

Amicale

Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan

January 2013 - No. 72

雙重

Shuang Zhong
double
weightedness

Is Taiji chuan
a real
profession?

**QUESTIONS/
ANSWERS**

Meeting Laoshi
for the first time

2012

La Pommeraye
22nd Rencontres

楊家秘傳



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From the chairman's desk

I find myself reelected chairman of the Amicale for the second year.

Once again, I'll endeavor to pursue the work of my predecessors and ensure the smooth running of the Amicale for everyone's benefit, in relation with the associations and the members.

The Amicale has grown a lot: we are now big of 85 associations and about 20 individuals, which makes over 2000 members. The attendance to our yearly meetings keeps increasing. The communications inter-associations or inter-groups is growing too. This testifies of the vivacity and fraternity of our practice.

We were over 280 participants at the last yearly Meeting of the Amicale, in La Pommeraye in Anjou (France) organised by the ATA of Angers, and it took place in the best possible organisation and a warm atmosphere.

You can be certain that, with the newly constituted team –elected board of directors and committee–, we will make sure to maintain the good spirit between one another.

We will be here to help you too, within our possibilities, with any problems you may encounter. Do not hesitate to contact us.

We will also be there, with the help of the different commissions, to carry on producing the services and publications we owe you:

Administrative notes, monthly informative notes, free-access to on-line bulletin, maintenance and sustainability of the website, publication of video archives of Wang Yen-nien's style, participation to the annual Meetings' logistics, external communication for the development of our style.

The Bulletin and website's committees will see to improve the quality of both supports which are our means of internal communication as well as our showcase for the outside.

Jean-Michel Fraigneau,

Vélizy-Villacoublay, december 12, 2012.



IS TEACHING TAIJI QUAN A REAL PROFESSION?

by
Claudy Jeanmougin

In one of his books, Hervé Marest advises not to be a Taiji Quan teacher only; he suggests one should also have another job simultaneously. Therefore, considering what Hervé says, my question is, “do you think that teaching Taiji Quan is a true job?”

Claudy Jeanmougin.

ANSWER: Zouzou Vallotton

Is teaching Taiji quan a real profession?

Firstly, I was surprised.

Should this reflection take place within the College of teachers?

For me, L'Amicale magazine is made for practitioners and I read it as a practitioner.

But why not! Maybe this question-answer will nourish the reflection of future teachers among the practitioners of L'Amicale.

Yes, for me, teaching Taiji quan is a profession, a profession like any other teaching (singing, French, biology, etc...)

The difference lies in the fact that “Taiji teacher” does not exist in the registry of professions or trades recognized (in Switzerland in any case).

No training is officially recognized.

A professional is either an employee or an independent possibly engaged by a structure, either an independent volunteer, or a volunteer possibly engaged by a structure.

For me, professional is a posture, to hell with official records.

I am listed under that name in taxes, insurance, etc.

It is as an independent initiated by structures and independent employed directly by my students that I practise my Taiji teacher profession.

When I give, I host a course, I'm professional.

Students pay for me to provide a teaching and I must adopt a professional stance.

If I am generous with them, demanding with me, if they feel that I give myself, that I am passionate, that I progress, that I continually train, that I enjoy my work then the results will be a commitment to their own learning, a curiosity about the Taiji, well outside the learning of a sequence of movements and we will be, them and me, happy in our common progress.



Because it is a common progress.

Without my pupils, I don't know how I would live my Taiji.

I trained, I learned, I advanced, stagnated, declined, I made unexpected discoveries in their company.

The APRET contribution is first meant to pay my training.

Then I have to be professional during the course they follow.

In 1993, I was hired by a small gymnasium whose Taiji teacher could no longer ensure the courses, to teach a course of 50 minutes and then, quickly, two courses on 50 minutes.

I remember as if it was yesterday.

At the end of the basic exercises, I was close to fainting; at the end of the course I was close to having a heart attack.

Everything I knew I had to make them do...

How things have changed since then!

At that time, I had a job at 75% as an instructor in palliative care and I gave these two courses at night.

Then I gradually increased the number of courses up to four.

In 2005, I found myself unemployed and I realised a portfolio of skills.

My goal was to introduce the Taiji into the health sector.

Reading this portfolio confirmed this goal.

Just by chance, it happened that the path led me to elderly people.

In addition to my teaching, I took a great responsibility-activity in the Centr'Âge association, particularly in the training of teachers of Taiji and Qigong for seniors.

The objectives of this association are:

- To bring together Taiji and Qigong teachers active with seniors to exchange and share their professional experience.
- To provide a Taiji and Qigong training adapted to the elderly.
- To have institutions that engage teachers, recognise the profession (which happened with a government institution dealing with the elderly and offering courses of Taiji and Qigong).

For seven years, I have been giving nine Taiji classes a week.

I train by following a training course annually. APRET invites a foreign participant once a year. I'm joining my fellow teachers at the College at least once a year.

I give a few annual internships to APRET.

Until December 2011, I was also hosting a group of people with cancer, one afternoon a week, a salaried activity which made all the difference.

I give four classes at my place as an independent to adults, a course with the same status in a place for which I have a low-cost rent, three courses in EMS (a medical home for elderly) and a course in an association against rheumatism as independent adviser.

Little by little, the percentage of Taiji courses and other professional activity has reversed.

The pace until December 2011 was optimum, four days full and two evenings.

From January 2012, I provide 40% as employee for a space of exchange of knowledge and sharing of various activities.

I'm being employed again!

We can say that I experienced all forms!

What is the most comfortable?

For me, the teacher's role, but more by interest than for financial reasons (my classes are well paid and I live with this unique activity). I want to experiment with other professional aspects.

But be careful not to do too much!

I don't want to let go of any of my classes.

Which first?

Each brings me so much.

And I feel responsible for my students, I can't tell them "my diary is full, I have to let you go".

My luck is that each of these courses are very different.

Another population, another mood, another place.

The question of aging...

I hope more and more for contemplation and relaxation...

That's me poorly engaged...

The body, a tool heavily used in Taiji teaching grows tired.

In December and June, Wow, the holidays are welcome...

I have to be careful to take care of myself and listen to my body.

Fortunately I have been practising Taiji!

But is there a job, one profession that saves fatigue, which saves the responsibility to find a balance between activity and rest, between outside-inside, allowing to pay attention to stay alive with you and others?

The Taiji teaching profession, like all other occupations, requires much, but what I get in terms of research and discovery in the art of movement, in terms of friendship is a precious gift. I don't know if there are many professions, especially at a time where one asks much of their workers, which offers as much.

I'm in good company on the way and I realise in my Taiji teaching profession and in everyday life.

Sometimes the boundary between Taiji and not Taiji is blurred, at last, I can say that Taiji is a huge part of my life and my teaching profession is closely linked to Taiji.

Although there are days, periods where I have to force myself, at the end of each course I say THANK YOU.

But the day I will feel "it is an uphill slog", then I will do another thing, another job...

ANSWER: François Besson

Why I teach as a volunteer

The question, "teaching taiji quan, is it a true profession?" is quite vast and it requires putting in black and white certain questions that I have already posed. What is teaching? What is taiji quan? And what is a profession? The questions revolve around the who, the what and the how. I will not give a response but simply pose questions that may have many answers. The answers that will emerge will be different according to each person's function. I will not revisit the notion of "profession" that Françoise Cordaro has explained in her article on the same subject ["Answer," *Amicale Bulletin*, No. 71]. As she has shown, to have a profession implies certain skills that do not necessarily include remuneration.

Initially I will dwell on the first two concepts: teaching and taiji quan.

"To teach," the second definition of Le Petit Robert: *transmitting to a student in the way that he comprehends and assimilates (certain knowledges)*.

Yes, but what is it that is transmitted? Definition of Le Petit Robert: *the passing from one person to another?*

When I am in the course, before the students, according to the definition, "something passes."

Fine, if that thing is taiji quan, then what is taiji quan? Still according to Le Robert, "taichi": *Chinese gymnastics, a series of slow and very precise movements*. There, Le Robert is a bit short while the presentation of taiji quan by the Fédération Française de Wushu is vast:

Taïchi chuan (taiji quan in pinyin), whose origins date back to 500 B.C., literally means “supreme ultimate boxing” or “shadow boxing.” It is an internal martial art, that is to say, it favors flexibility over force, is based on slow movements and which is executed with bare hands or weapons. Each movement of the form (a series of linked movements following one after the other) corresponds to a martial application that is possible to study alone or with a partner in tuishou, which literally means “sticky hands.” There exist about a hundred movements: counter, press, push, pull or “snake creeps down,” “white crane spreads its wings” ... These movements are linked harmoniously in short or long sequences. Taïchi chuan may be practiced for the martial dimension, but remains above all an art of well-being accessible to all. Taïchi chuan is often defined as “a moving meditation,” it acts to reach an interior state of tranquility all the while being in motion.

The art of well-being, of health, an internal martial art, meditation in movement, there is something for all inclinations.

And for myself, what is it that I hand down? Which taiji quan? Yang, Chen, Yangjia Michuan, bare-hands form, weapons, partner work, martial applications ... ? Here there is, as well, enough for all tastes.

Then, where does it come from this taiji quan? What does it transmit? What does it transmit to me? Also, the question of the lineage arises. And for my round, what is it that I transmit?

For my part, I have chosen to teach as a volunteer within an association. Above all the practice and teaching of taiji quan is for me leisure, a passion that I simply wish to share. To be a volunteer lessens constraints. For example, I don't have to ask the question, how many students do I need to have an income if I were to work independently (if I was to pose that question to myself)? Under a contract, if I were an employee of an association or a company, I represent constraints to my employer: work objectives, course schedules, course location, course content ... (there again, if the employer imposes such constraints). Nevertheless, like any teacher, I always have the constraints to be on time, to be consistent, to structure my course, to be ready to teach ... but I have chosen!

This way, I feel freer in my teaching. I teach according to my availability and I preserve time for myself to continue working by myself.

Within the course, I pay attention to questions of the students but in balance I present that which I wish to transmit. I do not stop myself from teaching of certain aspects of our school such as tuishou or working with a partner that are sometimes “forgotten” because certain students, who don't wish to have physical “contact,” flee. But I don't feel capable, nonetheless, to teach aged people with reduced mobility and to transform the teaching that I've received, for that specific type of activity. (Best wishes to these teachers who find teaching methods for this public.)

I try to pass on to the students that which I have learned so they can in their turn continue this practice.

Also, I have the good fortune to teach with a collective of teachers, where we are sharing amongst ourselves the levels of function as well as our teaching desires. I could be absent, I could be sick, I could replace another teacher or be replaced, the students will always have a teacher in front of them to transmit “something.”

I wish to thank my fellow teachers: Alix, Céline, Lionel and Valérie, for we have already discussed some of these questions together and I have taken certain ideas drawn from these conversations.

François Besson.

ANSWER: Christian Bernapel

Professional Teachers Versus Unpaid Teachers

Is teaching Taiji Quan a real job?⁽¹⁾

That is a wide-spanning question, and yet the answer is simple: of course it is!

To begin with, I suggest some approaches extracted from Wikipedia.

“A job is exercising a human activity, namely a professional activity. A professional activity is a manual or intellectual activity granting wage, money, income to the person practising it. Equally it constitutes a social role.”

On the other hand:

“A professional is someone who is specialised in some kind of business and has a job or a skilled job. Professionalism characterises the quality of work done by someone who has experience. In sport, a sportsperson who gets enough money to live from their activity is considered as a professional, contrary to the amateur who gets little or even no money at all.”

As you can see, practising a *métier* (be it a job or a hobby) is tightly linked to the notion of professional activity as well as a social role and a display of skills. These approaches raise the question: should we teach as a counsellor or a paid professional teacher? I can simply encourage the reader to refer to the rich study developed by Dana Hilliot on the world of culture, “Professionals Versus Amateurs,” which deals with the competitive activity fields between amateurs and professionals, a debate closely linked to the evolution of today’s socio-economic context.⁽²⁾

Taiji quan is considered by European authorities as a physical activity equated to sport. Each country has its own laws concerning the practice and paid teaching of physical training and sports activities. In France, paid teaching is strictly supervised by law and requires a diploma acknowledged by the state⁽³⁾. Lawbreakers may risk judicial proceedings, especially if someone complains for unfair trading. You can read the document posted on the FFWushu site⁽⁴⁾, “Should a teacher have a diploma, even if he is an unpaid teacher.”

Eventually, the issue deals with the way(s) to teach Taiji Quan today and above all tomorrow, considering the socio-economic and legal evolutions in Europe and particularly in France.

Nowadays, many teaching fields for Taiji Quan are open thanks to admitting professional or semi-professional diplomas: pointing the direction to people looking for a rich practice in every point of view, for firms, institutions, home health, handicapped people, the elderly, sportspersons still practising or looking for less traumatizing activities, and so many others ...

Such are the various ways to get true work that gives the opportunity to earn a living either totally or partially. Most probably, the person who aims to consider teaching as their main work will have to diversify and offer different practices and allow for concessions.

They may also choose to teach without getting a wage though they are skilled or choose teaching as a complementary practice or even as a complementary *métier*. Teaching will then offer mental independence as well as a certain freedom.

In a word, it would be wise that younger as well as older counsellors and teachers of our style question present and future possibilities and down-to-earth and legal opportunities to practice this job as an unpaid or professional teacher. Most of all they should question their responsibility for themselves as well as for passing along the calling to teach and ensuring the longevity of our school, Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan, today as well as in the future.

1) In one of his books, Hervé Marest advises not to be a Taiji Quan teacher only; he suggests one should also have another job simultaneously. Therefore, considering what Hervé says, my question is, “do you think that teaching Taiji Quan is a true job?” Claudy Jeanmougin.

2) Dana HILLIOT, “Professionnels versus amateurs”,
http://www.another-record.com/danahilliot/dana_writings/professionnelsversusamateurs.htm

3) Requirement for any person who would like to teach: L212-1 sport code article. “Only the persons having a diploma, be it a professional diploma or a certificate asserting the qualification that guarantees their skill concerning the safety of the disciples or other people, are allowed to teach, lead or supervise a paid physical or sporting practice, usually, seasonally or temporarily”. L212-8 article. “Lawbreakers could get a year imprisonment or a 15,000 € fine if they were paid to teach, supervise, lead or train a physical or sporting activity, or pretend they had the diploma or any other sort of qualification without having the skills required by the L212-1 article.

4) http://www.ffwushu.fr/sites/default/files/faq_profs_et_loi.pdf

News from Taiwan

Taichi chuan World Cup 2012 in Taiwan

Noëlle Kasai

Taipei, October 2012

The 4th taichi chuan world cup took place in Taiwan on October 6 and 7, 2012.

This event, organised every two years by the Taipei taichi chuan Federation, is always very rich, as well through its shows and demonstrations at the opening ceremony, as through the diversity of the styles and the practitioners.

This year, Anne-Bérangère, who arrived at my classes in Brittany last year, was eager to live this experience. She is explaining her impressions on her stay:

“After long months of patience, I am finally in Taiwan. My trip and my arrival went very smoothly: a taxi booked in advance was waiting to take me at the hotel where Noelle was expecting me. What a welcome! We visit some parts of the town. I walk on the footsteps of Master Wang, the place where he was practicing, near the “Grand Hotel”, it feels very peaceful. But I came here to learn so it is time to get to it. Here is the program: training every morning in the parks and sightseeing in the afternoon, with samples of the asian specialties at every meal. Oh, the parks!! They are wonderful and feel very quiet. You can see people practicing all kinds of different forms and styles of Qi Gong, Tai chi, tuishou and others that I could not define. My eyes don't know where to look at.

Arriving at 6 for a Qi Gong practice, I am already late! If you want to practice, it is very easy, you just have to join a group. People are very open, some of them speak english and don't hesitate to come and help me. I was also lucky to be introduced to Mark Linett who gave me precious information that I still use. The week went very fast. Noelle invited me to participate in a tuishou practice in the “Peace Park” with the grand master... A 92 year old man with a beautiful smile, surrounded by students from many



nationalities. I did not imagine there would be people with such a level of practice. I remain voiceless.

Within one week I sampled the richness and the diversity of Taichi, I became hooked. I wish every practitioner to be able to go to Taiwan and live this kind of experience. Since my return, I practice every morning and am determined to continue.

I realise now (even though not completely yet) how lucky I have been to have the possibility to go to Taiwan and see all the people practicing every day in the beautiful parks with such a contagious joy.

I was also very impressed by the level of some masters who show, at first glance, an incredibly tranquil force. I was also impressed by their simplicity and kindness.

Then came the time to go to the city of Taoyuan, to the taichi world cup.

Curiosity, excitement, stress. I am taken by a turmoil of emotions when I get into the arena of this 4th world cup. As a beginner in the practice of taichi, I didn't come here to “get a medal” but to participate in an -stricto sensu- exceptional moment: meaning beyond the ordinary. And I haven't been disappointed! My eyes are full of the demonstrations of the opening ceremonies of the various contests. Mine



arrives finally at the end of the Sunday morning, after precious advice given by the president of the Yangjia Michuan in Taipei, Mr Jason Han, called by Noelle to help me prepare the competition. A real stress-test. Under the effect of adrenalin, my old demons come back: I rush the tempo and finish in 4 min 50 instead of 5 minutes! The result is nonetheless positive for me: I succeeded in completing my program without too much error and shaking! I finished with the indulgence of the jury who gave me a quite honorable note and who came to congratulate the people who helped me for my performance. So I got a nice medal as a souvenir. I went back very happy about my discovery of the multiple styles of Taichi and, moreover, with an enormous enthusiasm for practicing and discovering all the facets of Taichi.”

Anne-Bérangère Siroen.

Taichi Chuan Gregorien - St Grégoire - Bretagne

This year there were more than 20 different countries representing 130 competitors in teams and 1527 individual competitors.

Beyond the competition, there was an incredible atmosphere, warmth and humility.

France was very well represented with over 20 people coming from all over the country. Europe too was well represented with groups from Germany, Spain, Portugal, Great Britain, Hungary and Serbia.

Before this competition which lasted two days, all the teams enjoyed practicing in the parks of Taipei or came to meet a teacher with whom they had already been working here or simply discovered the temples, the chinese herbs, cooking, the markets, the chinese language, etc. All of what makes the richness of Taiwan.

A program had been set up for those who didn't know the city of Taipei. Groups were formed with a lot of good spirit and great night parties...

I invite everyone who wishes to train in Taiwan to come with no hesitation. They will be assured of an unforgettable stay.

I finish this article by presenting the words of the President of the Federation, Grand Master Huang Yue-sheng, disciple of Me Chen Pan Lin, for his speech at the taichi world cup. There could not be a better conclusion:

“Tai chi chuan is the essence of our culture, of our nation. Taichi chuan is not only an art that cultivates our body but an art that cultivates our spirit also. Tai-chi chuan contributes to a better health, to joy, happiness and peace for the one who practices correctly, with a well meaning spirit of sharing. We are all here today for that very reason, I thank all of you for being here and address to you my deepest respect and my high gratitude...”

雙重

SHUANG ZHONG, DOUBLE WEIGHTEDNESS

The classic Taiji Quan texts speak about “double weightedness” (雙重: shuang zhong). What does this expression mean to you? What do you think about Peter Ralston’s position on this question? (Mr. Ralston’s text will be published in issue #73). These are the questions we asked a number of Taiji Quan teachers and practitioners. We would like to thank the six people who responded. We hope that there will be further reflection on this subject, as double weightedness remains something of a mystery.

Claudy Jeanmougin.

Serge Dreyer

Comments on Peter Ralston’s text.

I find Ralston’s book interesting approach even if it can be bit too intellectual and esoteric, sometimes leading to contradictions, such as recognizing the uncertainties concerning the origin of Taiji Quan and in the same sentence claiming to offer a “historical perspective”.

In describing the idea of effortless power, he beats around the bush, such a discussion turns out, as it does for all of us, to be unable to capture a reality which one must try to experience directly. And that, for all we know, is as far as any of us can go.

In the passage which Claudy asked us to comment upon, references to neuroscience (the opposition of the reptilian brain and the cerebral cortex) are not developed¹⁽¹⁾ and simply reproduce a number of other known oppositions (conditioning vs reflex, etc.).

I recognize, as he does, that many martial artists stand on both legs and are not necessarily in a position of weakness, I’m thinking in particular of wrestlers. There is no reason to think they would be at a disadvantage in a battle against someone who practices Taiji Quan⁽²⁾. All martial arts competitors know, or at least it seems me they should know, the arbitrary nature

of comparisons between different martial arts styles. Ultimately, the winner of any given match will eventually lose. And in some situations positioning oneself on both legs might just be useful, without necessarily becoming a systematic approach.

My perspective on the idea of ‘double weightedness’

First of all, my experience is limited to Tui Shou, because I don’t consider myself to be sufficiently experienced in combat to offer an opinion on the subject. I think that it is also possible to find double weightedness in the arms. This can happen if, while pushing with

1) Different schools of neuroscience offer diverging opinions. According to *Dossiers pour la Science*, (#76, July-September 2012, p.32) “Mitochondria are tiny organisms which produce energy and are passed along only through the mother”, but for one specialist I know, this energy is electrical in nature...

2) I would just like to reiterate my position that it is the quality of the individual which is the determining factor and not the particular style he practices. In the Nanjing national martial arts tournament of 1929, there were no Taiji Quan practitioners on the podium in any of the categories. The tournament Peter mentions, which I also attended, was called a “world championship” mainly for political reasons, and did not include competitors from mainland China. This takes nothing away from Peter Ralston’s remarkable performance, but I don’t agree with the conclusions he draws from it.

one arm, for example, the other arm remains too tense, thus reducing the effectiveness of the technique. We can notice this problem in the ‘jab’ movement, from the first section of our form (photos 27 and 28)³⁾; if after blocking a blow, the left arm remains too tense as the right arm begins its action, I would say the two arms are double weighted.

It also seems to me that the idea of double weightedness has a mental as well as a physical aspect, and that it also involves the adversary/partner. One only has to look at competitors in mixed martial arts to see that their two legged stances do not keep them from being extremely mobile. Furthermore, I have noticed that the defeats I have experienced in Tui Shou (competitions and challenges) involved adversaries/partners who, despite being double weighted, were still very effective.

My experience in tui shou has shown me that when one of my pushes has been blocked or absorbed by my adversary/partner, and my mind refuses to accept this difficulty, my body and my mind become too heavy respectively. In such a case, the intelligence of my body, or if you prefer, my body’s familiarity with Tui Shou, is no longer enough to solicit a change of posture

from my mind, which is thus unable to send the appropriate instructions for my body to follow. It is not unlike the paralyzing fear of a car bearing down on you, which leaves you frozen in the middle of the road.

Perhaps the inventor(s) of Taiji Quan had noticed that in moments of extreme danger, when we lose our calm, we tend to put our weight on both feet and to hold both arms out stiff. This double weighted posture may actually be a conditioned response to fear (from man’s reptilian brain?), which practitioners of Taiji Quan must learn to overcome in order to find the fluidity of movement necessary in transforming such a situation. All of this is obviously just a limited point of view, which I will not venture beyond.

3) Wang, Yen-nien. “Yang Family Hidden Tradition of Taiji Quan, Illustrated and Explained” Vol. 1. Taipei, Taiwan: Hsin Hwa Publishing Co., Inc., 1988.

Georges Charles

From what I remember, Wang used to speak about “double weight”, or “double gravity”, and explained that this is the reason why the bear waddles (including in Zhuangzi). In his opinion, nothing but the internal flow (Taixi, therefore Taisu) makes you avoid this “double weight”, in particular in rooting exercises. The more the body is immovable, the more the flow happens and avoids this “double weight”. Too much balance can harm the movement, but too much movement can also harm the balance. Wang used to say as a joke “the balance is dynamic, this is not the balance of a bag of potatoes in a cellar. And, even in that case, germs will grow and eventually modify this balance”.

Yin and Yang according to Traditional Chinese Medicine

Marie Bénazet, march 21, 2010

“Some time ago, a few teachers started an email discussion about the yin and yang. Interpretations on the yin or yang nature of some objects or concepts were different, depending on the references. There were even questions about combining the concepts.

For example: if a hot and black oven is very yang, is it becoming more yin than yang when it cools or more yang than yin? In order to answer such questions, I asked a student and friend of mine, Marie Benazet (Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioner), to write a short text about the yin and the yang.”

Yves PICART.

In the *Nei Jing Su Wen*, main book about the basic questions on Traditional Chinese Medicine, we find the following dialogue between the Yellow Emperor (HuangDi) and his physician Qi Bo:

Huang Di asked: *“I have heard : heaven is yang, the earth is yin ; the sun is yang, the moon is yin. longer months and shorter months, 360 days constitute one year, and man corresponds to this too.*

Now, the three yin and the three yang [of man] do not correspond to the [one] yin and [one] yang [of heaven]. What is the reason for this?”

Qi Bo responded: *“As for the yin and yang [correspondences in man].*

Count their [associations] and [you] can [reach] ten; expand these [associations] further and [you] can [reach] one hundred.

Count these [associations] and [you] can [reach] one thousand; expand them further and [you] can [reach] ten thousand.

The [associations] exceeding ten thousand are countless, and still their essential [principle] is one.

Heaven covers [the myriad beings]. The earth carries [them].

When the myriad beings just come to life, before they emerge from the earth, this is called yin in the yin.

When they emerge from the earth, then this is called yang in the yin.

Yang [qi] provides the [myriad beings] with proper [qi]; yin [qi] rules them.”

In texts on the philosophical basis of Traditional Chinese Medicine, we read this:

“Since a very long time, that is to say, from the Yi Ching, a book written before the invention of Chinese characters, Chinese philosophy recognizes two forces in all things: Yin and Yang.

The components of trigrams are the Yin and Yang. In a trigram, a solid line represents Yang, a broken line represents Yin.

Full Yang is represented by three solid lines, this is Heaven.

Full Yin is represented by three broken lines, this is Earth.

Up is Heaven, or Fire.

Down is Earth, or Water.

In this way the universe is represented.”

Yang is up, it's Heaven, and Yin is down, it is the Earth.

Earth is Yin, Heaven is Yang is everything contains Yin and Yang.

However, the elements represented in this way are inanimate, Life is not there.

When there is Life, the Chinese say that there is energy, Qi.

The presence of Qi indicates Life and characterizes Life.

Why then is Life appearing through Qi ⁽¹⁾?

Life appears in a different combination of Yin and Yang.

Because it is the nature of Heaven to go down and Earth to rise, Yin goes up and Yang goes down, generating Life.

The meridians of Yang organs have a downward movement, and those of Yin organs have an upward movement.

This movement creates Life, Life appears at this particular moment.

The resulting energy will act on matter, and transform inanimate matter into living matter.

Thus, yang organs have an evacuation function and yin organs have a hoarding function or a creating function.

Everything is made of a yin and a yang element and is a combination of both. Nothing is fully yin or fully yang, because it is a unity of yin and yang.

Yin and Yang have four characteristics:

–Unity of yin/yang as opposing aspects. They are the two opposing aspects inside the same thing.

–Interdependence, because they do not exist one without the other, and they help each other.

–There is always a growth / decline of yin and yang, a perpetual variation of both. This variation of the two forces generates a dynamic balance allowing energy to flow in the body.

–Mutual transformation from one to the other.

There is a constant balance between Yin and Yang.

If this active balance has a tendency to break, imbalance will set in and disease can appear.

We can establish the 7 following criteria :

YANG	YIN
Active	Inactive
External	Internal
Ascending	Descending
Hot	Cold
Bright	Dark
Functional	Structural
Hyperfunctional	Hypo functional

In each organ of the body, we find this idea of two opposing aspects in the same thing.

Some organs are yin: the Liver, Heart, Spleen, Lungs and Kidneys, and some organs are yang : the Small Intestine, Large Intestine, Stomach, Bladder

and Gallbladder, but none of them is completely Yin or completely Yang.

The Liver is 70% Yin and 30% Yang

The Heart is 90% Yin and 10% Yang

The Spleen is 50% Yin and 50% Yang

The Lungs are 70% Yin and 30% Yang

The Kidneys are 90% Yin and 10% Yang

The Gallbladder is 30% Yin and 70% Yang

The Small intestine is 10% Yin and 90% Yang

The Stomach is 50% Yin and 50% Yang

The Large intestine is 30% Yin and 70% Yang

The Bladder is 10% Yin and 90% Yang

Yet, if we put together each yin organ with his associated yang organ, we find another unity of yin and yang:

YANG	YIN
Liver: 30% + GB:70% = 100%	Liver: 70% + GB:30% = 100%
Heart: 10% + SI: 90% = 100%	Heart: 90% + SI: 10% = 100%
Spleen: 50% + Stomach: 50% = 100%	Spleen: 50% + Stomach: 50% = 100%
Lungs: 30% + LI: 70% = 100%	Lungs: 70% + LI: 30% = 100%
Kidneys: 10% + Bladder: 90% = 100%	Kidneys: 90% + Bladder: 10% = 100%

This is the illustration of Qi Bai’s answer:

“If you count the yin and yang itself, they are a unit or a dozen. If we go deeper, they will be a hundred or ten thousand. The main thing is always unity.”

We can infinitely define yin and yang, as in every thing there is yin and yang, and the unity of this thing is dependent on these two opposing but interconnected forces.

The Yang protects the Yin, and the Yin nurtures the Yang.

1) Huang Di nei jing su wen. *An annotated translation of Huang Di’s Inner Classic - Basic Questions*, Chap. 6, P.Unschuld & Hermann Tessenow, University of California Press

Direct translation from M.Bénazet’s text (NdT)

SUMMER COURSES IN ITALY

Gianvittorio Ardito

For nearly two decades, from late June to early July, the Taijiquan intensive takes place organized by the Association Wu Xing.

Its location changes often but always with the intent of being located in an environment as natural as possible. This year, we did not miss the goal. The location was at an old monastery near Viterbo, surrounded by forest, with a garden and a huge cave consisting of mysterious tunnels where the monks kept rows of barrels containing hectoliters of wine. The monks are now gone but now there is Mario, a lay person of serious aspect, whom with a lot of good will and the help of some colleagues, came to manage the business. Given the tradition of the place, the table does not lack a bottle of wine! The view of the valley is beautiful. The sunrises and sunsets punctuate moments of the day and provide a union between nature and our practice.

The theme of this year's seminar was "The Classics Taiji personal practice."

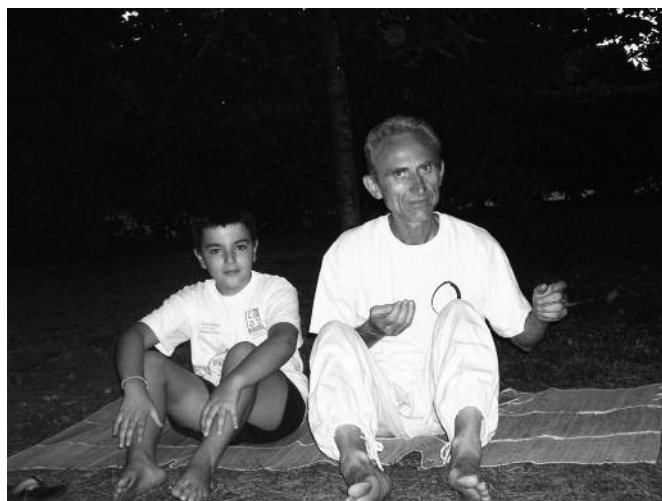
*"Do not neglect the Shi san shi,
it is at the level of the waist where the thought
emits breath.
Apply yourself to differentiate the empty and
full."*

So begins "The Song of Shishisan" Song Shuming.

How are such implemented in our practice, the principles enunciated by the great masters? What are the difficulties and obstacles to their achievement?

During to the program, in addition to immersion in the Classics, which provided the theoretical reflection on the principles from themselves and the teachings of Wang Yen-nien, there was a comparison between the mind and Tuishou and the underlying ideas of "non-violent communication" system developed by Rosenberg and some ethical principles from Taoist tradition.

The day begins at 6:30 in silence, with the practice of Neigong in a long narrow room, furnished with rugs and cushions. Immediately after, we go out for a walk along a quiet alley lined with laurels. Once arriving in a clearing surrounded by trees we follow the exercises in movement promoting the



flow of energy: ben ji dong zuo, along with other Qigong exercises. What better time to gather the Qi in the Dantian and lead it throughout the body? After breakfast, the morning is devoted to improving the forms and the afternoon to work with a partner. All accompanied by phrases from the Classics!

The meeting was part of a series of courses planned with the intention of forming a small group of future teachers in our style for a series that will see its sequel this year. In fact, the course is open to everyone who wants to get a final certificate and will take the commitment to follow all the training!

The idea of establishing correlations between aspects of meditation, the principles of push hands and nonviolent communication is an example of how Taijiquan and research in other areas may help a person to relate to others. It is also a challenge to apply the content of the practice to one's daily life.

In the system of "non-violent communication", communication relies on the correct identification of needs, liaison with one's own feelings, empathy for others. The authentic expression of needs are expressed by a clear and explicit request. This can have many similarities in method and philosophy, with some principles of meditation and Tuishou: the ability to feel ones' self first, then to listen to the other, to follow, and finally to transform to expression. It should, moreover, train ones' mind to not oppose another but to know how to receive, that is to say, working with the schemes of Tuishou differently from those practices which people use every day, in a word "live in the following Wuwei!"

In fact, those who diligently practice Neigong and Tuishou in a spirit of self-improvement and self-elevation should not need to resort to methods developed by psychologists and communication experts



All the great masters agree on the principle that to achieve Gongfu in Taijiquan, it is essential to cultivate the aspect of internal energy. This means that we really practice Taijiquan when the movement is an expression of Qi and Qi is led by Yi. The premise is to make the Qi rich and abundant through practice or internal Nei-gong. It is easy to see that these conditions do not always exist among practitioners of Taijiquan. In addition, the production of Qi is only the first step to higher levels of sophistication. But that is not the subject of this article or seminar! We will stay at a more fundamental level, the conditions necessary for physical labor and cohesive energy.

contemporary, even if it is respectable experts, such as Marshall Rosenberg. If we learn to listen to our “inner teacher,” we know that we can easily make the right choice! We can find all the answers in the way of the Tao.

To compare the contents that emerge from our arts with other approaches and methodologies meeting the themes of movement, health, human relations is undoubtedly an interesting and a rewarding exercise, but it should not lead us to “a little of this and a little of that.” The comparison better highlights the richness and depth of what we are already doing and the potential that our arts contain, even if we do not always perceive such.

Only a long and patient observation of our own feelings and reactions, combined with constant practice of our internal and external arts, provides results on our way of being in relationship with others as we work on the whole being.

The discourse to improve self-knowledge continued in the next workshop, a different look.

At the beginning of August, in collaboration with the association “The Circle”, located in Puglia and managed by Beniamino Carrasso and Lucia Giove, we organized a second workshop on the theme: “The work of internal Taijiquan.”

The seminar took place in Ostuni, the “white” city, caressed by the breeze of the Adriatic Sea, under the pines of a small well-maintained park. Above our heads the clear sky of Puglia, the generous red earth beneath our feet of this region often scorched by drought. A dozen people gathered for the theme of domestic practice.

In this course, we tried to examine what are the prerequisites for a good conduction and circulation of Qi: muscle relaxation, rooting, good posture important as physical conditions, mental calmness, concentration, perception of Qi as basic psychic background.

These conditions promote a better contact with the internal energy and the practice of Taiji, a contact that is not only an imitation or a copy of a sequence of recorded movements.

Methods facilitate learning but we must not lose sight of the goal which is the freedom of movement, deep knowledge of self, mental and physical spontaneity led by Yuanshen, the spirit of the original, and thus the ability of rapidity and instinct when it comes to martial applications.

The program provides a theoretical overview of the structure and functioning of the spinal column.

This may promote a greater awareness for the movement.

In theory, the discourse on Classics continues:

*“Without form or appearance
In a state of self-forgetfulness
Emptiness pervades the whole body
Internal and external are met.”*

The first verse of the song’s true Taijiquan links to the song of the birds.

In practice of the program a question arises: “Before reaching emptiness, how can one concretely improve the posture of the spine and relaxing the back muscles?”

The movements of Roger Perrin come to our aid and experiences “knowing by the movement”, according to the Feldenkrais Method. It was not difficult to identify in one other developments in key positions existing in the basic movements taught by Master Wang Yen-nien!

Another question arises, this time on the energy aspect: “how to lead the Qi?”

It is important at this stage to have a clear vision of our courses internal energy. Taoists were masters in creating “maps”—full internal representations and symbolic images representing different stages of internal alchemy: rivers, waterfalls, pearls, oxen to plow fields, mountains, forests, mythical characters and other things that inhabit our inner journey to symbolize energy. Maybe the imagination of Western men and women is more limited in this area. Although we spend less time and passion with the “inner vision” we all have the ability to imagine and visualize—at least something simple!

Conceptualize the Renmai and Dumai meridians in the basic exercise of our practice, as we try to follow and lead the Qi in these meridians in the execution of the sequences. Even in couple applications try not to leave out this concept.

The theoretical and practical physical axis affected and also the metaphorical axis of our body are expressed in “move the world.”

With particular attention to the Dumai path, fundamental energy capable of directing our every move and distributing energy, immersed the practice of the Taijiquan sequence which sometimes reached a state of deep harmony and high intensity. The blue sky, the freshness of pine, a gentle breeze helped us! However, it is not always easy to integrate these results into Tuishou, either because of lack of time or because a certain distance is created around couples’ work, although all recognize the fundamental value.

The content of the Taiji classics, especially “Song of the true meaning of Taiji” and “Clarification of the practice of 13 postures” fed the soul and gave



meaning to the practice. Even masters of Huainan have given a helping hand with some very deep concepts on the origin of things. Discussion of the Classics continues seminar to the seminar, accompanying physical sensations, and spiritual energy by images imbued with ancient wisdom.

Sharing experiences of the group, the confrontation of both the individual and collective problems were a real engine of the seminar and a source of learning for all.

Research has never limits. This is demonstrated by the leading researchers and teachers as well as Feldenkrais, all true masters of Qigong, Taijiquan, meditation and other martial arts, which have long experimented with themselves to pass along to others, not a packaged product, but the spirit of adventure and exploration of their own being, sharing with others.

QUESTIONS/ANSWERS

In issue #70, we asked two veteran Taiji Quan practitioners who had spent time in Taiwan the following questions. We continue our inquiry with Henri Mouthon, who I also spent time with during my visit to Taipei.

1. In which circumstances did you meet Laoshi for the first time?

Henri Mouthon. Since a week I was hanging around at the back of the Grand Hotel to find a teacher and started to lose hope. I saw Maryline Chanaud arriving in front of the Grand Hotel parking her motorbike and going to the practice area. I was told about a French woman who had a good taiji teacher. She really looked French. I sneaked in the path behind her and got there when the basic movements had begun. I found it very nice. Sabine came to see what I wanted, she introduced me to Laoshi who asked me my name and welcomed me with a big smile. A week later, we were three beginners. Johan Junge (German), Damien Andrew (Australian originally from Sri Lanka), Mark Linnet (American) and myself. Laoshi gave us “the baker” as teacher. Most of the time we were practicing under the canopy at the entrance of the temple, at the outposts to drive the pollution away from the biggest highway hub of Taipei, 100 meters in front of us. It was end of 1981 beginning 1982.

2. Did you go in Taiwan for taiji or something else?

Henri. I went there for the taiji. I had begun two years before because I needed to get back on my feet and yoga seemed too static for me. My first teacher was Gérard Edde, the form was from professor Chi Soo. The teaching was not strict for postures or footwork and I decided to go back to Asia that I appreciated so much in the early 70's. One of my friends osteopath studied acupuncture in Taiwan and told me there were good teachers in Taipei

3. How long did you study with Laoshi?

Henri. From the beginning of 1982 to the end of summer 1986 fulltime as well as the two following summers. Then I came back for shorter stays, Laoshi teaching less and less.

4. Can you give us the name of other Westerners you met during any of your stays?

Henri. Many came and a good number didn't stay more than a few months. Peter Clifford, Mark Linett, Maryse Fourgeaud, Christine Metzlé, Serge, Claudy, Julia, David Mac Call, Jackie Bondar, Bruno Hardsmeets, Ken Leonard, Taylor Welsh, Luc and Vyoun Defago, David Pauleen, Sam Tomarchio, Robert Politzer for the regulars during my time. Annick Blard and Jean Pai have also spent a moment at that time.



Peter Clifford, Julia Faichild, Mark Linett, Henri Mouthon
(Photos Henri Mouthon, 1983)

5. What is the best moment you remember in the exchanges with Laoshi?

Henri. Two of them that are opposite in my mind. Mid 1984, I was reaching saturation and started to party... We were three not doing much (spending time at the bistro asking ourselves existential questions about the “Master” instead of working). One evening, Laoshi stopped the class. He put everybody aside and put us in the middle, one to the next. We were lost, he came to correct us and we would get the next move wrong. Shame. And he insisted. He was very angry and you could feel it. I don’t think he would have done that with a Chinese. Needless to say we got back to work. At the opposite of this clarification, what

I perceived as a reward, happened in Chalennes during the sword workshop (WYN 1999). Laoshi requested eight assistants including myself. I was to guide and demonstrate among the last. Laoshi went on giving a comment to each of us. I did my exercise (probably tense like a bow) and I finished facing Laoshi, standing stiffly to attention. Perfect (for me) and he cracked a big smile, half amused half benevolent and went to the next.



First line: Henri Mouthon, an American of Taiwan, Luc Defago.
Second line: Jean Pai, Peter Clifford, Mark Linett, Johan Junge.
(Photo Henri Mouthon)

6. Where and when did you start teaching taijiquan?

Henri. I started with a workshop in Annecy at the end of 1995. I taught the whole thirteen postures in one weekend and at that time, it seemed normal to me...

7. Did you practice with another master?

Henri. Yes, with Peng shyé Kim in Penang, but he didn’t care much about me, the only taiji student, or about the other Westerners either. He was excellent but we were not enough in number.

8. In Laoshi teaching, tell us what seem the most important to you?

Henri. Everything is important because it’s a teaching totally coherent.



Luc and Vyoun Defago, Julia Fairchild, Hue Jou, Sabine Metzlé, Maryline Chanaud, Catherine ? (New Mexico US).
Johan Junge, Jean Pai, Henri Mouthon, Taylor Welsh, Laoshi, Peter Clifford, Kenneth Leonard, Serge Dreyer.

Training Courses Calendar

MAY

Stage d'Armes les samedi 18, dimanche 19 et lundi 20 mai 2013 à Annecy

Dates: du 18/05/2013 au 20/05/2013

Association: ATCHA

Email: henri.mouthon [AT]orange.fr

Animateur: Henri Mouthon

Contact: 04 50 64 19 41 - 04 50 77 25 66

Stage Epée kunlun (ancienne), le 26 mai 2013 à Angers

Dates: du 26/05/2013 au 26/05/2013

Association: Les Compagnons du Taijiquan

Site Web

Email contact [AT]compagnonsdutaiji.fr

Animateur: François Besson

Détail: Salle de sports de Belle-Beille, 47 bd Beaussier Angers

9h30-12h techniques de bases de l'épée, la forme et une initiation au travail à deux à l'épée. Tous niveaux.

Les Compagnons du Taijiquan, 12 rue Daudet 49100 Angers

Tél: 06.43.81.53.71

François Besson: 06.43.81.53.71

JULY

Stage d'été au bord du lac du 3 au 7 juillet 2013 à Annecy

Dates: du 03/07/2013 au 07/07/2013

Association: ATCHA

Email: henri.mouthon [AT]orange.fr

Animateur: Henri Mouthon

Contact: 04 50 64 19 41 - 04 50 77 25 66

AUGUST

Stage d'été à Port Maubert du 2 au 9 août

Association: GRDT

Email: jeanmougin.claudy@orange.fr

Animateur: Claudy Jeanmougin

Détail: Stage à la carte sur tous les aspects du Yangjia avec en prime sabre et bâton du sourcil.

Ouvert à tous les pratiquants, du débutant au confirmé.

Contact: Claudy Jeanmougin - 06 81 53 84 62

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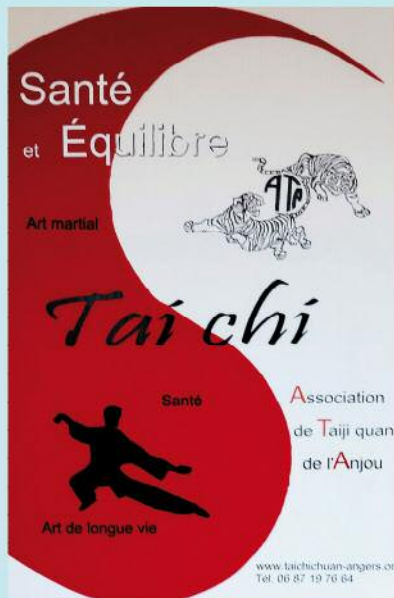
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