

Amica e

YANGJIA MICHUAN TAIJI QUAN

N°102

JANUARY
2023



Tributes to Christophe

Summer courses :
intensive and pleasant
practice !

Song for Claudy
New members
8 doors and 13 postures
Wang Yen-Nien's networks

楊
家
秘
傳

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EDITO



Thank you Christophe for your enthusiasm, your constant research, your benevolent requirement, your immense energy of sharing which encourage us still and always to practice, practice, practice... in joy and good mood, despite your so early departure.

Practice is also continuity. The associations that are joining us bear witness to this: in France as well as in Belgium, the "young" are taking over, in order to continue the transmission. Summer is also an ideal time to deepen and discover, by taking the time, while enjoying an often exceptional environment. Without forgetting the conviviality, which is essential for our school and the Amicale. We must not forget our origins, such as Master Wang's journey through his networks, but also our beloved 13 postures, the first steps on the endless path of Yangjia Michuan TJQ.

Happy New Year 2023!

Year of the Water Rabbit which, it seems, should bring us sweetness and changes.

Participez au Bulletin !

Signe de la vitalité de l'Amicale, le Bulletin est un outil très important d'information et d'échanges entre nous tous, membres de la famille du Yangjia Michuan. Il est édité pour vous, mais aussi grâce à vous ! Chacun peut y contribuer, quels que soient son niveau, son ancienneté... N'hésitez pas à soumettre vos propositions et souhaits de sujets, articles, courriers des lecteurs et autres informations ou commentaires à la rédaction :

redaction.bulletin.ymtjq@gmail.com

Merci d'adresser vos articles et photos sous les formats suivants :

- **Textes** : privilégiez les formats .doc, .docx ou .odt
- **Photos** : résolution minimum 150 dpi (150 dot per inch) et taille minimum 10 cm de large

Les articles doivent parvenir au plus tard à la rédaction :

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

Si ce n'est déjà fait, merci de communiquer le nom de votre correspondant(e) de manière à établir une communication plus aisée entre le Bulletin de l'Amicale et votre association.

Merci pour votre participation active !

Word of the President

A tiger returned to the mount, a dragon has joined the clouds. The year 2022 has been very hard for all of us. After Claudy's sudden death in February, the disease has just taken Christophe in two months. Two different temperaments, with very different contributions to the Yangjia Michuan TJQ, but two precious people whose imprint will live on in the hearts of their friends and/or students. As the years go by, our ties within the Amicale are strengthened by our repeated meetings but become more vulnerable to illness. We must therefore savor them to the fullest and this is what we did nevertheless during the Meetings at ST Jacut de la Mer. The weather was perfect, the site ideal, the organization impeccable. Christophe was very present, from a distance but kept informed by small videos of the progress of these Meetings prepared with all his heart, and we danced very late into the night, because he loved it. A very big and emotional thank you to all this beautiful organizing team, from the ranks of SMACT and Taiji Quan Dao, for having ensured the delivery of their magnificent gift, despite the circumstances.

As usual, after the GA, changes are reported and thanks are given. This year we have two new faces on the Board: Corinne Zerbib, our Editor-in-Chief, and Cécile Frégier, who took us with her team to Merlimont last year. Cécile has been an observer on the Board of Directors all year and this has made her want to participate for good. So she even decided to become Secretary! And Jean Claude Trap can take a little rest even if he remains present at the Board. I thank him for his very efficient work as Secretary during the last four years. I also thank the members of all the committees and commissions for their involvement in the life of the Association.

There is a special paragraph for the invisible work of the translation commission. Each issue of our Bulletin is (almost) entirely translated into English and formatted in that version. This enormous work of translation is ensured since the Bulletin n° 63 of January 2010 by Simonette Verbrugge and her team of translators, whom I thank very warmly. They have all the more merit since, by definition, they are perfectly capable of reading the French Bulletin. I would also like to thank Sophie Cornueil and Emmanuel Leblanc for putting together a double Bulletin for each new issue.

However, these hard-working people are getting tired and it is difficult to find a replacement. It was therefore legitimate to question the relevance of this effort. A quick assessment showed that this work is done to print about ten copies, most of which are courtesy copies. Unfortunately, we do not have statistics on downloads of this version. After a discussion at the General Assembly and a deliberation of the Board, it was therefore decided to stop this paper version of the English Bulletin. English-speaking readers, this Bulletin n° 102 will be the last to be printed in English. However, it is planned to publish the most relevant articles on an English version of the website and, in the long run, to give them visibility on social networks. The Amicale is therefore looking for a volunteer (or even several) to develop its visibility on social networks.

I wish us all a less trying year 2023 than the previous one.

Best wishes,
François Schosseler

BULLETIN DU YANGJIA MICHUAN TAIJI QUAN

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Hello,

It wanted to thank you all, who showed me support through your words, letters, SMS, emails and pledge.

Thank you to have made the trip, thank you for your presence at the ceremony which reflected Christophe and which we will keep in mind.

From the tea ceremony to the different tributes from the family, the taiji members and his work colleagues, Christophe would have been honored. The slideshow accompanied with live music by his friends, he would have appreciated. From the duan of his brothers and sisters of practice, he would have been proud.

And I have been very touched by the applause to say him "good-bye".

My love, Christophe, will be the sun that will enlighten us all. "Keep on practicing" he said, "may this brings you inner peace".

Nathalie JOINIS-LEPHAY



Christophe Lephay left us on November 22, aged 58 , after a disease which carried him off in two months.

Here are the respects pronounced during the ceremony¹.

Les étudiants de Smact et de Taiji Quan Dao

Beauty. The beauty of the world, the beauty of the gesture, the beauty of the heart, without judgment. Just being there, knowing how to welcome and transform for the beauty of life, always with joy and passion. Thank you very much. *Sybillie*

You, always, in a corner of my heart, smiling, sitting cross-legged. *Delphine*

I received a lot, it changed me. *Laurence*

I am just deeply grateful to Christophe. The intelligence, the wisdom, the tenacity and the sense of play of this great teacher are a rare tea whose flavour will diffuse eternally. *Helena*

Listening, accepting, transforming, tuning in to the other... I thank you for being a true, authentic teacher, I thank you for all that you have transmitted to me. *Marie*

"We don't remember the days, we remember the moments"; I in us, crossed by the life and sometimes "the meeting", the one that touches us at a precise place, the string vibrates to emit a sound, a chord, a body to body in a breath with the taste of eternity. *Corinne*

Christophe, you have initiated me wonderfully well for 2 years, to this magnificent art that is taichi, with softness and power, rigor and flexibility, patience and good mood. Receive my infinite respect and all my gratitude. *Marie-Pierre*

I thank Christophe who taught me to do scales, to follow a score, to explore and improvise so that my being expresses its movement in my practice. Thanks to this luminous artist, together we can compose the most beautiful melodies of Taiji Quan. *Valérie*

Christophe, 17 years ago, at the beginning of my initiation, you seemed hard, uncompromising, rigorous... But I know, for a long time now, that it was for my own good. You knew how to fascinate me for your art, to guide me as a good master on the path

of the transformation of my inner self. Many thanks. *Yveline*

Christophe, I come as usual with all my love and my nature of indomitable dragoness, to hold you in my arms of light. *Nelly*

I can still see the sparks in your eyes trying to transmit your desire to take us further and further in the learning of the practice, which we accepted with gratitude. Giving, receiving... *Fanny*

A long journey begins with one step, a beautiful journey requires a good guide. Thank you for having accompanied me on this too short portion of the path. *Olivier*

I appreciate Christophe because he knows how to pass on his love and his immense practice of Tai chi whatever our age (he often tells how much he knew how to pass on his passion during the courses given to the children) but also whatever our capacities. *Jean-Marc*

I considered myself as old and above all totally incoordinated, it teaches me that I am able to do and follow the movements of taichi chuan. I thank you Christophe for your empathy, your generosity and your immense work which will always persist. *Jean-Marc*

I turn the words in my head but nothing will be able to say the immensity of the generosity and the humanity of Christophe as much as to continue to practice Tai chi chuan with humility but tenacity. The most beautiful soul is now watching over us and will always support us on the way. *Muriel*



1. See and enrich contributions on the Amicale's forum and on <https://www.lacoopfunerairederenes.fr/avis/christophe-lephay>

**THANKS infinitely to our teacher
Christophe !**

Jean-Claude Trap

I am speaking to you on behalf of the Amicale and the Teacher's College of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan, but also and above all as a friend of Christophe.

I met him in 1988 when he discovered our style of Taiji Quan in Strasbourg. Practicing both external martial arts, we immediately hit it off. A sincere and lasting friendship was born which Nathalie later joined. We met periodically within the framework of Taiji Quan but also outside, at one or the other's house. For some time we had been considering joint projects.

I have always been impressed by his energy, an energy that he put into his teaching from 1991, including children, in which he was a pioneer. He joined the College of Teachers when it opened in 1992. But it was within the French Federation of Chinese Martial and Energy Arts that he worked a lot, actively participating in the recognition of our style.

He came regularly to the annual Meetings of our Amicale during which the workshops he led were highly sought after. And who doesn't remember his frenzied rocks during our festive evenings!

He was the organizer of these Meetings on two occasions. On the island of Berder in 2001, magnificent setting, exemplary organization, and very recently at the Abbey of Saint-Jacut, an invaluable leaving gift.

Nathalie, we will always be by your side. Christophe, passionate and insatiable researcher, outstanding technician, generous teacher, your energy will continue to carry us. You will remain in our hearts, may your soul rest in peace!

Christian Bernapel

This meeting around Christophe questions us about ourselves, our evolution in the world and the meaning of Time. With him, we have always been closely connected, beyond our consciousness. Many little cousins of Taiji were born in Bretagne and Alsace and so, beyond our practices, we are united around another dimension, that of the heart and the mind.

A few days ago we shared with Christophe laughs, smiles, tears, and confidences. He smiled when we cried! Magical and profound moments that awakened us filled with wonder at the happiness of life and its ephemeral beauty.

This communion has enlightened us and convinced us that the beauty of the heart is eternal!



With this great journey that Christophe has just embarked on, even if the Breath and its spirit connect us, I lose a large part of myself.

Christophe arrived in Strasbourg in 1986, I guess, and he moved to Bretagne in 1994. During this period he learned Taiji with us, and our heart connection was born over these studious and valuable years!

At this time, Taiji was a mysterious art, source of personal and mystical enrichment. Its learning transported us into a timeless world with the reality of our being of flesh and spirit which evolves with the struggles and joys of life.

It meant so much in our hearts. It is always so!

We were then passionate and thirsty for learning and progressing constantly in this secret art. We rubbed shoulders with Charles Li, then Master Wang Yen-nien on many occasions in Strasbourg in Europe, in the United States, in Taiwan. Over time we also met and got to know our brothers and sisters of practice. We shared the most enthusiastic and happiest period of our Taiji learning and teaching. It was a time flooded with lights.

Since then the world has evolved a lot, but we are still gathered here thanks to Taiji and the Masters who transmitted us their art with talent and complicity. In 1989, the Collège was born then the Amicale and, at the same year, the Fédération! It was a year of profusion!

Some time after his move in Laillé, he wrote to me very quickly to proudly announce the creation of his association "SMACT" which most of you know well. This

acronym made me smile because all of Christophe was there! "Breath and movement" and the onomatopoeia "smac" which evokes the sound of a kiss, those kisses bring us closer today around him and unite all our hearts in the same momentum.

Over the years, Christophe has become an enlightened and talented teacher and friend recognized and loved by all in Bretagne, France and Europe.

But it is in the company of the Breath, with sounds and movements that emanate from it, that I would like to honor him and make him resonate within us.

With all those who spent time with Christophe, from INPACT, APOB and elsewhere, with my wife Anne I present to Nathalie, to his children Jonathan and Hippolyte, to his brothers Pierre-Emmanuel and Jean-Marc, to his family and to all his students our most heartfelt condolences.

A text from Chuang Tzu speaks to us...

Extract from "*The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*"
JF Billeter éditions Allia

Here is Tzu-ch'i, the "hidden sage", lazily leaning on his elbows, dreamy, as if he was out of his body.

His assistant asks him why he is in this state, looking vacant.

Tzu-ch'i said, "You do well to ask the question, Yu.

Now I have lost myself.

Do you understand that?

You hear the piping of men, but you haven't heard the piping of earth.

Or if you've heard the piping of earth, you haven't heard the piping of Heaven!"

Tzu-yu said, "May I venture to ask what this means?"

Tzu-ch'i said, "The Great Clod belches out breath and its name is wind.

So long as it doesn't come forth, nothing happens.

But when it does, then ten thousand hollows begin crying wildly.

Can't you hear them, long drawn out?

In the mountain forests that lash and sway, there are huge trees a hundred spans around with hollows and openings like noses, like mouths,

like ears, like jugs, like cups, like mortars, like rifts, like ruts. They roar like waves, whistle like arrows,

screech, gasp, cry, wail, moan, and howl, those in the lead calling out yeee!, those behind

calling out yuuu! In a gentle breeze they answer faintly, but in a full gale the chorus is gigantic.

And when the fierce wind has passed on, then

all the hollows are empty again.

Have you never seen the tossing and trembling that goes on?"

Tzu-yu said, "By the piping of earth, then, you mean simply [the sound of] these hollows, and by the piping of man [the sound of] flutes and whistles.

But may I ask about the piping of Heaven?"

Tzu-ch'i said, "Blowing on the ten thousand things in a different way, so that each can be itself -

all take what they want for themselves, but who does the sounding?"

Well: the sky turns! the earth rests! The sun and the moon are chasing each other!

But who regulates this? who governs this? Who without exerting himself imparts his movement to all this?

Or is there a spring that acts from within?

Or does it run on its own indefinitely?

Clouds produce rain; the rain the clouds!

But who brings all this up? Who untiringly arouses this overflow of joy? The winds rise in the north, they blow east or west, or they rise in swirls. But what exhales and inspires like this?

What is it that, without acting,

waves and bends everything by its action?

Great understanding is broad and unhurried;

little understanding is cramped and busy.

Great words are clear and limp;

little words are shrill and quarrelsome. [...]

Joy, anger, grief, delight, worry, regret, fickleness, inflexibility, modesty, willfulness, candor, insolence - music from empty holes, mushrooms springing up in dampness, day and night replacing each other before us, and no one knows where they sprout from. Let it be! Let it be! [It is enough that] morning and evening we have them, and they are the means by which we live. Without them we would not exist; without us they would have nothing to take hold of.

This comes close to the matter.

But I do not know what makes them the way they are. It would seem as though they have some True Master, and yet I find no trace of him.



LE TIGRE

DORT CE SOIR

Xī Hū (4 fois)

1

En douceur, subtile douceur
Le Tigre dort ce soir
Tout le Yangjia vacille et pleure
Le Tigre dort ce soir

Lǎn Quiao Wěi (7 fois x 2)

2

Que d'ouvrages, bel héritage
Du Tigre qui dort ce soir
Recentrage, sans dérapage
Le Tigre dort ce soir

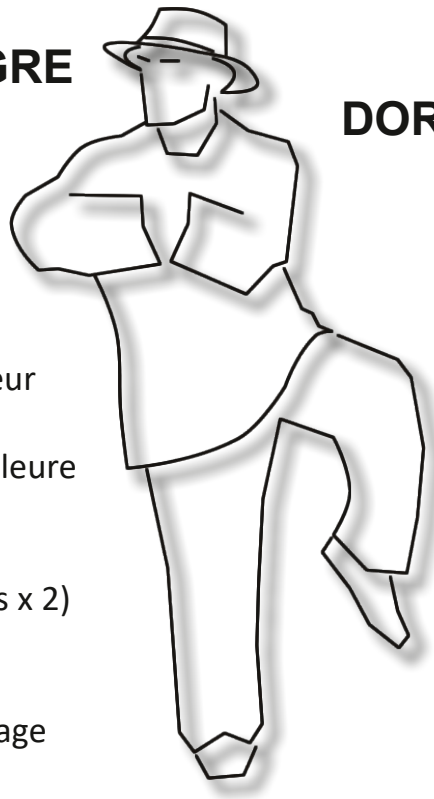
Lǎn Quiao Wěi (7 fois x 2)

3

Ce partage, ces témoignages
Au Tigre qui dort ce soir
Beaux messages d'apprentis' sages
Au Tigre qui dort ce soir

Lǎn Quiao Wěi (7 fois x 2)

4



抱虎歸山

5

L'incollable déraisonnable
Le Tigre dort ce soir
Le rebelle, le paternel
Le Tigre dort ce soir

Lǎn Quiao Wěi (7 fois x 2)

6

L'irritable, l'infatigable
Le Tigre dort ce soir
Prof' essionnel, presque immortel
Le Tigre dort ce soir

Lǎn Quiao Wěi (7 fois x 2)

7

En douceur, subtile douceur
Le Tigre dort ce soir
Tout le Yangjia vacille et pleure
Le Tigre dort ce soir

Lǎn Quiao Wěi / bào hǔ guī shān
(4 fois)

Xī Hū (1 fois)

攬雀尾

吸呼

Code QR pour la lecture du fichier MP3



Christelle : Chant
Christelle : Ukulélé
Joël : Paroles
Michel : Saxophone
Yves : Chant et guitares
Yves : Arrangement et montage



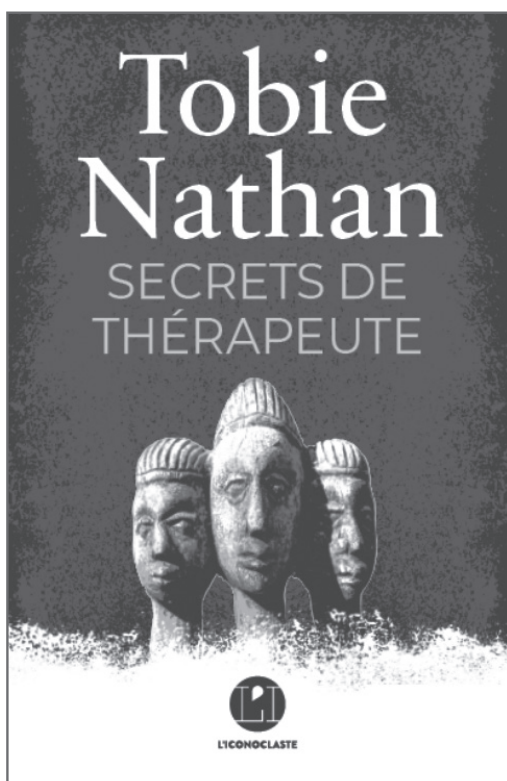
La Plume du Coq
en hommage à
La griffe du Tigre





Secrets de thérapeute

**Tobie Nathan, Ed. L'Iconoclaste, 2021,
387 p., 22 euros, ISBN: 978-2-37880-254-7**



« Car un thérapeute qui se contente de seulement soigner des individus ne guérit personne, son existence doit aussi être une thérapie pour le monde auquel il participe. » Sublime conclusion de cet énorme ethno-psychiatre qui nous entraîne magistralement dans son métier et dans la diversité des cultures qui le nourrissent. Pourquoi recommander ce livre dans une revue de taiji quan me direz-vous ? Deux raisons principales à mes yeux :

- L'importance du contexte culturel dans la thérapie que je trouve éclairante pour comprendre les enjeux interculturels présents dans notre pratique de cet art martial. Quant à la prétention d'un tuishou « thérapeutique », elle devient si insignifiante à la lecture de ce livre...

- Et puis son insistance sur la centralité de l'être (autant pour le thérapeute que pour le patient) mais un être apprenant et non pas subissant. Il me semble que l'enseignement-apprentissage du taiji quan relève justement de cette ontologie plus que d'une habileté technique. J'adore sa définition du maître qu'il oppose à celle du professeur : un bel encouragement pour tous les enseignants de taiji quan qui partagent leur savoir dans leur coin et en particulier ceux qui n'ont pas les certifications d'usage.

Bonne et joyeuse lecture !

Serge Dreyer

Entre marchands et brigands,

les maîtres escortes en Chine du nord

(18^e-20^e siècle)

**Laurent Chircop-Reyes, Hémisphères éditions,
26 euros, 8/12/2022**

Très intéressant travail d'un jeune chercheur spécialisé dans les arts martiaux. Je vous recommande également en accès libre sur Internet sa traduction « La sanglante dissection des arts martiaux chinois ».

Serge Dreyer

Laurent Chircop-Reyes

Entre marchands et brigands

Les maîtres-escortes en Chine
du Nord (XVIII^e - XX^e siècle)



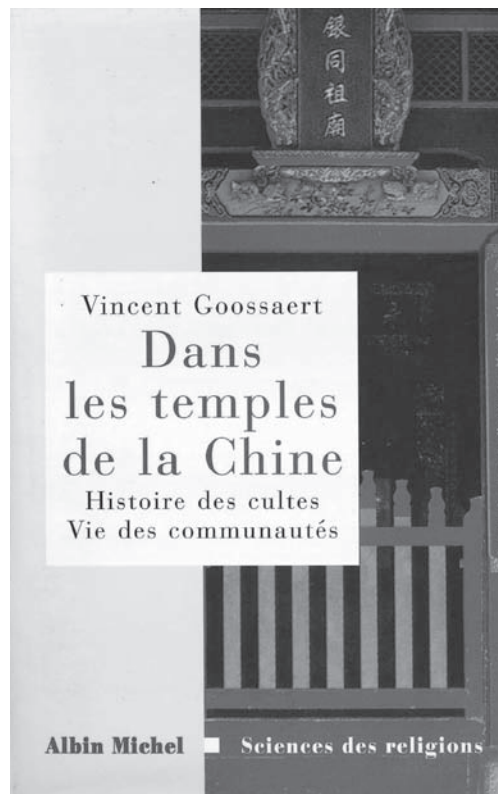


Dans les temples de la Chine, Histoire des cultes, Vie des communautés

**Vincent Goossaert, Ed. Albin Michel, 2000,
231 p., ISBN 2 226 11444 0,
prix 125 F à l'époque**

Lors de la venue à Taichung du groupe de pratiquants de taiji quan de Sabine Metzlé et Manuel Solnon, je leur avais expliqué le fonctionnement des cultes populaires dans une petite ville appelée Lukang. Certains participants s'étaient montrés très intéressés mais je n'avais aucune référence en français sur le sujet sous la main à l'époque. Mais je viens de retrouver un livre remarquable qui dormait depuis des années dans ma bibliothèque. Vous y trouverez décrite, de manière très accessible, la vie religieuse chinoise dont la découverte vous permettra de mieux comprendre un aspect fondamental des mentalités chinoises. Ni le Guomindang nationaliste et majoritairement protestant de Tchiang Kai Shek ni le parti Communiste chinois et sa brochette de dictateurs de Mao à Xi Jin Ping n'ont réussi à l'étouffer.

Serge Dreyer

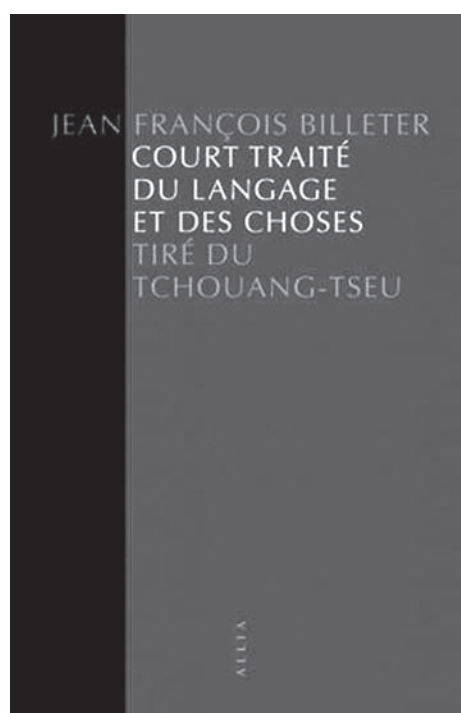


Court Traité du langage et des choses

**Jean-François Billeter, Ed. Allia, 2021,
75 pages, 7,50 euros, ISBN:979-10-304-1512-4**

Un texte très court, tiré du Zhuang Zi (Tchouang-Tseu), comme souvent chez J.F. Billeter, mais tellement dense et riche de réflexions sur le langage et la connaissance de soi. Je n'en raconterai pas plus, si ce n'est que citer cette phrase merveilleuse : « Parler est autre chose que souffler ».

Serge Dreyer





THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX WITH THE DALU

Yves P. Picart

Introduction

Who hasn't learned the DALU by starting with learning to navigate around a cross marked on the ground? I have been through it as have many others and after a long process learning such systematised movements I could at last move around the cross, but without being completely free from the worry of where to place my feet! This is a great shame as the very essence of this exercise in pairs lies elsewhere.

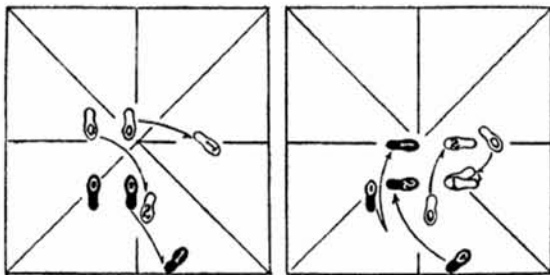


Figure 3A

Figure 3B

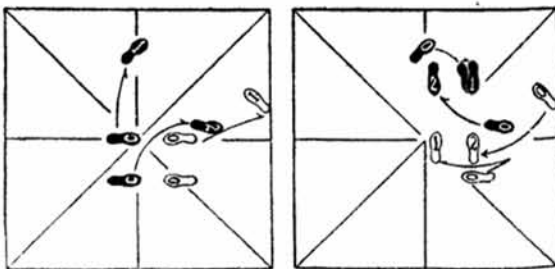


Figure 4A

Figure 4B

*Extrait de « Maîtriser le style Yang de Taiji Quan »
de Fu Zhongwen - éd. Le Courrier du Livre*

This approach is not specific to our style since I have seen it presented similarly in books on other styles... squared.

The full version of the movements around the cross, as we have described them in the College (CEEYMTQ) DVD on the DALU, are presented at the end of this article in the form of an independent, detachable leaflet for those 'addicts' of this way... of the cross.

During a summer College seminar, Frédéric Plewniak suggested another approach which starts with what happens at the point of contact of the arms and then coordinates the steps with what is happening above. Since then I have worked on this area and have continued to enrich the approach by structuring a pedagogy different from the one I learned and which I will present here. I am relaunching my association in the south of the Mayenne and will experiment this year with a group just starting Taiji Quan by introducing the DALU before the 13 Postures. This will no doubt, form the subject of another article next year.

This approach, where we try to do without the cross for as long as possible, is only mentioned briefly in the College DVD on the DALU but is not described, hence the motivation for this article. I will therefore present here the steps which I suggest and which generally allow a fairly advanced beginner to perform the complete sequence after a workshop of about one and a half hours, or even less.

Establishing the connection between centres

Exercise 1 (introduction)

First of all, I suggest an exercise in pairs with an AN on the PENG of the partner, asking the practitioners to form pairs of similar size which will be useful in the following exercise. I invite the pairs to play using slow pushes of small amplitude.



Beginners will need to stay in this position for quite a while so as to feel the connection of the two partners' centres settle in through this basic contact. The angle at which the PENG arm is open is fundamental to achieving this. So, one has two mobile centres which create a third centre which changes continually, but an ensemble which retains its coherence if both partners are sufficiently attentive, chiefly by 'playing' with the pelvis. It is like when one practises a sequence with a weapon: two centres of gravity moving and interacting the combination of which forms a third which must remain harmonious in the transformations.

By 'connection of the centres' I mean the sensation around the Dantian or in the area of the pelvis. The movements made by the partner are concentrated here. A light flux of constraint is transmitted through the body to the point of

contact at the extremity of the arm, via the buttress of the arm and then of the back. Working gently facilitates tuning into this fundamental sensation.

Exercise 2 (continuation of the introduction)

Potentially, once the partners are comfortable, carry out the same exercise with PENG on PENG, as if two wheels are pressing one against the other. This is more difficult for beginners since one forms an unstable equilibrium, forcing the position of the arm in a rather rigid fashion so as to reinforce the sensation of the connection between the centres. The mobility of the pelvis becomes critical to success.

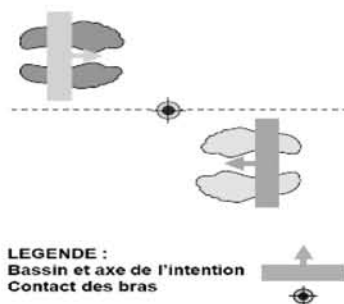
Exercise 3 (at last in the starting position!)

Next I suggest, whilst staying in the same pairs, to go back to the same feeling when in the starting position for the DALU. The feet are fixed and close together, the partners are off-set as though a line passes between them (I have not written a cross!), the right arms are raised and are in contact near the wrist. We again play the same game: a simple rotation of the pelvis of one partner should lead to an adaption of the other to keep the sensation of connection



between the centres since the feet do not move. The work becomes subtler and the notion of attentiveness is consolidated.

Since there is no clear intent, even if the pelvises are off-set, the connection is possible via the point of contact as shown in the following diagram.



With these three starter exercises, if the practitioners are very much beginners I impose alternating the roles of leader and follower to favour the perception of the connection, then I let them work freely. Otherwise one can directly let the partners play freely.

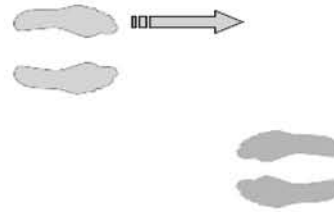
One can also enrich these three exercises with a phase of working with eyes closed if some do not do it naturally.

Exercise 4 ('the 1st step...')

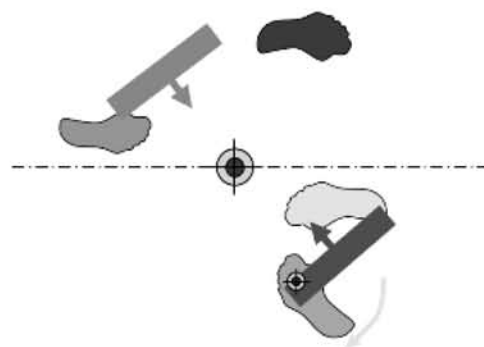
For editorial convenience I call the one who will take the first step the 'initiator' (of the movement), the other being designated the 'recipient'. We will look at the initiation of movements later as that can prove subtler than it seems.

By 'taking the first step', I mean the partner moves their external foot forwards (this is what I call the foot furthest from the centre formed by the two partners).

As an introduction to this exercise I ask that this step, which aims to circumvent the partner, be taken gently with a small amplitude so that the other, who for the moment does not move, can understand that the situation is becoming uncomfortable and that the connection between the centres is broken.



At last the fourth exercise can start, here the recipient will adapt to the change in position of the initiator by raising the heel of their external foot (here the left) to turn it on the ball of the foot and find the opening angle necessary so that once the heel is placed in its new position, the connection between the centres will be restored after their weight has been transferred into this foot which has just been turned.



<https://youtu.be/yFpPg3R24t4>

This exercise is helpful for developing the attentiveness necessary for dealing with the difficulty of opening the foot to the angle necessary to maintain the connection between the centres. Practising slowly is fundamental for the sensations to be established correctly.

Once the two partners are in the position obtained following these modifications, I ask that they take some time to check that the sensation of connection between the centres, via the contact, is still present, and to discuss with each other. This time of discussion and testing is important for beginners as they may not feel the comfort or discomfort of the other at the end of this movement.

This exercise evolves rapidly towards a game where the recipient works with eyes closed so as to reinforce their attentiveness, the initiator's step being of variable length such that different angles will need to be found for the foot to be turned adequately. Here it is sometimes necessary to allow quite some time so that the sensation can emerge for all.

Of course this preparatory exercise should be done exchanging roles between the two partners.

In so doing, the first movement of this short but technical sequence of the DALU, is in place as far as the lower part in concerned.

Avoiding the formation of the elbow stroke

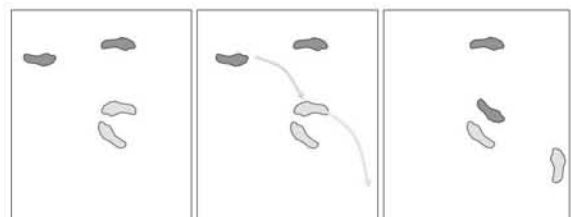
In the sequence, the initiator by taking this step forwards at the end of transferring their weight to the left foot initiates an elbow stroke which they hope to land in the centre of the partner (around the solar plexus) whilst circumventing them by means of this small displacement.

To practise this movement, I invite the partners to start from their initial starting positions but with ten centimetres each further away from the other and with an additional difference: the recipient has their left foot open. This allows the point of contact between the wrists to be lowered and provides more space between the partners so that the recipient can move backwards without concern and can concentrate on the arm movements. I ask the initiator to take their step gently and to initiate the elbow stroke slowly.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zp9fS2Yrn-E>

The idea is to diffuse the initiator's attack before their hands come together during their second step. To do this the recipient performs a downwards circular movement whilst moving backwards, thus bringing the partner's right arm towards themselves (CAI energy). The steps associated with this movement are illustrated in the diagrams below and the initiation of the CAI then the LU in the films which follow.



I have not developed an original step by step pedagogy for the end of the movement, so please refer to the College DVD which shows this very well in the details on the potentials. Similarly, to the first step, you can see how the interplay of the axes of intention, on the line perpendicular to the frontal plane of the pelvis, unfolds during the second step, via the following link:



<https://youtu.be/aMWB9jJtFmI>

I recommend just to take care that, when returning to the starting position, there is no break in the contact between the two partners since we are in fact practising mobile Tuishou.



<https://youtu.be/ZYfMdb6F86Q>

Regarding the initiation of movement

At last a little remark, which is also outlined in the DVD, on the notion of initiation. Just as in all martial applications, the attack of the initiator can be provoked by the recipient. A small gesture made by the recipient, a sign of opening, a false lowering of the guard, can lead the initiator to launch the attack, when in reality the partner has provoked it, has attracted it and waits to better 'catch' it, no pun with Cai intended....

When the students are comfortable with the sequence, I can get them to play with this idea.

Conclusion to this approach

After all this preparation, one only has to add the cross on the ground once the basic sequence has been learned and make all the exchanges of role such that after four repetitions one finds oneself back in the starting position. One notices that by and large the game around the cross is respected - even though this is not the aim, which you will have understood!

The advantage after several workshops run according to this principle during the Rencontres Amicales or during courses is often a freeing from the problem of memorisation ('I don't know where to put my feet any more') and allows the development of real attentiveness to the other moving, which is always a good thing. Finally, the number of potentials, of variants contained within this short sequence, illustrated in the College's DVD (no, this is not a promotional article), makes it a very rich teaching aid, whilst the name DALU (the great deflection) could lead one to believe that one is only going to work on a LU energy.

Thanks to Danièle and Joël Panhelleux for their kind participation and to the others on the College DVD of the DALU.

The College offers you 3 teaching DVDs containing films, animations, advice for practice and teaching. They are intended for all, teachers as well as practitioners.

Subjects examined:

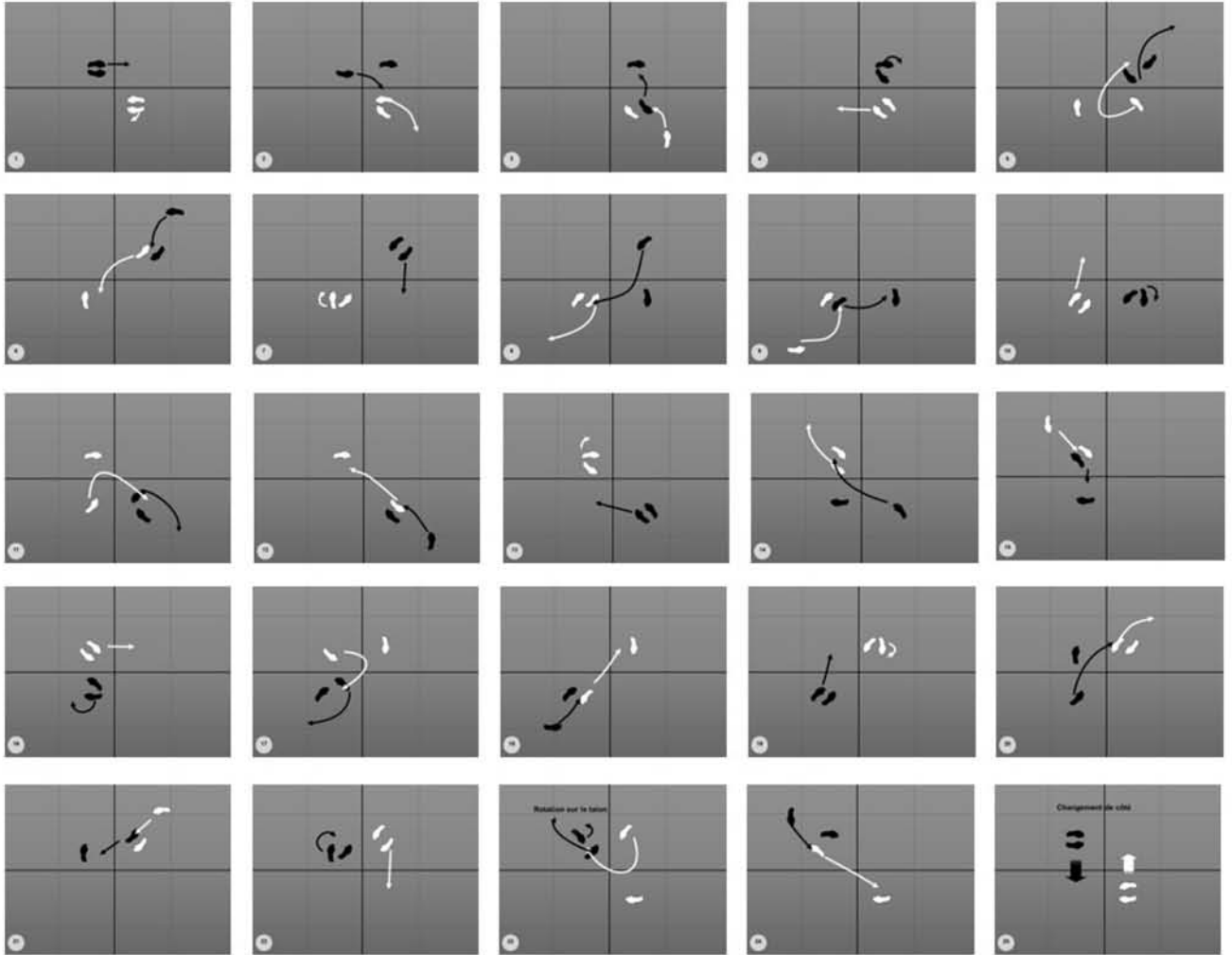
- The foot
- the Dalu
- the 13 postures.

Price: 15 € per DVD.

Contact:

Jean-Marc Lebouis
(lebouis77@gmail.com)

Reminder for the DALU





Introduction to the College Rencontres de l'Amicale at St Jacut 2022

written by Soazic Cordroch - lu par Anne Dourday

Dear friends, teachers and assistants who are passing on the Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan do not hesitate in joining the Teacher's College!

The European College of Teachers of YMTQ is a collegiate association which offers to all teachers of our school, whether they be experienced teachers or in the position of assistant, to share their experience and their questions.

The European College of Teachers of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan came into being in Cluny in 1989 driven by, and at the request of Master Wang Yen-Nien. At the beginning a few pioneer, direct students of Master Wang and today more than 150 teachers or assistants, coming from all walks of life, with in common their zest for passing on this martial art and their pleasure in sharing their experiences, have been admitted to the College.

To take part: no need for a vast experience or diplomas... everyone can make a contribution. The College aims to be a place of respect,

fraternity and exchange. At least once a year members of the College and new arrivals are offered the opportunity to participate in a seminar, that is a weekend of teaching and technical work, of joint reflection.

If this appeals to you, it is very simple, you just have to be in a position of transmitting the Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan: you get in contact with one of the College members (a list of whom you can find on the College web-site), and you indicate to them your intention to join the College. You will then be offered the opportunity to take part in two seminars as a guest after which you will be able to present your application to the collegiate assembly.

Who better to convince you than Master Wang who wrote the following to his student teachers and future teachers following the creation of the College: 'I encourage all who receive this letter to reply positively to the invitation made to them to join the College. So that everyone can benefit from it. It will enable you to increase your knowledge and promote your development as a teacher.'

The College and its committees

When it started the College was governed by a charter with a collegial way of operating. Gradually the members wanted to develop this 'de facto association' towards the legal framework of an association of the 1901 Law-type. From 2016, work on the charter (internal rules) was undertaken. Two years later the alignment to the 1901 Law was certified.

Nevertheless, so as to keep the collegial way of operating, the College does not have a president but rather a secretary and a collegial council comprising the committee heads. With the adoption of its new statute, the College altered its rules for admission. Today, all those who teach can apply to enter the College. They should take part in two seminars or

intermediate workshops before their application is studied and voted on in a collegiate assembly.

The College operates outside the annual seminars by means of working parties or committees which take care of the basic proceedings.

COLLEGE OFFICE

(Secretary Anne Dourday - Treasurer J.Marc Lebovis
– Assistant Secretary J.Luc Picard)

SEMINAR PROGRAMMING GROUP

(Head Nathalie Plewniak)

Prepares the organisation and ensures their smooth running. The committee also gathers feedback on the workshops made during the seminars.

DOCUMENT COLLECTION COMMITTEE

(Head Frédéric Plewniak)

This committee collates the feedback from the workshops on the College's private, collaborative Wiki site. It is thus possible to consult them and carry out searches by theme or by subject. The collaborative side of this site also allows those who wish, to write directly on-line, and the readers to make comments.

SITE MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE

(Head Jean-Christophe Clavier)

Maintain and improve the College website.

COLLEGE LEAFLET COMMITTEE

(Head Yves Picart)

Its role is to strengthen the relationship between the Amicale and the College by regularly producing a leaflet for the Amicale Bulletin. Its aim is to deepen our knowledge of Yangjia Michuan Taiji Quan, to share theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as educational questions. It also aims to offer material expressing the different sensitivities of the teachers who constitute the College through their writings.

COMMITTEE FOR TAI CHI FOR CHILDREN

(Head Bernard Bouisson)

This committee collects the different activities aimed at the youngest and distributes them to interested members.

MODERATING COMMITTEE

(Head Valérie Oppel)

Its mission is to moderate the workshops during the College seminars and the collegial assembly. Practically, this means timekeeping, ensuring equal say, redirecting remarks or the debate if necessary.

COMMITTEE FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS

(Head Anne Dourday)

This committee is in charge of external relations which for the moment mainly concerns our exchanges with Africa.

VIDEO COMMITTEE – on standby

This committee has produced three teaching DVDs over the last eight years. A resumption of activity could consider the production of 'College-approved' videos that are lighter, shorter and distributed using different methods.

COMMITTEE FOR TEACHER TRAINING OF THE MARTIAL ASPECT OF YMTQ

(Heads Sabine Metzlé and Hervé Marest)

The aim of this committee is to construct a method for teaching the martial aspect of Taiji Quan by providing a logical learning approach to the martial work with the intention of attracting a younger audience. This accessible method could lead to training offered by the College by means of written and video material as well as courses.

It proposes to create bridges between our style and other martial arts by exploiting everyone's experience in the human, pedagogical and martial aspects.



Le Tuishou du Tao

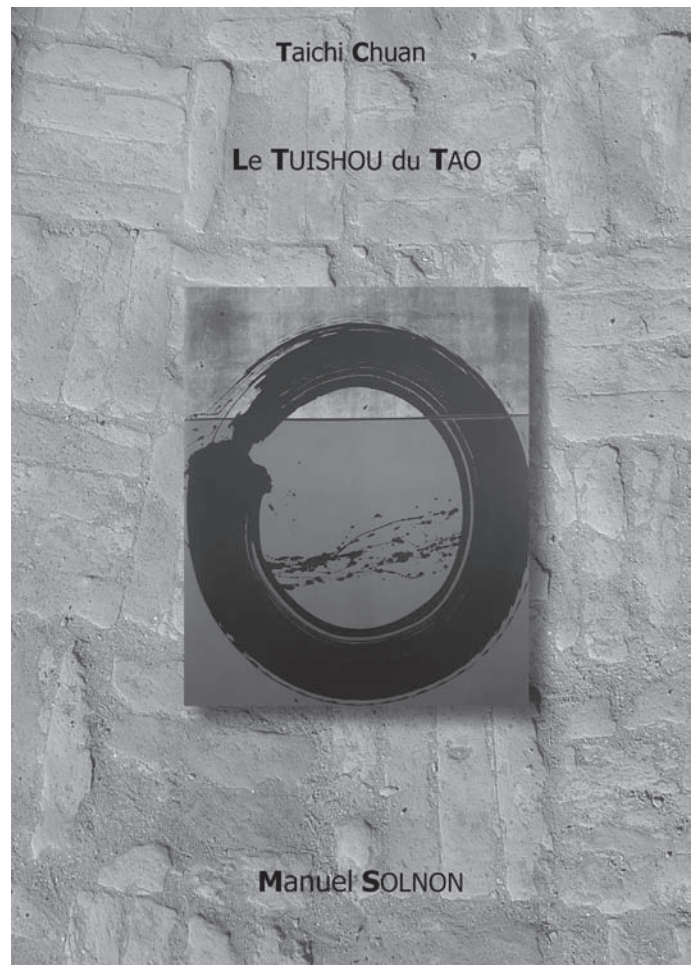
**Manuel Solnon, édité à compte d'auteur¹,
15€ (+ frais de port)**

Ce petit livre de réflexions sur le tuishou nécessite de nombreuses relectures pour commencer au moins à sentir ce que Manuel Solnon nous décrit et explique. Les termes et expressions utilisés, apparemment contrastés, tels que non-mouvement, le non-agir stimulent la créativité spontanée, actif passivement, point mobile, point convergent, rien lucide, vide conscient, ne sont pas forcément clairs pour la plupart des lecteurs... Il faut donc intégrer d'une manière ou d'une autre ces paradoxes apparents et chercher plus loin les sensations que ces expressions peuvent susciter.

Le plus difficile pour un débutant de Tuishou est d'écouter le partenaire tout en essayant de discerner toute modification de ses intentions et actions, de rester complètement dans le présent, et de ne pas tomber dans une répétition automatique et rythmique des mouvements ? qui deviennent rapidement ennuyeux, à mesure que notre attention au rythme de l'autre s'estompe.

L'auteur propose ainsi de nombreuses pistes pour nous aider à modifier notre tendance naturelle à contrôler, dominer (qui provoque le blocage du flux interne du Qi dans les articulations, les muscles... et même d'éventuelles blessures), afin de lâcher (lâcher prise) toute tension corporelle ou mentale, et ce tout en restant à l'écoute, en anticipant toute faiblesse ou rupture (faille) chez le partenaire qui pourrait nous permettre de le déséquilibrer doucement. Mais apprendre à lâcher tout instinct naturel de contrôle n'est pas facile pour nombre d'entre nous. Cultiver l'écoute du présent et repousser les pensées parasites perturbatrices qui traversent souvent notre esprit, demandent également un effort constant.

J'ai apprécié la comparaison entre le métal dont le forgeron élimine les impuretés et les pensées parasites que nous éliminons en taiji. Ou bien encore celle du danseur qui communique une énergie similaire avec celle que nous ressentons dans la pratique du Tuishou, dès que nous sommes capables de lâcher prise. Et puis aussi l'image (qui me parle particulièrement en



tant que choriste) du directeur de chœur ou d'orchestre qui communique avec ses musiciens par des mouvements silencieux générant la libération du son musical, comme, dans le cas du Tuishou, l'énergie du Qi circulant dans le corps.

L'étude très intéressante du cycle de l'eau et de sa transformation dans les sept directions, qui se produit dans la nature lorsque l'eau passe de l'état solide à l'état liquide, nécessite elle aussi une lecture attentive.

Au final, comme on dit aux States, *the bottom line* : Un petit ouvrage qui fournit une analyse très complète du Tuishou à lire tant par les débutants que par les pratiquants plus avancés.

Sally Lenoir

¹. Commande auprès de Stéphane Danflous : s_danflous@proton-mail.com – 06 23 79 75 46. Commentaires ou questions sur l'ouvrage : Manuel Solnon - solnon_manuel@yahoo.fr.



The notion of networks in Chinese culture and martial arts

After having described the notion of networks in the two preceding articles, we look now at the application of these principles in the world of the martial arts, in particular in the analysis of Maste. Wang's networks.

Serge Dreyer

6. A return to renqing wang

As soon as an individual asks a favor of someone, s/he has entered into a relationship marked by a quasi-unavoidable debt. This favor can fit several categories:

- financial: money loan, being a guarantor to a bank loan, buying an asset at a reduced price,...
- Social relation: being presented to an important person, joining an association requiring an introduction, participating in an activity reserved to a small number of people, introducing someone who can resolve administrative problems,...
- Symbolic/prestigious: asking someone to be photographed for an ad in a store, ask for a preface an article, being placed on the first row during a conference, being seated at the table of important people during a party,...
- Entering through the back door (hou men): when something cannot be done through regular means, calling upon a personal favor to resolve a situation.

The payment of the debt is not generally constrained by time (except in the case of money). This debt can even be passed from generation to generation. For example, when my father-in-law passed, my wife

contacted someone to whom her father had done favors in order to have him write a lovely eulogy. Even today, on the campus of our university people render to us small services as payment of a mostly moral debt owed to my father-in-law. I even found myself embroiled, without even knowing it at the beginning, in a debt drama. In brief, I was hailed one day by a professor unknown to me. He asks me to participate in a conference on French wines organized by a large bank for their clients, on behalf of a woman who is part of my wife's guanxi. Why didn't this woman ask me directly since we are familiar terms? Probably a debt this professor owed that she absolutely wanted repaid. So by going to this conference I give a lot of "face" to Ms. S. (She is the only one amongst this assembly of rich folks accompanied by a not just a professor, but a French one who happens to be an expert in wine. I was paraded accordingly). She is therefore now in debt towards us. At the end of the school year, my wife learns that our daughter will be placed in a class whose teacher has a poor reputation. But Ms. S. Also has her daughter in the same class. She also happens to sponsor several activities at that school. One phone call later and the debt is paid. But the professor who asked for my participation in the conference for Ms. S. Is also in my debt. I sometimes saw him on campus. His awkward smile told me much about his problem of how to resolve that debt. One day I see him almost radiant, a disgusting bottle of Bordeaux Superior in hand, which he offers me while thanking me, insisting on the word "Superior" on the label...



Il faut être bien conscient pour s'assurer une bonne position sociale qu'une dette non payée devient un sujet de rancœur voire de vengeance (recours très courant aux gangsters) quand il s'agit d'argent. Je me suis trouvé en faute avec un collectionneur d'antiquités que je rencontrais souvent chez mon pote brocanteur favori. Il m'apporte un jour une boîte de gâteaux afin que je l'aide à trouver quelqu'un qui puisse lui traduire un court texte en grec ancien. Ce n'est pas très élégant de sa part car il me force la main mais je reste attentif à ménager un bon client de mon pote brocanteur avec lequel j'ai développé une belle relation ; je raisonne à la chinoise en réseau. On voit déjà la différence avec ce qui se passerait en France : j'aurais refusé poliment mais fermement car je n'ai personne dans mon réseau spécialiste du grec et l'ami brocanteur n'en aurait conçu aucun sentiment particulier. Manque de chance, un énorme tremblement de terre très meurtrier se produit dans notre région quelques jours après notre entrevue. J'ai évidemment la tête ailleurs et j'oublie le texte en grec. Plusieurs mois plus tard un pote collectionneur m'apprend que ce monsieur raconte partout dans notre petit monde de collectionneurs à Taïwan que je ne suis pas digne de confiance, sans m'avoir relancé. J'ai beau retourner la situation dans tous les sens, d'autant plus que je ne sais toujours pas qui je pourrais solliciter pour ce texte en grec, je suis hors-jeu (et il est hors de question de rendre le cadeau) It is crucial to a good social position that an unpaid debt does not become a subject of rancor or even vengeance (very common amongst gangsters), especially when money is involved. I found myself at odds with an antique collector that I often met when visiting my antique dealer friend. The collector one day brought me a cake in exchange for my help in finding someone who could translate a short ancient Greek text. It was not very elegant on his part since he forced me into this exchange, but wanting to preserve a good relationship with a client of my friend, I think in terms of the Chinese network. We can already see the difference with what would have happened in France: I would have politely but forcefully refused his offer since I have no one in my network who specializes in Greek, and my friend the dealer would not have had any feelings on the exchange. Sadly, an enormous and deadly earthquake hit our region a few days later. I am obviously distracted and forget the Greek text. Several months later a friend tells me that this collector is telling everyone in our little circle of collectors in Taiwan that I am not trustworthy, without even getting back in touch with me. No matter how I turn this situation in my head, especially since I still don't know who I could turn to with this Greek text, I see no way to extricate myself from the situation (and returning the gift is not an option).



7. Networks in crisis

American anthropologists describe Chinese society as being group oriented, the term collectivist being today, correctly, out of favor. Meaning that the group prevails over the individual in social interactions (though not always). Statements like "I don't care what other people think" are rare, though they exist, but arise mostly in times of crisis. For example, as I write this, the Taiwanese are watching with incredulity the mass protests in France against mandatory vaccinations, an opposition they see as the expression of an amoral and asocial individualism. Consequently, the resolution of conflicts is often arranged through a third party who belongs to a shared *guanxi*. It is therefore extremely important to have in one's *guanxi* someone who possesses the ability to solve conflicts. My father-in-law was renowned for this and therefore had a large *guanxi*; it is the same for my friend the antique dealer who is a master of networking. These people are in great demand and highly respected. You could say the same in France, but, whether in China or Taiwan, the informal networks are much more present. The public spaces created by the sidewalks are regularly invaded by merchants or by the local inhabitants leaving large objects out in front of their house in order to secure a parking space. I arrive at my friend the antique dealer's place, and hear some guy yelling. He considers the space in front of his house his property, but a neighbor disagrees. The yelling man goes to my friend for him to relay the extent of his fury, and make clear that he is willing to hire the services of thugs. The police? Useless in this case since there are no clear laws covering this case, and they have more important things to deal with anyway. The yelling man knows that hiring thugs will cost him money, and if his neighbor also has connection in the underworld, things might get heated and the prices will go up. On the other hand, he has heard of the excellent reputation of the antique dealer. My friend knows the local thugs, as well as a local politician who needs to keep a good image, and is facing a reelection. The politician clears up an unused space in the neighborhood.

The dueling neighbors slide some cash his way, and, according to my friend, they will later on receive posters and placards from the politician to hang on their cars and houses... When under a dictatorship, like China under Xi Jin Ping or previously Taiwan under Tchiang Kai Shek, the back door networks become a question of survival (as seen in the beautiful movie *The Life of Others* about living under communism in East Germany).

The other important aspect to consider is the exclusion from a network. In the Chinese world, it is a frightening eventuality, since given the intertwining of the networks, in a case of ostracism several networks will be alerted as to the anti-social behavior which threatens the social fluidity. The call to a third party, or more, becomes the only safeguard. It is easy to measure the difficulty of the affair. I was also excluded from a network of a qinnashou club (a martial art based on joint locks) in which the teacher also taught tuishou. I was saved only by the good feelings (ganqing) of a fellow student to whom I discreetly taught some tuishou techniques. One morning he warned me that no one would speak to me since two strangers had told the son of the teacher that I looked down on his tuishou. He explained to me how to resolve the situation, which simultaneously paid his debt to me for the teaching, and I was again accepted in the group. Since several other of the students came from other martial arts schools to study with the aging teacher, it would have closed my access to two tuishou groups in other locations that I participated in.

8. The guanxi of M. Wang and his Taiji quan association

I will only describe what I know directly about Mr Wang or through his former students. Since I have never tried to get into his intimacy, this description is a bit of a gruel, but I thought it would help you not only to understand the character better but also his environment.

8.1 History:

When Master Wang arrives in Taiwan, he has three networks: the professional network of the military, and the one of those from his native Shanxi province. These are tight-knit networks. The third is the network of refugees labelled as Continentals, a looser network that knits together impoverished soldiers living in terrible condition as well as well-heeled functionaries, or even the upper class that fled to Taiwan with their gold ingots. Having never talked politics with him, I don't know if he was a member of the Kuomin-tang, the nationalist party of Tchiang Kai Shek. As to the

Taoist sect that he was a member of, I don't know what happened to it.

His family network is destroyed since he left his family in China, as well as his Taiji teacher who also stayed on the continent.

It is therefore as a man relatively poor in networks who lands in Taiwan, in an environment becoming quickly hostile (look up the White Terror in Taiwan to know more).

It is a difficult time that he lives through: a soldier, his army has suffered two defeats against Japan¹ and then the Communists of Mao, without forgetting that his childhood occurred during the "Warlords" period. The army of Tchiang Kai Shek went from being the liberators from the Japanese colonizers to an invading force to many of the native Taiwanese.

He quickly forms a Taiji club composed at the beginning mostly of refugees like him. But it is not enough to live on. One of his students, an upper class Chinese who had fled to Taiwan, loans him money to start a shoe business, but it fails. Despite this, his student decides, with a few others, to finance him as a professional teacher of Taiji quan in the 1950s. It is the beginning of the adventure that we know, and the creation of a network that will become important to him.

As an officer, he has the right to remarry and create a new familial network with a Taiwanese woman (he had confided in me on day that he had quickly realized that China was not going to be reconquered any time soon, and that he would never find his Chinese wife again). His familial network will give him emotional stability, but not much else in the material sense.

He belongs to (or creates? I don't remember) a temple dedicated to the Buddhist goddess of compassion, Guanyin. As far as I know it is a small network with not much impact on his social life.

Let's take a closer look at his Taiji network. In a dozen years, he acquires a good national reputation (see Robert Smith's book, *Masters of boxing in China*) but his network is blocked by Cheng Man Ching's. Apart from their personal issues, it is two types of networks that battle it out for decades. Indeed, it is a characteristic of networks in Chinese culture that they end up in pitched battles (these days, the politics of Xi Jin Ping can be understood as a conflict between his network and the one of Jiang Zemin, his predecessor). And M. Wang's superior officer is not in the

1. Officially the Chinese army was on the side of the victors in 1945, but it was the collapse of the Japanese empire faced with the American power that played the major role.



good graces of Tchiang Kai Shek, so he has to keep a low profile. By contrast, Cheng Man Ching, a man of letters, is close to the power centers since he teaches painting to Ms. Tchiang Kai Shek. A poor soldier who fought for this country, an intellectual shielded from basic needs who never fought on the front lines; everything pitted them against each other. On top of that, Cheng Man Ching goes to the USA in the 60's where he finds a great success in teaching Taiji quan, which increases his prestige in Taiwan. Proof of the superior quality of his networks, his students fan out after his death throughout the States, Taiwan and South East Asia. In contrast, M. Wang does not have foreign students who could spread his teachings and his local student are mainly drawn from the merchant and industrial classes, who practice their Taiji quan for health and social reasons; discretion is still required.

It is in the 1970's that things start to change. Foreigners come to study with him and shine in national tuishou competitions to the point where he acquires the nickname "professor of foreigners". Local Taiwanese follow the example and they too shine in tuishou competitions. The network strengthens spectacularly. He is first invited to lead a workshop in Japan, and then, in 1981, I invite him to France with the help of my Taiji club at the time. The rest everyone knows; the invitations multiply in France and in other countries. In Taiwan, his network is at its summit; he is named president of the national federation, becomes a national treasure, etc. The Taiji quan community in Taiwan knows that his teachings shine in Europe and the US. New students come to study with M. Wang, but also because his network is vast and therefore prestigious. The comparison between a network and a living organism seems here appropriate. You are entitled to claim that your participation has had a role in the life of this Taiji quan network. Sadly it collapsed in Taiwan, but that is another story.

8.2 Socialization within the Taiji quan network:

First, I will distinguish two networks guanxi, according to the flow of information.

One network with a personalized power with one or more leaders. One could compare it to the Eiffel Tower: one or more leader at the top, and various levels before reaching the summit. Movement is primarily along the vertical. It is the Taiji network of M. Wang. But the majority of the guanxi in daily life is of a more horizontal nature without an official hierarchy (though one might be noticed!).

It might be more appropriate to look at all networks instead of just one. But let's take a wider view before examining the sub-networks.

At its height, Master wang's Taiji quan network had a wide guanxi and a renqing wang small but playing an important role. At the level of the guanxi were many figures: beginners, other practitioners coming from other groups lead by M. Wang's advanced students, passing practitioners, etc. Since they paid a subscription, we can consider them as members of a floating guanxi. Stopping the subscription payment simply ended their participation in the guanxi without further formalities. Constraints among this group are slight: being polite towards the other students and M. Wang of course, whose teaching one does not criticize. In return he provides regular classes for the payments, and also is polite towards his students. Everything flows easily. Traditionally, this type of student is not accredited to teach Yangjia Michuan Taiji quan except if M. Wang grants permission.

As for the renqing wang, we can distinguish several groups according to the following criteria: length of practice, level of practice (certified or not), teaching or not, practicing the form only, practicing the form and tuishou (sub-divided between those who compete and those who don't), neigong practitioners, and foreigners. In a vertically aligned network, it is no surprise that the leader would shape its style. In the case of M. Wang, a traditional Chinese man with a patriarchal vision, it is not surprising that the elder students, teachers or not, set the tone. They organize the events, structure the organization, spread the teaching, favor the entry of some into the ruling structure, etc. In exchange, M. Wang gives diplomas, place favored students in prime positions during demonstrations, give them classes to teach, etc. But more importantly, he creates through the baishi ceremony a community in which mutual aid is expected. I was asked multiple times by students who did not know me if I had made baishi with M. Wang, which would have made clear in their heads which attitude to adopt towards me. Without having done the baishi², no matter what my level was compared to theirs, I was just a simple practitioner; but having done the baishi with M. Wang, I was effectively an "older brother", no matter what the age or the level of those present. During banquets, it was those students who were seated at M. Wang's table, or who surrounded him in official photos, etc. They are also in the front row in official ceremonies or demonstrations. They are the standard bearer of the style, those who will promote the teachings of M. Wang by discussing them in articles or books, etc.

Some sub-networks become very visible at some times, as was the case in the tuishou competitions in the 70s

2. This ceremony is very common in the world of the martial arts in China. In front of an altar, teachers and students mark through a ceremony the link that tie them through reciprocal constraints. This link is certified by the presence of the other students who have already gone through this ceremony and, most often, by the presence of the statue of a god or goddess chosen by the teacher. In certain schools this ritual implies the transmission of secret techniques, but this was never the case with M. Wang.

and 80s, before disappearing (after his taxi accident in the case of M. Wang). Others who were negligible in the past become the face of the network, which is the case for neigong. The art of the leader comes in maintaining the links between the different networks and to not get bogged down in inter-personal relations at the detriment of the group, no matter what the preferences are. An exuberant social life is not recommended for the proper functioning of the network, since at any time someone's feelings could get hurt. And when that happens, inevitably, the art of saving face comes into play.

9. Reminder

I mentioned in the general introduction that what I was describing had exceptions and were mostly tendencies. I come back to this point because the trap of sociological or anthropological analysis is to lead the reader to think that the people within these cultures function according to a system that they cannot escape due to a cultural determinism. In the case of the networks described above, we gladly use language evoking guanxi and ganqing in the Chinese world in order to describe social interactions, but the term renqing wang is only found in scientific texts. In daily life, guanxi replaces both terms or even simply renqing. It is a bit like the French who happily describe themselves as Cartesians, despite the fact that not one in a thousand has even read Descartes. And a Chinese noticing the attention given by the French to their horoscope or divination³ would be skeptical of their self-description. He would simply have to read the magnificent work of Jeanne Favret-Saada on sorcery in the Mayenne (a region in France) in the 20th Century (4) for the French to suddenly seem superstitious... I therefore hope that the readers will remember that, no matter the latitude, individuals can escape the analysis of the system. A beach is made of individual grains of sand!

3. Not forgetting these last two decades Chinese fengshui and the Yijing.

4. "*Les Mots, la mort, les sorts*", 1977, Gallimard.

The Eight Gates and the 13 Postures (2)

The quintessential part of the art of Taiji quan, these fundamentals always deserve explanations and deepening. While the previous bulletin (N° 101) reviewed the theoretical foundations of the 8 gates and 13 postures, the present issue examines their practical aspects.

Workshop led by Christian Bernapel on the 11th of June 2021 for the FAEMC¹

The eight gates: bā mén

The eight gates represent eight “potential energies” formed or produced by certain types of physical, mental and sensitive mobilisation (body, mind, intention).

Each gate opens up numerous potentials that fall into series of applications and experience (martial, energetic, relational):

- **An action** built on a mind-body principle and its many applications.
- **A global energy** that emerges therefrom.
- **A state of being:** pushing and holding back rely upon different internal states. Diverting and breaking off rely upon different states. This is what I call “state of being”. It can also become a relational state. (see L’esprit du taichi chuan peut-il favoriser nos relations? Can the spirit of Taichi Chuan improve relationships? Available on www.taichi-inpact.fr)
- **An intimate perception**, a “sensation” linked to the whole and possibly to its projection in a potential, or a particular application linked to a given sequence of the form and the related potential (grasp the bird’s tail, brush knee, the white crane etc.).

Concerning the “meaning”, let us refer to François Cheng’s view on this French word that designates direction, as well as sensation, sensory perception and “what conveys the meaning”.

1. Downloadable at : <https://taichi-inpact.fr/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/EXPOSE-SUR-LES-8portes-et-les-13-postures-edition.pdf> ou <https://vu.fr/JRmX>

To practice the Eight Gates together with their “meaning” has a profound impact on both body and mind. When agility of the body combines with the state of being of each gesture and its meaning, it opens to the harmony of body and mind in all its expressions:

- **Martial:** to conquer, yield, deflect, dodge, transform, push back, hold off, break out, thrust, shove, turn, retreat. To conquer with responsiveness and mindfulness enables to adapt progressively to any situations, provided the mind remains attentive and the heart serene.
- **Energetic and relational:** to listen, follow, adhere, transform.
- **Spiritual** in the spirit of things.

Thus, the eight gates open up to infinite possibilities.

Each potential achieves its function, sensation and spirit in its psychological and conceptual dimension. Owing to its distinctive characteristics, a kind of energy is produced and circulates in relation to the surroundings that can be either neutral (solo practice confronted to earth’s gravity and the biomechanical, muscular and visceral body architecture), active (when one or several external elements influence the practice), or stimulated by the actions of a partner (whether fellow practitioner or real assaulter).

This is how the boundary between a gesture that expresses itself and its conceptualisation fades away.

These gates open up then to a new dimension: that of our behaviour and actions in the various relational situations we are confronted to. This very integration allows for the articulation of the potential and its gate that opens up all possibilities.

Although the 8 potentials tend to be defined in martial and fighting terms, when they're approached in relational terms they open the way to the heart and mind.

The eight potentials

PÉNG – warding off, protecting oneself, covering oneself

Péng is at the center. Because of this fact each of the eight potentials is expressed.

Péng is at the beginning, and this is what makes it possible to keep a distance, protect oneself, observe closely and penetrate the nature of things. No gesture is required to express it - a mere attitude is enough. Warding off, embracing, feeling "like an inflated balloon" that spins on its centre at the slightest pressure. The energy of Péng is like a protective shield against the partner's pressure or grabbing. Its internal sensation is the watchful attention to the self and to the other.

Péng is the reflex action in response to the sky falling!
or the umbrella opened when it rains,
or the airbag that inflates for cushioning,
or the tarpaulin the fire fighters stretch
to catch a falling person,
or the tennis racket...

Péng is a physical, mental and psychical wrapping. It is a precautionary principle. A reserve built about a person before going any further with that person.

Rejecting is made possible thanks to **its expansive side**. Holding back and absorbing are possible thanks to **its receptive side**.

In its centre it is like the surface of an inflated balloon.

How could Péng be better represented than by two planets in a balanced relation due to their relative distance and mobility, and influenced by other presences as for example the earth by the moon, sun, stars and planets.

A feeling of self-confidence, a calm and soothing effect, emanate from this stance.

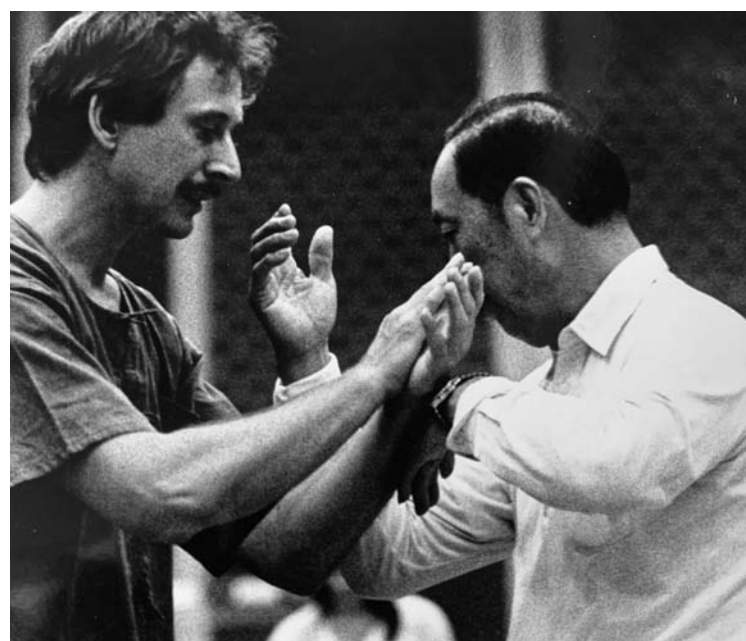
Péng is most commonly done with the forearm connected to the centre and can turn in all dimension. Biomechanical congruence is achieved through breathing and respiration, and the muscle-tendon and skeletal system. It is also a mental state wherefrom the form is created as well as what emanates from it.

Lǚ: rolling back, taking in, smoothing out, deflecting, retreating

Lǚ is like a ball that spins if pushed. Its envelope will densify when an external pressure is applied.

The principle of Lǚ introduces a tangential resistance to the external force that makes it possible to apply the principle of transformation at any moment and for each tiny fraction of the movement. This one-ounce force at any given moment can effortlessly deflect the power of tons. Pulling backwards, drawing the opponent into emptiness by accentuating his/her thrust. Lǚ and cǎi are close, hence some substitutions between the two from one school to another.

Lǚ is the capacity to accept the other, say "yes" in order to understand what he wants, take the time to analyze it, and adapt while preparing the answer.



Lǚ is to be found in all the rotations induced by the partner's action.

It is also a way to defend oneself peacefully, to deflect so as not to be reached.

Lǚ sends the action back to the other, to one's own advantage, it doesn't reject it.

Àn: pressing on, fending off, holding off

Fending off or holding off with both hands or just one. Fending off is a progressive action that causes a loss of balance the way a submerging wave does. Àn is an energy that pushes back while uprooting. The keys to this movement vary according to the school, but their common point is a biomechanical movement induced by the front leg, the back leg, or both. The movement is driven by the relationship between the pelvis and the scapular girdle. Holding off keeps the other at a distance. Absorbing is cushioning pressure by densifying (similar to Péng's compressive strength).

Péng – Àn: they interlock and complement one another. Àn allows Péng to express itself while Péng brings about the active dimension of Àn. Coming into contact with a partner is commonly done through one or another of these potentials. Active or passive, in listening mode, or passive-active, it depends! Àn and Péng complement each other and can be applied in pairs: when Àn pushes, Péng is absorbing, when Péng is expanding, Àn absorbs.

Péng and Àn make it possible to maintain a distance to oneself, to space and to the action of the other. They can be articulated with Lǚ and Jī but also with

the four remaining ones - Caī, Liè, Zhǒu, Kào – in twos, in threes, or more, thus giving access to a range of infinite possibilities by means of gestures that can follow, complement or oppose each other, be linked or combined.

Péng – Lǚ – Àn: this circular application, complementary and cyclical of the 3 potentials enables to have the first exchange between two persons, in complementarity and by circular permutation.

It is akin to the gesture of the Basque pelota, tennis or Chinese racket players who receives, welcomes, cushions and hits back. An exchange of arguments and counter-arguments amidst an exchange of opinions!

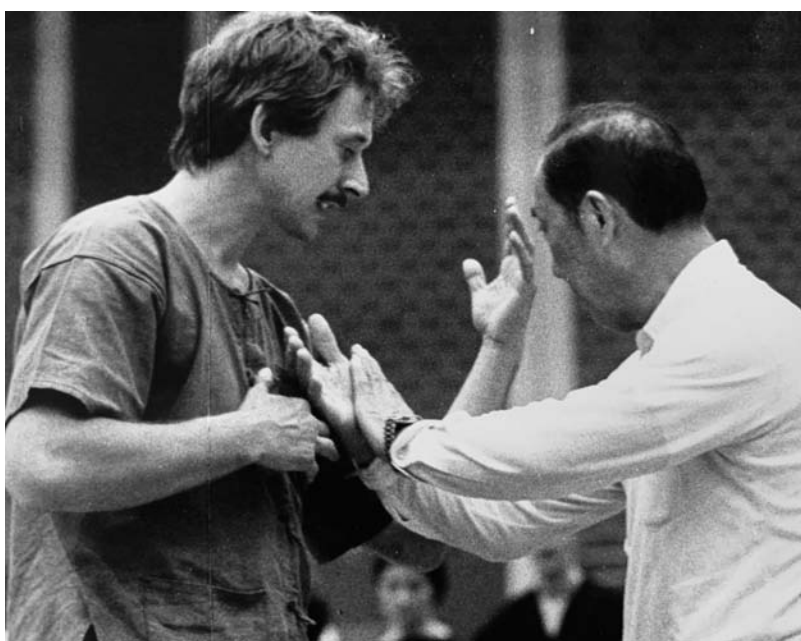
Jī: pressing, shoving, compressing, squeezing

Jī merges Péng and Àn in a mix of Péng that holds off and Àn that presses. These two actions interact like a spring that is compressed at first then suddenly released. Hence its powerful effect.

To press is a forceful action, an energy that penetrates into the other's body. It's a violent action which may harm internal organs if performed vigorously.

Jī can be used to end an attack if need be. In its yin function, it also provides a precious resource for the other potentials should they be "overwhelmed".

In its yin aspect, Jī can be used either to support Péng if it can no longer come to grips with the situation, help Lǚ to consolidate protection, or else back up Àn.



Péng – Lǚ – Àn – Jǐ: circularity and exchange of the 4 first potentials. All schools use the 4 potentials as a drill to understand them, practice their succession, and their reciprocal transformations.

The following 4 potentials are based on expressions that are more “martial”.

Caī: plucking, GATHERING, squeezing out, choosing

Plucking, seizing, cutting off, penetrating. Caī can be applied to the low, middle or high level. Caī is plucking in the sense of pulling off a fruit, a gesture that requires the expression of a dry action to detach a fruit from its stem. In that respect Caī means breaking off from its attachment: uproot.

Caī contains complementary notions: seizing then pulling, in order to induce a reaction from the partner that will be used by suddenly going in his/her direction after having released one's grip. A firm grasp is necessary at first that will be loosened in a second phase (hence the term 'pluck').

Caī also seeks to penetrate deftly like a Trojan horse with a view to influence, acting from within, confusing and surprising the other. It sometimes replaces Lǚ, or possibly Liè, in the styles where it is called “pull” or “pull downwards”.

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Liè – twisting, bending, levering, splitting

Liè uses the lever principle. Like a crowbar, it has a short end and a long end about the fulcrum. Three points (one of them fixed) forming a triangle are needed for a level to function. The position of the fulcrum may vary depending on the situation or its evolution.

Liè requires a support similar to a fulcrum to be put into practice. This point is provided by taking the partner for support, or his/her resistance, and shifting the centre of the triangular polygon of gravity (that is his/her resistance to torsion) from the arm towards the elbow or the wrist. The practitioner who is executing Lié has to generate this transfer by imparting a more accentuated resistance on one side or the other.

ZHŌU: elbowing, elbow strike

One of the necessary gestures in the event of a lockdown!

You also ‘elbow your way’ to make room or ‘rub elbows’ with people.

Zhōu aims at getting together in confrontation or complicity.

Zhōu is like the chisel triggered off by the hammer. Its principle is close to Jǐ. Its amplitude is a short but mighty one. Think of how one brief hammer stroke enables the chisel to blow up a chip.



It is a powerful application because the contact with the partner is made with the pointed elbow. The fist of that elbow is pushed by the other hand, something that increases the rear leg push, the one opposed to the elbow. The power of the thigh combines with the dry and penetrating thrust of Jī due to the hand that pushes the fist.

KÀO shouldering, being close to..., leaning on, relying upon

Kào is the action of interposing one's shoulder with a view to holding off or thrusting to dislodge or project. One may also just lean and collude.

Giving a shoulder or elbow strike can also be pacific: act shoulder to shoulder, back up, support each other.

The thirteen postures – Shísān Shì (Shísān = thirteen. Shì = model/template, gate, posture)

The eight gates and the five directions are generally dealt with separately without the elaborated continuity of a "form". And yet, a form called the Thirteen Postures (Shísān Shì) does exist in our Taiji Quan style, the Yangjia Michuan devised by Master Wang Yen-nien. It provides the opportunity to use the 8 potentials in the four cardinal and diagonal directions while staying in the centre. This form complements harmoniously the principles recommended by the Classics (see bulletin N° 101, p. 23).

Conférence :

« l'esprit du taichi chuan peut-il favoriser nos relations » :

<https://taichi-inpact.fr/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/LESPRIT-DU-TAICHI-CHUAN-PEUT-IL-FAVORISER-NOS-RELATIONS.pdf>

ou <https://vu.fr/vJgA>

ou



The 13 postures result from them and they stand out thanks to the body movements, between sky and earth, in the terrestrial gravity, this invisible force that is at the origin of our body architecture, at the service of the useful gesture, but also ready for the gestures' infinite expressions.

Thus, three remarkable Taiji Quan sequences are performed four times, to the right, to the left, aligned with the four cardinal directions for the first two, with the four diagonals for the third one.

The first two:

"Grasp the bird's tail" (Lǎn qiāo wěi) and "seal it closed" (Rú fēng sī bì).

"Brush knee" (Lǒu xī ào bù) and "play the pipa" (Shǒu huī pí pá).

The third one:

The "eight techniques" (Bā fǎ) which unfold the eight potentials in their complementarity allow for two practitioners to practice their applications: cǎi, liè, zhǒu, kào while moving forward, then péng, lǚ, àn, jī while stepping backwards.

A total of twelve sequences starting from the centre and returning to the centre, in which a thirteenth appear: Embrace the Tiger and Return to Mountain (Bào hǔ guī shān).

Les Treize Postures Shísān shì se succèdent dans une The thirteen Shísān Shì postures follow one another in a circular ring that enables the practitioner to identify the space that surrounds him/her (right/left and front/back, left/right and back/front, and then the diagonals), to navigate his way while gliding between sky and earth.

This is the magic of the thirteen postures. I would be grateful to any reader emeritus to enrich these remarks that can only be personal on such a vast and complex question.





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