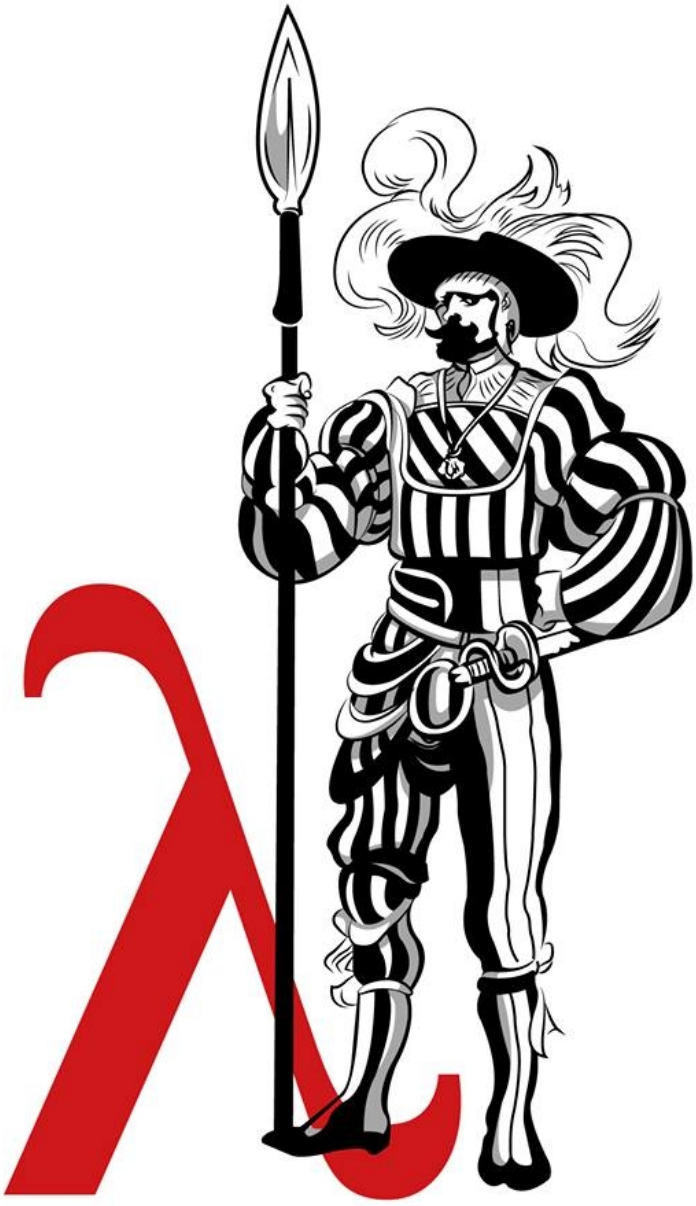


Operative Tao and the Landsknechts

Reinterpreting the myth of the cave by Plato in the "Republic", chapter VII * A discipline of body and spirit

by Christian René Robin

The practice of Tai Chi Quan allows the practitioner to balance and direct the mind. It is a full awareness of one's own corporeality through understanding and the will to act on oneself. This technique offers everyone the possibility to realign and free themselves from the contingencies of the world, achieving a salutary mental detachment. No longer subject exclusively to discursive reason Tai Chi Quan allows the individual to efficiently understand the natural and independent power of the physical body on the mind. The mind is left unaffected by all else and comes to believe it has full dominance over the subject before it. The practice then develops fundamental abilities: the power of sustained mental concentration and internal control of the body, both muscular and organic. It is a strengthening exercise of both body and mind. It develops a heightened awareness which translates into greater control of respiration and management of our animal instincts, by way of deliberate training of controlled reflexes. This results in the differentiation of each individual practitioner from the passive and impulsive majority which lives entirely within the world of involuntary conditioned responses of attraction and repulsion. In short there develops a comportment of an aristocratic nature in harmony with it's very own power of existence both physically and mentally ! An ethic of unegotistical distinction is assumed. It is a way to free oneself from mental slavery and become a new man free to create and act with a whole new conscience that is firm and voluntary. A subject mentally unified but not mentally indistinct, the practitioner encounters his inner self as well as his biological mortality. He cultivates close attention to reality as opposed to any intent he may have regarding it. He observes the demeanor of his own body in the progress of it's daily activity.

Perfect knowledge of one's body involves mastery of thought and allows one to concentrate on movement, which is the very symbol of Life. This is also derived from the fact that it is

inconceivable to live in a house while knowing anything about it. We must begin our practice by discovering our very own corporeality. It entails an investigation into reality. Why can I stand on such small ankles? Why does my body refuse to move as I would like? Why am I so clumsy? All these questions find an answer in the practice of introspection, from skin to fingertips and on to the deepest of organs. This allows one to ask the fundamental question: who am I really, in reality, when I am alone with myself? This reflection sometimes occurs on it's own, but generally this particular sensation is accompanied by trauma, an illness or emotional distress... The practitioner no longer lives in the superficiality of his existence, nor in making a splash in society, but lives in the present moment, in the hic et nunc, "everything immediately and now!". Every driver should have a practical working knowledge of his vehicle, in order to maintain it mechanically. The same applies to the body as well as to the mind! A good example of this can be found in the fact that a martial arts master cleans his studio himself, like a temple, as if it were his own physical body. We well understand that this technique leads to living differently continuously day after day, not only during it's practice, without any restriction, but differently, hyperconscious of oneself compared to the periphery and the outside world. It is a real mastery of oneself, a true awareness of the "new man" compared to the vagaries of life. It is a formidable weapon against any attack, both physical and mental! "A HEALTHY MIND IN A HEALTHY BODY!"

*

TAI QI QUAN :

"Tai" stands for the ultimate, the utmost, the supreme, "Qi" stands for the summit, the vital force deriving from the pinnacle of Heaven, and "Quan" stands for the fist, the battle, action. This is interpreted as "the movement of life".

*

Far-Western Tradition and Far-Eastern Tradition. To what extent could two extreme visions of the World harmonize and become

complementary? The attraction to the martial arts of the Far East is not new in our circles. But, in general, we know more about Japan than China, since communism has been, to a large extent, a brake on our enthusiasm! However, more or less everyone has heard of the benefits of acupuncture or acupressure...

Julius Evola and René Guénon were interested in Taoist esotericism. While the first wrote a pamphlet on the subject and took up the famous esoteric formula "Riding the Tiger", the other offered us a key to understanding that develops Taoist metaphysics in his masterly book "The Great Triad". Obviously, one cannot do without the essential work "Chinese Thought" by Marcel Granet, who was, let us remember, Georges Dumézil's teacher... If we have the best authors of theory and philosophy, the practices of Tai Chi Quan and Qi Gong remain the essential complements to Knowledge. This is where we come in. It is indisputable that a philosophical basis must be the cement of solid thought, but all this takes on another dimension when we examine the foundation of this particular art. Indeed, we could talk about meditation, self concentration and the various yoga techniques of multiple,more or less sectarian, schools. But this is not the place. The history of this discipline and its founding masters does not interest us at the moment, thousands of books have already been written on the subject. On the contrary, we will talk about the technique, its effectiveness and the compatibility that we will inevitably find in pre-Christian traditions of the West.

What does “Riding the Tiger” mean?

Man and beast represent, in reality, the perfect image of the power of dominion of the spirit over matter and base instincts. As we have noted, it is not a question of killing the animality linked to the reptilian brain, but of harmonizing with the convulsions and behavior of the body. The spirit is simply the one invited to assume guidance of the

beast. It is therefore with awareness that it directs its own team. In other words, like a riding master on his thoroughbred, the initiate proposes more than directs, he supervises and invites his mount to become one with himself, like Chiron the Centaur.

Above all, we need to establish the foundations of good practice.

They are simple and efficient. As a basic principle, everything is a question of orientation. One must place oneself with respect to the space dedicated to the discipline, which allows one to position oneself with respect to the 4 cardinal points and the rising sun. The practitioner is always at the crossroads of the 4 directions, the cardo and the decumanus. Like a primordial axis, he is at the center of everything. All directions are derived from him. He is therefore like a King, at the center of his own world, at the media mundi between the Skies and our mother Earth. It is up to him to maintain his kingdom!

If the technique is learned in a studio, it's actual practice is preferably outdoors. The air quality is an integral part of the practice because it is based on the knowledge of controlled breathing. The practice of Tai Chi Quan responds to ten basic Principles: nothing else! But the technique requires a lot of training, willpower and patience, because it is based on an in-depth study of one's self-control. It is a particular and empirical connection that, like the skins of an onion, is discovered layer after layer, to the depthsof one's being, to the very seed of life.

Note that among the ancient Germans, the 21st rune, l**'laukaz**, is precisely the expression of the seed, in other words, the first stem cell of life, and that the jarl offered the newborn a head of garlic as a gift to bring him good luck...

*Here are the 10 precepts:

A care free head and a lively spirit. (As if drawn by the sky)

Loosen your chest and keep your back straight. (Strength is developed through the back)

Life, the center of movement. (All movements begin from life, tan tien)

The void and the occupied. (The movements generate the yang and the yin in continuity)

Release your shoulders and elbows. (Drop your elbows and free your armpits)

Intention and not effort. (Relaxation and harmonious flexibility)

The union of spirit and body. (Synchronization of movements with awareness)

Simultaneity and harmony of movements. (Awareness of the inside and the outside)

Continuity. (Sequence of movements without interruption)

Calmness in movement. (Seeking peacefulness, well-being in form)*

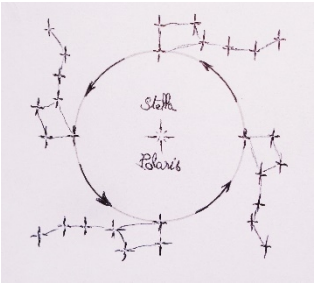
It is the basis of a constant search for stability and balance, performed with flexibility and calmness in a controlled and harmonious fluidity of gestures. The rootedness of the body, on the one hand, and a calm and natural breathing, on the other, are the basis of every action. Let us add to this that, if we had to symbolize the type of movement, we would say that we are, at one and the same time, in the slowness and precision of the movement of the panda, in the flexibility and deliberateness of the tiger and the dragon. Furthermore, the upper part of the head is as if suspended by a celestial thread, the gaze lucid and attentive to the movements. The gestures and movements are established thanks to the action of the hands and feet in a precise choreography, as a puppeteer would express it with his wooden puppet.

Taoism in regards to Western thought.

Let us note first that, if we connect the two runes R.12 jeran and R.13 ihwaz of the ancient Germanic fuÞark, we discover that they fit perfectly into a pattern that suggests the symbol of the most elementary galaxy of type SBb in Eridanus, but also that of the tao! This evolutionary pattern, here, demonstrates it to us clearly.

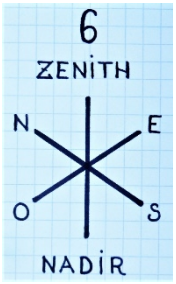
The symbols associated with Taoism are nothing less than crucial information of a unique way of thinking belonging to the peoples of the Northern Hemisphere. The key symbol of the East is based on the expressive value of the Tao. It generates a power that develops harmoniously according to two basic principles called yin and yang. These two elements become one only when they are in motion, since one depends on the other like breathing where inhalation generates exhalation, like the fullness and the emptiness of every action. They are complimentary, even if they appear as opposites or even contradictory.

The Celtic artifacts, which we behold here in these two images, show us that this centrl symbol of the East has always been known in the West! And that, when all is said and done, Socratic thought is very close to that of the Confucian... It is based on logic in relation to the Divine Principle!



In addition, as for the Celts or the ancient Germans, there is the polarity of the Sky. Just as for the Europeans, the shining Star is at the pinnacle of the Sky and is found in the constellation of the 111 stars of the Great Bear, which the Far Easterners call Tai Qi "the Ladle", or the ultimate point of the Universe, which is the home of tai i, "the Great Unity", "the Supreme One".

This Vertical Tradition of experience connects man directly involved in the practice and the stars : the summit of the Sky,



the Sun and the Moon. la Lune. It gives the Earth a reason to exist in relation to our luminaries and their movements, but it also places us in relation to the 6 points considered in space: horizontal (North-South-East-West) and vertical (zenith and nadir). Each individual is at the center of this definition! Any space, any place in which man finds himself, wherever it is, becomes for him his own center. The rest will never be anything other than the periphery. The Ancient Germans could speak of Asgard in relation to Utgard, and the Romans of the Limes and the Urbs in relation to the Orbs! Each must understand and accept, as a new non-virtual reality, this first image of himself that is inscribed in both terrestrial and celestial geographies. It is a paradigm shift! It may seem dizzying, but if we lend credence to astrophysicists, the Earth rotates on itself, around the Sun, which in turn ventures into infinity at an astronomical speed. If we were to consider all the cumulative rotation speeds and celestial movements of this immeasurable sidereal clock, we would lose our minds! However, the art of Tai Qi calls upon an entire system of movements in accordance with the celestial model. Axis, mobility, airy lightness, the practitioner will find in the rotations of his movements and in his breathing the harmonic rhythms of Heaven and Earth gathered in him and repeated by himself with full awareness. Let us never forget that we are children of the stars!

*Taoist poetry says that the left eye is yin, in accordance with the white tiger, and is assimilated to the Sun, while the right eye is yang, identified with the Moon and in accordance with the green dragon. Both look towards the South. Reality and dream become confused. The eyes are the tyrants of the heart, said Isha Schwaller de Lubicz, but they can also become penetrating. The Scandinavians conceived Odin as a god with only one eye, but is he not more clairvoyant than before, after having given up one eye at the spring of Mimir in order to learn the fate of the world, close by themagical Spring of Knowledge, at the roots of the cosmic tree Yggdrasil? In this mytho-poetic metaphor, do we not encounter the idea of a yin, or

introspective eye, compared to a yang, a prospective eye?
What is the relationship between the practice of Tai Qi Quan and Western philosophy? The practice offers the possibility of discovering oneself. It is not speculative. It opens doors of direct understanding of the body through an examination of bodily movement, which recalls shamanic dancing.

We escape the world of appearances and enter the world of action! Masters of our own movement, we define it to better circulate the natural energies that govern the body. We wear the flesh and skeleton of the corpse to express our presence through it, by a depersonalized awareness of the body that leads to a perfect mastery of movement in its stability.

How does this specific practice support the ethics of the Landsknecht? It is inconceivable that a Landsknecht is not able to be master of himself in all circumstances! Both morally and civilly, both physically and spiritually, both esoterically and materially. To be a Man among the ruins requires an aristocratic form of impersonal activity. He does not conform to the desires of homo vulgaris! He identifies himself with the principle of everything through the control of his thought and his way of acting and being. It is because he is also an example to others, in a nobility that remains silent, that he acts. This is the royal virtue that the enlightened Taoists call Ming tö. It is not a cardinal point with respect to a geographical situation, because it is centre,in the center, like the number 5 in the magic square, in the imperial palace, the Ming t'ang!

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It is a martial art that nourishes the spirit. It is all about patience, will and concentration to act on one's identity. It's a discipline! And as such, it requires disciplined disciples!

The practice leads to a better understanding of oneself and others. The practitioner arms himself against all external

aggressions. It is an invisible shield. The physical body becomes our true ally and no longer, as is often believed, a burden! We are no longer burdened by it while we consciously bear our reptilian brain. In reality, the body does not really need to be thought of, it acts according to the biological rhythm of its species without giving any care to the mind.
However, mood, reflexes and external appearance will depend on the nature of each individual. Notwithstanding, the physical body does not express judgments; it operates within its scope effectively according to its nature. Our anatomy functions autonomously, and our internal clock, which regulates and governs autonomously, organizes the periods of wakefulness and rest, appetite and digestion, consumption and purgation, breathing through the 5 main full organs (yin) and the 5 main empty organs (yang), etc. Following the cycle of day and night, the physical body never ceases. Thus, it manages our internal and external activities through the proper functioning of these organs, including of course the heart and diaphragm. Breathing, sleep, hunger and thirst are an integral part of the body's maintenance. That is why the body needs periods of rest, when it enters a state of "sleep". During sleep, the biological body repairs minor injuries or illnesses. The red and white blood cells constantly respond to external and internal attacks on our physiology and, without any deliberate effort on our part, act to resolve the problems that every human being faces throughout life. The 5 physiological organs, liver, heart, spleen, lungs and kidneys, act without us realizing it. In short, the body is autonomous, while the mind is often elsewhere, lost in its hazy thoughts and in its existentialist smallness of always seeking to win approval or popularity, etc. So, if the mind seems to dominate matter, it is only an appearance. And this is where the practice of Tai Qi comes into play! In fact, learning this discipline, in the strictest sense of the term, allows us to become aware of our skeleton, our muscles, tendons and nerves through the control and understanding of movement. The practitioner enters a state of altered consciousness, but without anything that hints at some form of magic. He approaches himself as if he had decided to enter his own body

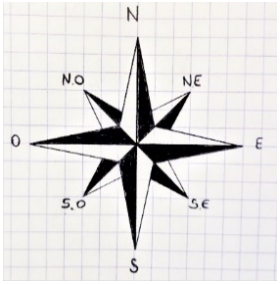
to better inhabit it, to better understand it and direct its movements and its strength through the vital energies that circulate in him. What he will discover is of a perceptible nature, through an introspection that allows him to understand how to direct energy flows, guiding them mentally and giving them an efficient direction. This, in terms of physical reflexes, will heighten awareness and uncover surprising interdependent connections between them all. But this is not visible as when a person practices bodybuilding exercises or weight lifting. The quest is not limited to having a well-sculpted body to show off on the beach; this should be obvious! During this whole experience, which can last a lifetime, he will discover that the body is guided by an dynamic energy, and that this can become his ally at any time.

A good example is the bundles. The bundles represent the intelligence of the body, they constantly respond to all physical needs and demands, both internal and external. Everything we perceive, such as cold and heat, burns, stings, caresses and blows, etc., immediately activates the brain! It is the fasces that give us this feeling of continuously existing, even during sleep. They envelop our muscles, our fibers, nerves, tendons, bones, spinal cord, etc., and are continuously loaded with information, at all times! For example, they are the ones who alert us and cause us to sweat when it is too hot, in order to cool the body, and the same happens with everything that is regulated by the physical... They participate fully in the management of the body and its needs directly!

**When beginning to learn the discipline, the student must accept that he is evolving in a specific and providential context. This school room is similar to a long cube, which implies, as a matter of fact, a geography of space in three dimensions, in direct relation to the nature of Heaven as it manifests itself. That is why the practitioner is asked to stand straight, in a vertical axis that consciously places him between a polarized Heaven and the Earth. During this controlled activity, he must remember that, like the king, the Wang, he is at the center of

everything, and that it is by himself, as an immutable axis, that he constantly places himself between a polarized Heaven and the Earth, sacralized by the place of his practice. This place becomes his temple, his palace. This recalls the ideogram of the 6 directions of the Danish rune Hagal. So, everything depends on the orientation with respect to the place we occupy.

This recalls the ideogram of the 6 directions of the Danish rune Hagal. So, everything depends on the orientation with respect to the place we occupy. But, what will the student discover when he focuses on his own destiny? It is in introspection that he will find his strength and his comfort. Once awakened to its centrality with respect to the periphery, it will be able to evolve!



*For this, an additional explanation is necessary. If the human body, as well as everything that moves in sidereal space and in all the mineral-vegetable-animal-human kingdoms, is born, vibrates, grows, moves, lives, it is because it is crossed by an Energy coming from the cosmos, which reaches us from the instant of the "Big Bang". Astrophysicists and quantum physicists have repeatedly spoken about it in specialized magazines.

Everything is vibration, of course, but even more so it is animated by forces that are revealed already during the conception of life. Being immaterial, it could be translated symbolically through aspects of the Numen. However, the man in the making is faced with the uncertainties of life. By nature, he identifies himself as a burden to himself. This all-too-human burden that lowers him by making him analyze everything in a negative way, through his Fatum, is a brake that does not allow him to either elevate himself or free himself!

Three energies nourish and activate life. Three distinct powers that are however manifested in unison. However, they are differentiated because of their reason for beingand their exigency. These are the jing, the Qi and the shen, the “3 jewels” or san jiao. They are the three timeless nourishments

corresponding to the three levels of what is called “the path to cinnabar” or tan tien. This precise term of “cinnabar” is the title of one of the main works of J. Evola, "Il cammino del cinabro", which briefly reveals his life path, as a unique initiatory experience. We must be mindful that the literary work of the Baron does not have the ambition to please or convince, but only to show through the laws that govern the world that a spiritual and temporal alternative is possible!

These three energies are subject to the powers of the Earth, to life as an individual as well as to Heaven. Three levels of energy that range from material to immaterial. From conditioned to non-conditioned. These three jewels are the principle nutrients of the body. Prenatally and hereditarily, we also find them in the organic energy provided by food and in the quality of the air refined by controlled breathing.

HEAVEN → SHEN
MAN → QI
EARTH → JING

It is said that:

“The plane of Heaven” is associated with circulatory functions and breathing. It is related to the yin tang spot, between the eyebrows, seat of the shen.

“The plane of Man” is associated with the function of consumption, correlated to the zhongwan spot, at the level of the sternum. Where the Qi resides.

“The plane of Earth” is associated with the function of purgation, correlated to the tan tien of which the Qi hai spot is located slightly below the navel. It is the seat of the jing.

The fundamental principle reminds us that, as in the West and in the founding myths of the ancient Germans, the universe is

regulated and created by two contradictory forces: fire and water. The powers of this fire and water do not concern us here, but we are reminded of the primordial waters and the celestial fires. The fact remains that antagonistic and conflicting relationships accommodate themselves to create life! The latter manifests itself in the poetic imagination as an androgynous giant.

It is from this hermaphrodite that creation will be renovated, thus generating all possibilities through the two aspects of force, yin-yang and the 8 trigraphs of theTao, from the diagram of the Bā-Guā, etc..

Vital energies pass through the body thanks to 12 meridians which are each the path of a specific circuit... The one we are talking about is called chong mai. It connects the three "fields of cinnabar", the 3 hearths which are also called the triple heaters. The role of the "3 heaters" is to circulate and distribute the original energy, the yan Qi, towards the periphery of the body, to the skin and to the 12 meridians.

The lower hearth is located at the level of the hara, about three centimeters below the navel. It is called Qi hai, it has an intense and bright blue color and is also called "the ocean of breath". It is related to the Moon and water.

The mid level hearth is called tan zhong, it is located at the level of the pericardium. It is the color of nascent fire, cinnabar, redish orange, almost vermilion, and is associated with the sun and therefore with celestial fire.

The upper hearth is called tan lu, pearl white in color, it is associated with silver metal and is located at the base of the throat, which is obviously associated with the speach, the spoken Word, and certainly with the thyroid as well...

The importance of the diaphragm is greatest. This muscle is of the greatest utility because it regulates breathing by itself. However, like a membrane, it separates the torso from the abdomen into two interdependent but distinct sections. The

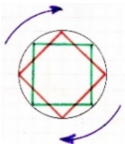
abdomen contains the digestive and reproductive organs, while above the diaphragm there are only the brain, the heart and the lungs. In Qi gong, the flexibility of this muscle is maintained to relax the entire organism through controlled breathing. Its elasticity and strength allow the "three original hearths" to breathe and relax, especially when they are afflicted by disruptive elements of an emotional nature, which cause discomfort (abdominal pain, heart pains , etc.). It is the work of this muscle to constantly act as an air pump for the lungs. The lungs would remain inert balloons if it were not for the diaphragm, hence the importance of training it, with moderation, to remain flexible and strong. This is what is worked on during specific sessions, preferably in the morning immediately after waking up.

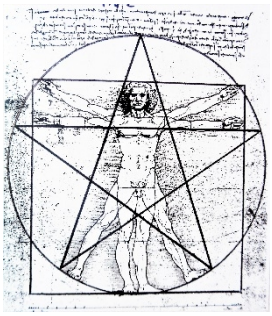
*The living being understands that it must understand the dynamics of it's own body. Let's take the example of the aortic arch. If the aorta sends re-oxygenated blood throughout the body, it is thanks to the aortic arch that the regenerated blood is directly propelled both in the 6 carotids and to the arms through the 2 subclavian arteries, in order to irrigate and vivify the hands and fingers... In other words, there are two circulations of blood in the body. That of the upper body primarily, and that of the lower, by necessity, towards the abdomen. This creates, at the level of the diaphragm, two interdependent sections but distinct in function. In fact, our intelligence and the dexterity of our 10 fingers generate the dynamics of all manual executions related to creativity thanks to the spontaneous and dynamic impulses of the brain and, of course, the upper arterial blood flow. I think, therefore I act, I build, I fabricate, etc.! Hence the importance of concentrating on the activity and the movements of the hands, as in the case of the craftsman who gives perfect shape to his object by modeling it with skill and dexterity! Thus, during the practice of Tai Qi, one can easily understand the importance of always being aware of your fingers and hands... This reveals a direct awareness of the movement initiated by the hands as opposed to the arms or elbows... It is therefore the hands that guide the

forearms and not the other way around! This is why the hand generates the movement of the elbow through the radial head and why the radius rotates around the ulna. This action expresses the movement (yang) of the radius, in relation to its immutable axis (yin), the ulna. Thus, when I move the thumb, I induce a rotation of the hand thanks to the movement followed by the radius around the ulna. As a matter of fact, all the movements of the upper arms are initiated in the same way.

*In Tai Qi, action is a succession of martial movements that signify perfect mastery of the body. In effect it involves, therefore, an actual initiation into physical reality. Aligning the feet and moving are the first difficulties encountered. The student does not walk, rather, he moves in a manner that suggests a combative form, either by advancing, yang action, or by retreating, yin action. The upper body, from the top of the head to the groin, is firm like a domino. The upper part of the body therefore experiences no constraints with respect to the abdomen. The head follows the movement of the upper body without ever turning or separating from the body.

It is analogous with life which rotates around itself and it's own axis, represented by the spine. The arms and especially the hands are always visible and move with careful, deliberate and determined observance, the movements are initiated from the fingertips to the elbow. It is the hands that direct and not the shoulders or elbows! The latter, however, must always be relaxed. As in a dance, we could say, life rotates on itself in a vertical and oscillating action, from left to right and from right to left. The hands trace arcs that generate the movement of the forearms. This image of roundness puts the practitioner in an intimate relationship with the Sky, which is the moving expression of a circle. By contrast, the legs, whose movements are accentuated by the rotary features of the knees and ankles, are evocative of angular movements, in other words, it is the moving square that symbolizes the Earth. Thus, the practitioner moves forward in conformity with established ritual. Situated between the Earth and the Sky, it imitates both the perpetual

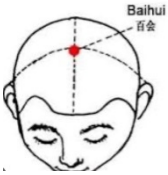




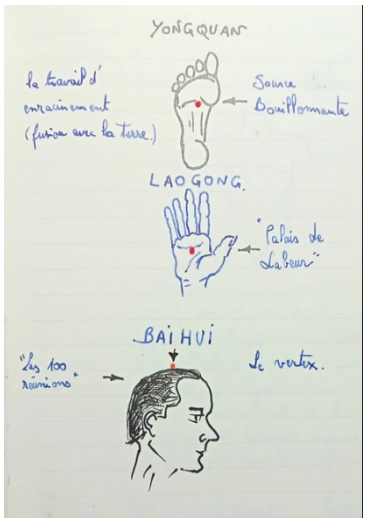
movement generated by the Pole Star with respect to the zodiac, and that of the Earth in its appropriate space. This is symbolized by a square that rotates on itself. Leonardo da Vinci had understood this perfectly when he created the man (of Vitruvius), that is, the man included in a star, between the square (the Earth) and the circle (the Sky). The subdivisions of the square, developed by the master, themselves explain all the possibilities of this body, model of perfection...

*Tai Qi Quan was born from observation of the animal kingdom. From mating dances, to the predator's hunting of or even the combat betweentwo different creatures like the mongoose and the snake, it is by observing the behavior of animals that the Taoist masters have discovered what is best for man when he has to face a fight.
For this reason, poetry also has a power over the imagination when it gives names to animals associated with the grace of their impulse, such as: "the crane spreads its wings", "chasing the monkey", "bringing the tiger back to the mountain", "oblique flight", "clipping the tiger's ears", "the snake that crawls" or even "riding the tiger"... It is also said that, in the development of a good practice, the body must be like a tree. The trunk well rooted to the ground, the arms mobile like branches and the hands lively leaves... All these evocations put into practice precise applications of the traditional form of the "yang" style, called "tao lu". It is traditionally spoken of as the form of the "108 movements".

* Some essential points of the body that every practitioner must know.
First of all, the top of the head, the vertex. This corresponds to the fontanel, it is called Bai hui, often assimilated to the Buddhist tradition as the Sahasrāra-padma. This dominant point is called “the 100 meetings”. The ming men, on the other hand, is located between the two kidneys, but more precisely it is at the junction of a triangle, equidistant from the perineum or



point called hui yin, from the lower tan tien and from the kidneys. It is said of it that it is an “ocean of breath”. The image is too beautiful to be forgotten. Vitality comes from having an innate power in the belly, and this is the source of our vigor. It is commonly said that “he who has nothing in the belly” has neither courage, nor will, nor power. This says it all! Obviously there are other sensitive points of great importance for the technique and practice of tai Qi. They are related to the soles of the feet and the palms of the hands, located more or less in the same places.



The point located in the palm of the hands is called lao gong, “work palace”. You can sense a person’s virility in the energy that emanates from his hands… Nothing is more indicative than a handshake to know who you are dealing with… soft, wet, dry hand, a whole series that instinctively repels us. The open hand has nothing to hide. The fingers extended and closed together show a unity. Those who use the expression “united like the 5 fingers of the hand” are probably unaware that these planks have a cognitive relationship with the 5 elements. The thumb symbolizes the Earth, for example. In short, the expression of power and knowledge is manifested through and in the hands. Finally, two other points are located under the feet at the height of the cushions of the toes. They are called yong Quan, “fusion with the earth”. It is through them that the body is rooted. It is because of them that the principle of movement is realized. And since the yong Quan initiates movement, the energetic propulsion occurs from the heel. All these points are physical expressions of the driving energy. Even more so when they are directed correctly to drive the body through the awareness of the mind.

*Finally, the assiduous practitionerswill use weapons. These are the sword, the sabre, the stick, short or long, and the fan. In fact, the fan is not particularly feminine in and of itself. It is not just used to fan oneself to cool off. It is a manual weapon! This

object has always been a companion of the samurai and, in our case, of the expert practitioner of tai Qi Quan. All these weapons serve to harden and make the wrists more elastic with the use of the sword, the elbows with the sabre, the shoulders and back with the long stick, etc.

*Finally, Tai Qi Quan is not a sport! It is a martial art with diverse virtues that, as such, allows each individual to draw on their own deep nature. Understanding in order to better use the natural force that moves them, this is the challenge. Each and every one could find in it the very sources that regulate the Universe. More than just an investigation, this autopsy of the living will allow each one to take up the acronym formula of operative alchemy:

V.I.T.R.I.O.L: Visita Interiora Terrae Rectificando Invenies Occultum Lapidem

"Visit the interior of the earth, and by regulating, you will find the hidden stone." The famous "philosopher's" stone that Taoist operative alchemy poetically calls, "The white jade flower." Born from the marriage of the fires of Heaven and Earth...