

EXPLAINING TAIJI PRINCIPLES (TAIJI FA SHUO)

Posted on [September 14, 2013](#)

太極法說
EXPLAINING TAIJI PRINCIPLES
楊班侯
attributed to Yang Banhou
[circa 1875]

[translation by Paul Brennan, Sep, 2013]



[On the front cover, there are two titles for the manuscript and five personal stamps:]

太極法說〔吳愛仁堂〕
Explaining Taiji Principles (below which is placed a Wu Airen “property of” stamp)
吳鑑泉〔吳鑑泉章〕
Wu Jianquan [signature] (with his stamp)

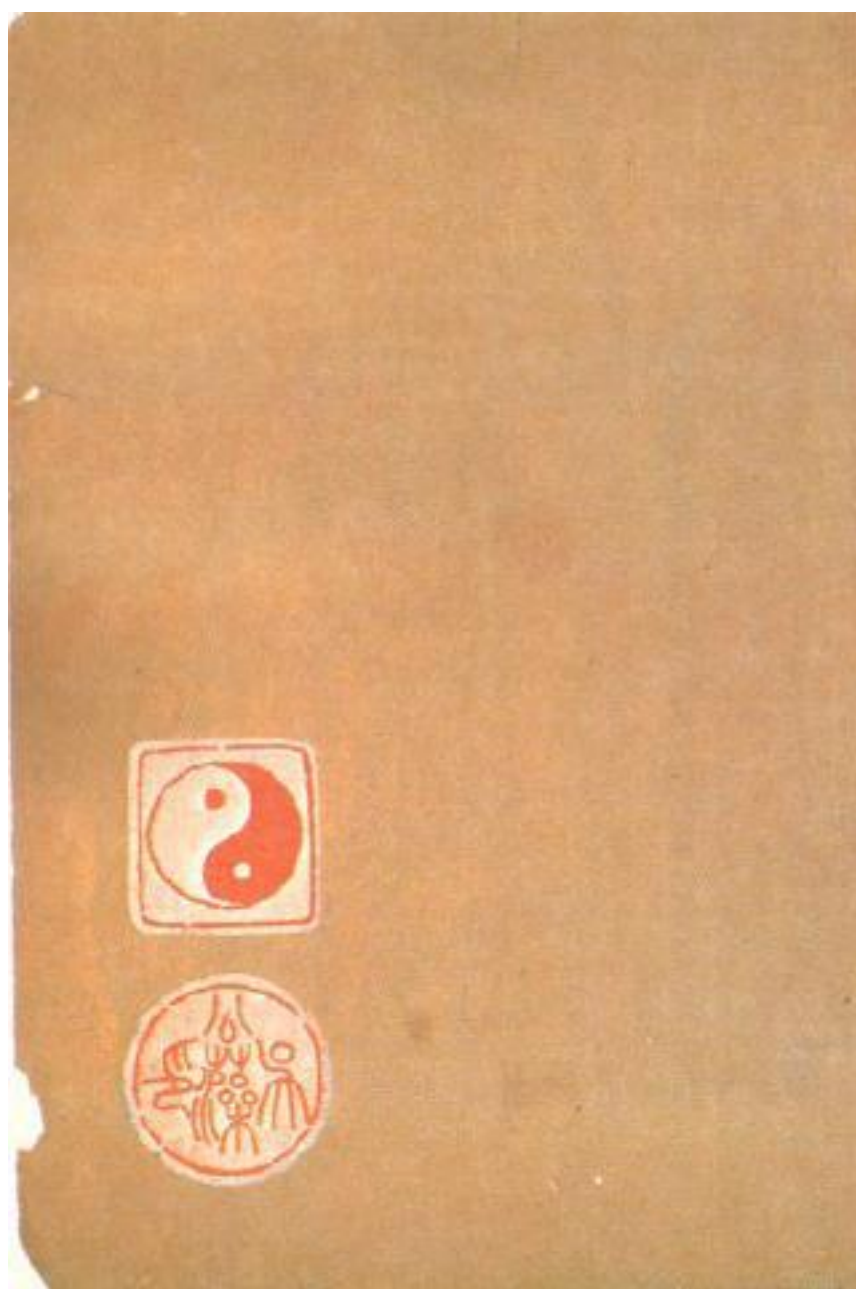
吳氏家傳太極拳体用全書〔吳公藻〕

Complete Book of Wu Style Taiji Boxing Theory & Practice (with Wu Gongzao's stamp)

黎鐸珍藏 1948〔黎鐸之印〕〔黎鐸〕

“For Li Duo to Cherish” [in Wu Gongzao's handwriting] (with Li Duo's stamp, below which is “1948” written over a different Li Duo stamp)

[As to Li's role, I was contacted by YL Yip, son of a disciple of Wu Gongyi, who has this to say: “Mr. Li was a disciple of the Wu family and a rich man living in Macao. In 1940s, the Wu family in Hong Kong was so poor that they gave this book to Li for a big sum of money. Thus you can see his stamp of collection, which is a ritual of all Chinese book lovers and collectors. In 1979, when Wu Gongzao was released from prison and came to Hong Kong, Li returned the book free of charge. When Gongzao got hold of the book, tears rushed out of his eyes and his hands shook.”]

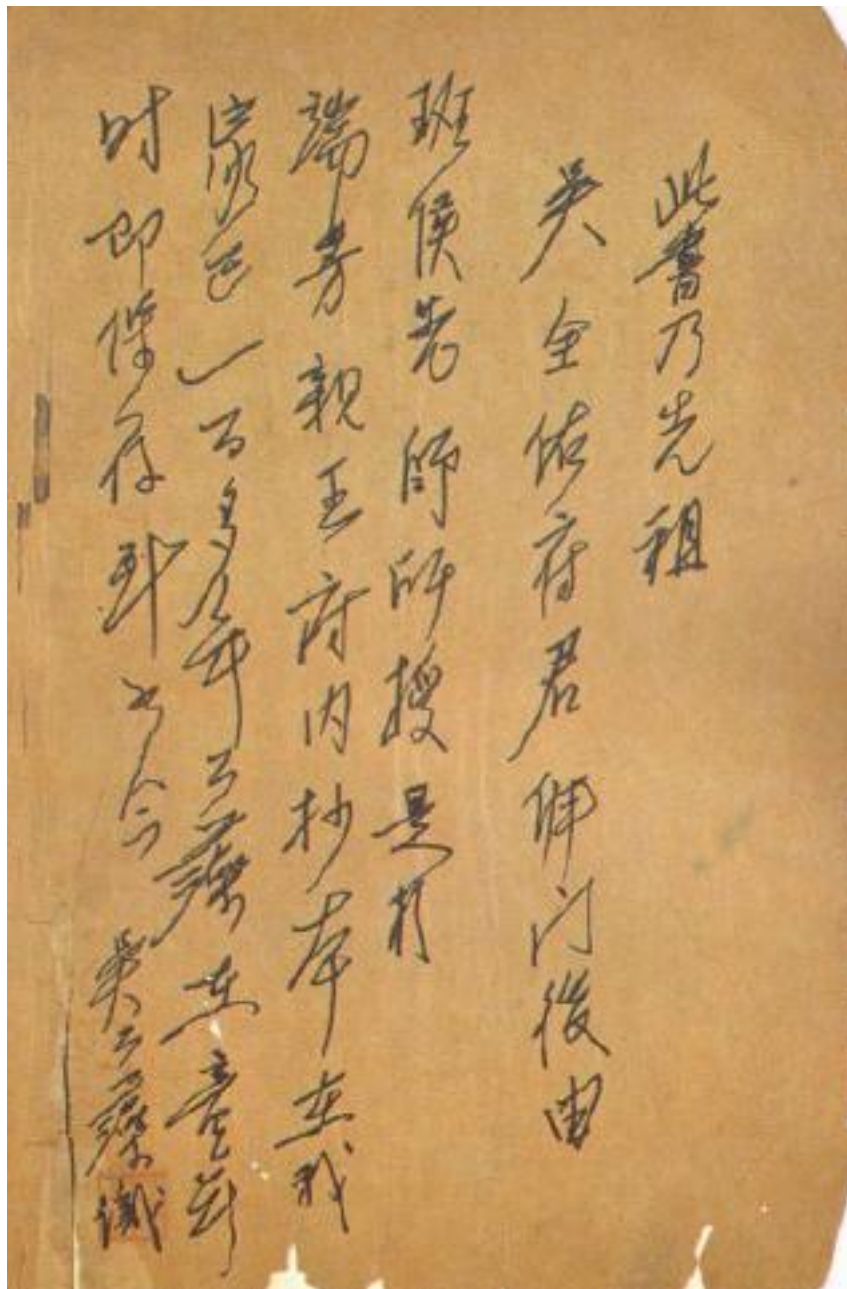


[On the inside of the back cover is:]

〔吳公藻印〕

(a different Wu Gongzao stamp)

[The personal stamps appear also upon three other pages of the manuscript. On the first page of the contents and last page of the main text are the Wu Jianquan stamp, followed by the Wu Gongzao stamp, then both Li Duo stamps. The Wu Airen stamp appears below the other stamps on the first contents page, but is crowded out by the spacing of the stamps on the last page of the main text and so is placed on its own on the first page of the main text.]



[On the inside of the front cover is this small introduction:]

此書乃先祖吳全佑府君拜門後由斑侯先師所授是於端芳親王府內抄本在我家已一百多年公藻在童年時即保存到如今

吳公藻識

After my grandfather Wu Quanyou became a formal disciple, Yang Banhou gave him this manual. It is a handwritten manuscript that was made in Duan Fang's royal mansion. It has been in our family for over a hundred years. I have preserved it up to now since my childhood.

– comment by Wu Gongzao

[This Yang family manuscript exists in two versions, placed side by side below. The pages on the left are the version owned by the Wu family, first shared publicly in its entirety in 1985, and the black & white photocopies on the right are of the version owned by the Yang family itself, first shared publicly in 1993. (Only the Wu family's version is titled and has a cover, intro, and personal stamps.)

To date these documents, all we really have to go on is Wu Gongzao's comment of "more than a hundred years". But when did he scribble his introductory note? The Wu family's document was included as an extra section for a 1985 reprint of a Taiji manual Wu Gongzao had published in 1935, but Wu Gongzao had died in 1983, leaving the reprint to be published posthumously. Going by Jin Yong's postscript to the reprint – dated Jan, 1980 – we are probably safe in assuming the reprint version of the book was already in preparation in 1979 and that Wu Gongzao's introductory note was made around that time. And if we then assume Wu Gongzao was being accurate when he said "more than a hundred years", the manuscript would be from no later than 1878. Yang Luchan, Wu Quanyou's first teacher, passed away in 1872. The manuscript probably cannot be from any earlier than that or Wu Gongzao would more likely have been told that Yang Luchan was to be credited as well as Yang Banhou. It is even possible that the loss of Yang Luchan may itself have served as a motivator for

preserving Yang family teachings and that his passing pushed the manuscript into being. Making a simple compromise between the two dates of 1872 and 1878, I will provisionally guess that the manuscript is from the thereabouts of 1875.

One version was evidently copied from the other. This is demonstrated by the fact that there are some idiosyncrasies of text that are irrationally preserved. For instance, the title for section 13 in the contents uses 体, whereas the title for 13 in the body of the text uses the full version of the character: 體. All other occasions of 體 are written as the variant version 𠂔, except for one peculiar instance near the end of 13's text, where 體 is used instead of 𠂔. This situation is identical in both documents. A more mindful act of re-rendering the text would simply put the more consistent 𠂔 in the places where 体 and 體 were being used in the original document, but what appears instead is the loyalty to words rather than text that is the hallmark of mere expedient copying. This indicates the process of copying the text was not done slowly and editorially in order to make a tidier version of the manuscript, but was instead the act of quickly copying words from one set of paper to another simply for the sake of making a copy, resulting in what is actually a sloppier version of the manuscript.

As can be seen from examining both versions, they are clearly by the same hand, and so were probably not made very far apart in time. In which case, how close in time could they be? Taking up a pen and copying the text into a notebook myself, I found that to maintain a decent balance between efficiency and legibility, I averaged about twenty minutes to copy out a page of the manuscript. A more skilled calligrapher ought to be able to do it in about half the time, but a half dozen pages per hour still adds up to a full day's work. I think it is doubtful these two documents were produced on the same day, but it is possible that one was copied from the other the very day after the first was completed.

Even if they really happened to be made only a day apart, we can still reasonably conclude which of the two is the earlier document. When going through the process of simply copying out words, it is unusual to add words but very natural to accidentally leave a few words out. There are more occasions of words appearing in the Wu document being left out in the Yang document than the reverse. A less mindful process of copying out words also tends to generate more incorrect words than is the case with the thoughtful writing of an original document. Again the Yang document has more mistaken words than the Wu document. Both of these things indicate the Yang document was most likely copied from the Wu document, which would make the Wu document the earlier of the two. (*I have included a list of the textual variations further below.) It remains open to speculation as to why the Wu family should have the earlier version and the Yang family possess only a copy, and whether there were still earlier versions than the Wu version, or whether there were any further copies made in between the Wu and Yang versions and after.

Since it appears to be the authoritative draft of the two, my typed transcription of the Chinese text below is entirely from the Wu document. The punctuation indicators appearing in the Yang family's copy are absent from the Wu family's version and so must have been added by a later hand, possibly a great deal later, and therefore in the interests of authenticity I have not included them in the transcription.]

目錄	八門五步	八門五步用法	固本分明法	粘黏連隨	頂區丟抗	對待無病	對待用法守中	身形腰頂	太極圖
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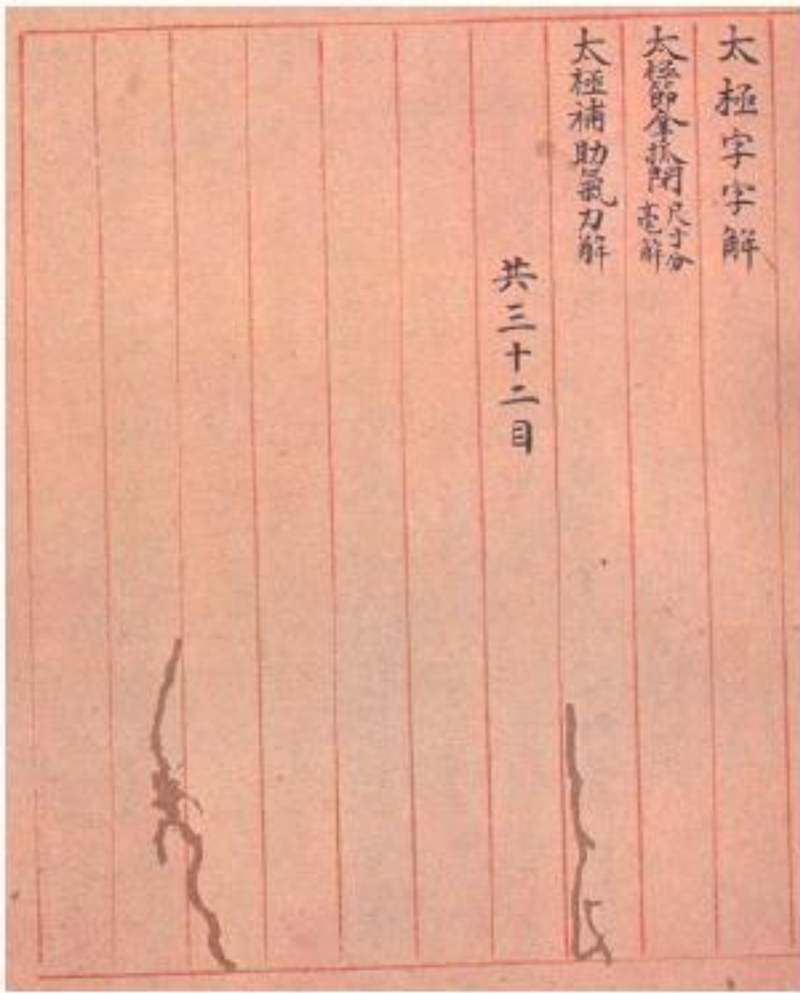
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太極進退不功	太極上下名天地	太極人盤八字功	太極休用解	太極文武解	太極懂勁解	八平三勢長拳解	太極陰陽顛倒解	人身太極解	太極文武武解
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太極下乘武事解	太極正功解	太極輕重浮沉解	太極四陽解	太極平準隨解	太極四時五氣解	太極血氣根本解	太極力氣解	太極尺寸分毫解	太極腰膝筋穴解
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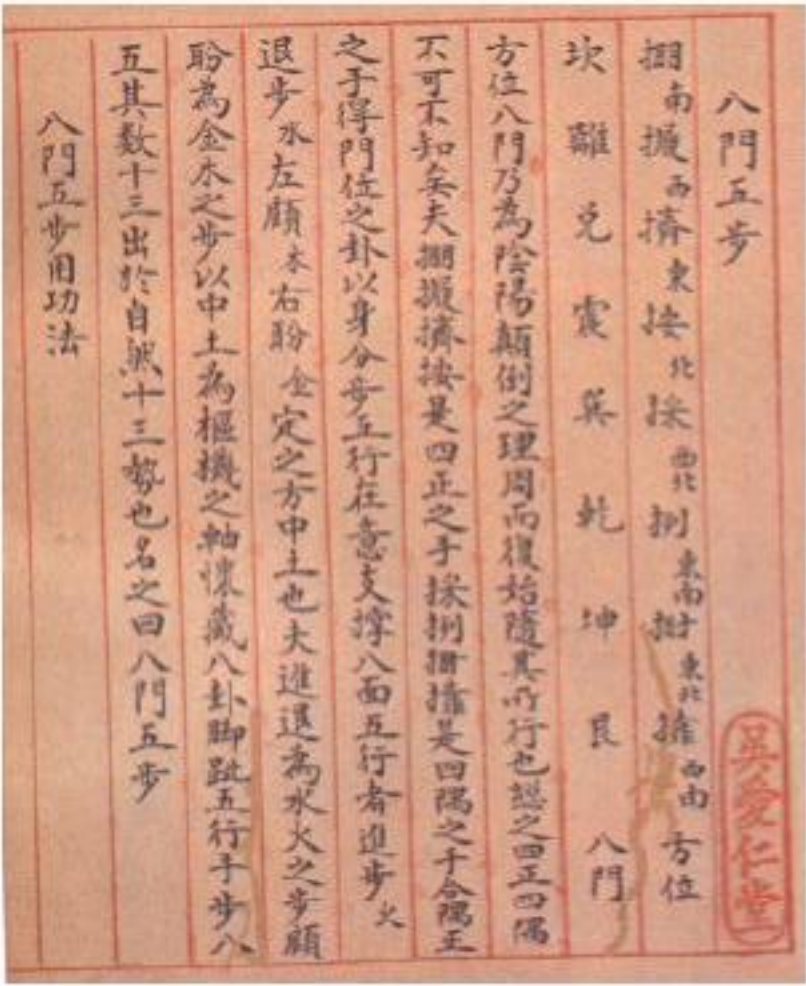
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共三十二目

(Thirty-Two Sections in Total)

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八卦五行是人生成固有之良必先知覺運動四字之本由知覺運動得之後而后方能懂動由懂動後自能接及神明然用功之初要知知覺運動雖固有之良亦甚難得於我也

固有分明法

蓋人降生之初目能視耳能聽鼻能聞口能食顏色聲音香臭五味皆天然知覺固有之良其手足蹈於四肢之能皆天然運動之良思及此是人熟無因人性近習遠失迷固有要想還我國有非乃武無以尋運動之根由非乃文無以得知覺之本原是乃運動而知覺也夫運動而知覺不運不覺不動不知運動極則為動覺感則為知動知者易運動者難先求自己

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知覺運動得之於身自能知人要先求知人恐失於自己不可不知此理也夫而後懂動然也

粘粘連隨

粘者提上拔高之謂也

粘者留戀縫綫之謂也

連者合己無離之謂也

隨者彼走此應之謂也

要知人之知覺運動非明粘粘連隨不可斯粘粘連隨之功大亦甚細矣

頂區丟抗

頂者出頭之謂也

區者不及之謂也

丟者離開之謂也

抗者太過之謂也

難先求自己知覺運動得之於身自能知人要先求知人恐失於自己不可不知此理也夫而後懂動然也

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要知于此四字之病不但粘粘連隨斷不明知覺運動也初學對手不可不知也更不可不去此病所難者粘粘連隨而不許頂區丟抗是所不易矣

對待無病

頂區丟抗失於對待也所以為之病者既失粘粘連隨何以獲知覺運動既不知己焉能知人所謂對待者不以頂區丟抗相對於人也要以粘粘連隨等待於人也能如是不但無對待之病知覺運動自然得矣可以進於懂動之功矣

對待用功法守中土

定之方中足有根先明四正進退身棚擺擠按自四手須費功夫

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定之方中足有根先明四正進退身棚擺擠按自四手須費功夫

得其真，身形腰項皆可以粘連隨意氣均運動知覺來相應，神是君位骨肉臣，分明火候七十二，天然乃武蓋乃文。

身形腰項

身形腰項豈可無，缺一何必費工夫，腰項窮研生不已，身形順我自伸舒，舍此真理終何極，十年數載亦糊塗。

太極圖

退園容易進園難，不離腰項後與前，所難中土不離位，退易進難仔細研，此為動功非站定，倚身進退並比肩，能如水磨推急緩，雲龍風虎象周旋，要用天盤從此覓，久而久之出天然。

功夫得其真，身形腰項皆可以粘連隨意氣均運動知覺來相應，神是君位骨肉臣，分明火候七十二，天然乃武蓋乃文。

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太極進退不已功

棚進擺退自然理，陰陽水火相既濟，先知四手得來真，採捌掛撐方可許，四隅從此演出來，十三勢架永無已，所以因之名長拳，任君開展與收斂，千萬不可離太極。

太極上下名天地

四手上下分天地，採捌掛撐由有去，採天撐地相應求，何患上下不既濟，若使採捌習遠離，迷了乾坤道歎惜，此說亦明天地盤，進用掛捌歸八字。

太極人盤八字歌

八卦正隅八字歌，十三之數不幾何，幾何若是無平準，丟了

之出天然

太極進退不已功

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太極人盤八字歌

腰項氣歎哦，不斷要言只兩字，君臣骨肉細琢磨，功夫內外均不斷，對待數兒豈錯他。

對待於人出自然，由茲往復於地天，但求舍己無深病，上下進退永連綿。

太極體用辭

理為精氣神之體，精氣神為身之體，身為心之用，効力為身之用，心身有一定之主宰者，理也，精氣神有一定之主宰者，意識也，識者天道，識之者人道，俱不外意念須臾之間，要知天人同體之理，自得日月流行之氣，其氣意之流行，精神自隱微乎理矣，夫而后言乃武乃文，乃聖乃神則得。

八卦正隅八字歌，十三之數不幾何，幾何若是無平準，丟了腰項氣歎哦，不斷要言只兩字，君臣骨肉細琢磨，功夫內外均不斷，對待數兒豈錯他。

太極體用辭

理為精氣神之體，精氣神為身之體，身為心之用，効力為身之用，心身有一定之主宰者，理也，精氣神有一定之主宰者，意識也，識者天道，識之者人道，俱不外意念須臾之間，要知天人同體之理，自得日月流行之氣，其氣意之

若時以武事論之於心身用之於勁力仍歸於道之本也故不得獨以末技云爾

勁由於筋力由於骨如以持物論之有力能執數百斤是骨節皮毛之外操也故有硬力如以全體之有勁似不能持幾斤是精氣之內壯也雖然若是功成後猶有妙出於硬力者修身體育之道有然也

太極文武解

文者體也武者用也文功在武用於精氣神也為之體育武功得文體於心身也為之武事夫文武尤有火候之謂在故卷得其時中體育之卒也文武使於對待之際在昔

流行精神自隱微乎理矣夫而后言乃武乃文乃聖乃神則得矣若特以武事論之於心身用之於勁力仍歸於道之本也故不得獨以末技云爾

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太極文武解

文者體也武者用也文功在武用於精氣神也為之體育武功得文體於心身也為之武事夫文武尤有火候

發當其可者武事之根也故云武事文為柔軟體操也精氣神之筋勁武事武用剛硬武事也心身之骨力也文無武之豫備為之有體無用武無文之侶伴為之有用無體如獨木難支孤掌不鳴不惟體育武事之功事一諸如此理也文者內理也武者外數也有外數無文理必為血氣之勇失於本來面目欺敵必敗爾有文理無外數徒思安靜之學未知用的採戰差微則亡耳自用於人文武二字之解豈可不解哉

太極懂勁解

自己懂勁接及神明為之文成而后採戰身中之陰七十有

之謂在故卷得其時中體育之本也文武使於對待之際在舊發當其可者武事之根也故云武事文為柔軟體操也精氣神之筋勁武事武用剛硬武事也心身之骨力也文無武之豫備為之有體無用武無文之侶伴為之有用無體如獨木難支孤掌不鳴不惟體育武事之功事一諸如此理也文者內理也武者外數也有外數無文理必為血氣之勇失於本來面目欺敵必敗爾有文理無外數徒思安靜之學未知用的採戰差微則亡耳自用於人文武二字之解豈可不解哉

太極懂勁解

二無時不然陽得其陰水火既濟乾坤交泰性命葆真矣於人懂勁視聽之際遇而變化自得曲誠之妙形著明於不勞運動覺知也功至此可為攸往咸宜無須有心之運用耳

八五十三勢長拳解

自己用功一勢一式用成之後合之為長治不斷周而復始所以名長拳也萬不得有一定之架子恐日久入於滑拳也又恐入於硬拳也決不可失其綿軟周身往復精神意氣之存用久自然貫通無往不至何堅不摧也於人對待四手當先亦自八門五步而來踏四手一碾磨進退四手中四手上下四手三才四手由下乘長拳四手起大開大展

自己懂勁接及神明為之文成而后採戰身中之陰七十有二無時不然陽得其陰水火既濟乾坤交泰性命葆真矣於人懂勁視聽之際遇而變化自得曲誠之妙形著明於不勞運動覺知也功至此可為攸往咸宜無須有心之運用耳

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煉至緊湊屈伸自由之功則升之中上成矣。

太極陰陽顛倒解

陽乾天日火離放出發對開臣肉用氣身武_命方呼上進陽陰坤地月水坎卷入蓄待合君骨體理心文_性圓吸下退正蓋顛倒之理水火二字詳之則可明如火炎上水潤下者水能使火在下而用水在上則為顛倒然非有法治之則不得矣。辟如水入鼎內而治火之上鼎中之水得火以然之不但水不能下潤藉火氣水必有溫時火雖炎上得鼎以隔之是為有極之地不使炎上炎火無止息亦不使潤下之水永涸漏此所為水火既濟之理也顛倒之理也若使任其

對待四手當先亦自八門五步而來站四子、一碾磨進退四子中四子上下四子三才四手由下系長拳四子起大開大展煉至緊湊屈伸自由之功則升之中上成矣。

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火炎上來潤下必至火水必分為二則為火水未濟也故云分而為二合之為一之理也故云一而二而一總斯理為三天地人也明此陰陽顛倒之理則可與言道知道不可須臾離則可與言人能以人弘道知道不遠人則可與言天地同體上天下地人在其中矣苟能參天容地與日月合其明與五岳四瀆華朽與四時之錯行與草木並枯榮明鬼神之吉凶知人事與哀則可言乾坤為一大天地人為一小天地也夫如人之身心致知格物於天地之知能則可言人之良知良能若思不失固有其功用浩然正氣直養無害攸久無疆矣所謂人身生成一小天地者天也性也

為有極之地不使炎上炎火無止息亦不使潤下之水永涸漏此所為水火既濟之理也顛倒之理也若使任其火炎上水潤下必至火水必分為二則為火水未濟也故云分而為二合之為一之理也故云一而二而一總斯理為三天地人也明此陰陽顛倒之理則可與言道知道不可須臾離則可與言人能以人弘道知道不遠人則可與言天地同體上天下地人在其中矣苟能參天容地與日月合其明與五岳四瀆華朽與四時之錯行與草木並枯榮明鬼神之吉凶知人事與哀則可言乾坤為一大天地人為一小天地也夫如人之身心致知格物於天地之知能則可

地也命也人也虛靈也神也若不明之者烏能配天地為三乎然非盡性立命窮神達化之功胡為乎來哉。

人身太極解

人之周身心為一身之主宰主宰太極也二目為日月即兩儀也頭像天足像地人中之人及中脘合之為三才也四肢四象也腎水心火肝木肺金脾土皆屬陰膀胱水小腸火胆木大腸金胃土皆陽矣茲為內也顧下火地間承漿水左耳金右耳木兩命門也茲為外也神出於心目眼為心之苗精出於腎腦腎為精之本氣出於肺但氣為肺之原視思明心動神流也聽思聰腦動腎滑也

古人之良知良能若思不失固有其功用浩然正氣直養無害攸久無疆矣所謂人身生成一小天地者天也性也地也命也人也虛靈也神也若不明之者烏能配天地為三乎然非盡性立命窮神達化之功胡為乎來哉。

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鼻之息香臭口之呼吸出入水鹹木酸土辣火苦金甜及言語聲音木憂火焦金潤土瑱水漂鼻息口呼吸之味皆氣之往來肺之門戶肝胆震之風雷發之聲音出入五味此言口目鼻舌神意使之六合以破六慾也此內也手足肩膝肘膀亦使六合以正六道也此外也眼耳鼻口大小便肚臍外七竅也喜怒哀思悲恐驚內七情也七情皆以心為主喜心怒肝憂脾悲肺恐腎驚膽思小腸怕膀胱愁胃慮大腸此內也夫離南正午火心經坎北正子水腎經震東正卯木肝經兌西正酉金肺經乾西北隅金大腸化水坤西南隅土脾化土巽東南隅胆木化土艮東北隅

於心目眼為心之苗精出於腎腦腎為精之本氣出於膽氣為肺之原視思明心動神流也聰思聰腦動腎滑也臭之息香臭口之呼吸出入水鹹木酸土辣火苦金甜及言語聲音木憂火焦金潤土瑱水漂鼻息口呼吸之味皆氣之往來肺之門戶肝胆震之風雷發之聲音出入五味此言口目鼻舌神意使之六合以破六慾也此內也手足肩膝肘膀亦使六合以正六道也此外也眼耳鼻口大小便肚臍外七竅也喜怒哀思悲恐驚內七情也七情皆以心為主喜心怒肝憂脾悲肺恐腎驚膽思小腸怕膀胱愁胃慮大腸此內也夫離南正午火心經坎北正子水

胃土化火此內八卦也外八卦者二四為肩六八為足上九下一左三右七也坎一坤二震三巽四中五乾六兌七艮八離九此九宮也內九宮亦如此表裏者乙肝左肋化金通肺甲胆化土通脾丁心化木中胆通肝丙小腸化水通腎己脾化土通胃戊胃化火通心後背前胃山澤通氣辛肺右肋化水通腎庚大腸化金通肺癸腎下部化火通心壬膀胱化木通肝此十天干之內外也十二地支亦如此之內外也明斯理則可與言修身之道矣

太極分文武三成解

蓋言道者非自修身無由得也然又分為三乘之修法來

腎經震東正卯木肝經兌西正酉金肺經乾西北隅金大腸化水坤西南隅土脾化土巽東南隅胆木化土艮東北隅胃土化火此內八卦也外八卦者二四為肩六八為足上九下一左三右七也坎一坤二震三巽四中五乾六兌七艮八離九此九宮也內九宮亦如此表裏者乙肝左肋化金通肺甲胆化土通脾丁心化木中胆通肝丙小腸化水通腎己脾化土通胃戊胃化火通心後背前胃山澤通氣辛肺右肋化水通腎庚大腸化金通肺癸腎下部化火通心壬膀胱化木通肝此十天干之內外也十二地支亦如此之內外也明斯理則可與言修身之道矣

者成也上乘即大成也下乘即小成也中乘即誠之者成也法分三修成功一也文修於內武修於外體育內也武事外也其修法內外表裏成功集大成即上乘也由體育之文而得武事之武或由武事之武而得體育之文即中乘也然獨知體育不入武事而成者或專武事不為體育而成者即小成也

太極下乘武事解

太極之武事外操柔軟內含堅剛而求柔軟柔軟之於外久而久之自得內之堅剛非有心之堅剛實有心之柔軟也所難者內要含著堅剛而不施外終柔軟而迎敵以柔軟而應

蓋言道者非自修身無由得也然又分為三乘之修法上乘者成也上乘即大成也下乘即小成也中乘即誠之者成也法分三修成功一也文修於內武修於外體育內也武事外也其修法內外表裏成功集大成即上乘也由體育之文而得武事之武或由武事之武而得體育之文即中乘也然獨知體育不入武事而成者或專武事不為體育而成者即小成也

太極下乘武事解

太極之武事外操柔軟內含堅剛而求柔軟柔軟之於外

堅剛使堅剛盡化無有矣其功何以得乎要非粘連隨已成自得運動知覺方為懂勁而后神而明之化境極矣夫四兩撥千斤之妙功不及化境將何以能是所謂懂粘連得其視聽輕靈之巧耳

太極正功解

太極者元也無論內外上下左右不離此元元也太極者方也無論內外上下左右不離此方也元之出入方之進退隨方就元之往來也方為開展元為緊湊方元規矩之至其就能出此以外哉如此得心應手仰高鑽堅神乎其神見隱顯微明而且明生不已欲罷不能

久而久之自得內之堅剛非有心之堅剛實有心之柔軟也所難者內要含蓄堅剛而不施外要柔軟而迎敵以柔軟而應堅剛使堅剛盡化無有矣其功何以得乎要非粘連隨已成自得運動知覺方為懂勁而后神而明之化境極矣夫四兩撥千斤之妙功不及化境將何以能是所謂懂粘連得其視聽輕靈之巧耳

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太極輕重浮沉解

雙重為病于於填實與沉不同也雙沉不為病自爾騰虛與重不易也雙浮為病祇如漂渺與輕不例也雙輕不為病天然清靈與浮不等也半輕半重不為病偏輕偏重為病半者半有著落也所以不為病偏者偏無著落也所以為病偏無著落必失方圓半有著落豈出方圓半浮半沉為病失於不及也偏浮偏沉失於太過也半重偏重滯而不正也半輕偏輕靈而不圓也半沉偏沉虛而不正也半浮偏浮茫而不圓也夫雙輕不近於浮則為輕靈雙沉不近於重則為難處故曰上手輕重半有著落則為

之至其就能出此以外哉如此得心應手仰高鑽堅神乎其神見隱顯微明而且明生不已欲罷不能

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平手除此三者之外皆為病手蓋內之虛靈不昧能致於外氣之清明流行乎肢體也若不窮研輕重浮沉之手徒勞振井不及泉之數耳然有方圓四正之手表裏精粗無不到則已極大成又何云四隅出方圓矣所謂方而圓圓而方超乎象外得其象中之上手也

太極四隅解

四正即四方也所謂擗捩擠按也初不知方能始圓方圓復始之理無已焉能出隅之手矣緣人外之肢體內之神氣弗得輕靈方圓四正之功始出輕重浮沉之病則有隅矣譬如半重偏重滯而不正自然為採捩擗捩之隅手或雙重填實

半浮偏浮茫而不圓也夫雙輕不近於浮則為輕靈雙沉不近於重則為難處故曰上手輕重半有著落則為平手除此三者之外皆為病手蓋內之虛靈不昧能致於外氣之清明流行乎肢體也若不窮研輕重浮沉之手徒勞振井不及泉之數耳然有方圓四正之手表裏精粗無不到則已極大成又何云四隅出方圓矣所謂方而圓圓而方超乎象外得其象中之上手也

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亦出陽手也。病多之手，不得已以陽手扶之，而歸圓中，方正之手，雖無至底者，肘靠亦及此，以補其所以云爾。春後功夫能致上來者，亦須採掇而仍歸大中至正矣。是四隅之所用者，因失體而補缺云云。

太極平準腰頂解

頂如準，故云頂頭懸也。而手即平左右之盤也。腰即平之根株也。立如平準，所謂輕重浮沉，分厘毫釐，則偏顯然矣。有準頂頭懸，腰之根下株尾闕至白門也。上下一條線，全憑兩手轉變，換取分毫尺寸，自己辨車輪兩命門一畫接又轉，心令氣旗使，自然隨我，便滿身輕利者，金剛羅漢煉對待。

解輕靈方圓四正之功，始出輕重浮沉之病，則有隅矣。辟如早重偏重滯而不正，自然為採掇掛靠之隅手，或雙重填實，亦出隅手也。病多之手，不得已以隅手扶之，而歸圓中，方正之手，雖然至底者，肘靠亦及此，以補其所以云爾。春後功夫能致上來者，亦須採掇而仍歸大中至正矣。是四隅之所用者，因失體而補缺云云。

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有往來，是早或是晚，合則放發去，不必凌霄霄，涵養有少，一氣哈而遠，口授須秘傳，開門見中天。

太極四時五氣解圖

夏火呵南

北吹水冬

呼土中央

春木震東 秋金兌西

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春木震東 秋金兌西

太極血氣根本解
血為營，氣為衛，血流行於內，膜絡氣流行於骨，筋脈，骨甲為骨之餘，髮毛為血之餘，血旺則髮毛盛，氣足則筋甲壯，故血氣之勇力出於骨，皮毛之外壯，氣血之體用出於內，筋甲之內壯，氣以血之盈虛，血以氣之消長，消長盈虛，周而復始，終身用之，不能盡者矣。

太極力氣解

氣走於膜絡筋脈，力出於血肉皮骨，故有力者，皆外壯於皮骨，形也有氣者，是內壯於筋脈象也。氣血功於內，血氣功於外，壯要之明於氣血二字之功能，自知力氣之由來矣。知

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氣力之所以然自能用力行氣之分別行氣於筋脈用力於皮膚大不相侔也

太極尺寸分毫解

功夫先煉開展後煉緊湊開展成而得之纔講緊湊緊湊得成纔講尺寸分毫由尺寸之功成而後能寸住分住毫住此所謂尺寸分毫之理也明矣然尺必十寸寸必十分分必十毫其數在焉故云對待者數也知其數則能得尺寸分毫也要知其數非秘授而能量之者哉

太極膜脈筋穴解

節膜拿脈抓筋開穴此四功由尺寸分毫得之後而求之膜

力之所以然自能用力行氣之分別行氣於筋脈用力於皮膚大不相侔也

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太極膜脈筋穴解

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若節之血不周流脈若拿之氣難行走若抓之身無主地穴若開之神昏氣暗抓膜節之半死申脈拿之似亡單筋抓之勁斷死穴開之無生提之氣血精神若無身何有主也如能節拿抓開之功非得點傳不可

太極字字解

推柔推打於己按摩推拿於己開合升降於己此十二字皆用子也屈伸動靜於己起落急緩於己閃還撩了於己此十二字於己氣也於人手也轉換進退於己也顧盼前後於己也即瞻前眴後左顧右盼也此八字關乎神矣斷接俯仰於己也此四字關乎意動也接關乎神氣也俯仰關乎手足也動

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斷意不斷意斷神可接動意神俱斷則俯仰矣手足無著落耳俯為一叩仰為一反而已矣不使叩反非斷而復接不可對待之字以俯仰為重時刻在心身手足不使斷之無接則不能俯仰也求其斷接之能非見隱顯微不可隱微似斷而未斷見顯似接而未接接斷接其意心身體神氣極於隱顯又何慮不粘黏連隨哉

太極節拿抓開尺寸分毫解

對待之功既得尺寸分毫於手則可量之矣然不論節拿抓開之手易若節膜拿脈抓筋開穴則難非自尺寸分毫量之不可得也節不量由按而得膜拿不量由摩

接勁意神俱斷則俯仰矣手足無著落耳俯為一叩仰為一反而已矣不使叩反非斷而復接不可對待之字以俯仰為重時刻在心身手足不使斷之無接則不能俯仰也求其斷接之能非見隱顯微不可隱微似斷而未斷見顯似接而未接接斷接其意心身體神氣極於隱顯又何慮不粘黏連隨哉

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八門五步

[1] THE EIGHT GATES & FIVE STEPS

方位 八門

position / gate:

棚 南 坎

warding off – S / ☵

捋 西 離

rolling back – W / ☲

擠 東 兌

pressing – E / ☱

按 北 震

pushing – N / ☳

採 西北 巽

plucking – NW / ☴

捩 東南 乾

rending – SE / ☰

肘 東北 坤

elbowing – NE / ☷

靠 西南 艮

bumping – SW / ☶

方位八門乃為陰陽顛倒之理周而復始隨其所行也總之四正四隅不可不知矣夫棚捋擠按是四正之手採捩肘靠是四隅之手合隅正之手得門位之卦以身分步五行在意支撐八面五行者進步火退步水左顧木右盼金定之方中土也夫進退為水火之步顧盼為金木之步以中土為樞機之軸懷藏八卦脚趾五行手步八五其数十三出於自然十三勢也名之曰八門五步

The positions of the eight gates are based on the principle of the passive and active aspects inverting each other, cycling round and round, following each other in their process. All of the four primary techniques [corresponding to the cardinal directions] and four secondary techniques [corresponding to the corner

directions] must be understood. Warding off, rolling back, pressing, and pushing are the four primary techniques. Plucking, rending, elbowing, and bumping are the four secondary techniques. The combining of these cardinals and corners thus positions the trigrams.

The body makes its steps according to the five elements, bracing in all directions. The five elements are: advance (fire), retreat (water), step to the left (wood), step to the right (metal), and stay in the center (earth). Advancing and retreating are the steppings of water and fire, left and right are the steppings of metal and wood, and the central earth is the axis for all of them.

Embrace the eight trigrams as you step through the five elements. Techniques plus steps equals eight plus five, amounting to thirteen, naturally expressed as the Thirteen Dynamics, known as the Eight Gates & Five Steps.

八門五步用功法

[2] ON THE TRAINING METHOD FOR THE EIGHT GATES & FIVE STEPS

八卦五行是人生成固有之良必先明知覺運動四字之本由知覺運動得之後而后方能懂勁由懂勁後自能接及神明然用功之初要知知覺運動雖固有之良亦甚難得之於我也

The eight trigrams and five elements are innate within us. You must first understand that they are based in these four terms: perception, realization, activation, action. [These four terms amount to “moving with awareness”. This is a breakdown of four words – 知, 覺, 運, 動 – which would typically, and especially so for modern Chinese speakers, only be considered as two terms: 知覺 and 運動. To break movement (運動) and awareness (知覺) into their component parts results in: moving = the activation (運) of movement + the act (動) of moving, and awareness = the perception (覺) that something is + the realization (知) of what it is. In short, moving with awareness. This idea is further elaborated upon in the next section, where the purpose of breaking down the two terms into four becomes more clear.]

Once you have achieved moving with awareness, then you will be able to identify energies. Once you can identify energies, then you will be able to be miraculous. But in the beginning of training, you should understand moving with awareness. Although it is innate, it is nevertheless hard to achieve within oneself.

固有分明法

[3] OUR INNATE ABILITY TO DISTINGUISH

蓋人降生之初目能視耳能聽鼻能聞口能食顏色聲音香臭五味皆天然知覺固有之良其手舞足蹈於四肢之能皆天然運動之良思及此是人熟無因人性近習遠失迷固有要想還我固有非乃武無以尋運動之根由非乃文無以得知覺之本原是乃運動而知覺也夫運而知動而知不運不覺不動不知運極則為動覺盛則為知動知者易運覺者難先求自己知覺運動得之於身自能知人要先求知人恐失於自己不可不知此理也夫而後懂勁然也

From birth, our eyes can see, ears can hear, nose can smell, mouth can taste. Sights and sounds, smells and tastes – all innate senses. Dance of hands, prance of feet – the abilities of our limbs are all innate forms of movement. Pondering upon this, we find it is our random experience – “Our natures make us the same, but our experiences make us unique.” [*Lun Yu*, 17.2] – that makes us lose touch with what is innate. If we want to return

to our innate qualities, there will be no martial aspect unless we seek the source of movement, and there will be no civil aspect unless we grasp the basis of awareness. With these things, then there will be moving with awareness.

If there is activation and perception, there will be action and realization. If there is no activation or perception, there will be no action or realization. When activation is at its height, action is initiated. When perception is fully lucid, there is realization. Action and realization are the easy part. Activation and perception are tricky.

First strive to move with awareness for yourself, grasping it within your own body, then naturally you will be able to spot it in the opponent. If on the other hand you try to find it in opponents first, you will probably never find it in yourself. You have to be able to understand this concept in order to be able to identify energies.

粘黏連隨

[4] STICK, ADHERE, CONNECT, AND FOLLOW

粘者提上拔高之謂也

黏者留戀繾綣之謂也

連者舍己無離之謂也

隨者彼走此應之謂也

要知人之知覺運動非明粘黏連隨不可斯粘黏連隨之功夫亦甚細矣

Sticking means to lift up high.

Adhering means to stay and be attached.

Connecting means to let go of yourself and not separate from the opponent.

Following means to follow him wherever he goes.

If you want to move with awareness and yet you do not understand sticking, adhering, connecting, and following, it will be beyond your reach, for it is a very subtle skill.

頂匾丟抗

[5] CRASHING IN, COLLAPSING, COMING AWAY, AND RESISTANCE

頂者出頭之謂也

匾者不及之謂也

丟者離開之謂也

抗者太過之謂也

要知于此四字之病不但粘黏連隨斷不明知覺運動也初學對手不可不知也更不可不去此病所難者粘黏連隨而不許頂匾丟抗是所不易矣

Crashing in means sticking your head out.

Collapsing means not enough pressure.

Coming away means separating.

Resistance means too much pressure.

You should understand that these four mistakes will not merely interfere with sticking, adhering, connecting,

and following, but will also prevent you from moving with awareness. When beginning to work with a partner, you must understand and especially prevent these errors. The difficulty in sticking, adhering, connecting, and following is in not allowing yourself to crash in, collapse, come away, or resist. This is not at all easy.

對待無病

[6] FIGHTING WITHOUT MISTAKES

頂匾丟抗失於對待也所以為之病者既失粘黏連隨何以獲知覺運動既不知己焉能知人所謂對待者不以頂匾丟抗相對於人也要以粘黏連隨等待於人也能如是不但無對待之病知覺運動自然得矣可以進於懂勁之功矣

Crashing in, collapsing, coming away, and resistance will lose in a fight, and so they are called mistakes. If you neglect sticking, adhering, connecting, and following, you will not be able to achieve moving with awareness. And if you are not aware of yourself, how will you be able to know your opponent? Therefore when fighting, do not use crashing in, collapsing, coming away, or resistance, thereby opposing the opponent, instead use sticking, adhering, connecting, and following, thereby awaiting the opponent. If you can do it in this way, then not only will you be without mistakes, but moving with awareness will be automatically accomplished, and you can then progress to the skill of identifying energies.

對待用法守中土 俗名站樁

[7] PRACTICING MAINTAINING THE CENTRAL GROUND IN FIGHTING (COMMONLY CALLED STANDING LIKE A POST)

定之方中足有根先明四正進退身棚捋擠按自四手須費功夫得其真身形腰頂皆可以粘黏連隨意氣均運動知覺來相應神是君位骨肉臣分明火候七十二天然乃武並乃文

When standing centered, your feet should be rooted.

Start by understanding the four primary techniques, then advancing and retreating.

The four techniques are ward-off, rollback, press, and push.

You have to do a lot of work to get them to be real.

For the body posture, your waist and headtop should both be correct.

When sticking, adhering, connecting, and following, your intention and energy are to be uniform throughout.

Movement and awareness respond to each other.

Mind is sovereign and body is subject.

When you get the degree just right,

you will naturally have both the civil quality and the martial. [i.e. If the “degree” is not right, there is “overcooking” or “undercooking”, in which case too civil would be undercooked and too martial would be overcooked.]

身形腰頂

[8] THE BODY’S POSTURE – THE WAIST & HEADTOP

身形腰頂豈可無缺一何必費工夫腰頂窮研生不已身形順我自伸舒舍此真理終何極十年數載亦糊塗

For your body's posture, how could your waist and headtop be ignored?

Neglecting either, all your work would be in vain.

Waist and headtop are to be exhaustively studied for your whole life.

When your body's posture is natural, it will naturally be loosened and comfortable.

If you dismiss this truth, how will you end up

but that after ten years you will still be confused?

太極圈

[9] TAIJI'S CIRCLING [as in the circles of the pushing hands exercise]

退圈容易進圈難不離腰頂後與前所難中土不離位退易進難仔細研此為動功非站定倚身進退並比肩能如水磨摧急緩
雲龍風虎象周旋要用天盤從此覓久而久之出天然

Circling while retreating is easy, but circling while advancing is difficult,

so do not get sloppy with your waist and headtop when going forward or back.

It is hard to stay in the central position,

so the ease of retreat and difficulty of advance are to be carefully studied.

As this is a matter of movement rather than stance,

stay close to the opponent while advancing or retreating.

Circling can be like a watermill as it speeds up or slows down,

or like the dragon-like clouds or tiger-like winds winding all around.

If you use the sky as a model to help you seek this,

then after a long time it will be expressed instinctively.

太極進退不已功

[10] TAIJI'S SKILL OF ADVANCING & RETREATING CEASELESSLY

棚進捋退自然理陰陽水火相既濟先知四手得來真採捌肘靠方可許四隅從此演出來十三勢架永無已所以因之名長拳
任君開展與收斂千萬不可離太極

It is natural to ward off while advancing and roll back while retreating,

since passive and active, like water and fire, exchange roles with each other.

First understand the four primary techniques and get them to be authentic,

then you may move on to plucking, rending, elbowing, and bumping,

performing the four secondary techniques on the basis of the primary.

Then there is the Thirteen Postures solo set, which goes on and on ceaselessly,

and hence is called Long Boxing. [“It is like a long river flowing into the wide ocean...”]

You may spread out and gather in as you will,

but by no means allow yourself to stray from the taiji concept.

太極上下名天地

[11] TAIJI'S ABOVE & BELOW, OR "SKY & GROUND"

四手上下分天地採捌肘靠由有去採天靠地相應求何患上下不既濟若使捌肘習遠離迷了乾坤遺歎惜此說亦明天地盤進用肘捌歸人字

Four techniques divide into above and below, sky and ground:

plucking, rending, elbowing, and bumping each having their source [pluck & rend based in sky, elbow & bump based in ground].

When plucking and bumping are coordinated with each other,

there is no worry of above and below coming out of joint.

But if rending and elbowing are not coordinated with each other,

you will lose the relationship between sky and ground and be left with only sighs of regret.

As this explanation is clearly about the realms of sky and ground,

when advancing using elbowing or rending, return to the condition of mankind [i.e. the proper range, the balanced position, man being the middle zone between sky and ground].

太極人盤八字歌

[12] TAIJI'S EIGHT TECHNIQUES IN THE REALM OF MANKIND

八卦正隅八字歌十三之數不幾何幾何若是無平準丟了腰頂氣歎哦不斷要言只兩字君臣骨肉細琢磨功夫內外均不斷對待數兒豈錯他

對待於人出自然由茲往復於地天但求舍己無深病上下進退永連綿

This eight technique song concerns the eight trigrams with its four primary and four secondary techniques.

A mere thirteen dynamics is not a lot.

But however many there might be, if their standard is not maintained

and if the position of your waist and headtop is misplaced, you will end up sighing with woe.

The key to their being no division lies in but two words:

the "sovereign" and "subject" roles of the mind and body – ponder them carefully.

Your skill should have no division between internal and external,

and then there will be not any mistakes however many contenders you fight.

What comes out of you during a fight should be natural,

coming from such interactions as between the realms of ground and sky.

When you no longer have a problem with letting go of yourself,

there will never be hesitation as you go upward or downward, forward or back.

太極體用解

[13] TAIJI'S SUBSTANCE & APPLICATION

理為精氣神之體精氣神為身之體身為心之用勁力為身之用心身有一定之主宰者理也精氣神有一定之主宰者意誠也誠者天道誠之者人道俱不外意念須臾之間要知天人同體之理自得日月流行之氣其氣意之流行精神自隱微乎理矣夫

而后言乃武乃文乃聖乃神則得矣若特以武事論之於心身用之於勁力仍歸於道之本也故不得獨以末技云爾
勁由於筋力由於骨如以持物論之有力能執数百斤是骨節皮毛之外操也故有硬力如以全體之有勁似不能持幾斤是精氣之內壯也雖然若是功成後猶有妙出於硬力者修身體育之道有然也

Principle is the substance of essence, energy, and spirit. Essence, energy, and spirit are the substance of the body. Body is mind applied. Power is the applying of body. Mind and body have a specific controller: principle. Essence, energy, and spirit also have a specific controller: heartfelt sincerity. Sincerity is the way of nature and to be sincere is the way of mankind, and neither of these ways leaves the mind for an instant.

If you understand the principle that nature and mankind are of the same substance, you will naturally grasp the solar and lunar [i.e. active and passive] flow of energy, that the energy is the flow of intention, and that spirit lies naturally hidden within principle. Then you will obtain the martial and civil aspects, and the qualities of wisdom and spirituality. In order to make use of martial arts as a means to discuss mind and body or to develop power and strength, keep it based in the Way, for this art is not only for developing skill.

Power comes from the sinews. Strength comes from the bones. Looking at it purely physically, one who has great strength is able to carry many hundreds of pounds, but this is an externally showy action of bones and joints, a stiff strength. If on the other hand the power of your whole body is used, it may appear you are unable to lift hardly any weight at all, yet there is an internal robustness of essence and energy, and once you have achieved skill, you will seem to have something more wonderful than one who has the stiff sort of strength. Thus runs the method of physical training for self-cultivation.

太極文武解

[14] TAIJI'S CIVIL & MARTIAL QUALITIES

文者體也武者用也文功在武用於精氣神也為之體育武功得文體於心身也為之武事夫文武尤有火候之謂在放卷得其時中體育之本也文武使於對待之際在蓄發當其可者武事之根也故云武事文為柔軟體操也精氣神之筋勁武事武用剛硬武事也心身之骨力也文無武之豫備為之有體無用武無文之侶伴為之有用無體如獨木難支孤掌不嚮不惟體育武事之功事事諸如此理也文者內理也武者外數也有外數無文理必為血氣之勇失於本來面目欺敵必敗爾有文理無外數徒思安靜之學未知用的採戰差微則亡耳自用於人文武二字之解豈可不解哉

The civil quality is the substance. The martial quality is the application. The civil training within the martial application is a matter of the essence, energy, and spirit. It is the physical cultivation. The martial training of the civil substance is a matter of mind and body. It is the martial reality. The civil and martial qualities in the training process are a matter of when to coil and when to release. This is the basis of physical cultivation. The civil and martial qualities in a fighting situation are a matter of when best to store and when best to issue. This is the foundation of martial reality.

It is said that a dose of civil in the martial makes it a softened physical exercise, the sinewy power of essence, energy, and spirit, while adding more martial to the martial would make it a hardened fighting drill, a solid effort of mind and body. The civil quality without the martial quality at the ready would be just application without substance. The martial quality without the civil quality in tandem would be substance without application. Since one piece of wood will not support a whole building, and since you cannot clap your hands with just one hand, this is not just a matter of health and fighting, but is a principle that applies to everything.

The civil quality is the inner principle. The martial quality is the outward skill. Those who have the outward skill but lack the civil principle will be consumed by reckless glory. Discarding the original purpose of the art,

they will try to overpower opponents and inevitably lose. Those on the other hand who have the civil principle but lack the outward skill will be distracted by meditative expectation. They will have no idea what to do in a fight, and they will be destroyed the moment it turns chaotic. To apply this art upon an opponent, you must understand both the civil and martial qualities.

太極懂勁解

[15] TAIJI'S IDENTIFYING OF ENERGIES

自己懂勁接及神明為之文成而后採戰身中之陰七十有二無時不然陽得其陰水火既濟乾坤交泰性命葆真矣於人懂勁視聽之際遇而變化自得曲誠之妙形著明於不勞運動覺知也功至此可為攸往咸宜無須有心之運用耳

Once you are identifying your own energies, you will be working your way toward something miraculous. Succeed at the civil aspect and then delve into the martial. There are at all times in the body seventy-two channels for passive energy [as well as seventy-two channels for active energy]. When the active aspect is balanced by the passive, water and fire are in a state of mutual benefit, skyness and groundness are at peace with each other, and the genuineness of one's life essence is preserved.

Once you are identifying the opponent's energies, in a state of seeing them and hearing them, you are adapting to everything you encounter, and will naturally obtain the subtlety of falseness and trueness [i.e. the manipulating of emptiness and fullness]. The postures will be performed with effortless precision and your movements will be conducted with awareness. Once at this degree of skill, everything you do will be appropriate and you will not have to put thought into what you are doing.

八五十三勢長拳解

[16] ON THE THIRTEEN DYNAMICS LONG BOXING SET

自己用功一勢一式用成之後合之為長滔滔不斷周而復始所以名長拳也萬不得有一定之架子恐日久入於滑拳也又恐入於硬拳也決不可失其綿軟周身往復精神意氣之本用久自然貫通無往不至何堅不推也於人對待四手當先亦自八門五步而來跔四手四手碾磨進退四手中四手上下四手三才四手由下乘長拳四手起大開大展煉至緊湊屈伸自由之功則升之中上成矣

In your own training of each posture, once you have learned them all, they are joined together to make a long routine, flowing on and on without interruption, one posture after another, and thus it is called Long Boxing. It is crucial for the set of postures to be performed consistently, otherwise it may after a while turn instead into either "slippery boxing" or "stiff boxing". You assuredly must not lose your pliability, and the movement of your whole body should be grounded upon mind and spirit. After practicing over a long period of time, you will naturally have a breakthrough and attain everything you have been working toward, and nothing will be strong enough to stand up against you.

When working with a partner, the four techniques of ward-off, rollback, press, and push are the first of the thirteen dynamics to work on. Stand in one place and do the four techniques rolling in circles, then do them advancing and retreating, doing them at a middle height. Then do them higher and lower as well, practicing at all three heights. Starting with the basics, work your way through the solo set. Then begin working with the four techniques, larger gross movements at first, then focusing on the finer details until the skill of extending and

contracting is fluent, and you will have ascended through the midway of attainment, and then will continue to the top.

太極陰陽顛倒解

[17] TAIJI’S INVERSION OF THE PASSIVE & ACTIVE ASPECTS

陽乾天日火離放出發對開臣肉用氣身武立命方呼上進隅

陰坤地月水坎卷入蓄待合君骨體理心文盡性圓吸下退正

Examples of the active / passive:

☰ / ☷

sky / ground

sun / moon

fire / water

☳ / ☶

releasing / coiling

exiting / entering

issuing / storing

offense / defense

opening / closing

subject / sovereign

muscle / bone

the practice / the theory

the energy / the principle

body / mind

martial / civil

dedicated to / absorbed in

square / round

exhale / inhale

up / down

advance / retreat

oblique / direct

盖顛倒之理水火二字詳之則可明如火炎上水潤下者水能使火在下而用水在上則為顛倒然非有法治之則不得矣辟如水入鼎內而治火之上鼎中之水得火以然之不但水不能下潤藉火氣水必有温時火雖炎上得鼎以隔之是為有極之地不使炎上炎火無止息亦不使潤下之水永滲漏此所為水火既濟之理也顛倒之理也若使任其火炎上來潤下必至火水必分為二則為火水未濟也故云分而為二合之為一之理也故云一而二二而一總斯理為三天地人也明此陰陽顛倒之理則可與言道知道不可須臾離則可與言人能以人弘道知道不遠人則可與言天地同體上天下地人在其中矣苟能參天察地與日月合其明與五岳四瀆華朽與四時之錯行與草木並枯榮明鬼神之吉凶知人事興衰則可言乾坤為一大天地人為一小天地也夫如人之身心致知格物於天地之知能則可言人之良知良能若思不失固有其功用浩然正氣直養無害悠久無疆矣所謂人身生成一小天地者天也性也地也命也人也虛靈也神也若不明之者烏能配天地為三乎然非盡性立命窮神達化之功胡為乎來哉

The inversion principle can be explained with water and fire. Left to their own devices, fire rises and water

sinks, but if water is placed above fire then they are in an inverted state. Of course, if not done properly there would be no inverted state, [just a fire put out and some water made into steam,] and so it has to be a situation of water being put in a pot which is then positioned over a fire. When the water in the pot receives the fire's heat, not only will it not be able to sink away, it will also absorb the fire's heat and inevitably become warm, and although the fire is rising to the pot, it is stopped there and goes no further. By not allowing the fire to rise freely or the water to sink away, this is water and fire as in After Completion [hexagram 63 – made of water ☵ on top of fire ☲], and is the principle of inversion. If the fire is allowed to rise freely and the water to sink away, the result will of course be that the water and fire will go their separate ways as two entities, and this is water and fire as in Before Completion [hexagram 64 – made of fire ☲ on top of water ☵]. So goes the principle that in separating they become two and in joining they become one, and thus it is said that one becomes two, then two becomes one, which totals three, namely sky, ground, and mankind.

Once you understand this principle of passive and active inverting, then the Way can be discussed. Once you understand that the Way cannot be departed from for a moment, then human beings can be discussed, and it is through human beings that the Way can be glorified. Once you understand that the Way is not far away from human beings, then the universe can be discussed. It is all one entity of sky above, ground below, and mankind in the middle. If you can examine the world, and be one with the shine of the sun and moon, with the grandeur and erosion of the landscape, with the wax and wane of the seasons, with the growth and decay of plants, and come to terms with the favors and frownings of spirits, and understand the rising and declining of human affairs, then can be discussed the larger universe of skyness and groundness, and the smaller universe that is a human being.

To understand the human body and mind, study the awareness and abilities of things in Nature. Then the human awareness and abilities that come from Nature can be discussed. If you do not forget your innate talents, nor your noble energy, constantly nurturing it and never harming it, you will survive indefinitely. And so it is said that a human being is a small universe. The sky represents your nature, the ground represents your life, and your naturalness represents your spirit. If you do not understand this, how will you be a blending of sky and ground to make a third? Unless you express your nature and sustain your life, the work of spiritual enlightenment and transformation has nothing to build on and cannot come to fruition.

人身太極解

[18] THE TAIJI-NESS OF THE HUMAN BODY

人之周身心為一身之主宰主宰太極也二目為日月即兩儀也頭像天足像地人中之人及中腕合之為三才也四肢四象也腎水心火肝木肺金脾土皆屬陰膀胱水小腸火胆木大腸金胃土皆陽也茲為內也顙丁火地閣承漿水左耳金右耳木兩命門也茲為外也神出於心目眼為心之苗精出於腎腦腎為精之本氣出於肺胆氣為肺之原視思明心動神流也聽思聰腦動腎滑也鼻之息香臭口之呼吸出入水鹹木酸土辣火苦金甜及言語聲音木亮火焦金潤土壅水漂鼻息口吸呼之味皆氣之往來肺之門戶肝胆巽震之風雷發之聲音出入五味此言口目鼻舌神意使之六合以破六慾也此內也手足肩膝肘胯亦使六合以正六道也此外也眼耳鼻口大小便肚臍外七竅也喜怒憂思悲恐驚內七情也七情皆以心為主喜心怒肝憂脾悲肺恐腎驚胆思小腸怕膀胱愁胃慮大腸此內也夫離南正午火心經坎北正子水腎經震東正卯木肝經兌西正酉金肺經乾西北隅金大腸化水坤西南隅土脾化土巽東南隅胆木化土艮東北隅胃土化火此內八卦也外八卦者二四為肩六八為足上九下一左三右七也坎一坤二震三巽四中五乾六兌七艮八離九此九宮也內九宮亦如此表裏者乙肝左肋化金通肺甲胆化土通脾丁心化木中胆通肝丙小腸化水通腎己脾化土通胃戊胃化火通心後背前胃山澤通氣辛肺右肋化水通腎庚大

腸化金通肺癸腎下部化火通心壬膀胱化木通肝此十天干之內外也十二地支亦如此之內外也明斯理則可與言修身之道矣

The heart is in charge of the whole body, the body’s taiji [the body’s “grand polarity”, the body’s “1”].

[2] The eyes are the solar and lunar aspects, the “two polarities”.

[3] The head represents the sky and the feet represent the ground. The Renzhong acupoint [between lip and nose] represents mankind, along with the Zhongwan acupoint [solar plexus]. The three combined are the “three substances”.

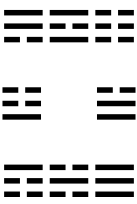
[4] The four limbs are the “four manifestations”.

[5] The passive [or more solid organ] correspondences [to the five elements] within the body are: kidneys – water, heart – fire, liver – wood, lungs – metal, spleen – earth. The active [or more bag-like organ] correspondences within the body are: bladder – water, small intestine – fire, gallbladder – wood, large intestine – metal, stomach – earth. The external correspondences are: headtop – fire, jowls and Chengjiang acupoint [below the lower lip] – water, left ear – metal, right ear – wood, both sides of the “life gate” [earth]. Spirit is expressed from the heart. The eyes are the sprouts of the heart [similar to “windows to the soul”]. Essence is expressed from the kidneys. The brain and kidneys are the source of the essence. Energy is expressed from the lungs. The gallbladder energy has its source in the lungs. When the eyes see clearly, the actions of the heart make the spirit flow. When the ears hear clearly, the actions of the brain make the kidneys smooth. As breath goes in and out, what is perceived by the senses of smell and taste are: salty – water, sour – wood, spice [sweet] – earth, bitter – fire, sweet [spice] – metal. And the sounds they produce are: clear – wood, fire – hoarse, congested – metal, breathy – earth, distracted – water. The scent and taste of the air as the lungs pump it in and out, and as the wind (☳) and thunder (☳) of liver and gallbladder produce the five manners of voice, comes and goes as the five fragrances/flavors.

[6] Mouth, eye, nose, tongue, spirit, and intent make the six internal unions by which the six desires will be overcome. Hand, foot, shoulder, knee, elbow, and hip make the six external unions by which the six paths [front, back, left, right, up, down] will be straightened [i.e. moved toward efficiently].

[7] The seven external apertures are: eye, ear, nose, mouth, anus, urethra, navel. The seven internal emotions, which are governed by the heart, are: joy, rage, worry, obsessiveness, grief, fear, shock. Inside, joy is in the heart, rage is in the liver, worry is in the spleen, grief is in the lungs, fear is in the kidneys, shock is in the gallbladder, obsessiveness is in the small intestine, terror is in the bladder, anxiety is in the stomach, and pensiveness is in the large intestine.

[8] The internal qualities of the eight trigrams:



- ☰: S / Wu [noon] / fire / heart meridian
- ☷: N / Zi [midnight] / water / kidney meridian
- ☳: E / Mao [dawn] / wood / liver meridian
- ☶: W / You [sunset] / metal / lung meridian
- ☴: NW / metal / large intestine / transforming of water
- ☵: SW / earth / spleen / transforming of earth
- ☲: SE / wood / gallbladder / transforming of earth

☶: NE / earth / stomach / transforming of fire

[9] Externally, ☶ is 1, ☷ is 2, ☱ is 3, ☴ is 4, the center is 5, ☳ is 6, ☵ is 7, ☲ is 8, and ☰ is 9. 2 and 4 are the shoulders, 6 and 8 are the feet, at the top is 9, at the bottom is 1, on the left is 3, on the right is 7 [producing a “magic square” in which every line of three numbers – horizontal, vertical, diagonal – adds up to the same number]:

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

These are the “nine palaces” [eight trigrams plus the center]. The internal quality of the nine palaces is the same.

[10] The inner and outer [alignment with the ten Celestial Stems (the names of the days of the ancient ten-day week, a poetic microcosm of the agricultural process: 甲 Jia – “Seed”, 乙 Yi – “Sprout”, 丙 Bing – “Shoot”, 丁 Ding – “Ear”, 戊 Wu – “Sickle”, 己 Ji – “Bundle”, 庚 Geng – “Pestle”, 辛 Xin – “Sack”, 壬 Ren – “Haul”, 癸 Gui – “Store”. The pulse of the days is: active, passive, active, passive, the odd-numbered active days intended as being more work-oriented days and the even-numbered passive days intended as being more rest-oriented days. The order is twisted below because the pairings are presented passive/active rather than active/passive.)] runs thus:

Yi: liver and left ribs / transformed by the metal of the lungs

Jia: gallbladder / transforms the earth of the spleen

Ding: heart / transformed by the wood of the gallbladder and liver

Bing: small intestine / transforms the water of the kidneys

Ji: spleen / transformed by the earth of the stomach

Wu: stomach / transforms the fire of the heart, energy coursing through the mountain and valley of back and chest

Xin: lungs and right ribs / transformed by the water of the kidneys

Geng: large intestine / transforms the metal of the lungs

Gui: kidneys and lower body / transformed by the fire of the heart

Ren: bladder / transforms the wood of the liver

These are the internal and external qualities of the ten Celestial Stems.

The twelve Terrestrial Branches also have internal and external qualities [which for some reason are not delved into here. The Terrestrial Branches are the names of the ancient “hours” of the day: 子 Zi (11pm-1am – “Conception” – picture of a baby, representing also the new day beginning at midnight), 丑 Chou (1am-3am – “Curled Up” – in sleep), 寅 Yin (3am-5am – “Contortion” – curled up further in sleep), 卯 Mao (5am-7am – “Shutters Opening” – i.e. dawn), 辰 Chen (7am-9am – “Slight Bowing” – looking down away from the sun above the horizon), 巳 Si (9am-11am – “Deep Bowing” – slouching over in response to rising sun), 午 Wu (11am-1pm – “Oppression” – sun directly above), 未 Wei (1pm-3pm – “Short Shadow” – shadow finally moving off center), 申 Shen (3pm-5pm – “Long Shadow”), 酉 You (5pm-7pm – “Wine Withdrawn” – the wine going back into the bottle, i.e. sunset), 戌 Xu (7pm-9pm – “Depression” – woundingly missing the daylight), 亥 Hai (9pm-11pm – “Bliss” – picture of a man and woman in bed together). As a further side note, since the Celestial Stems describe an agricultural process and the Terrestrial Branches are based on the progress of the sun through the sky, the 天干地支 Celestial Stems and Terrestrial Branches probably should have been called the 地干天支 Terrestrial

Stems and Celestial Branches.]

Once you are clear about this theory [that there is a taiji quality of passives and actives inherent in the body], you will then be able to talk of the methods of self-cultivation.

太極分文武三成解

[19] TAIJI'S SEPARATION OF THE CIVIL & MARTIAL QUALITIES INTO THREE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

蓋言道者非自修身無由得成也然又分為三乘之修法乘者成也上乘即大成也下乘即小成也中乘即誠之者成也法分三修成功一也文修於內武修於外體育內也武事外也其修法內外表裏成功集大成即上乘也由體育之文而得武事之武或由武事之武而得體育之文即中乘也然獨知體育不入武事而成者或專武事不為體育而成者即小成也

As far as the Way goes, without cultivating the self, there is no source from which to obtain it. It is separated into three vehicles for cultivation, “vehicle” meaning accomplishment. The greater vehicle takes you all the way to the top. The lesser vehicle gets you at least to the bottom. The middle vehicle is to succeed via sincerity. The methods are separated into three kinds of cultivation, but are working towards the same accomplishment.

Cultivation of the civil quality is internal. Cultivation of the martial quality is external. Physical training is internal. Martial affairs are external. When the cultivation methods, both internal and external, surface and interior, are merged and achieved together, this is a grand accomplishment, the top.

When one obtains the martial quality by way of the civil training or obtains the civil quality by way of the martial training, this is the middle.

When one knows only the civil training but knows nothing of the martial part of it or focuses on only the martial part of it but does not do the civil training, this is the bottom.

太極下乘武事解

[20] TAIJI'S LESSER ACCOMPLISHMENT – ITS MARTIAL QUALITY

太極之武事外操柔軟內含堅剛而求柔軟柔軟之於外久而久之自得內之堅剛非有心之堅剛寔有心之柔軟也所難者內要含蓄堅剛而不施外終柔軟而迎敵以柔軟而應堅剛使堅剛盡化無有矣其功何以得乎要非粘黏連隨已成自得運動知覺方為懂勁而后神而明之化境極矣夫四兩撥千斤之妙功不及化境將何以能是所謂懂粘連得其視聽輕靈之巧耳

Taiji's martial quality is to be outwardly soft while inwardly hard, always seeking softness. By being outwardly soft over a longer and longer period, you will naturally obtain inner hardness, so long as your mind is focused on the softness rather than the hardness. The difficulty lies in containing hardness within and not letting it expose itself, outwardly only engaging the opponent with softness. By using softness to respond to hardness, his hardness is made to dissipate until it is spent.

How is such a skill to be obtained? Once your sticking, adhering, connecting, and following are complete, you will naturally have achieved moving with awareness, and from there you will move on to identifying energies, then gain a miraculous understanding, and ultimately you will have been transformed.

As for the subtlety of four ounces moving a thousand pounds – how could you have such an ability if your skill has not reached a transformative state? Thus it is said that you are to recognize when you are connected to the opponent, and thereby obtain the art of keenly observing and listening.

太極正功解

[21] CORRECTNESS OF SKILL IN TAIJI

太極者元也無論內外上下左右不離此元元也太極者方也無論內外上下左右不離此方也元之出入方之進退隨方就元之往來也方為開展元為緊湊方元規矩之至其就能出此以外哉如此得心應手仰高鑽堅神乎其神見隱顯微明而且明生生不已欲罷不能

Taiji is round, never abandoning its roundness whether going in or out, up or down, left or right. And Taiji is square, never abandoning its squareness whether going in or out, up or down, left or right. As you roundly exit and enter, or squarely advance and retreat, follow squareness with roundness, and vice versa. Squareness has to do with expanding, roundness with contracting. [Squareness means a directional focus along which you can express your power. Roundness means an all-around buoyancy with which you can receive and neutralize the opponent's power.]

The main rule is that you be squared and rounded. After all, could there be anything beyond these things? By means of this you will become proficient at the skill. But “gazing up, it grows higher, and drilling in, it gets harder...” [i.e. there is always more to it], so magical it is. When you look upon it at last, it hides again, revealing there is yet more subtlety to it, illumination upon illumination. It generates new features infinitely, rendering you “unable to quit even if there were the desire to do so.” [*Lun Yu*, 9.11]

太極輕重浮沉解

[22] TAIJI'S LIGHTNESS & HEAVINESS, FLOATING & SINKING

雙重為病干於填寔與沉不同也雙沉不為病自爾騰虛與重不易也雙浮為病祇如漂渺與輕不例也雙輕不為病天然清靈與浮不等也半輕半重不為病偏輕偏重為病半者半有著落也所以不為病偏者偏無著落也所以為病偏無著落必失方圓半有著落豈出方圓半浮半沉為病失於不及也偏浮偏沉失於太過也半重偏滯而不正也半輕偏輕靈而不圓也半沉偏沉虛而不正也半浮偏浮茫而不圓也夫雙輕不近於浮則為輕靈雙沉不近於重則為離虛故曰上手輕重半有著落則為平手除除此三者之外皆為病手蓋內之虛靈不昧能致於外氣之清明流行乎肢體也若不窮研輕重浮沉之手徒勞掘井不及泉之歎耳然有方圓四正之手表裏精粗無不到則已極大成又何云四隅出方圓矣所謂方而圓圓而方超乎象外得其寰中之上手也

- [1a] Both sides fully heavy [“double pressure”] is wrong. It is too full. It is different from sinking.
- [1b] Both sides fully sinking is okay. It has to do with being ready to move. It is different from heaviness.
- [1c] Both sides fully floating [“double vacuum”] is wrong. It is too empty. It is different from lightness.
- [1d] Both sides fully light is okay. It has to do with natural nimbleness. It is different from floating.
- [2a] One side under-light and one side under-heavy is okay. To underdo means one side is stable. Therefore it is okay. Since to underdo is stable, it will not lose squareness and roundness.
- [2b] One side over-light and one side over-heavy is wrong. To overdo means neither side is stable. Therefore it is wrong. Since to overdo is unstable, it will lose squareness and roundness.
- [2c] One side under-floating and one side under-sinking is wrong, for it is not enough.
- [2d] One side over-floating and one side over-sinking [is wrong, for it] is too much.
- [3a] One side under-heavy and one side over-heavy, you will be not only sluggish but also unsquared.

- [3b] One side under-light and one side over-light, you will still be nimble but you will be unrounded.
- [3c] One side under-sinking and one side over-sinking, you will still be balanced but you will be unsquared.
- [3d] One side under-floating and one side over-floating, you will be not only scattered but also unrounded.

Both sides fully light [1d] is not a matter of floating, and thus it is nimbleness. Both sides fully sinking [1b] is not a matter of heaviness, and thus it is alertness. Thus it is said: “The best technique is both light and heavy [2a], half and half, thus you will have a balanced technique.” Anything beyond these three [1b, 1d, 2a] would be wrong.

When your inner naturalness is not obscured, it can be sent outward as purified energy, flowing into your limbs. If you do not exhaustively study these aspects of technique – lightness, heaviness, floating, sinking – it would be like digging a dry well. But if you possess squareness and roundness, then warding off, rolling back, pressing, and pushing will all be there inside and out down to their smallest detail, and you will have attained a great achievement, and then plucking, rending, elbowing, and bumping will also be squared and rounded. And so it is said: “Square but round, round but square.” Going beyond the shape [squareness OR roundness] takes you to the highest level [squareness AND roundness].

太極四隅解

[23] TAIJI’S FOUR SECONDARY TECHNIQUES

四正即四方也所謂搯捥擠按也初不知方能使圓方圓復始之理無已焉能出隅之手矣緣人外之肢體內之神氣弗緝輕靈方圓四正之功始出輕重浮沉之病則有隅矣辟如半重偏重滯而不正自然為採捩肘靠之隅手或雙重填寔亦出隅手也病多之手不得已以隅手扶之而歸圓中方正之手雖然至底者肘靠亦及此以補其所以云爾春後功夫能致上乘者亦須獲採捩而仍歸大中至正矣是四隅之所用者因失體而補缺云云

The four primary techniques, aligned with the four cardinal compass points, are ward-off, rollback, press, and push. In the beginning, there will be a lack of understanding of the principle that squareness can lead to roundness and that they may alternate. Thus ability will emerge in the four secondary techniques of pluck, rend, elbow, and bump. Due to your outer limbs and inner spirit not maintaining nimbleness of squareness/roundness in the primary techniques, the mistakes of lightness, heaviness, floating, or sinking will start to manifest, and with them the secondary techniques.

For example [3a]: “One side under-heavy and one side over-heavy, you will be not only sluggish but also unsquared.” This situation will naturally lead to the secondary techniques. Or [1a]: “Both sides fully heavy... is too full.” Again the secondaries will emerge. If your technique has many flaws, you will be compelled to use the secondary techniques to make up for them in order to regain a roundness that is centered and a squareness that is squared. Even a beginner can achieve this with the techniques of elbow or bump. But one whose skill has risen to a higher level still has to maintain the techniques of pluck and rend to regain a position that is centered and squared. Therefore the purpose of the four secondary techniques is to troubleshoot the mistakes you make in those moments when your technique is performed contrary to the theory.

太極平準腰頂解

[24] THE PROPER ALIGNMENT OF WAIST & HEADTOP IN TAIJI

頂如準故云頂頭懸也兩手即平左右之盤也腰即平之根株也立如平準所謂輕重浮沉分厘絲毫則偏顯然矣有準頂頭懸腰之根下株尾閭至凶門也上下一條線全憑兩平轉變換取分毫尺寸自己辨車輪兩命門一羶搖又轉心令氣旗使自然隨我便滿身輕利者金剛羅漢煉對待有往來是早或是晚合則放發云不必凌霄箭涵養有多少一氣哈而遠口授須秘傳開門見中天

Your head is like a centered pole, as in “your headtop is suspended”, and with your hands making the trays to each side, your waist being the platform base, you are “standing like a scale”. Whether you receive the slightest bit of lightness or heaviness, floating or sinking, the tipping of the trays to either side will reveal all to you. With your headtop suspended and waist rooted below, you are connected from tailbone to skullbone.

*Standing in a vertical line,
all depends on a horizontal rotation.
My adaptations can catch the smallest change,
and I can distinguish all measurements.*

*Rotating my waist,
the great flag is waved.
My mind sends the command, the energy carries the directing banners,
and I naturally move with facility.*

*My whole body is activated
like a toughened arhat warrior.
In fighting,
one will be either early or late.
Joining with the opponent, I send him away,
but it is not necessary for me to try to launch him into the stratosphere.
With an amount of power contained,
I need only express a “ha!” and he goes far enough.
But this is something that must be taught personally
in order for the door to be opened and the view to be seen.*

太極四時五氣解圖

[25] A TAIJI MAP OF THE FOUR SEASONS & FIVE ENERGIES [meaning the five elements]



土
中央

S: summer / fire / “he” [scolding]

E: spring / wood / “xu” [shushing] (taiji) W: autumn / metal / “xi” [sighing]

N: winter / water / “chui” [boasting]

Center: earth / “hu-xi” [breathing]

太極血氣根本解

[26] THE ESSENCE OF BLOOD & ENERGY IN TAIJI

血為營氣為衛血流行於肉膜絡氣流行於骨筋脉筋甲為骨之餘髮毛為血之餘血旺則髮毛盛氣足則筋甲壯故血氣之勇力出於骨皮毛之外壯氣血之體用出於肉筋甲之內壯氣以血之盈虛血以氣之消長消長盈虛周而復始終身用之不能盡者矣

Blood is for nourishment. Energy is for defense. Blood flows through muscles, tissues, and limbs. Energy flows through bones, sinews, and vessels. Healthy sinews and nails are a sign of healthy bone. Healthy scalp hair and body hair is a sign of healthy blood. When the blood is vigorous, the scalp and body hair is lush. When the energy is full, the sinews and nails are robust.

Thus the boldness and strength of the blood and energy when the blood is emphasized manifests outwardly in the robustness of the bones, skin, and hair, while the form and function of the energy and blood when the energy is emphasized manifests inwardly in the robustness of the muscles, sinews, and nails. The energy relies on the blood's burgeoning or depleting. The blood relies on the energy's decreasing or increasing. Decreasing then increasing, burgeoning then depleting, the cycle goes on endlessly. Make use of this your whole life and you will never be worn out.

太極力氣解

[27] STRENGTH & ENERGY IN TAIJI

氣走於膜絡筋脉力出於血肉皮骨故有力者皆外壯於皮骨形也有氣者是內壯於筋脉象也氣血功於內壯血氣功於外壯要之明於氣血二字之功能自知力氣之由來矣知氣力之所以然自能用力行氣之分別行氣於筋脉用力於皮骨大不相侔也

Energy courses through the tissues, limbs, sinews, and vessels. Strength emerges from the blood, muscles, skin, and bones. Therefore a strong person has an outer robustness to their skin and bones, a matter of posture, while an energized person has an inner robustness to their sinews and vessels, a matter of presence. Training the energy and blood with emphasis on the energy will empower the internal. Training the blood and energy with emphasis on the blood will enhance the external.

If you awaken to the functions of these two things, both the energy and the blood, you will naturally come to

understand the basis of strength and energy. Understanding what strength and energy are all about, you will naturally be able to distinguish between the using of strength and the moving of energy: the moving of energy will be felt in your sinews and vessels, while the using of strength will be felt in your skin and bones – extremely different things indeed.

太極尺寸分毫解

[28] TAIJI’S REDUCING MEASUREMENTS

功夫先煉開展後煉緊湊開展成而得之纔講緊湊緊湊得成纔講尺寸分毫由尺住之功成而后能寸住分住毫住此所謂尺寸分毫之理也明矣然尺必十寸寸必十分分必十毫其数在焉故云對待者数也知其数則能得尺寸分毫也要知其数非秘授而能量之者哉

Work first at training gross movements, then finer details. When the gross movements are obtained, then the finer movements can be talked of. When the finer movements are obtained, then measures of a foot and below can be talked of. When your skill has progressed to the level of a foot, then you can progress to the level of an inch, then to a tenth of an inch, then to the width of a hair. This is what is meant by the principle of reducing measurements.

A foot has ten “inches”. An inch has ten tenths. A tenth has ten hairs. These are the measurements. It was long ago said: “Fighting is a matter of measuring.” Understanding the measurements, you can achieve the reducing of measurements. But if you want to understand the measuring, you will not be able to without the deeper teachings.

太極膜脉筋穴解

[29] VESSELS, CHANNELS, SINEWS, AND ACUPOINTS IN TAIJI

節膜拿脉抓筋閉穴此四功由尺寸分毫得之後而求之膜若節之血不周流脉若拿之氣難行走筋若抓之身無主地穴若閉之神昏氣暗抓膜節之半死申脉拿之似亡单筋抓之勁断死穴閉之無生搃之氣血精神若無身何有主也如能節拿抓閉之功非得點傳不可

Controlling his vessels, seizing his channels, capturing his sinews, and sealing his acupoints – these four skills are to be worked toward after you are able to measure down from the level of a foot to the level of an inch, then to a tenth of an inch, then to the width of a hair. When his vessels are controlled, his blood will not circulate. When his channels are seized, his energy will not move. When his sinews are captured, his body will have no control. When his acupoints are sealed, he will lose consciousness.

By controlling certain vessels, he will seem half dead. By seizing certain channels, he will seem fully dead. By capturing certain sinews, his power will be cut off. By sealing the lethal acupoints, he will not survive. Basically, if he is without energy, blood, or spirit, how will he have any control over his body? However, even if you have ability in the skills of control, seize, capture, and seal, these particular effects will not work without specific instruction in them.

挫柔捶打於己於人按摩推拿於己人開合升降於己人此十二字皆用手也屈伸動靜於己人起落急緩於己人閃還撩了於己人此十二字於己氣也於人手也轉換進退於己身人步也顧盼前後於己目也人手也即瞻前眇後左顧右盼也此八字關乎神矣斷接俯仰此四字關乎意勁也接關乎神氣也俯仰關乎手足也勁斷意不斷意斷神可接勁意神俱斷則俯仰矣手足無著落耳俯為一叩仰為一反而已矣不使叩反非斷而復接不可對待之字以俯仰為重時刻在心身手足不使斷之無接則不能俯仰也求其斷接之能非見隱顯微不可隱微似斷而未斷見顯似接而未接接接斷斷斷斷接接其意心身體神氣極於隱顯又何慮不粘黏連隨哉

Applying to either yourself or the opponent: file, knead, punch, strike, push down, rub in, push out, seize, spread, merge, ascend, descend. These twelve terms are all techniques.

Applying to either yourself or the opponent: bending, extending, movement, stillness, rising, falling, quick, leisurely, evade, counter, incite, conclude. These twelve terms apply to your own energy in relation to the opponent's techniques.

Applying to your own body in relation to the opponent's stepping: turn, switch, advance, retreat. Applying to your own gaze in relation to the opponent's techniques: look left, look right, look forward, look behind. These eight terms have to do with your spirit.

These four terms have to do with intention and power: disconnecting, connecting, bowing forward, yawning backward. Disconnecting and connecting have to do with your spirit and energy. Bowing forward and yawning back have to do with your hands and feet. The power may disconnect, but the intention does not. If the intention disconnects, the spirit can stay connected. If the power, intention, and spirit disconnect together, there will be bowing forward or yawning back, your hands and feet not touching or landing where they would have. To bow forward is to end up cracking your head. To yawn backward is to end up toppling over. To keep yourself from cracking your head or toppling over, you must disconnect then reconnect. Bowing forward and yawning backward are important things to consider in fighting. At no moment allow there to be in mind, body, hand, or foot a disconnection without reconnecting, and then you will prevent bowing forward or yawning back.

Seeking for the skills of disconnecting and connecting will not work without seeing what is concealed and revealing what is subtle. With concealment and subtlety, it is like you have disconnected but not disconnected. With seeing and revealing, it is like you have connected but not connected. By connecting and disconnecting, disconnecting and connecting, in mind, body, and spirit, you will ultimately be concealing and revealing, and then you will have no worry that you are not sticking, adhering, connecting, and following.

對待之功既得尺寸分毫於手則可量之矣然不論節拿抓閉之手易若節膜拿脉抓筋閉穴則難非自尺寸分毫量之不可得也節不量由按而得膜拿不量由摩而得脉抓不量由推而得拿閉非量而不能得穴由尺盈而縮之寸分毫也此四者雖有高授然非自己功夫久者無能貫通焉

When in your fighting skill you have obtained the sense of a foot, an inch, a tenth of an inch, and the width of a hair, you can then estimate the opponent. Regardless of any ease you may have with the techniques of

controlling, seizing, capturing, and sealing, in order to control his vessels, seize his channels, capture his sinews, and seal his acupoints, you must make estimations of a foot, an inch, a tenth of an inch, and the width of a hair.

To control without estimation, his vessels can be obtained through pushing down. To seize without estimation, his channels can be obtained through rubbing in. To capture without estimation, his sinews can be obtained through pushing out. But as for sealing, without estimation his acupoints cannot be reached, because [to get to his acupoints] you have to work your way down from the level of a foot to the level of an inch, then to a tenth of an inch, then to the width of a hair. For these four skills, even if you receive instruction from an expert, you will not be able to master them unless you personally put a lot of work into them over a long period.

太極補瀉氣力解

[32] TAIJI'S BOOSTING OR DISSIPATING ENERGY & STRENGTH

補瀉氣力於自己難補瀉氣力於人亦難補自己者知覺功虧則補運動功過則瀉所以求諸己不易也補於人者氣過則補之力過則瀉之此勝彼敗所由然也氣過或瀉力過或補其理雖一然其有詳夫過補為之過上加過遇瀉為之緩他不及他必更過仍加過也補氣瀉力於人之法均為加過於人矣補氣名曰結氣法瀉力名曰空力法

There is difficulty in boosting or dissipating your own energy and strength. There is also difficulty in boosting or dissipating the energy and strength of the opponent. When your awareness is insufficient, boost [your energy]. When your movement is overdone, dissipate [your strength]. These are things that are not easy matters when it comes to yourself.

When the opponent has too much energy, boost it. When he has too much strength, dissipate it. By this means, you will win and he will lose. Or you may when he has too much energy, dissipate it, or when he has too much strength, boost it. The principle is the same in either case, and yet to elaborate further: if he has too much [of either], add more so that he is overdoing, or if he has too little [of either], dissipate it further so that in his insufficiency he adds more and again ends up overdoing. Both boosting his energy and dissipating his strength induce him to overdo it. Boosting his energy is called the method of “tying up his energy”. Dissipating his strength is called the method of “emptying his strength”.

太極空結揉揉論

有挫空挫結有揉空柔結之辨挫空者則力隔矣挫結者則氣斷矣揉空者則力分矣揉結者則氣隔矣若結柔挫則氣力反空挫挫則力氣敗結挫挫則力氣盛於氣力在氣上矣空挫挫則氣盛於力氣過力不及矣挫結挫揉結挫皆氣閉於力矣挫空挫揉空挫皆力鑒於氣矣總之挫結挫空之法亦必由尺寸分毫量能如是也不然無地之挫揉平虛之實結亦何由而致於哉

懂勁先後論

夫未懂勁之先長出頂區丟抗之病既懂勁之後恐出斷

太極空結揉揉論

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懂勁先後論

夫未懂勁之先長出頂區丟抗之病既懂勁之後恐出斷

接俯仰之病然未懂勁故無病亦出動既懂何以出病乎動似懂未懂之際正在兩可斷接無準矣故出病神明及猶不及俯仰無著矣亦出病若不出斷接俯仰之病非真懂勁弗能不出也胡為真懂因視聽無由未得其確也知瞻眇顧盼之視覺起落緩急之聽知閃還撥了之運覺轉換進退之動則為真懂動則能接及神明及神明自攸往有由矣有由者由於懂勁自得屈伸動靜之妙有屈伸動靜之妙開合升降又有由矣由屈伸動靜見入則開退出則合看來則詳就去則升大而後總為真及神明矣明也豈可日後不慎行坐臥走飲食溺瀉之功是所為及中成

俯仰之病然未懂勁故無病亦出動既懂何以出病乎動似懂未懂之際正在兩可斷接無準矣故出病神明及猶不及俯仰無著矣亦出病若不出斷接俯仰之病非真懂勁弗能不出也胡為真懂因視聽無由未得其確也知瞻眇顧盼之視覺起落緩急之聽知閃還撥了之運覺轉換進退之動則為真懂動則能接及神明及神明自攸往有由矣有由者由於懂勁自得屈伸動靜之妙有屈伸動靜之妙開合升降又有由矣由屈伸動靜見入則開退出則合看來則詳就去則升大而後總為真及神明矣明也豈可日後不慎行坐臥走飲食溺瀉之功是所為及中成大

大成也哉

尺寸分毫在懂勁後論

在懂勁先求尺寸分毫為之小成不過未拔武事而已所謂能尺於人者非先懂勁也如懂勁後神而明之自然能量尺寸尺寸能量纔能節拿抓開矣知膜脈筋穴之理要必明存亡之手知存亡之手要必明生死之穴其穴之數安可不知乎知生死之穴數焉可不明開而不生乎焉可不明閉而無生乎是所謂二字之存亡一開之而已盡矣

太極指掌捋手解

自指下之腕上裏者為掌五指之首為之手五指皆為

成也哉

尺寸分毫在懂勁後論

在懂勁先求尺寸分毫為之小成不過未拔武事而已所謂能尺於人者非先懂勁也如懂勁後神而明之自然能量尺寸尺寸能量纔能節拿抓開矣知膜脈筋穴之理要必明存亡之手知存亡之手要必明生死之穴其穴之數安可不知乎知生死之穴數焉可不明開而不生乎焉可不明閉而無生乎是所謂二字之存亡一開之而已盡矣

太極指掌捋手解

自指下之腕上裏者為掌五指之首為之手五指皆為指五

指五指攢裏其背為捶如其用者按推掌也拿揉抓開俱用俱用指也挫摩手也打捶也夫捶有搬攔有指襠有時底有搬身四捶之外有農捶掌有接膝有換轉有車鞭有背四掌之外有車掌手有雲垂有提手拿有十字手四手之外有反手指有屈指有伸指捏指四指之外有量指又名尺寸指又名覓穴指然指有五指有五指之用首指為手仍為指故又名手指其一用之為旋指旋手其二用之為根指根手其三用之為弓指弓手其四用之為中合手指四手指之外為獨指獨手也食指為卡指為劍指為為佐指為粘指中正為心指為合指為鈎指為採指無

指攢裏其背為捶如其用者按推掌也拿揉抓開俱用指也挫摩手也打捶也夫捶有搬攔有指襠有時底有搬身四捶之外有農捶掌有接膝有換轉有車鞭有背四掌之外有車掌手有雲手拿有十字手四手之外有反手指有屈指有伸指捏指四指之外有量指又名尺寸指又名覓穴指然指有五指有五指之用首指為手仍為指故又名手指其一用之為旋指旋手其二用之為根指根手其三用之為弓指弓手其四用之為中合手指四手指之外為獨指獨手也食指為卡指為劍指為指為粘指中正為心指為合指為鈎指為採指無名

名指為全指為環指為代指為扣指小指為幫指補指媚指掛指若此之名知之易而用之難得口訣秘法亦不易為也其次有對掌推山掌射雁掌瞭翅掌似開指扣步指灣弓指穿梭指探馬手灣弓手托虎手玉女手跨虎手通山捶葉下捶背反捶勢分捶捲攪捶再其次步隨身換不出五行則無失錯矣因其粘連黏隨之理舍已從人身隨步自換只要無五行之外錯身形腳勢出於自然又何慮些須之病也

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關乎存亡三因其人纔能傳第一不授不忠不孝之人第二不傳根底不好之人第三不授心術不正之人第四不傳齒莽滅裂之人第五不傳授目中無人之人第六不傳知禮無恩之人第七不授反復無長之人第八不傳得易失易之人此須知八不傳匪人更不待言矣如其可以傳再口授之秘訣傳忠孝知恩者心氣和平者守道不失者真以為師者始終如一者此五者果其有始有終不變如一方可將全體大用之功授之於徒也明矣於前於後代相繼皆如是之所傳也噫抑亦知武事中烏有匪人哉

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張三丰承留

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天地即乾坤伏羲為人祖畫卦道有名堯舜十六母微危
允厥中精一及孔孟神化性命功七二乃文武授之至于來
字著宣平許延年藥在身元善從復始虛靈能德明理
令氣形具萬載咏長春心今誠真跡三教無兩家統言
皆太極浩然塞而冲方正千年立繼往聖永綿開來學
常續水火既濟焉願至戊畢字

口授張三丰老師之言

予知三教歸一之理皆性命學也皆以心為身之主也保
全心身永有精氣神也有精氣神能文思安武備
動安動乃文乃武大而化之者聖神也先覺者得

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張三丰以武事得道論

蓋未有天地，先有理。理為氣之陰陽主宰。主宰理以有天地，道在其中。陰陽氣道之流行，則為對待。對待者，陰陽也。數也。一陰一陽之為道，道無名。天地始道，有名。萬物未生，天地之前無極也。無名也。既有天地之後，有極也。有名也。然前天地者曰理。後天地者曰母。是乃理化。先天陰陽氣數母生後天胎卵濕化位天地育萬育道中和。然也。故乾坤為大父母。先天也。爹娘為小父母。後天也。得陰陽先後天之氣，以降生

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身則為人之初也。夫人身之來者，得大父母之命性。賦理得小父母之精血形骸。合先後天之身命。我得而成人也。以配天地為三才。安可失性之卒哉。然能率性則本不失。既不失本來面目，又安可失身體之去處哉。夫欲尋去處，先知來處。來有門，去有路。良有以也。然有何以之。以之固有之知能。無論知愚賢否，固有知能皆可以之進道。既能修道，可知來處之源。必能去處之委。來源去委既知，能必明身不修。故曰自天子至於庶人，一是皆以修身為本。夫修身以何，以之良知良能。視目聽耳，曰聰。目明手舞足蹈，乃武。乃文。致知格物，意誠心正，心為一身之主。正意誠心，以足蹈五行，手舞八卦，手足

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為之四象用之殊途。良能還原。目視三合耳聽六道。目耳亦是四形體之一表。良知歸本耳目手足分而為二。皆為兩儀合之為一。共為太極。此由外欽入之於內，亦自內發出之於外也。能如是表裏精粗無不到，豁然貫通，希賢希聖之功自臻。於曰睿曰智，乃聖乃神。所謂盡性立命，窮神達化在茲矣。然天道人道一誠而已矣。

以足蹈五行手舞八卦，手足為之四象用之殊途。良能還原。目視三合耳聽六道。目耳亦是四形體之一表。良知歸本耳目手足分而為二。皆為兩儀合之為一。共為太極。此由外欽入之於內，亦自內發出之於外也。能如是表裏精粗無不到，豁然貫通，希賢希聖之功自臻。於曰睿曰智，乃聖乃神。所謂盡性立命，窮神達化在茲矣。然天道人道一誠而已矣。

太極空結挫揉論

[i] TAIJI'S EMPTYING, TYING UP, FILING, AND KNEADING

有挫空挫結有揉空柔結之辨挫空者則力隅矣挫結者則氣斷矣揉空者則力分矣揉結者則氣隅矣若結柔挫則氣力反空揉挫則力氣敗結挫揉則力盛於氣力在氣上矣空挫揉則氣盛於力氣過力不及矣挫結揉揉結挫皆氣閉於力矣挫空揉揉空挫皆力鑿於氣矣總之挫結揉空之法亦必由尺寸分毫量能如是也不然無地之挫揉平虛之靈結亦何由而致於哉

To empty or tie up by way of filing is different from emptying or tying up by way of kneading. Emptying by way of filing, the opponent's strength is boxed in. Tying up by way of filing, his energy is interrupted. Emptying by way of kneading, his strength is spread out. Tying up by way of kneading, his energy is boxed in.

If you apply the tying & kneading filing, then his energy and strength will be reversed. If you apply the emptying & kneading filing, then his energy and strength will fail. If you apply the tying & filing kneading, his strength will build up from his energy until his strength is greater than his energy. If you apply the emptying & filing kneading, his energy will build up from his strength, making his energy overloaded and his strength insufficient.

The filing & tying kneading and the kneading & tying filing will both result in his energy getting sealed off by his strength. The filing & emptying kneading and the kneading & emptying filing will both result in his strength being chiseled away by his energy. Basically, methods such as tying up by way of filing or emptying by way of kneading all require that you work your way down from measurements of a foot, to an inch, to a tenth of an inch, to the width of a hair. If not, there will be no occasion of filing or kneading and a flattened out void for emptying or tying, for they will not be gotten from anywhere.

懂勁先後論

[ii] BEFORE IDENTIFYING ENERGIES AND AFTER

夫未懂勁之先長出頂匾丟抗之病既懂勁之後恐出斷接俯仰之病然未懂勁故然病亦出勁既懂何以出病乎緣勁似懂未懂之際正在兩可斷接無準矣故出病神明及猶不及俯仰無著矣亦出病若不出斷接俯仰之病非真懂勁弗能不出也胡為真懂因視聽無由未得其確也知瞻眇顏盼之視覺起落緩急之聽知閃還撩了之運覺轉換進退之動則為真懂勁則能接及神明及神明自攸往有由矣有由者由於懂勁自得屈伸動靜之妙有屈伸動靜之妙開合升降又有由矣由屈伸動靜見入則開遇出則合看來則詳就去則升夫而後纔為真及神明也明也豈可日後不慎行坐臥走飲食溺溷之功是所為及中成大成也哉

Before you are identifying energies, you will typically be making the mistakes of crashing in, collapsing, coming away, and resistance. Once you are identifying energies, you will perhaps still make the mistakes of disconnecting, connecting, bowing forward, and yawning back. Before you are indentifying energies, it is natural to be making mistakes, but even after you are identifying energies, there are reasons as to why there are still mistakes to be made. When in that vague zone of almost but not quite indentifying energies, there is a lack of precision in disconnecting and connecting, hence there will be mistakes. And then when almost but not quite at the level of the miraculous, bowing forward and yawning back may still not be entirely under control, again resulting in mistakes.

As long as you are not making the mistakes of disconnecting, connecting, bowing forward, or yawning back,

you are doing it right, for if your identifying of energies is not genuine, you would not be able to prevent such mistakes. What does it mean for it to be genuine? Simply that a sensory foundation must be laid to build it up into a reality. Be aware through observing: there is looking forward, looking behind, looking left, looking right. Be aware through listening: there is rising, falling, quickness, leisure. Be aware through feeling: there is evading, countering, inciting, concluding. Be aware through acting: there is turning, switching, advancing, retreating. In this way, your identifying of energies will be genuine.

You will then be able to reach the level of the miraculous, and this is because there is a foundation, the foundation being the identifying of energies. The subtleties of bending, extending, movement, and stillness are automatically built upon that foundation. Then spreading, merging, ascending, and descending are in turn built upon bending, extending, movement, and stillness. By way of bending and extending, movement and stillness, spread his attack aside when you see him enter, then merge with him as he tries to exit. Descend when you see his attack come in, then ascend as he withdraws.

Once your genuineness in identifying energies reaches all the way to the point of the miraculous, at such a level you will thereafter be mindful in every activity – whether it be walking, sitting, lying down, running, eating, drinking, or even going to the bathroom. By this means, your achievement will go from middling to great.

尺寸分毫在懂勁後論

[iii] REDUCING MEASUREMENTS AFTER IDENTIFYING ENERGIES

在懂勁先求尺寸分毫為之小成不過末技武事而已所謂能尺於人者非先懂勁也如懂勁後神而明之自然能量尺寸尺寸能量纔能節拿抓閉矣知膜脉筋穴之理要必明存亡之手知存亡之手要必明生死之穴其穴之數安可不知乎知生死之穴數烏可不明閉而不生乎烏可不明閉而無生乎是所謂二字之存亡一閉之而已盡矣

If you strive for the reducing of measurements before identifying energies, yours will amount to a small achievement and be but a smattering of martial skill. You will not be able to estimate the opponent even at the level of a foot before you are identifying energies. After you have achieved identifying energies, you will have a miraculous understanding, and you will automatically have the ability to reduce measurements. From there you will then be able to control, seize, capture, and seal.

To understand the theory of vessels, channels, sinews, and acupoints, it is necessary to be clear about which techniques will save or kill. To understand the techniques that will save or kill, it is necessary to be clear about the acupoints for life and death. In the acupoint art, how could you go without knowing them [seeing as not knowing them might result in killing someone by mistake]? To know how to activate the life and death acupoints, it is necessary to be clear about the technique of sealing. Sealing is what determines both life and death.

太極指掌捶手解

[iv] THE FINGERS, PALM, FIST, AND HAND IN TAIJI

自指下之腕上裏者為掌五指之首為之手五指皆為指五指權裏其背為捶如其用者按推掌也拿揉抓閉俱用指也挫摩手也打捶也夫捶有搬攔有指襠有肘底有撇身四捶之外有覆捶掌有撈膝有換轉有單鞭有通背四掌之外有串掌手有雲手有提手拿有十字手四手之外有反手指有屈指有伸指捏指閉指四指之外有量指又名尺寸指又名覓穴指然指有五指有

五指之用首指為手仍為指故又名手指其一用之為旋指旋手其二用之為根指根手其三用之為弓指弓手其四用之為中合手指四手指之外為獨指獨手也食指為卞指為劍指為佐指為粘指中正為心指為合指為鈎指為抹指無名指為全指為環指為代指為扣指小指為幫指補指媚指掛指若此之名知之易而用之難得口訣秘法亦不易為也其次有如對掌推山掌射雁掌晾翅掌似閉指拘步指灣弓指穿梭指探馬手灣弓手抱虎手玉女手跨虎手通山捶葉下捶背反捶勢分捶捲挫捶再其次步隨身換不出五行則無失錯矣因其粘連黏隨之理舍己從人身隨步自換只要無五行之舛錯身形腳勢出於自然又何慮些須之病也

The “palm” is the area of the hand below the fingers and above the wrist. The “hand” refers to the whole thing up to the fingertips. A “finger” refers to any of the five fingers. A “fist” is when the five fingers are clasped inward to emphasize the back of the hand. Palm techniques are matters of pushing down and pushing out. Finger techniques are matters of seizing, kneading, capturing, and sealing. Hand techniques are matters of filing and rubbing. Fist techniques are matters of striking.

Fist techniques: Parry & Block, Punch to the Crotch, Under the Elbow, Torso-Flung Punch, and beyond these four there is also the Overturned Punch. Palm techniques: Brush the Knee, Exchanging Palms, Single Whip, Through the Back, and beyond these four there is also the Threading Palm. Hand techniques: Clouding Hands, Raising Hand, Seizing Hand, Crossed Hands, and beyond these four there is also the Reversing Hand. Finger techniques: bending, extending, pinching, sealing, and beyond these four there is also estimating, which is also called “reducing measurements” or “seeking acupoints”. The five fingers also have five-fingered functions, operating as a whole hand as well as individual fingers, and so these can be termed as either hand or finger techniques: corkscrewing, planting, curling, or closing inward, and beyond these four hand/finger techniques, there is also “standing alone”.

The forefinger is the impatient finger, sword finger, assisting finger, or sticking finger. The middle finger is the central finger, closing finger, hooking finger, or smearing finger. The ring finger is the completing finger, surrounding finger, exchanging finger, or covering finger. The little finger is the helping finger, healing finger, enticing finger, or hanging finger. Though the names of these techniques are easy to comprehend, they are difficult to apply, even with personal instruction in the deeper methods.

Supplementary palm techniques: Palms Facing Each Other, Push the Mountain, Shoot the Goose, Spreading Wings. Supplementary finger techniques: Sealing Shut, Jab in a Crossed Stance, Bending the Bow, Working the Shuttles. Supplementary hand techniques: Reaching Out to the Horse, Bending the Bow, Capturing the Tiger, Maiden’s Hands, Sitting Tiger Hands. Supplementary fist techniques: Punch Through the Mountain, Punch Under the Leaf, Turning Behind Punch, Momentum-Splitting Punch, Wrap & File Punch.

A further supplementary layer is that your steps are to go along with your body’s changes and are never to perform a step unassociated with the five elements, and thus you will be free from making mistakes. Because of the principle of sticking, connecting, adhering, and following, as well as letting go of yourself to follow the opponent, your body in turn will go along with your stepping, and as long as you remain true to the five elements, there will be such a naturalness to your posture and steps that it will not matter even if you do make some mistakes here and there.

口授穴之存亡論

[v] ON PERSONAL INSTRUCTION IN THE ACUPOINTS THAT SAVE OR KILL

穴有存亡之穴要非口授不可何也一因其難學二因其關乎存亡三因其人纔能傳第一不授不忠不孝之人第二不傳根底

不好之人第三不授心術不正之人第四不傳鹵莽滅裂之人第五不傳授目中無人之人第六不傳知禮無恩之人第七不授反復無長之人第八不傳得易失易之人此須知八不傳匪人更不待言矣如其可以傳再口授之秘訣傳忠孝知恩者心氣和平者守道不失者真以為師者始終如一者此五者果其有始有終不變如一方可將全體大用之功授之於徒也明矣於前於後代代相繼皆如是之所傳也噫抑亦知武事中烏有匪人哉

There are acupoints that save and acupoints that kill. They cannot be learned without personal instruction. Here are three reasons why: because of how difficult they are to learn, the fact that they are a matter of life and death, and the degree of a person's talent. There are eight kinds of people not to be taught:

1. the disloyal and unfilial,
2. those who are fundamentally unkind,
3. those with crooked intentions,
4. those who are rude and reckless,
5. those who think themselves superior to others,
6. those who care more about rules than they do about people,
7. those who are fickle,
8. those who will have an easy time picking it up and then just as easily discard it.

It must be understood that these eight people are not to be taught. Criminals of course do not deserve to be considered at all. As for those who may be taught, they are eligible to be given personal instruction in its secrets. There are five kinds who may be taught:

- [1] those who are loyal, filial, and gracious,
- [2] those with a mild temperament,
- [3] those who will hold to the method and not discard it,
- [4] those who will be true to the teacher,
- [5] those who will complete the study as ardent as when they started.

These types will be resolved to complete the study without having doubts and can be shown the whole thing, and what will be given to the pupil is illumination. It goes from those who already know it to those who will know it, the torch being passed down through generations, always by this process. But what a shame it is that of those who know martial arts, some turn out to be criminals.

張三丰承留

[vi] WHAT ZHANG SANFENG INHERITED

天地即乾坤伏羲為人祖畫卦道有名堯舜十六母微危允厥中精一及孔孟神化性命功七二乃文武授之至予來字著宣平許延年藥在身元善從復始虛靈能德明理令氣形具萬載咏長春心兮誠真跡三教無兩家統言皆太極浩然塞而冲方正千年立繼往聖永綿開來學常續水火濟既焉願至戊畢字

“The sky and the ground made the world.

Fu Xi was the progenitor of mankind.

He drew the trigrams and declared the Way

for Emperor Yao and Emperor Shun, and for sixteen generations on.

The most mysterious of pinnacles have consented access

to the most dedicated, such as Confucius and Mengzi.

The skill of spirit transmuting the life-force

went down through seventy-two sages to King Wen and King Wu.

“Instruction has come to me

by way of the writings of Xu Xuanping.

The medicine to bring about longevity lies within ourselves,

in the perfection of our original state being revived. [Basically, live every day as though it’s your first, a lesson that could have been learned from pretty much any Daoist poet.]

Your natural self can empower and enlighten.

The truth when expressed can fulfill you in spirit and body.

With countless repetitions, chant of lengthening the springtime.

Heartfelt sincerity will have a real effect.

“The three doctrines [Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism] are not different schools,

for all that each of them discuss is a matter of the Grand Polarity

which runs through everything,

centered and everlasting.

The ancient wisdom is always with us,

constantly inspiring new students to learn.

When water and fire cooperate [as in hexagram 63 – water above, fire below, leading to a heated cooking pot,

as opposed to hexagram 64 – fire above, water below, an absence of interaction which produces nothing],

our goals are able to come to fruition.” [The metaphor in this last statement is that ancient knowledge is the fire and the act of learning from it is the water being brought to a boil.]

口授張三丰老師之言

[vii] THE TEACHINGS OF ZHANG SANFENG

予知三教歸一之理皆性命學也皆以心為身之主也保全心身永有精氣神也有精氣神纔能文思安安武備動動安安動動乃文乃武大而化之者聖神也先覺者得其寰中超乎象外矣後學者以效先覺之所知能其知能雖人固有之知能然非效之不可得也夫人之知能天然文武目視耳聽天然文也手舞足蹈天然武也孰非固有也明矣前輩大成文武聖神授人以體育修身進之不以武事修身傳之至予得之手舞足蹈之採戰借其身之陰以補助身之陽身之陽男也身之陰女也然皆於身中矣男之身祇一陽男全體皆陰女以一陽採戰全體之陰女故云一陽復始斯身之陰女不獨七二以一姤女配嬰兒之名變化千萬姤女採戰之可也亦安有男女後天之身以補之者所謂自身之天地以扶助之是為陰陽採戰也如此者是男子之身皆屬陰而採自身之陰戰己身之女不如兩男之陰陽對待修身速也予及此傳於武事然不可以末技視依然體育之學修身之道性命之功聖神之境也今夫兩男之對待採戰於己身之採戰其理不二己身亦遇對待之數則為採戰也是為汞鉛也於人對戰坎離之陰陽兌震陽戰陰也為之四正乾坤之陰陽艮巽陰採陽也為之四隅此八卦也為之八門身足位列中土進步之陽以戰之退步之陰以採之左顧之陽以採之右盼之陰以戰之此五行也為之五步共為八門五步也夫如是予授之爾終身用之不能盡之矣又至予得武繼武必當以武事傳之而修身也修身入首無論武事文為成功一也三教三乘之原不出一太極願後學以易理格致於身中留於後世也可

“I understand the idea that the three doctrines are basically the same: they are each a study of life, each take the mind to be controller of the body, and are purposed to maintain mind and body, to bring longevity to essence, energy, and spirit. With essence, energy, and spirit, we can be calmly civil and boldly martial. Calm and bold, civil and martial – as these things are expanded and have a transformative effect, there will come wisdom and spirituality. The earliest discoverers of this found their way into truth and then took it to another level. Later

students then imitate what they did in order to achieve their awareness. Such awareness is innate in everyone, but to get at what they were doing, it is nevertheless necessary to follow in their footsteps. Civil and martial are inherent to human ability. The seeing of eyes and hearing of ears are inherently civil while the dancing of hands and prancing of feet are inherently martial, and so both aspects are clearly inherent. Having achieved the layers of civil, martial, wisdom, and spirituality, the forefathers advanced the teaching of self-cultivation by way of physical training, though not by way of martial arts.

“When the teachings reached me, I grasped the receive/oppose [counterbalancing] nature of the dancing prancing, in which the passive aspect of the other person’s body is borrowed to build up the active aspect in one’s own. The active aspect is the masculine quality. The passive aspect is the feminine quality. The body has both qualities. While the maleness is active and the femaleness is passive, the femaleness receives the active aspect to counter her own passive aspect [as the maleness receives the passive aspect to counter his own active aspect]. Thereby the active [or passive] returns to its initial state [of being in balance with the other]. The passive feminine aspect within the body means more than a young woman being developed enough to become pregnant. There are countless ways in which a woman may enact counterbalancing, and this is not about the bodies of men and women being somehow corrected. It is said that taking advantage of the skyness and groundness in one’s own body is what makes the counterbalancing of the passive and active aspects. This means that a man may make use of the passive aspect of his masculine side as a way to counter his own feminine quality. [However, this work of balancing the masculine and feminine qualities within oneself] is not as efficient as the self-cultivation of two partners making use of their masculine quality to work at balancing their passive and active aspects [through the constant exchanging of passive and active roles during the pushing hands exercises].

“Seeing as I have placed these teachings into a martial context, martial arts must not be viewed as something trivial, but as a part of physical education, a method of self-cultivation, a practice of life-enhancement, a category of wisdom and spirituality. The work of counterbalancing between two partners is no different in principle from the counterbalancing within your own body, but when working with a partner, it is like counterbalancing between mercury and lead. [In the context of two partners pushing hands, the role of the attacker is solid and heavy, like lead, while the defender is fluid and yielding, like mercury.] When fighting, the four primary techniques are a matter of active opposing passive, while the four secondary techniques are a matter of passive receiving active. The eight trigrams supply the eight techniques. The body and feet stand centered. To advance is to oppose actively. To retreat is to receive passively. To step to the left is to receive actively. To step to the right is to oppose passively. The five elements supply the five steps. Combined, they are the eight techniques and five steps.

“These teachings of mine you may make use of for your entire life and yet never be able to use them up. What I have gained and am passing down is to be taught as a martial art of self-cultivation. As to the method of cultivating the self, it does not matter if it is approached by martial or civil means, for the achievement is the same. The three doctrines, at any of the three levels [greater, middle, lesser], are all inescapably based in the concept of the grand polarity. I wish for the next generation of students to examine the theory in the *Book of Changes* within themselves and that it be continued by succeeding generations. That would be a good thing.”

蓋未有天地先有理理為氣之陰陽主宰主宰理以有天地道在其中陰陽氣道之流行則為對待對待者陰陽也數也一陰一陽之為道道無名天地始道有名萬物母未有天地之前無極也無名也既有天地之後有極也有名也然前天地者曰理後天地者曰母是乃理化先天陰陽氣數母生後天胎卵濕化位天地育萬育道中和然也故乾坤為大父母先天也爹娘為小父母後天也得陰陽先後天之氣以降生身則為人之初也夫人身之來者得大父母之命性賦理得小父母之精血形骸合先後天之身命我得而成人也以配天地為三才安可失性之本哉然能率性則本不失既不失本來面目又安可失身體之去處哉夫欲尋去處先知來處來有門去有路良有以也然有何以之以之固有之知能無論知愚賢否固有知能皆可以之進道既能修道可知來處之源必能去處之委來源去委既知能必明身不修故曰自天子至於庶人壹是皆以修身為本夫修身以何以之良知良能視目聽耳曰聰日明手舞足蹈乃武乃文致知格物意誠心正心為一身之主正意誠心以足蹈五行手舞八卦手足為之四象用之殊途良能還原目視三合耳聽六道目耳亦是四形體之一表良知歸本耳目手足分而為二皆為兩儀合之為一共為太極此由外歛入之於內亦自內發出之於外也能如是表裏精粗無不到豁然貫通希賢希聖之功自臻於曰睿曰智乃聖乃神所謂盡性立命窮神達化在茲矣然天道人道一誠而已矣

“Before there was the universe, there was the principle which governs the passive and active energies. This governing principle by which the universe exists is the core of the Way, and the way these energies flow is in the manner of complementary opposites. For passive and active to oppose and yet complement each other is a mathematical principle: to be [zeroed out in a half-and-half state of] one part passive and one part active is the Way. ‘The Way that cannot be described is the origin of the universe itself. The Way that can be described is the source of all things within the universe. [*Daodejing*, chapter 1]’ Before the universe existed, there was merely nothingness, and thus nothing to be described. Once the universe existed, there was finally somethingness, and thus things to be described. Before the universe existed, there awaited the principle of existence. Once the universe came into being, there was then the creative principle.

“Pre-beginning, it was the principle of existence that brought about the balanced passive and active energies. Post-beginning, the creative principle then gave rise to the ways of coming into being: gestation in a womb, hatching from an egg, spontaneous generation from water, and metamorphosis. The Way is the way of neutrality, nourishing all things by being in a balanced position between skyness and groundness. The sky and ground are your greater parents, of the pre-beginning. Your mother and father are your lesser parents, of the post-beginning. When we are born, we are the recipients of the energies of passive and active, of pre-beginning and post-beginning, and on such a basis we begin. When we are born, we are given by our greater parents our life-force and disposition, and are endowed with reason. From our lesser parents come our physical essence, blood, and bones. By the merging of the life-force and body of the pre-beginning and post-beginning, we each then become a person. For us to align with the sky and ground, taking our place as one of the three substances, we cannot ignore our fundamental origin [as a product of both].

“As long as we are able to follow our nature, we will not lose touch with our origin. By not forgetting where we come from, we will not lose touch with where we are headed, for if you want to know where you are going, you must first know where you are coming from. With our origin mapped out, our way ahead is a clear route that will be traversed by way of instinct. We all, whether smart or stupid, worthy or worthless, have an instinctive awareness that will point us to the Way. If we cultivate the Way, we will be able to know our origin and can fulfill our destiny. To know our origin and fulfill our destiny lies in being able to cultivate the self. Thus it is said [in the *Da Xue*]: ‘From king to commoner, it all comes down to self-cultivation.’ The way to cultivate the self is through instinctive understanding and ability: eyes keenly seeing and ears acutely hearing, hands dancing and feet prancing, martiality and civility. ‘Broaden your understanding by studying things deeply, thereby improving your intellect and smoothing your emotions.’

“Since mind is in charge of body, the intellect should be improved and the emotions smoothed in order for the feet to perform the five steps and the hands to perform the eight techniques. The hands and feet amount to

four, and they can be used in such a variety of ways, but instinct is able to retrieve their basic state [of unity]. The eyes see as a union of three [what the left eye sees, what the right eye sees, what both eyes see by triangulating together] and the ears hear along the six paths. The eyes and ears amount to four, but within they function as one, instinct again regaining the basic state. Ears, eyes, hands, and feet – they each are divided into two, making two polarities, but each functioning as a unity, totaling a grand polarity.

“Gathering inward from without, expressing outward from within, all of it in this way can be reached, inside and out, specifically and in general, all understood thoroughly, and we will naturally attain the hoped-for achievements of the worthies and sages, their vision and knowledge, their wisdom and spirituality. This is what they meant by fulfilling one’s nature and facing one’s destiny, taking spirit as far as it will go and thereby causing transformation. The way of both Nature and mankind is sincerity and nothing more.”

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[*Survey of Textual Variations (Wu document left side / Yang document right side):

Harmless character variants:

section 5 – 斷 / 断

7 – 得 / 得

10 – 得 / 得

13 – 得 / 得

15 – 得 / 得

21 – 顯 / 顯

23 – 緝 / 緝

24 – 憑 / 憑

30 – 顯 / 顯

ii – 得 / 得 ; 也 / 矣

iv – 得 / 得

vii – 得 / 得 ; 得 / 得 ; 得 / 得 ; 之 / 者 ; 得 / 得

Flipped words (one occasion in each document):

24 – 絲毫 / 毫絲

vi – 濟既 / 既濟

Missing words (one occasion in Wu document, seven occasions in Yang document):

1 – 五行者 / 五行

2 – 得之 / 得

13 – 得矣 / 得

19 – 得成 / 得

22 – 半重偏 / 半重偏重

ii – 緣勁 / 勁

iv – 如對掌 / 對掌

vii – 補助身 / 補助

There are also two occasions in Yang document of missing character components:

17 – 悠久 / 攸久

25 – 咽 / 四

As for accidentally added words, there is one occasion in Wu document:

22 – 除除 / 除

In section 30, 於己人 is expanded in Yang document to 於己於人 five times, indicating deliberate addition in Yang document rather than absent-mindedness in this section of Wu document.

Mistaken words (one occasion in Wu document, ten occasions in Yang document):

3 – 知 / 覺

5 – 匾 / 區

18 – 亮 / 毫

23 – 使 / 始

24 – 凶門 / 勾門 ; 云 / 去

32 – 一然 / 亦然

iii – 末 / 未

vi – 戍 / 戌

viii – 壹 / 一 ; 手 / 乎]

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