ideas to integrate into your personal practice and/or share with your students. But learning through contact with a flesh and bone person can teach more than anything written since nothing can replace the lived experience.

The Structure of the body in movement, or the Body-Mechanics

Body-mechanics: the correct body position

Definition

The awakening of the body through the practice of Taijiquan allows for a new look at its physiognomy, its mechanics: how does this interconnected assembly of muscles, bones, joints move?

This practice is an occasion to decipher the personal puzzle of the joints : for example, how to link the feet and the hands, the thighs and the arms, the ankles and wrists?

The concept of Body-Mechanics can be then added to this reflection on the body, through its mostly mechanical study: we can understand body-mechanics as the study of the function and optimum functioning of the human body, taking into account the configuration of bone, muscles and joints. A good comprehension and correct implementation of body mechanics in movement is a guarantee of efficiency as well as the preservation of the health of the joints.

The Basic Posture

Here are the principles that can be applied , step by step, to try to approach a correct feeling of the body in Taiji:

1. I settle my body on the ground (being soft, relaxing the muscles pulled by gravity).
2. The ground pushes back and pushes me towards the sky (guiding the mind towards the structure of bones, as if it was trying to stand up, to maintain itself).
3. The head is slightly lifted, the chin tucked in.

What is interesting is that you can start to integrate these feeling in the body thanks to the mind: the pull of the earth fixes my body to the ground, as if my body was a magnet and the ground a metallic surface. It is a way to try to integrate rootedness within yourself.

Unifying sections, parts to bring together

Now we can consider the different parts of the body, the different joints through the viewpoint of body-mechanics. In order to find a more correct movement, these parts will move together, will align themselves in order to create a solid structure:

- foot/ankle-knee: the knees are bent and the sacrum vertical, the weight of the body goes through the knees into the ground: our weight is indeed to be dropped into the ground; in order to protect them the knees do not pass the toes, but are almost in the same vertical alignment.
- Knee-hips: it is good to know about the Gua, the articulation of the inner hip joints and its amplitude ; to place the pelvis between the feet in the polygon of support (the space where you are balanced), so that the pelvis remains free, supple and mobile.
- Hips-shoulders: for a good positioning of the pelvis, keep the shoulders free, supple and mobile.
- Shoulders-Head: free, mobile, suspended.
- Shoulders-arms-head: the connection is free, tonic, relaxed.
- Finally, what is crucial for the verticality of the skeletal structure in movement, along a vertical eight in the sagittal plane and according to Godelieve Struyf: the legs are in line with the iliac; the sacrum is with the spine, and therefore with the back of the head and the sternum.

The bones

To unify the body, we must try to create a vertical alignment of the bones, always along a vertical eight along the sacral plane and according to Godelieve Struyf: heel-knee-sacrum-spine-sternum-occipital ridge (back of the head) are tied in a vertical axis, and move together.

Indeed, the skeletal structure should move as one, it is one of the benefits of a good structure, which we will return to soon. It follows the movement in the shape of an "8". The decoding of the skeletal puzzle is therefore to be done in our bodies, with and through the physical sensations.

The structure of the body in motion: lines of force

The axis according to the muscle chains

The vertical axis is composed of three muscle chains: PAAP, PM, AM; the horizontal axis is composed of two: PL, AL.

1. Name of the muscular chains according to Godelieve Struyf. PAAP: postéro-antérieure/antéro-postérieure. PM: postéro-médiane. AM: antéro-médiane. PL: Postéro-latérale. AL: antéro-latérale. See <http://ceramontreal.ca/chaines-g-d-s/>

I will not go into greater detail on muscle chains, instead I will refer you to the work of Godelieve Struyf.

Reference Planes

The sagittal plane divides the body in two: the right side and the left side. The frontal plane cuts the body into a front and a rear. The transversal plane creates links top-bottom, between the upper and lower limbs.

As far as the hands are concerned:

- They move within the sagittal plane,
- They rise up to the level of the shoulder blades, the point on the back of the hand (He Gu 4GI) never rising above the fold of the armpit,
- They never cross past the frontal plane, same with the elbows that are to be kept linked to the hands.

As to the feet, whose movement is no less fundamental and should initiate every movement, they stay underneath the pelvis, while maintaining the heel-heel internal line. The principle of the heel-heel line can be explained thusly: when you have one foot forward, imagine a line connecting the heel and the front toes, extending in both directions. The other heel cannot be placed along that line or cross it, but instead a small space must be maintained while respecting the partition of the body along the sagittal plane, which is a guaranty of balance and of a structure correctly aligned.

On the importance of the feet in stepping and the placement of the structure

Of the correct placement of the feet depends the correct alignment of the body

One of the points I consider most important is the work of the feet in movement. The feet control the body. Indeed, they should place the pelvis, which in turn helps to place the shoulders which then place the arms and the hands. The correct placement of the pelvis depends on the correct placement of the feet, which might limit the mobility of the pelvis, otherwise the body is in torsion and cannot be aligned correctly between Heaven and Earth (which might be considered as another plane to respect: the horizontal plane). Let's take an example which illustrates the benefits of applying the body-mechanics in order to preserve the health of our joints, of our body: in the context of a deflection, when receiving a push or a punch, often the yielding is done by the line of shoulders going past the mobility of the shoulders or the hips. The work to deflect or to move, whether in the study of a technique or in Tuishou, demand an increase in the action of the joints away from their optimal safe zone for their health. And because of this, the spine

is put under a strong rotational force, the torsion creating what I call a "body grimace" which we can guess as to the negative effects especially for our joints.

Despite the fact that it seems self-evident, the work of the feet and the correct placement of the body are often left to the wayside in our practice when knowing how to place the feet is primary, and as such, it seems to me that it is important to develop a good knowledge of this part of the body.

What to add? We can also say that in order to place the foot correctly, in the correct way, it is good to know and to be able to bring forth a precise proprioception of the ankle, the knee, the hip, the pelvis and all of the skeletal intermediaries. All of this relies on the permanent exercise of a constant and diffused vigilance of the entire body. The body-memory is created through practice, with the participation of the mind including the subconscious, in the listening to the various parts of the body and their interactions. We will come back in greater detail on the reverberations that can be triggered in our mind, but from a purely bio-mechanical viewpoint we can already say that it relates to, to repeat what has been said:

- The feet, as controllers and initiators of movement, who point in the correct direction.
- The alignment of the knees in the direction of the toes, which is vital for their health and to avoid their early deterioration due to an unconscious use.
- The pelvis whose vertical axis is between the feet and the orientation is towards the toes, and the toes oriented in the direction of the action and the body's engagement.
- The pelvis, limited in its placement, but yet still free and unlocked.
- The shoulders, above the pelvis, free and always listening to the movement of the pelvis and the feet.
- The arms which are aligned with the action, while maintaining the center. They do not act independently from the feet.

The extremities initiate the movement

The body should move as a single unit, but the movement should be started in the extremities: the heel and toes are at once guide and followers. They constitute as well points on which we can focus the mind in order to move more precisely, which does require some vigilance. Let's insist finally on the principle which explains the importance of the feet in the movement. Indeed, there are two ways of initiating movement:

- By the feet (toes and heel);
- By the tip of the fingers.

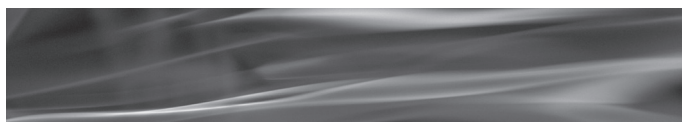


This brings us back to the principle of consecutive engagement of the muscles that we can find in Systema, the Russian martial art. These points should bring our attention towards the guiding of the movement through tip of our five fingers or in the heel/toes, and to engage behind them the rest of the body.

Conclusions on stepping and body-mechanics

Therefore, no matter what movement is done, there is always a displacement to be made, from the smallest to the largest, and this always in accord with our own potential, our own possibilities and physical disposition (which is in itself a basic rule, a principle to keep in mind at all times). Several steps are possible, either small like in the YMTJQ, or large like in the popular Yang style (this is not a dig, usually the popular styles use larger stepping, as a means of strengthening the legs). In closing, we can remember two great benefits from the study of body-mechanics:

- It urges us to learn and respect our own mobility, our own joint amplitude in order to prevent injury. It is a potentially healing study of the body and the essence of movement.
- It allows the unification of the body in movement - we can insist on this point in the next installment of these reflections. A correct investment of the body in the form is synonymous to me with efficiency! Can we contest the effectiveness of a gesture capable of engaging the weight of the entire body during a push, for example, without compromising the structure?



Nous avons lu...

Le Secret de l'Occident. Vers une théorie générale du progrès scientifique,



David Cosandey,
Flammarion, Champs
Essais, 2008, 865 p.

Remarquable ouvrage d'un physicien suisse. C'est un gros pavé, très bien écrit, dans lequel on apprend une foule de choses. Mais surtout, sa théorie du développement incroyable de la science en Occident qu'il met en regard avec l'Islam, la Chine et l'Inde, ouvre des horizons passionnants dans lesquels

histoire et géographie jouent un rôle important. C'est également une bonne occasion de réfléchir sur les développements contemporains de la science dans le cadre de la mondialisation.

À la croisée de collections d'art entre Asie et Occident, du XIX^e siècle à nos jours,



Marie Laureillard et Cléa
Patin (dir.),
Maison neuve & Larose
Nouvelles Éditions et
Hémisphères éditions,
2019, 417 p.

Fruit d'un colloque tenu au musée des Confluences à Lyon, ce livre intéressera tous ceux qui collectionnent des objets d'art ou qui visitent les musées consacrés à ce domaine,

sans oublier les réflexions sur les marchés d'art. De fait, la plupart des interventions concernent l'Asie. Le livre est divisé en :

1. Profils et motivations des collectionneurs
2. Collections institutionnelles et collectives
3. Marché de l'art et enjeux identitaires
4. Collections : regards croisés

De la documentation et des réflexions solides.

Note de la rédaction

Claudy Jeanmougin

Il est fort probable que vous ayez reçu tardivement votre bulletin ou que vous ayez constaté que l'adresse était incomplète et vous voudrez bien excuser votre humble serviteur qui a commis une petite gaffe... En effet, dans la préparation des étiquettes, lors de l'étape « insérer un champ de fusion » j'ai tout simplement sauté (bien involontairement) la rubrique avec numéro et nom de la rue. Ce qui fait que l'adresse était incomplète et là il faut applaudir les facteurs et factrices qui ont accompli l'exploit de remettre le courrier avec cette lacune.

C'est la première fois que cela arrive et il en faut bien une, de première fois... Je vais mettre un bémol sur l'éloge des agents de la poste car, au retour de vos courriers, j'ai voulu réparer en mettant une nouvelle étiquette avec l'adresse complète cette fois et en mettant de nouveaux timbres avec le risque de léser les comptes de l'Amicale... Et que s'est-il passé ? Tout simplement les lettres me sont revenues sans vraiment d'explications. Et alors ? Je lève le bémol pour continuer l'éloge de la Poste, et plus particulièrement de ma factrice qui m'a conseillé de mettre l'étiquette avec la bonne adresse sur l'ancienne, ce que je faisais, d'enlever la petite étiquette de la Poste qui mentionnait l'erreur et de ne pas timbrer, puis de remettre le tout dans la boîte du village qu'elle relevait. Depuis, tout baigne et cela ne coûte pas un centime à l'Amicale...

Au fait, si quelqu'un veut prendre en charge cette tâche alors pas de soucis... C'est bien volontiers que je céderai le poste.

Federation – Expression

Hervé Marest

Three years ago I started to take the FAEMC (Federation of Chinese Martial and Energy Arts) federal exams, starting from the bottom up, without going through the VAE (Validation of Acquired Experience), and following the following steps: ATT1 (ATT=technical attestation), CMB (Certificate of Volunteer Instructor), ATT2, CQP (Certificate of Professional Qualification), ATT3, DEJEPS (State Diploma of Youth Popular Education and Sport). I am currently taking the CQP.

This list of acronyms must surely start to put some of you to sleep so please wait for the rest.

Why this process?

Some time ago I had a very bad image of this federation. I remind you of some of the rumors that were going around: lavish expenses, the hold of a few people and a particular style, strange General Assembly's, etc.

On the other hand, I was beginning to think that it would be a good idea for me to begin the process of obtaining an official paper to teach Tai Chi, voluntarily and professionally.

Solicited by my friend Eugène Müller, I first joined the Karate Federation which has a Tai Chi branch called "Tai Kyo Kukken". I passed my 1st dan black belt there in order to pass the federal diplomas and the BEES (state diploma of physical and sports educator). My personal life made that I had to stop this process, otherwise I would perhaps still be today at the French Karate federation. I also received advice from Joël Panhelleux to pass a VAE (validation of acquired experience), a very simple process

at the time, and to join the Sport for All federation, but I did not follow up, because, even if the process was easy and cheap, I did not really feel at home, just as I did for the Karate federation.

My opinion on the FAEMC began to change when Christian Bernapel became its president. I said to myself: "If someone from Yangjia Michuan was able to become president, it is because there is an opening". And when there is openness, there is hope and future.

Let Christian be thanked here for his approach, his work and his involvement. Being president of a national federation is certainly not a sinecure. I feel it is my duty to relay this involvement.

Well, now you're thinking: "Blah, blah, the federation stories, I'm fed up, etc."

Please wait for the rest. Maybe it will be useful.

Because the most important questions are: Did I enjoy it? Did it make me progress? Did it reinvigorate my practice and my classes?

The answers are: Yes. Yes.Yes.

Let's talk about the training courses first (CMB and CQP).

Yes they are not cheap. It was even a hindrance for me at one point. Some people said that it was too expensive and that it was mainly used to fill the coffers of the federation, which I know today is completely false. If the number of people trained attracts subsidies, the cost of the training barely covers the expenses, and from one year to the next



their maintenance can be called into question, as it was for DEJEPS, which is currently suspended.

On the other hand, the cost is well worth it. The content and the trainers are of a very high quality, and it is a former student of the French School of Taiji Quan who tells you so. Even when you are up to speed on certain subjects, you are not bored for a moment.

There are also exchanges with people of other styles of Taichi, Qigong or Wushu (Kung Fu). It's really very rich, especially since the subjects covered in class allow us to go in all sorts of directions.

The preparation of the technical certificates is also a great source of progression. For me it would be a pity not to be inspired by them, if not to pass them. Working on the form so that it is more expressive while remaining harmonious obliges us to review everything from top to bottom, to detail each gesture again. It is a new impulse, a new discovery.

In wanting to be expressive, I was afraid for a while of falling into a kind of formatting, in what I call the "Shaolin Taichi", a very spectacular Taichi in silk pyjamas that often triggers the "Oh's" and the "Ah's", but which exasperates me in the bad days and leaves me unconcerned in the good ones. But no, by changing my point of view, more or less expressive, more or less fast, etc. The result is that I am able to modulate my performance, because I have revisited it.

One of the benefits of this work has also been for me a much better connection legs-pelvis-back-arms, a unity much better felt.

I also realized that I was beginning to do a Taichi that was a bit "cushy", without bending my knees too much, and that far from being a kind of "energetic integration" of the movement, it was only a lack of expressiveness, a laziness. Today, when I practice, I'm sweaty, even in winter. I don't do extra acrobatics, but I'm much more involved in the expression of the movement, which also corresponds to a certain martial understanding, hence the usefulness of working in pairs in parallel.

Then there are the Tuishou trials and the applications (imposed and free). For this you have to find a partner, or "plastron" in the federal language, with whom you can work regularly enough. Since my wife follows the same approach and we are available for each other most of the time, it is with her that I started this work. In fact, we can see the results of our almost daily training.

First of all, we have to show several Tuishou exercises (fixed step for ATT1, moving step for ATT2 and ATT3). They can be presented one after the other, or they can be performed in a continuous sequence. The latter is much more interesting because it allows you to work on the connections and continuity between several exercises. For the exams we have recently defined a sequence, but we also had fun changing exercises "live".

We then have to “express” the eight potentials: peng, lu, an, ji, cai, lie, zhou, kao. For example, in the vertical circles exercise, we will, at a given moment, express a peng by moving the “plastron” back a few steps. The expression must be measured to preserve the safety of the partner, but it must be clean, clear and without burr.

Then a peng proposed by the partner must be responded to, using one of the eight potentials or an application of the form (but naming the potential used in the expression).

The same process is then reproduced with about ten applications (and answers) of the form (1st and 2nd duan for ATT1, the three duans for ATT2).

For the exams, we choreographed all this. It would be a mistake for me to stay in the choreography afterwards, but at some point it is an undeniable tool for progression before moving on to improvisation as in Jazz. Besides, if we can choose the applications that we’re going to demonstrate in Tuishou for the ATT1 and ATT2, it’s not the case for the ATT3. In this case, it’s the jury that asks you for this or that application while you’re doing your moving step Tuishou.

The jury then asks you to make a few imposed applications that it chooses in the form (1st and 2nd duan for ATT1, the three duans for ATT2).

Afterwards, it is up to you to freely show a few applications of your choice on various attacks (punch, kick, grasp, key, etc). This is the opportunity to shine, because these you can prepare well in advance.

These last tests require you to have practiced all the applications of the form and be able to demonstrate them at any time. That’s a lot of work! For the ATT3, you even have to present several variants per application. The total delight!

Taking exams is not necessarily very motivating, especially from a certain age, or older. First of all, you say to yourself: “I’ve already done enough of that”, I can do without it. There is also the stress of the first exams, because passing in front of a jury in a big gym full of people watching you is first of all very hard, a challenge to take up. Personally, the test was difficult, but after ATT2, I only want to go back into the arena. I’m preparing for it...

As I said before, you don’t have to take these exams, but it’s in your best interest to use these tests as inspiration for your work. At least for a period of time.

If I have entitled this article “Federation - Expression”, it is precisely because this work with the FAEMC has led me to improve my expression. It is not only technical, it goes much further. It’s about who I am intimately and my relationship to the world. It has changed

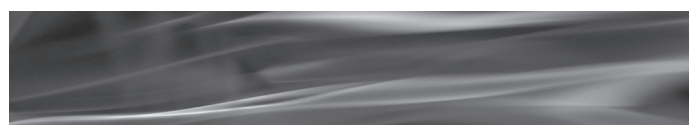
my posture in form and applications, but also in my life. Why do without such benefits?

I think I was mainly practicing a “Reflection Taichi”, with my head a little lowered. “What do I do? How do I do it? Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going?” Now I think I’m practicing more of a “Taichi of expression”. I shut up and do it, looking straight and clear towards a radiant and transcendental future (I’m barely laughing, actually). And I also believe that the Yangjia Michuan needs this. I find that on the whole one is good at writing, but rather average in practice (and I include myself in it). Would we be able for example to make a demonstration that holds up at the Night of Martial Arts in Bercy?

What I’m talking about today, I sincerely believe it can help us move forward. Bercy is obviously not an end in itself, but, really, our style should at some point be able to show on the outside what we have on the inside (and not just two seconds here and there), otherwise it’s a bit of a show off! Because the risk when we live secret and hidden, is also to be weakened, to believe that we are great when we are just “has been”.

What I’m saying here may seem peremptory and I apologize for that. But I sincerely believe that what the FAEMC is offering us today is really a chance to give us some “peps” even though I know, and I understand, that this approach does not concern everyone. I therefore urge you to join the FAEMC, even if you are not French. If you don’t want to join, at least try to get some inspiration from the ATT to work and maybe do a little more small demonstrations in your practice places with nice outfits and everything. You won’t regret it.

Best regards to all.



Reflection on a salute specific to Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan

Note: You are invited to immerse yourselves once again in the article which appeared in Bulletin 44, November 2003, entitled *'The ritualised operation' of practice* written by Sabine Metzlé.

Recorders for the workshop on the Salute*:
Marie-Christine Moutault, Zouzou Valloton
Overview Committee :
Jean-Paul Bonhuil, Sonia Sladek,
Jean-Luc Perot, Yves Picart.

Other contributors to this article (remarks made by e-mail, in previous publications, or during the workshop on the Salute): Michel Amard, Marc Appelmans, Bernard Bouisson, Marie-Pierre Coeuignart, Cathy Drouet, Du Yü, Gianvittorio Arditto, Anne-Marie Guibaud, Claudy Jeanmougin, Noëlle Kasai, Diana Kakatou, Pierre Lang, Georges C. Lin, Hervé Marest, Yves Martin, Sabine Metzle, Eugène Meyer, Pietro Papagni, Frédéric Plewniak, Léonard-Paul Roelandt, Simonette Verbruge.

* 9 novembre 2019.

Mark the thirtieth!

On the occasion of the 2019 annual seminar of the teachers' College, and in the perspective of opening a brainstorming workshop to the widest possible audience in celebration of its thirtieth birthday, it was suggested to investigate introducing a salute specific to our style.

The responses flooded in.

Amongst these, a document on the salute edited by www.ecolewuxing.com which reveals the origin of the gesture 'Bao Quan Li', that is 'the rite of enveloping the hand'. Other than showing respect to the master and the place of practice, this gesture symbolises courage with the closed fist and intelligence with the open hand when it is not referring to the principle of Yin and Yang. In this document, the different ways of associating the open hand with the closed hand also reflected affiliation to a specific group.



Wudang mountains

A second document, related to 'the Taoist salute of the Wudang Mountains' set out in detail how to adopt the position of the hands which, in the end, traces out the sinusoid of the Yin Yang symbol. To do this, one should:

For men proceed in the following manner:

Left hand: yang

and in the yang there is the little yin.

The thumb of the left hand is placed on wu (little yin) which is at the end of the middle finger of the same hand, this forms a circle.

Right hand: yin

and in the yin there is the little yang.

The right hand envelops the left hand and the thumb of the same hand slips into the circle to connect up at the base of the left ring finger, this base represents zi: little yang.

For women it is the opposite.

A few details regarding this hand position: it is above all a method for protecting against all sorts of dangers and for activating the circulation of qi in the body, and beyond ...

This hand position has a name

子午 陰陽 連環訣

ziwu yinyang lianhuan jue

ziwu yinyang circulate subtle process,
wonderful formula

or if one prefers the short name

子午訣

ziwu jue

ziwu subtle process...

One could translate it by: Mudra (strange translating Chinese to Sanskrit...) to activate (zi-wu) yin-yang ...or simply to speak of the protection Mudra, a point on which Master Wang put considerable emphasis...

The sinusoid marking out the Yin and the Yang appears clearly, viewed from above, in the line separating the two hands.

This salute was reported as *'being ours since Zhang Qinlin, the fingers, apart from representing Yin and Yang, represent Zi-Wu Mao-You by touching each other and illustrate the 4 periods most favourable to the daily practice of our art'* (the notion Mao You corresponds to the differentiation of Yin and Yang according to the daily cycle of day and night, and the notion of Zi Wu relates to the annual cycle differentiating Yin and Yang).

Nevertheless, contradictory opinions meant that *'this position of the hands, although well known in our school, was adopted only for the practice of Neigong. Placed before the dantian, the hands form the shape of Taiji called: ziwu yinyang lianhuan jue. If the gestures which bring one to this position resemble a salute it is only for starting Neigong and not for Taiji quan.'*

Consequently, thinking about a salute specific to our school remained relevant and was not lacking in interest.



An own salute?

'There is probably a commendable origin to this idea of creating a greeting specific to our school ... Yangjia Michuan already contains many specificities!

A salute common to wushu, and to many Chinese martial arts (Bao Quan), participates in the recognition of the common base, and is more unifying.'

'I am puzzled and do not understand the need or utility of our style having a specific salute. The salute commonly used by Taoists suits me very well, it is simple, understated and common to many things.'

'The Taiji quan could free itself from these obsolete signs which reinforce membership, group spirit, the 'us' which is different from the 'you', the 'our school' as opposed to 'your school'... Are polite greetings not enough? They can be adapted to all sensitivities, do not compete in any way and demonstrate a savoir-vivre which does not wound any allegiance. Military salute, religious salute, sectarian salute, martial salute...'

'(..) In the question as posed, it is perhaps the word 'salute' associated with 'specific to our school' which might irritate and rigidify the practice of Taiji quan, whose purpose is quite the opposite of rigidity... I do not feel obliged to use some exaggerated salutation imbued with Asiatic esotericism which would give (I doubt) a more valuable identity to our practice.

Nevertheless, I consider that there is an 'entry into practice' and a 'exit from practice'. One does not go into a Taiji class quite in the same way as one goes shopping in a supermarket and leave it with a basket of groceries. I dare to believe that the time during a lesson has a slightly deeper aspect than the simple act of consuming...'

'This expression, which here appears to me to take on a rather esoteric connotation, does not seem to me to correspond to the spirit which Master Wang passed on to us either.'

'What did Master Wang do? I remember a course in 1999, during which Luc Defago launched a resounding "Qingli !!!" or something like that, to indicate that we should salute our partners by simply bowing.'

'Having discussed with those around me we find that our salute suits us. It is very classic: the right hand forming a fist, the left hand resting on top, the arms horizon as for a 'zhou', slight forward tilt of the upper body.'



Practices

Just as we punctuate each 'duan' with a 'carry the tiger', I punctuate a session with the same movement followed by the salute Bao Quan... Nothing new, nothing different from what we do already.

Beyond that, I do not impose anything particular nor even propose it and I adapt readily to the various habits of those whose teaching I am lucky enough to follow, from our school or elsewhere.'

'To answer the question regarding a salute representative of our school, in all my classes I have adopted the habit of finishing the session with a 'carry the tiger' followed by a salute of left hand on right fist.'

'Here is what I practise:

- two forward bends, on the second we stay down for a few seconds to stretch the back whilst exhaling,

- twice raise the arms to fetch the heavenly qi which flows to the dan tian: return of the qi to the dan tian. On the second, the right foot approaches the left by half a step.

- finally the Taiji is closed by the left foot. It takes two minutes but we leave on a final note of unison like an orchestra. We may applaud ourselves.'

'I think we should consider the closing moments of a session and perhaps define something in common. Too often we go on our separate ways without having closed the practice.'

Ritual, politeness, respect

From the pertinence of and the positions taken in the observations communicated, one could tell just how sensitive the subject was. For all that, the notion of ritual, so dear to the world of the martial arts, should challenge us.

The term ritual comes from the Sanskrit 'rite' indicating 'that which is in keeping with the way things are organised' then from Latin 'ritus' which signifies 'according to good practice' but equally from Celt 'ritum' which signifies 'passage, ford'. Whence the notion of the rite of passage from the visible secular world to the invisible sacred world. Throughout the Far East, for millennia, ritual has been regarded as the backbone of society. Nothing of any importance, particularly in the martial arts, could be done without ritual. Originally, in China, it was about linking the human being to the earth and the heavens such that his actions would disturb neither one nor the other. Amongst the classic Chinese texts, there exists the book of rites or Liji. The character 'li' signifies collectively; rite, ritual, ceremony, good manners, politeness, curtesy.

The salute, in the martial arts, was a mark of respect for the place of practice and the human beings. By the way, a ritual salute can always be a useful tool for facilitating group dynamics.

Through their comments, the contributors were questioning how a ritual salute would translate in its teaching without picking up a folkloric or sectarian connotation?

Certainly, some were in line with China's history, during which there was a major split between classical or traditional education and modern education. To salute the earth or the heavens, to refer to the 'old masters', to the ancestors, was to demonstrate negationism, deviationism or revisionism at the time of the Cultural Revolution. There is therefore a historical reality of a practice without ritual, of stripping away any signification other than of a sport.

But isn't this losing the very essence of the practice by depriving it of its character once considered sacred?

The debate started before it was time and feelings were sufficiently contrasted for it to be necessary to restate the context in which the question was formulated on adopting a possible salute specific to our school.

For that, Lao-Tseu was a great help, each teacher was invited not to envisage the final stage of the decision but rather the path that would lead there. The path passing through our groups collegiate way of functioning. In fact, the European College of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan Teachers is a place for discussion, within which everyone, regardless of their seniority of practice, gender, age or opinion can freely express themselves and benefit from being listened to respectfully. Here, no decision is imposed. However, taking decisions horizontally and democratically requires a few rules and guarantees which are ensured in particular by the 'mediation' commission, by honest and accurate notes taken of the discussions, by respecting the time allotted to each speaker, etc... and it was important to demonstrate this, on a subject which could have proven to be polemic, in front of our brothers in practice from Taiwan and Burkina Faso.



An 'international' forum

And so, on the 9th November 2019, within the Strasbourg Youth Hostel, as part of the 30th anniversary of the European College of the teachers of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan, an audience of a good forty odd teachers of our style was gathered. In addition to our British, Swiss and Italian friends was also Georges C. Lin, ambassador for our style in Taiwan, as well as Diana Katakou and Adama Traore representing Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan in Burkina Faso.

It fell to Pietro, the originator of the proposal, to open the forum.

He reminds us *'that we have everything, a form, arms, Tuisbou, etc, but no bello nor good-bye... A salute is like a way of saying 'hello' or 'good-bye.'* He suggests: *'having a common salute for when we all meet together, like at the Rencontres; something very simple, recognized and accepted by the family of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan. Like a common vocabulary,'* and wishes *'to benefit from the presence of Adama and Diana, as well as of that of Georges Lin, to create this common vocabulary.'*

The first reactions and opinions regarding the need for a salute followed on rapidly.

'The salute is necessary, it is a ritual which allows a group to be in tune with the practice, it opens and closes a practice.'

It is emphasised that *'in the martial arts the ritual of the salute is a sign of respect. One bows to greet one's students, to salute the lineage of Masters and to salute the Daoguan'* and our friends from Burkina Faso explained that: *'The ceremonial in Africa is important and long, it includes the ancestors amongst others, it is part of our culture.'*

At the beginning and at the end

However, some still wondered: *'Why create a salute specific to our style?'* and shared their reservations: *'To ritualise risks it becoming rigid.'*

So it is explained: *'In fact it is like starting a lesson like a sentence and finishing with a full stop.'* One stated that his *'Master always did it, finding that to start the practice with a salute facilitated concentration.'*, another argued *'At the beginning we saluted each other politely and the end was a bit ramshackle. So it was necessary to institute a method such that at the end of the class the students would be facing the teacher and salute.'*

Various contributions followed describing the ways in which *'this punctuation'* is applied in their classes.

'Facing the students who arrange themselves, silence falls, at the beginning and end of a session, there is like a ritual during which Yin and Yang are reunited, expel the perverse breath and reunite the three fields of elixir, then a salute is addressed to the room, the fellow practitioners, the teacher and the ancestors.'

This was a familiar way of practising to some who added: *'Rather like this but in a circle since the circle adds something very strong regarding the shared energy.'*

This arrangement was approved as it illustrates the notion of the 'pivot' more commonly known under the term of 'fulcrum'. The fulcrum is a supporting point; it directs, organises and energizes the movement. It supports and allows the development of a movement with its consequential vitality. Borrowed from the physical sciences, it originates from the Latin *fulcio* and signifies 'prop up' or 'support'.

In a circle, *'the group sends the energy to the centre and the energy in the centre returns to the group.'*

Further contributors explained different practices:

'As a starter I smile, and to finish I say 'Thank you'.'

'Some explained that they accompanied the 'bello' with a slight bow and the 'thank you' with applause.'

More commonly encountered were those who explained:

'To start and finish a lesson with a salute, right hand closed and the left open' and to continue 'It's a way of leaving one another 'looking into each other's eyes'.'

'Some refer to 'an experience in China, and of a Taoist salute: thumb in laogong, the other hand gripping the thumb and closing on the other hand. The yang hand seeks the small yin and the yin hand seek the small yang. Note the importance of closing together.'

There are also many who adopt *'a moment of calm and of meditation to start'* and to do this establish *'the calm by breathing peacefully either facing the students or with their back turned'* and nothing prevents then adding a *'bao gui shan'*.

Applause

The exercise was a success, the varied experiences were expressed, aroused interest and was also genuinely relaxed appropriate for the joke proposition of a salute combining Cai, Zhou and Kao with two big kisses to the partner.

Of course, a final decision accepted by all closed the debate. It will stay in its concise form full of imagery, imposed by the allotted time:

'Our style remains a reflection of Master Wang Yen-Nien who often practised in his vest. We are a 'proletariat' style, with neither costume nor sequins et intend to stay that way...'



Nonetheless, there appears to be a need for a 'ritual' to open and close the practice, left to the initiative of each teacher who should not forget that our style already has many specificities and that we should refrain from making it more complicated. How can we not point to Master Wang who passed on to us to applaud at the end of a practice? It's so simple!

The practice of Taiji quan is way of everyday life which assumes autonomy.

Jean-Luc Perot in his article Taiji quan today - tradition and modernisation - July 2010 - wrote: 'Maintaining the vigour of the message implies practice as an act of resistance and its questioning as living transmission.'



Master Wang in summer 1999
at the WYN 99 course in Chalonne-sur-Loire.
on the left of the photo we recognize Luc Defago.



Bye-bye!

We came close to disaster...

Claudy Jeanmougin

Well aware that there is no such thing as zero risk, the fact remains that we must do everything possible to avoid an accident which, by definition, is a fortuitous, unforeseeable event. Good insurance can protect a person responsible for an accident as long as he has taken all the necessary safety measures, but it will never restore the life of the person who has lost it or the physical, even mental, integrity of the victim who got out of a bad situation.

We hope that this experience will be communicated so that sword-cutting practitioners can take the necessary measures to minimize the risk of an accident. The author of these lines, creator of the "Sword Games" and responsible for the sabre and sword cutting workshop, takes full responsibility for what happened because he made two mistakes: one inexcusable and the other half forgivable... We will later explain why.

So what to do? Or, what to do when we want to develop a physical activity at risk? Because, the saddest and most regrettable would be to no longer organize a risky activity. In these circumstances, it would be a question of permanently abolishing the practice of cutting with sword and sabre. However, this technique is the only one that we know in order to test the ability to develop the right gesture with the emission of energy at the right moment.

"Sword Games"

Let's get to the point but first, a bit of history on the "Sword Games" since it was during one of his workshops that the event happened. These



"Games" were created in 2004 and the first session took place from August 27 to 28 in Saintes. The idea is to put Taiji Quan practitioners in a two-person work situation for practicing weapons. Too often, the practice of weapons is limited to the repetition of a sequence executed either slowly or quickly but never in a fencing situation, that is to say in a confrontation

with a partner. Since 2004, the content of the "Sword Games" has been very diverse, since the work of two is not limited to the discipline of the sword. From the Taiji sword the "Games" saw various medieval weapons such as the long stick, the short stick, the fan, the pole, the dagger, the sabre and most recently the roliball, a discipline created in China 90's. We got the idea that it would also be interesting to run a workshop geared towards cutting. This is what we put in place in 2018.

So what is the point of this "cutting test" work? Cutting work allows both to test oneself and to test weapons. The weapon may be correct and the failure of the cut will be the result of a wrong move. It may be fair and the failure of the cut will be blamed on a weapon that is not in good condition. In the work of cutting, there should not be the slightest effort to cut the object, whatever it is. For this article we will retain two instructions:

- choose a cutting plane and maintain it until the target hits (trajectory of the hit).
- choose the point of impact of the blade.

In addition, this exercise requires extreme concentration so that the cutting plane comes to a specific point on the target. Saying everything that the cutting test requires, and does, goes well beyond the purpose of our article, which should draw attention to safety rules. We will focus on organizing the workshop to highlight the circumstances of what could have been a very serious accident.

Organization of the “Sword Games” cutting workshop

The cutting workshop is organized outside of the hours of the other workshops so that everyone is focused on this activity, precisely for safety reasons.

Arms. We had four sharp weapons: a Taiji sword dedicated to cutting, two swords lent by an animator (Gilles) and a katana (Japanese sword) lent by Jean. These weapons are placed in their case on a seat behind the candidate for the test at a distance of 6 m. With the exception of the Taiji sword, all other weapons were freshly sharpened.

Target and target retention device. The target is a simple plastic bottle full of water. The target holding device, produced by Joël Panhelleux, is a wooden log fixed to a tripod whose horizontality is regulated by two levels fixed on the base. At the top of the stake is fixed a plastic cylinder on which the water bottle will be placed. This plastic tip helps prevent damage to the sword blade if the target is missed at the bottom.

Positioning of people. The test is done with the target between the performer and the audience which is more than 6 m away. The workshop leader stands on the same line as the target on the same side as the strike on the target. If the strike is to the right of the target, that is to say with a cut from right to left, the person in charge moves to the right. That day, the leader of weapons was behind the operative, about 5 m. There was no one who could practice the cutting elsewhere. Everyone had to observe the practitioner.

What happened then?

For two years we never had the slightest incident so we maintained our safety rules, except for one as you will see in the pictures.

When Sébastien shows up, it's the first time he's practising the cutting test. Gilles hands him the weapon in the rules of the art, guiding him so that he does not get hurt. Indeed, a possible accident is quite simply to cut yourself with your sword.



Sébastien takes the weapon with both hands and makes a preparatory gesture several times to aim at the target. I notice that his gesture is not correct because he makes a rotary motion without keeping the cutting plane from the start. And every time he tries it he makes the same mistake. Ready to correct it, I recant, thinking it was better for him to have his own experience. Well, it will be a serious mistake which could have had serious consequences. With fifty years of experience in teaching risky bodily techniques such as climbing, gymnastics, throws in athletics or even teaching swimming, both in the river Loire and in swimming pools, you could believe it easy to avoid such a mistake. Nothing is ever final and vigilance is required under all circumstances.

When Sébastien decides to hit the target, everything happens very quickly. Here is a picture which shows Gilles's position behind about 5 m. As he held his sword in both hands, we can clearly see Sébastien's left hand near his chest, with the right hand in front of the abdomen, and we see that the sword is no longer in either hand. The bottle flies and only the cork comes off, so the cut is missed. See where the sword is, right between Gilles and Sébastien. An enlarged view shows it better.

The sword goes straight in the direction of Gilles, whose gaze remains on Sebastian. It is only at the last second that he will see him make an absorbing gesture. Fortunately, it was the handle that struck Gilles and not the point of the blade as I thought



for a moment. Imagine my amazement! I ran to Gilles and asked him if the sword was planted, with a negative nod he told me it was not. Phew!

So what happened actually? Why did the sword slip out of Sébastien's hands? I explained that Sébastien had a spinning motion which caused the sword to rotate counter clockwise. Also, the striking point on the sword was too close to the tip. As a result, when the blade touched the objective, the rotational movement was accelerated which made the sword drop because there was no cut but strike with a cutting angle different from the cutting plane. As a result, the handle went off first because the tip of the blade was delayed. Fortunately!

What lessons should we learn from this?

It is the purpose of this article in our newsletter to outline the precautions to be taken to ensure that such an accident does not recur. Strengthened by this experience, I went to see the experts in cutting techniques and more particularly the FFAMHE (French Federation of European Historical Martial Arts) whose safety commission offers a booklet of "safety recommendations for cutting exercises" we suggest cutting practitioners to considerate. Here, we will only indicate the environmental recommendations (version 1.3 of 11 November 2012).

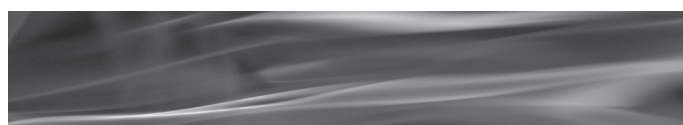
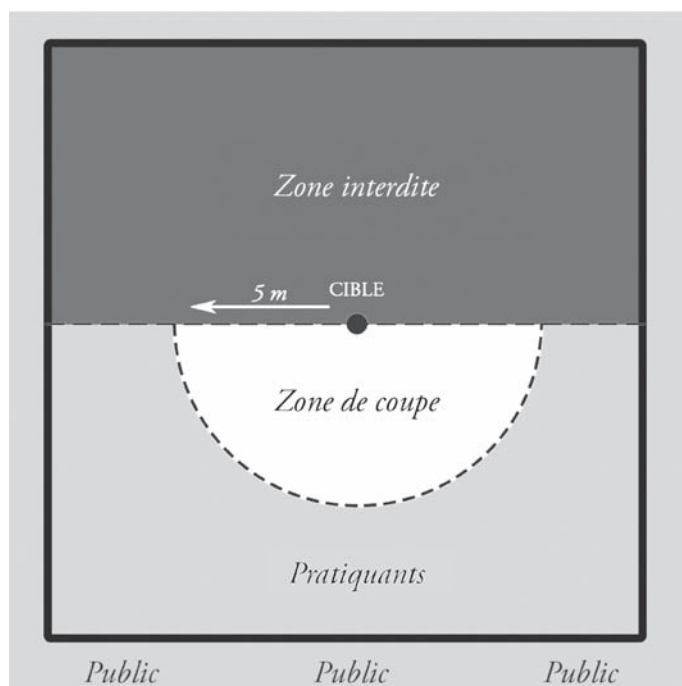
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Four spaces are considered in a cutting exercise:

- the forbidden zone which is behind the target and where no one should stand during the cutting session.
- the exercise area which includes, in this diagram, the cutting area and the space just behind the target where the performer will position himself, only the performer will be on this surface for the duration of the exercise.
- the public area, facing the cutting area, and in which no weapon should circulate.
- The preparation zone, not shown in the diagram, must be behind the prohibited zone.

I am personally used to locate the workshop leader on the dividing line between the forbidden zone and the cutting zone, at a distance of 5 to 6 m from the target and always on the side opposite to the direction of the cutting.

Gilles and Sébastien recovered from their emotions. I was personally not very proud because I made two mistakes. May this experience serve as a lesson for all fans of cutting unfamiliar with safety instructions.



Covid, containment... and Taiji

Danièle Chevallier

For several months, Dominique and I worked in tandem on slowness and his dissertation was presented to Claudy Jeanmougin on Monday, March 2, 2020... Fifteen days later, current events came to telescope this research. The world having stopped to stick to our reflection, an addition in the form of an afterword was necessary!

On March 2, after starting in China, what was still only described as an epidemic hit Italy hard. On March 4, 9 people infected with Covid 19 were in intensive care in Mulhouse, on the 12th the first measures of restriction were announced in France and our confinement started on Tuesday, March 17 at noon (initially for 15 days).

On March 19, while our electricity consumption had fallen by 15%, 500 million people were confined worldwide. From then on, the word pandemic was used.

From Friday, March 20, our psychological preparation for a containment of 4 or even 6 weeks was skillfully orchestrated by the government and the media. Then it was half of humanity that was confined, the economic machine that seized up, our lives that were turned upside down without us being able to take the measure of the changes that were going to take place, without us knowing how long it was going to last.

Although we did not immediately perceive that our field of action was shrinking, by the afternoon of March 17 it was obvious to everyone living in the city that the noise level had dropped: a minority of cars, a majority of people on foot or on bicycles,

hearing perceptions change at breakneck speed, the permanent feeling of urgency diminishes and then disappears, and despite the anxiety linked to this leap into the unknown: how is all this going to evolve? How long will this situation last? In what state will we come out of it? Individually and collectively? In spite of all this, a peaceful atmosphere is settling in the streets and, although it is not clearly perceptible, it is highly likely that the air is getting cleaner, that pollution is decreasing.

So it was possible! We could stop the process... The permanent runaway could come to an abrupt halt! Unbelievable... Three months earlier, nobody would have bet a kopeck on this scenario and yet, as inconceivable as it may seem, we were actually living it: with more or less ease or discomfort depending on our state of health, with more or less ease or difficulty depending on each person's health situation, with more or less acceptance and patience depending on our personality, with more or less fluidity or rigidity depending on our intention to accompany the confinement or to resist it but, for a large majority of the population, we were indeed there.

However, this novel scenario covered completely disparate situations. There were those, at the forefront of which were the caregivers, for whom the pace accelerated, the pressure intensified, who had to constantly adapt without any visibility in the face of a situation that kept getting worse; the same ones who paid a heavy price to the ogre Covid. One can think that for them the psychological after-effects will be important and long-lasting. There are the "first of drudgery" who, in often

difficult conditions, have maintained the continuity of the circuits allowing us to cover our basic needs. There are those, and especially women, who have had to combine teleworking, home schooling, meal preparation and household chores. For them this period was difficult and exhausting. There are those who have lost their jobs and also those who have no more income and whose only preoccupation, anxious, is day-to-day survival. And those who could be described as privileged, the retired, confined to forced idleness, pleasant for some, unbearable for others. For each one of us, more or less, life has been changed as a result.

What will come out of all this? Do the majority of us appreciate the peace and calm that has settled in? Will they have a taste for slowness, or will the permission to go out again be synonymous with frenzy? Many people have made this wish, but the information that is gradually being distilled seems to rule out this hypothesis. We are told that on May 11th we will be geographically deconfined, with strict maintenance of protective measures and great vigilance on our part to avoid the spread of the virus, which is a matter of the most elementary wisdom.

The sheng cycle that we have known (undergone?) for several decades, characterized by our frenzy of speed and activity, has come to a spectacular halt. Are we experiencing the beginning of a Hai cycle (of revolt, insult)? We know that "in its relationship with practice, the expression of the cycle of revolt allows us an awakening of the body's energies¹." Jean-Luc Saby also tells us that "this cycle means that each element can revolt by turning against its dominating element. It openly opposes the Ke cycle of domination by its opposition to it. "Metal (lung disease) would thus have come to cut the fire... of the action? And if we need a clue for the rest, "At the level of the body, the awakening provoked by the sequence of the Hai cycle is first very brutal (metal, fire, water), then softens, balances (earth), to finally hope for the return to a natural functioning of the body (wood)²."

Nature having taken it upon herself to show us that our collective madness had reached its limits, for many of us and without our choice, the temperature of the water in the cauldron dropped by several degrees, causing a decrease in the permanent tension and stress. At the beginning of a new period, which will be what we make

of it, we can ask ourselves the question: will this confinement have been the time and the place of awareness? Will it allow us to realize that slowness is useful to us, that it encourages us to take a step back, that it gives us the opportunity to have a different vision? What if we decided to continue more slowly to better appreciate, feel, savor? It is up to all of us together, but also to each of us individually to channel, inflect, orient,... through our life choices.

To the question that was asked³: your idea to rethink the world is to slow down? Gaspard Koenig⁴ answered: "It is an experience that not all but many of us who are confined live, it is a form of great slowing down of life where suddenly everything is slower. This mastery of time allows us to leave room for the unexpected, the impromptu, the untimely, and deep down we realize that this form of idleness can be extremely productive. There is a very good guide to follow this path, it is Michel de Montaigne who is a kind of professional of creative idleness, who advocates it in all fields, in love, in travel, ... Beyond personal or moral issues I think it can allow us to rethink a number of things, including the fact that the journey is as important as the destination."

As for Etienne Klein⁵, he tells us: "In ordinary times, in the world before if you prefer, we were told that time is accelerating, that everything is always going faster. We always had the impression, thanks to the effects produced by this sentence (time is accelerating), that we were behind the world, that is to say that the world had its own rhythm, so fast that we could only be out of step with it. And here I have the impression that the world has slowed down (which doesn't mean that there is no urgency in the hospitals) but the world in its dynamic has been slowed down and therefore everyone feels in phase with the present, and the fact of being in the present, paradoxically, leads us to think about the future⁶."

Carlo Rovelli tells us "To move forward, the world does not need energy, it needs low entropy; what makes the world go round are not the sources of energy, but the sources of low entropy⁷. "And he adds "... entropy increases. This increase is what we perceive as the passage of time⁸."

So would the implementation of slowness in our Taiji practice be to reduce entropy? What is certain is that

1. Claudy and Jean-Luc Saby, *Les Cahiers didactiques de l'énergie chinoise IFAM (Institut de Formation des Arts Martiaux Internes)* p.28.

2. Jean-Luc Saby; *Yi Yin Fa, Qi Gong Taoïste*, p. 35-36, *Vent propice et pluie opportune*.

3. France Inter Saturday April 25, 2020 On n'arrête pas l'éco, interview réalisée par Camille Crosnier.

4. Author of a dozen novels and essays, Founder and President of a think tank "Génération libre", he teaches Philosophy at Science Po Paris.

5. PHD in Philosophy of Science, specialized in time, teaches in Ecole Centrale in Paris.

6. *Les Entretiens confinés*, Camille Crosnier, France Inter.

7. Carlo Rovelli, *L'Ordre du temps*, Flammarion, p.185-186.

8. *Ibid*, p. 181.

it requires all our concentration and effort. During each session, we must first leave aside external constraints, get into phase with the group and get into condition (this is the role of the warm-up), then calm down, concentrate on breathing, take all the time to bend/unbend, trying to feel the continuous progression of the movement in our body, from one step to another; to perceive the precise moment when the gesture has reached its full amplitude, when the transformation takes place in softness and roundness, the right moment when, guided by the intention, the energy starts again in the other direction. This fine listening of our sensations, in the calm and relaxation, will induce for sure the slowness that we are looking for. We will then be able to savor the journey rather than focus on the destination.

There is only one way to achieve this goal: training. It is by repeating the gestures over and over again, with the intention of slowness and respecting the conditions of its implementation, that each of us must practice: where the intention goes, the gesture follows. And we must do it with determination, assiduity and tenacity. By adding humility and patience, little by little, without anything showing through, we will integrate and then appropriate all these parameters to, in the end, discover, appreciate, savor... slowness... one day!

The different cycles

- Wood feeds the Fire,
- Fire nourishes the Earth, thanks to its ashes,
- Earth generates Metal (metals are extracted from the earth),
- Metal enriches Water with mineral salts,
- Water feeds the Wood (without water, vegetation cannot grow).

The Sheng cycle:

Cycle of engendering or generation, which operates in the direction of development, of growth, where each element is "mother" to the element that follows it and "son" to the element that precedes it.

If this cycle alone existed, disorder would set in and increase from generation to generation. To prevent this entropy⁹ from setting in, a self-regulation exists in all organized systems, the Ke cycle.

- Wood exhausts the Earth
- Earth dams up the Water
- Water extinguishes Fire
- Fire melts Metal
- Metal cuts Wood

9. The Larousse on line indicates that entropy is the name given by Rudolf Clausius (German physicist, specialized in thermodynamics, for in 1822, died in 1888) to the state function noted "S" which characterizes the "disorder" state of a system. And also that from a statistical point of view, entropy measures the degree of disorder of a system at microscopic level.

The cycle Ke:

Cycle of domination, oppression, destruction, in which "each element dominates another and thus prevents it from expanding too much, capable of unbalancing the elements between them".¹⁰

"The Sheng and Ke cycles thus intertwined can only coexist to establish the right balance of all systems, living or not," says Claudy Jeanmougin in a course material. He adds "This balance can be broken to give rise to various pathologies if we refer to the physiology of living organisms, or to natural disasters if the ecology of the planet is at stake."

- Metal despises Fire
- Fire despises Water
- Water despises the Earth
- Earth despises Wood
- Wood despises Metal

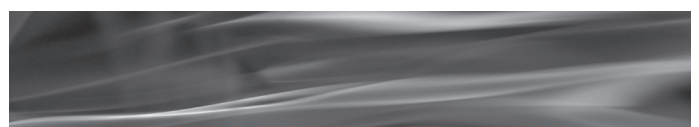
Cycle of contempt, outrage, revolt or insult where "Each element can revolt by turning against its dominating element... In its relationship with the practice, the expression of the cycle of revolt allows an awakening of the body's energies through aggression"¹¹.

Jean-Luc Saby adds: "The Hai cycle is a disseminating cycle, it attempts to destroy the momentary order established in the body of each individual or to destabilize a precarious order organized to compensate for a momentary dysfunction."



10. Jean-Luc Saby - Yin Yin Fa, Qi Gong Taoïste p.35 - Vent Propice et Pluie Opportune.

11. Ibid.





Year of the buffalo

Paule-Annick Ben Kemoun

Go figure, we were in a hurry to see the end of the year 2020 and we are also waiting for the end of the Year of the Rat on February 12, 2021, the date of the Chinese New Year and the entry into the Year of the Ox.

At the end of this terrible year, as an aside, the prospect of living this pseudo-immortality conferred by the annual Chinese course amuses me moderately.

We discovered the word "confinement" which we had not had much use for until now. 遏制 è Zhì.

We felt as if we were living the movie An Endless Day, but much less funny because of the underlying anguish of being affected or seeing our loved ones affected by the virus.

And as I write these words, we are still prisoners.

So, before we discover or rediscover the beef ideogram, and since this virus is supposed to come from China, we're going to look at this thing that puts our lives on hold.

Virus (病毒 bìng dú in Chinese) is made up of 2 characters: bìng which means sick and dú which means poison, toxic.



To say Covid-19 the Chinese use the description of the beast :

新冠 Xīn Huā = new crown

That helps, you will say... at least we know the enemy that is rotting our existence at all levels and we can name him.

Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan Lian Hui

Let's come back to our buffalo/ox.



牛 The ideogram of the ox is easy to trace. First the comma on the left, then the horizontal line at the top, then the lower one slightly bigger, and finally the vertical; of course, the whole thing must be centered in a square (like all Chinese characters).

The buffalo is rather respected in Asia, if only for its use in agriculture.

It is associated with calm, strength and kindness. It is a buffalo that is used as a mount by the Taoist master Laozi (Lao Tzu) for his journey to the West.



In ancient Egypt, Hathor is the goddess of love, beauty, music, motherhood and joy.

The oldest among us will remember Marguerite who travels with Fernandel in The Cow and the Prisoner. The



Allow me to take you to the concert (only in a dream, alas!); to the sound of the Ox on the roof by Darius Milhaud (one of my favorite pieces).

<https://youtu.be/VZLfiKYg0Pg>, version with score or Alondra version by La Parra & Orchestre de Paris
https://youtu.be/Bv9ii_uc2Rc

At intermission we will share a glass of champagne: xiāng bīn jiǔ 香槟酒 (jiǔ = alcohol)

As we raise our glasses, we are going to wish each other many annual Chinese courses, departing from the Chinese tradition which first of all forms wishes of wealth, and playing it "western and classical": "and above all health!" Take care of yourself and others, be alive, be healthy! Happy New Year of the Buffalo.

- <http://www.chine-nouvelle.com/outils/dictionnaire.html>
- Wang Hongyuan at the sources of Chinese writing Sinolingua Beijing
- Catherine Meuwese 505 Chinese characters to know and their 1001 derivatives Ellipses

mere mention of this film from my childhood would push me to become a vegetarian.

I remember the cow on the cover of the Pink Floyd's Atom Heart Mother album. This music accompanied my exam revisions and later we used it for some public tai chi demonstrations.

Not the shadow of a buffalo in our form of tai chi. I would have seen a bullfighting bull but «it's not internal».

In fact, as I write this annual course, there are no more tai chi classes except to be practiced outdoors... This damn virus has taken away a lot of important or futile things from us that we are mourning. Period of emptiness...

At various levels, this virus has destroyed too many lives.

We miss movies, theater, concerts, sports, music, restaurants, bars, and fiestas, but we are lucky: we are alive and will do everything to stay that way.

I just discovered that the word "vaccine" in Chinese (牛痘 niú dòu), uses the ideogram of beef! Whatever your position on vaccines in general (and this one in particular), let me take this as a positive sign.

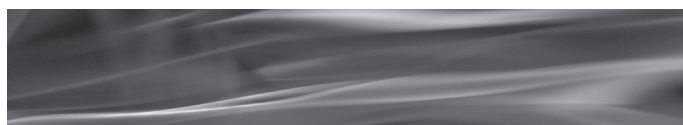
Wishing you a better Year of the Ox than the Year of the Rat that is coming to an end is easy: could this New Year be worse? Yes of course (as far as I'm concerned) if this annual Chinese course had to be stopped for lack of a teacher.



牛	<u>niú</u> bœuf ; buffle	clé : 牛 buffle
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九牛一毛	jiǔ niú yī máo	une goutte d'eau dans l'océan ¹
奶牛	nǎiniú	vache
牛年	Niúnián	Année du Buffle
牛马	niúmǎ	bêtes de somme
牛皮	niúpí	cuir
牛皮大王	niúpí dàwáng	fanfaron ; hâbleur
牛皮纸	niúpízhǐ	papier kraft
牛肉	niúròu	viande de bœuf
水牛	shuǐniú	buffle
小牛	xiǎoniú	veau

1. L'expression chinoise correspondante « un poil parmi ceux de neuf buffles » est utilisée pour désigner, comme dans l'expression française, quelque chose de sans importance.





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

1^{er} Septembre 2020 au 31 Août 2021

ABONNEMENT AU BULLETIN tirage PAPIER

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 Collective

Vous êtes responsable d'un groupe (associatif ou non) et vous renouvelez l'affiliation à l'Amicale, deux cas de figures :

1. Votre groupe est inférieur ou égal à 15 personnes, vous réglez la somme de 30,00 €.
2. Votre groupe est supérieur à 15 personnes, vous multipliez le nombre de personnes par 2,00 € pour obtenir le montant de votre règlement.

Je soussigné(e) Nom et Prénom du Responsable Associatif

.....

Votre adresse ①

.....

.....

désire renouveler l'adhésion de notre Association à l'AMICALE du Yangjia Michuan TJQ.

Téléphone	Portable	Adresse Mail

Nom de l'Association :

Adresse du siège social de l'Association ② :

Téléphone :	Adresse Mail :
Fax :	Site Internet :

Règlement pour l'Adhésion collective

- Je règle 30,00 € car le groupe est inférieur ou égal à 15 personnes.
- Je règle 2,00 € x adhérents soit € car le nombre d'adhérents est supérieur à 15.

Abonnement au Bulletin de l'Amicale tirage papier (3 numéros par an)

Pour votre association

- Je règle 27,00 € x ____ (nombre d'abonnements), soit ____ €
 à expédier à l'adresse ① ou à l'adresse ②

Modalités de règlement

Total adhésions + Total abonnements = Total à payer

- Par virement bancaire (frais à la charge du donneur d'ordre) Par chèque Autre mode de paiement

Les règlements doivent être effectués à l'ordre de «Amicale du Yangjia Michuan TJQ»,
 A adresser à AMICALE DU YANGJIA MICHUAN TAIJI QUAN / Alain Coussedière,
 1 rue du Troquant, Port à Clou, 17350 PORT D'ENVAUX (France)

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Données personnelles

En adhérant à l'Amicale du Yangjia Michuan TJQ j'accepte, au titre de Responsable Associatif, que mes données personnelles recueillies fassent l'objet d'un traitement informatique en vue de tenir à jour le fichier des adhérents 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

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

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

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.

楊家秘拳太極拳會



*Amicale du Yangjia
Michuan taiji quan*