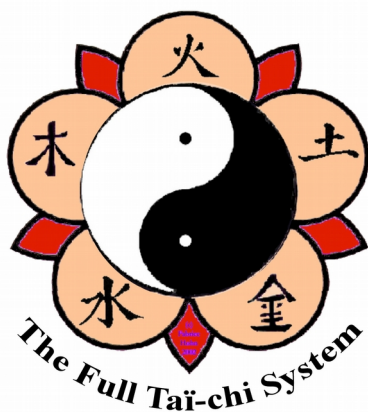


# The tao of the Taiji

The energy of Tai-chi comes from Wu-chi (whose general meaning is the absence of manifestation which, for bodily disciplines, means immobility). This energy, like a mother, gives birth to Yin and Yang, those who appear separately in the movements and disappear in the rest."

Tai Chi Chuan Treaty of  
WANG Tsung-Yueh  
(Zongyue)



Tai chi. Strength and form. Supreme polarity. Promise of balance. Program for the creation of life and its transfiguration, Tai Chi is an energy, as we identified it in Tai Chi Mag No. 6.

Tai-chi is the energy of life, that is, the universal electromagnetic dynamic described in negative-positive terms: in other words, according to the Chinese tradition,

yin-yang.

Its polarized force spreads to the ends of the universe.

It permeates more or less into everything.

It manifests itself in completeness or opposition according to the degree of intimacy with the right medium.

The Tai-chi disappears in the rest and is therefore defined by two actions necessary for its manifestation:

continuous movement and polarity.

We had seen some polarities in the energies: tension-relaxation, action-restraint, earth-sky, left-hand, front-rear, top-down, inside-outside, ...

Imagine a balloon: its center is the Wu-ji, its rays manifest polarities.

The Tai-chi is impregnated in physical and visible manifestations: ellipses, helicoids, spirals, torus and especially the eight in the three dimensions or sign of the infinite, lemniscate. The eight motion is the embodiment of the universal energy field. It is like a stagnation of slow waves not having enough speed and space to continue their journey. They move on the spot. The vibrations remain but «weighed down» and confined to a particular place, continuing their dance in the shape of eight.

In summary, the Tai Chi includes the continuous movement through the yin-yang polarity that forms a whole. In other words, the All manifests itself in the multiple through polarity.

The question I would like to ask you now is: how to manifest Tai-chi in body practice and in particular in the art that directly refers to it, Tai-chi chuan?

More precisely, how to move while respecting the principle of yin-yang polarity in continuity?

But first, we must ask ourselves why.

**WHY SHOULD WE  
INCORPORATE TAI CHI LAWS  
INTO OUR BODY PRACTICE?**

Try to walk so that the spine and legs do not move a hair. Try to run without swinging your arms... For walking and running, nature has created a subtle bio-mechanics in which each joint moves in total harmony with the others. Observe and observe the mechanisms of your

march... and you will find.

For health as well as for self-defense or martial arts, the respect of bio-mechanical and energy laws guarantees greater efficiency. It is in the contrariety of these natural principles that wounds or weaknesses appear.

To be able to respect the natural movement, you need to relax because nervous and emotional tensions lead to parasitic muscle contractions. To relax in depth is to «clean» our whole being while activating more and more networks of vital energy. Thus, the road being clear, the movement is free and fluid.

The right gesture can manifest.

**CLEAN UP. WHAT IS TAI-CHI  
CHUAN NOT?**

It does not define itself with slowness. If you slowly made a sequence of gestures of Karate, or chi kung would it be Tai-chi chuan? Moreover, in the schools of Tai-chi chuan, there are multiple sequences (taolu, kata, kuen) made with speed as, for example, the san shou and the pao chui as well as the explosive movements of the form of Yang Luchan. Slowness does not define the principle of polarity.

Is the Tai-chi chuan distinguished by relaxation? If so, the kungfu of the drunk man is not bad in this field... Relaxation does not define biomechanical polarities but is one of the conditions.

Is it defined by the fact that it is a gentle and peaceful gymnastic with meditative colors? No, because yoga or any other sweet practice would deserve that name.

Tai chi is movement, change of point of view. Put aside everything you have learned. Be like a child discovering novelty. Be careful to experience for yourself with humility in order to verify any assertion.

**The double burden :**

“When you see someone, practising for many years, unable to transform the attack and allowing themselves to be dominated by the adversary, it is because he has not understood this fault that is double heaviness.”

WANG Tsung-Yueh

Some classical texts speak of double heaviness as having the weight evenly distributed on both feet. This clearly means a neutral position the weight in the middle and stagnant. On the contrary, the Tai-chi chuan is the polarized movement and as soon as the body moves in a natural way, it manifests it.

How would you avoid double heaviness? The weight must fluctuate from one foot to the other, right? And how? Take the walk as a guide. What do you observe? The weight "crashes" on the heel, "flows" on the line of the second small toe, "rotates" towards the base of the big toe and then passes over the heel of the other foot. Note that it does not pass through the point N° 1 of the meridian of acupuncture of the kidneys... This is sometimes referred to as the anchor point, but it is located in a hollow at 2/3 of the foot length and cannot be a crossing point for walking, running or any other movement. Just look at the trace drawn by a wet bare foot on a wooden terrace to see this phenomenon.

The heel is a cushion to absorb the shock into the ground. The outer edge and small toes are provided for balance. The big toe serves as a thruster. If we put the weight on point 1 of the meridian of the kidneys, it is in static position in equilibrium on a single leg.

In truth, in the walk, the path of a foot resembles the ribbon of möbius. Look what it is in a dictionary or on the internet... In addition, the weight on the ground is an arc of circle... which, passing on the other foot, forms an eight or a lemniscate, a wave, a wave, an S! This would be the manifestation of Tai-chi, yin-yang, for the pressure under the feet. Remark: here, Tai-chi is not a circle.

For the next experiment, release the arms and back well. Propels the body with the legs and drives a wave through the spine into the arms and hands.

First, walk as if you were in a hurry while being fluid (don't confuse fluidity with joint flexibility). The arms are thrown by the movement of the bust. Observe the position of the

wrist, elbow and shoulder. As the arm goes down, the hand opens more with the wrist in extension (yang) and when it goes up it is released the wrist in flexion (yin). Now, remember the double heaviness often understood as the weight evenly distributed on both feet. What about both hands? 2 yin or 2 yang: isn't that the double heaviness? Also, doesn't the bottom lead the top? If the pressure on the ground must constantly alternate from one foot to the other, can the weight (the force) be the same in both hands simultaneously?

### **The stiffness :**

"Size controls the whole body (...) synchronize the upper part with the lower part of the body (...) make your movements continuously and without interruption."

YANG Chengfu

Stiffness manifests the immobility of two or more contiguous joints in relation to each other. Stiffness indicates that stagnation replaces life, immobility replaces fluid motion. If a wave, coming from the legs or the waist, encounters a set of excessively gassed joints, it fades or "dies" in the latter and does not communicate its dynamics to the upper limbs.

### **The alternating polarities :**

Now, I'm gonna take you on a tour of space to map out possible polarities. You must perform the movements quickly or imagine that you are doing them in the water. It may be that you see your arms all the time yin... It doesn't matter what happens next.

#### **1) The polarity on the vertical axis :**

Put your arms together along the right body. Go up and down bending your knees wide and rhythmically on a second round trip. Lift and lower your arms as if they were chains or bird wings: start with the shoulder, then the elbow and finally the wrist. What happens? The soft arms climb away from the trunk and descend back into contact. And what else? Observe... There is a wave, a wave that spreads symmetrically in both

arms. When the arms go up, the elbows and wrists are bent. We will designate this position as yin. Both arms are yin at the same time. When descending, these are extended (the inside of the arm stretches). Let's designate this as yang.

You have just discovered a polarity among others but memorizes their common point: the arm flexes and the palm rather directed inwards manifests a withdrawal on oneself and corresponds to the yin. The arm extended, unfolded and the palm more outward is said yang. If you perceive the alternation of the rise of the arms in yin posture and the descent in yang position, you notice an alternating complementarity forming a tai-chi.

#### **2) Frontal polarity (in front plane) :**



Take the same starting position and then spread the feet shoulder-width, finally putting the weight in the middle. Now push with one leg and then the other alternately by transferring your weight from one foot to the other. Let's designate the leg that stretches for propulsion as yang and the other as yin. Accentuates the wavy swinging through the spine and arms. Put your arms on the sides at shoulder height. Observes and observes... The back leans right and left. One arm goes up yin while the other goes down yang.

#### **3) The transverse polarity in symmetry (horizontal) :**



From your position with your feet spread apart, advance your torso by bombarding it with the arms opening then back it by digging it with the arms closing at a rhythm creating a wave up to the fingertips. Observes and observes. Yin-yang is symmetrical.

#### **4) Sagittal polarity (vertical plane front-back) :**

From your previous posture, lean forward and backward, arms down and up in front of you. Spread the wave of your spine into your hands. When you go up in front, they are yin. When you go down, they are yang, aren't they?

#### **5) Asymmetric (horizontal) transverse polarity :**

From the last position with your back straight, spiral your spine horizontally. Keep your arms soft and let them go around your pelvis and waist. Be careful not to over-twist the joints to avoid pinching the nerves. When your bust is facing, the arms stretch on both sides and are therefore yang. When wrapping around the waist, they are folded and yin.

Have we visited all dimensions of the space? Frontal or forehead plane, sagittal or foreback plane, transverse or horizontal plane? Yes. In fact, we visited five bio-mechanical movements. Knowing that the being,

in its construction, visits its five dimensions in a precise order, we could progress in the same way in the learning of Tai-chi chuan... but this is the subject of another chapter.

What can you conclude about the polarities experienced above? Don't you see the double burden in some plans? Yes,... there are two yin or yang arms at the same time for polarities 1, 3, 4 and 5! Double heaviness except for motion in the frontal plane bending to the right and left. For the incarnation of Tai-chi in the movements, it is imperative to move in this frontal plane!

#### **TAI CHI CHUAN COMPLETE (Full Taiji) :**

In truth, what is the general rule of Tai Chi that can apply to any part of the body? The double heaviness is having a position with two yin or two yang at the same time. Conversely, and by definition, the bio-mechanics of Tai-chi is necessarily a simultaneous yin-yang complementarity at all levels.

How could the yin-yang of the legs and weight generate double heaviness in the arms and hands if one of the main rules of Tai-chi is the fluidity driven from one place of the body to another? If the top is headed from the bottom and there is no double heaviness at the bottom, then there is no heaviness at the top either.

Example of error in the execution of Tai-chi chuan movements:

When moving from Press to Push,



the right hand stagnates in yin position while the left was yang and becomes yin. Why does one follow the rest of the body and the other not? It turns out that the right hand becomes independent, «dead». The simultaneous yin-yang that we see in the press turns into double heaviness the two hands yin in the back then the two hands yang in the push. This reveals a lack of unity, fluidity and polarity is not applied. Here are the movements respecting the yin-tang:

#### **The universal and perpetual movement :**

“When you can feel that Yin and Yang complement each other in the movements, then you can say that you have understood what the internal energy of Tai Chi Chuan is.” WANG Tsung-Yueh

You have, for the moment, visited each plane of space separately. Can a movement combine them while respecting yin-yang?

This movement is the complete Tai-chi and has no «double heaviness». This means that there is the yin at the same time as the yang, at any time and everywhere in the body, without interruption.

Isn't that the goal of the passionate practitioner?

Can it be a round trip in a straight line? No, because there is a stop to go back in the opposite direction. Is it a circle? No, because it is in one plane and is in double heaviness for the sagittal plane.

But, it's an idea...

Do the experiment:

Performs a large circle with the hands face-to-face in the frontal plane and in a naturally fluid way: there is polarity... In the sagittal plane, the hands are yin then yang at the same time... In the transverse plane (horizontal), there is polarity. Is it possible that the movements of the Tai-chi chuan are done only in the frontal and transverse planes? Perhaps, but this is not the case... And, there is a way to combine the three plans.



Not being able to be in a single plane, the movement must synthesize the five polarities... Does this remind you of something? ... , The five elements of Chinese philosophy and medicine also found in our energy alchymic tradition: earth, water, fire, metal/air and wood/ether. You may understand that the five elements are integrated into the Tai Chi... So, what is this famous totally Tai-chi movement?

Here is the answer: the eight or lemniscate, the torus, the sign of infinity in the three dimensions... Expression of the yin-yang in-interrupted force! The eight is a very ancient understanding of the universe as an essential dynamic element of life. Lemniscates are everywhere: look at the trees composed of branches, trunk and roots, animals and humans with their brains, their eyes, their nostrils, their ears. They are also found in the structure of DNA, the «Birkeland currents» of cosmic plasma . Learn about the Earth's electromagnetic field. Several methods use the eight lying down to rebalance the cerebral hemispheres.

Here's how to practice at the 8th: I suggest you put your hands together in front of you. Draw a wide horizontal eight in a flexible way with the articulations moving in waves one after the other, going up behind you to the right and left, front and back. You can do it in two directions: either up or down the middle. Continue by spreading your hands about thirty centimetres apart. There you are, making a real essential movement of Tai-chi! It is well yin-yang for hands and arms without interruption and in the three dimensions.

There are several eight that can be done in both directions. They form what I call the sphere of eight. This gives multiple possibilities to introduce these eight in any form of gestural choreography including in the forms of the Tai-chi chuan of Yang Chengfu and Yang Luchan.... Knowing that these must be

performed through all joints.

However, one of the eight is the «source» and corresponds to the one the body uses for its movements: walking and running. It is with this one, being energy channel of the Tai-chi, that you will make the technique natural and effective for health as well as for the fight.

This eight must include the opening and closing of the horizontal plane as well as the spirals inside the waves or waves of the spine and the four limbs.

Do you feel that it would take a lot of work? Yes and no. It was mainly the thought process to reach this conclusion that took a long time. Integrating the eight in the Tai-chi chuan or other sequences, it is easy enough for some, very difficult for some and impossible for some...

Remember this: every effort has its reward.

The eight also says «eight lazy» or the ribbon of möbius being the embodied movement of Tai-chi, it is guarantor of harmony. If you perform undulating movements in yin-yang symmetry with double heaviness, it is already beneficial... But, the benefits are increased tenfold during a circuit in eight.



To sum up, the true Tai Chi Chuan manifests the natural laws of polarity of the universe. This is why I translate Tai-chi chuan (Taiji quan, Taiki quan,...) by Boxing of the Supreme Polarity.

## THE FUNDAMENTAL RULES OF TAI-CHI CHUAN :

### First rule : CONTINUITY

The movement is continuous. Each joint is constantly moving: all, without exception, even those of the fingers.

### Second rule : THE POLARITE

The biomechanical polarity is manifested in the six dimensions that are: high-low, right-left (frontal), front-rear (sagittal), horizontal symmetric (transverse), horizontal asymmetric and temporal rhythm. The synthesis being a wave or wave propagating through all the joints making an eight except in the Wu-chi posture, the movements of the Opening and the Closures in which the eight are in a doite-left symmetry. In other words, it is necessary that the movement be coordinated so as to form a whole (tai chi) and to manifest yin-yang complementarity or flexion-extension.

### Rule 3 : NO EXTREMES

The five «whips» of the spine and the limbs each form an S or an arc. The five «whips» are never in a straight posture except in the Wu-chi posture before and after the start of the movements of the sequence. Also, fluidity implies the fact that yang persists within the yin and vice versa. The weight never goes completely either front or behind. The eight being made by the pressure exerted under the feet, the weight, it, follows a shorter path avoiding the extreme yin or yang. The pressure and weight under the feet does not pass on the N°1 of the kidney meridian. The weight fluctuates from the rear forefoot to the heel of the front foot as long as there is no movement. This avoids extreme yin or yang (and imbalance in fighting or pushing hands, etc.).

### Fourth rule : INTEGRATED INTERNAL POLARITES

The practitioner must evolve to integrate and balance the energy polarities that are feminine-masculine and earth-sky. For this, the mind (shen) must be centered at the energetic heart and distributed both inside and outside the body. The shen is therefore everywhere. (See article

in No. 6 of Tai-chi Mag.)

By mastering the four fundamental rules in a body art, one is a master in Tai Chi...

Chuan (quan) translating into boxing, Tai-chi master chuan means that these rules are also integrated into the art of fighting.

To start your training, if you want, resumes the eight lying down with hands joined then separated but always parallel palms and soft wrists in yin-yang. In the second time, perform the eight with the pressure of the feet on the ground during your sequence (taolu, kata...).

Fabrice Hohn, 2015  
<http://taichichuan.yoga.free.fr>

N.B. (later addition to the published article): The installation of corrugated movements in 4 planes plus the axis (5 base movements) exists in very few schools and perhaps partially most of the time.

Moreover, as proof to the contrary, and compared to my current knowledge, the application of the eight-motion in Tai-chi chuan is unique and exists only in my teaching.

