



Vol. IV, No. II

March 1989

P.O. Box 630, New Millford, N.Y. 10959

The Master Key to Tai Chi Chuan

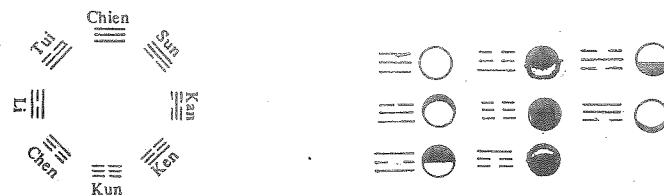
Part II

by Jou, Tsung Hwa

In the foreward of Li Yi Yu's Classic, "The Five Word Secret." it is said: "Wu Yu Hsiang at first learned T'ai Chi Ch'uan from Yang Lu Ch'an, but only got the basics. Later, as he was passing through the Chao Pu District of Honan Province he took the opportunity to study with Chen Ch'ing P'ing. In a very short time, approximately a month, he was able to internalize the Master Key." The explanation Li Yi Yu offered is that Master Wu was a genius, and that his accomplishment is beyond mortal man. But it very definitely is my point of view that Master Chen was able to transmit the Master Key to Master Wu. After this became clear to him, his other accomplishments came naturally. Because he practiced constantly he arrived at being able to intercept energy, or Tong Ching, and this led him to a godlike state.

Now let us return to the more orthodox teachings. If the hands embracing the Eight Trigrams are the movements of Tai Chi Ch'uan, then Yin and Yang must move in coordination, imitating the rotational motion of the Sun and the Moon. Now let us take the Yang style "Wave Hands Like Clouds," as an example:

When the back of the palm faces upwards, it is called Yang, and when the front of the palm faces upwards it is called Yin. Now let me explain in detail as follows.



1.) When the right hand is on top and the back of the hand is facing upwards, it describes total Yang, and it is related to the Chien Trigram, ☰○ like the full moon.

At the same time, when the left hand is on the bottom, and the palm is facing upwards, it describes full Yin and is related to the Kun Trigram. It is like the New Moon on the first day of the Lunar Month. ☷●

2.) When the right hand, which has formed the Chien Trigram, revolves to the right and downwards, the visibility changes, and the lower part describes a Yin visibility and thus describes the Sun Trigram. This Trigram is written ☱ and it resembles the Moon when it is in this phase. ○

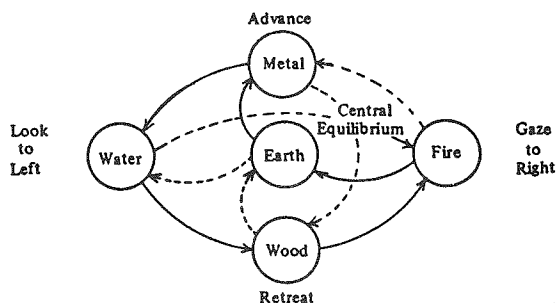
Looking at the mirror image of this, if the left hand is in the Kun Trigram, ☷, and it revolves towards the upper left, its upper part will reflect a change towards Yang, ☰ it will form the K'ien Trigram. Here is the lunar description of this Trigram. ●

3.) When the right hand, starting from the posture which is English we call "holding the ball," again revolves to the lower right it first becomes the Sun Trigram, and then as it continues to revolve creates the Kan Trigram, and its lunar counterpart looks like this: ☵ ●

4.) When the right hand Kan Trigram again revolves to the lower right, at this time only its upper part describes Yang, and it forms the Ken Trigram, ☶, looking like the lunar phase: ● The left hand Kan Trigram, rotating to the upper right, only has its lower part describing Yin, and it forms the Sun Trigram, ☱ looking like this phase of the lunar cycle. ○

5.) When the right hand, in the Ken Trigram, revolves again to the lower right, its full Yin becomes the Kun Trigram, ☷, and it resembles the New Moon. ● The left hand Sun Trigram, ☱, rotates again to the upper left, becoming a full Yang, and thus the Ch'ien Trigram is shown, resembling the full moon. ☰ ○

In the above diagrams, because the right hand is revolving from the upper right downwards, and because the left hand is revolving from the lower left to the upper left, their direction of change is the opposite of one another. The revolution is one half of the entire sphere. When the reader completes the movement of "Wave Hands Like Clouds," with this type of understanding of how Yin changes into Yang, then he will easily be able to grasp the meaning of "the hands embrace the Eight Trigrams."



The above diagram shows the alchemy of weight transformation which takes place in the feet as they tread the pattern of the Five Elements. While this is taking place both hands must be "embracing the Eight Trigrams." So the position of the hands cannot just be changed at random. The hands must completely follow the movement of the body while it is turning. "Advance" is related to Metal. Metal becomes transmuted into Water, which is "Look to the Left." This Water creates Wood, or "Retreat", and Wood, gives birth to Fire, or "Gaze Right". Fire creates Earth, and we have "Central Equilibrium", which brings us back to the beginning of the cycle, as Earth again produces Metal, and this again becomes "Advance." So while this "alchemical transformation" takes place in the feet, the hands, following this motion, create the Trigrams. This above explanation is overly complicated, but in reality anyone can easily learn how to mimic this motion. And the understanding of it can also come quickly, especially if you have diligently studied the Third Chapter on "coiling silk energy," or Chan-Ssu Chin, in my book: The Tao of Tai Chi Ch'uan.

Just as the most profound and esoteric principles of action are often extraordinarily simple, so can attempting to actualize a simple principle often be very difficult. Therefore a desire to obtain The Master Key to gain entrance into the Halls of Mastery will not be realized by standing behind the Teacher and following him day after day. You are not going to get it through this type of practice. There are no short cuts to getting hold of it. You must "silently reflect and thoroughly comprehend; when your practice has fully developed you will understand intrinsic energy." What does the phrase "understanding intrinsic energy" mean? The Tai Chi Chuan Classics clearly point out that Yin is also Yang and Yang is also Yin. When Yin and Yang are in perfect harmony then it can be

described as understanding intrinsic energy. If you want to know how to interpret energy, it does not begin with pushing hands, but primarily from knowing one's individual balance of Yin and Yang within one's different body movements. Beginning with "the hands embrace the Eight Trigrams," and the feet "tread the pattern of the Five Elements", one gradually comes to understand his or her own intrinsic energy. This understanding can then be slowly transferred over into an understanding of someone else's energy. With this understanding a person eventually arrives at a state where, "My opponent does not know me, but I know my opponent. When these techniques are mastered your accomplishment can become beyond measure." So from a student to a Master, from shallow to profound, finally reaching the highest level. This is to be considered the highest accomplishment of Tai Chi Chuan.

Every kind of Art has its own Master Key. A person might study dance for a lifetime and only become a journeyman professional. The reason for this is that most people are satisfied to study only the appearance of things. A genius always feels the need to re-invent the wheel. The extraordinary dancer leaps beyond the external constraints when he has acquired the Master Key to dance. Many people learn to paint and write poems, but only a very few achieve renown. To achieve renown requires a Master Key style of approach.

Many years ago there was a man who lived in seclusion deep in the mountains. He spent his time observing monkeys, imitating their movements and behavior, finally creating the now well-known Monkey Boxing. It is possible for someone to learn Monkey Boxing from a famous Teacher; maybe practice very hard, study for twenty years or so, and even reach a profound level of achievement. But if one has never seen a real Monkey, this achievement is only a boxing achievement, and has nothing to do with real skill in Monkey Boxing. Let us extend this comparison and analyze the way many people study Pa Kua Chang, (Eight Trigram Palm); Mostly what these people know is how to walk the circle in "the treading mud step," and how to thrust and overturn the palms. Some could not even sketch the Eight Trigrams. Even though their boxing ability might rank very high, this has no real relationship with Pa Kua Chang. The Master Key of Pa Kua Chang has to

do with having the Eight Trigrams in both the hands and the feet. In a similar fashion, the Master Key to Hsing-I Chuan has to do with having the five Elements in both the hands and feet. And as for those of us who are actively practicing Tai Chi Chuan, if we don't know the names and directions of the Eight Trigrams, or the names of the Five Elements, with the different pattern of Creation and Destruction, we can only achieve dexterity in boxing, not accomplishment in Tai Chi Chuan.

Many people who practice Monkey Boxing, Pa Kua, Hsing-I, or Tai Chi Chuan will sneer at my explanation, and reject it as nonsense which has no practical value when related to real life. If the sum total of their vision consists of external form, it may be right, but what I am describing is without form and appearance. If this is considered to be too abstract and difficult to relate to daily life, again, they may be right, but in fact I consider this to be very simple and easy. The Master Key for Tai Chi Chuan originates from the Tai Chi Diagram and is patterned after the rotational movements of the Sun and the Moon. There is no form and no appearance. The whole body is transparent and empty. But "without a long period of arduous practice you cannot find yourself possessed of a broad and penetrating insight."

I have been practicing Tai Chi Chuan for more than twenty years. After practicing Tai Chi I have had to study the theories of Yin and Yang, and the Five Elements. Approximately four years ago I began to have to personally have some understanding of those elusive phrases: "The hands embrace the Eight Trigrams and the feet tread the pattern of the Five Elements." Looking at Wang Tsung Yueh's textual emendation which was appended to the end of Chang San Feng's Tai Chi Chuan Classic: "Every word of this Classic is very important without any surplus allusion, and its meanings cannot be grasped without natural insights. The ancient Masters were not willing to transmit their Teachings to those incapable of learning them, since they were afraid of wasting their time." We can clearly see that this is not empty talk. I will only say that I am a relative novice at Tai Chi Chuan who wants to share his research with his fellow hobbyists. I am not saying that I am handing down my Teaching, but only that I am casting away a brick and looking forward to getting back a piece of Jade.

The Chang San Feng Festival

by Marsha Rosa

The 17th annual Chang San Feng Festival will be held at the Tai Chi Farm of June 2,3,4, 1989. As many of you already know this is an event held each year to honor Chan San Feng, however it has come to mean much more than this for many Tai Chi players. Some of us see each other only once a year during this weekend so it has come to mean a weekend of not only workshop, demonstrations and practice but of caring and sharing with our Tai Chi friends.

This year we have planned something educational and lots of fun. Since competition is playing an important role in the life of many players we have arranged for everyone who attends the festival to participate in a mock tournament. (Remember a Taste of China will be in July) One Saturday morning session will include tournament guidelines for competing and judging. You will receive a shortened version of the judging rules given by a U.S. Wu Shu Federation representative. Competition rules will also be demonstrated by workshop leaders.

The afternoon session will be the mock tournament. Everyone will have an opportunity to be a competitor and a judge. Everyone will receive a copy of the judges evaluation sheets for reference. All are encouraged to participate in this event and share Tai Chi with others.

There will be a team meeting after everyone has performed for a discussion of this experience. Later in a large group meeting in the Chang Building the chief judge of each team will report to the group the results of this experiment.

The tournament is only one event of the weekend.

In addition, there will be workshops on Friday and Saturday morning, and sessions on Friday and Saturday evenings as well. (See the schedule.)

If you plan to stay overnight at the farm, please not the camping and cabin fees. Also, prepare to bring you own supplies: a sleeping bag, food and utensils, and toiletries. (The cabins are very rustic, so prepare for "roughing it"!)

Most important of all, bring yourself and your friends, ready to share Tai Chi!

Festival Program

June 2, 1989 - Friday

- 7:00 PM Welcome and registration
- 8:00-9:00 PM Special Video Viewing:
1) Cheng Man Ching
2) 1988 Tai Chi Tour of China

June 3, 1989 - Saturday

- 7:30 - 8:15 Breakfast
8:30 - 9:30 Workshop
9:45 - 10:45 Workshop
11:00 - 12:00 Workshop on Tournament Guidelines for all Festival Participants
12:00 - 1:00 Lunch
1:00 - 4:00 Tournament
4:00 - 4:30 Rap-Up Session
5:30 - 7:00 Dinner
(6:00 - 7:00 Annual Teacher's Meeting during dinner)
7:30 - 8:30 Workshop

June 4, 1989 - Sunday

- 7:30 - 8:15 Breakfast
8:30 - 9:30 Workshop
9:45 - 10:45 Workshop
11:00 - 12:00 Workshop
12:00 - 1:00 Lunch
1:00 - 4:00 Annual Demonstration honoring Chang San Feng

Festival Costs:

- 3 day package - \$50.00 (lodging extra)
Saturday - \$30.00
Sunday - \$30.00
Cabin \$10 - 1 Night; \$15 - 2 Nights
Campsite \$5 - 1 Night; \$10 - 2 Nights

Volunteers Needed!

Volunteers are needed at the Tai Chi Farm to help with preparations for the Festival and this year's summer workshops. Any local students and friends are asked to contribute whatever time you can spare to help with projects here. Most of the work to be done is cleanup and renovation (like cleaning the outdoor class space and the cabins, and painting, and repairing windows, etc.) Projects will begin on the weekends in April and May. Can you help? Volunteers are welcome to join classes 8AM Saturday and Sunday and stay over in cabins, too!

Workshops: Here and There!

1989 Summer Workshops at the Tai Chi Farm

* Master Jou, Tsung Hwa:
June 16-18

① and The Master Key to Tai Chi Chuan
July 14-16

② June 19-24

③ July 17-21

* Master T.T. Liang:

August 7-11 Push Hands, Yang Long Form,
Weapons Forms, and Taoist Philosophy

COURSE FEES - 1989

	Weekend	5-Days
Tuition:	\$85	\$170
Lodging: Cabin	\$20	\$ 40
Camping	\$10	\$ 20

WEEKEND WORKSHOPS – begin at 9:00 A.M. Saturday and end at 3:00 P.M. Sunday, with registration and informal gathering on Friday night. FIVE-DAY – seminars begin at 9:00 A.M. Monday and end at 12:00 Noon on Friday, with registration and informal gathering Sunday night.

Study Tai Chi In China!

Zhonzhou Wushuyuan is conducting wushu and Tai Chi training courses with Masters Chen Xiaowang, Liang Yiquan and others. The course is divided in two classes, Junior and Middle

Dates: 1st Course: July 20 - August 10

2nd Course: September 10 - 30

Those Interested may contact the Tai Chi Farm for more information.

**Tai Chi Chuan Mountain Retreat
With Master Abraham Liu**
May 19 - 23, 1989, Julian, CA
(near San Diego)

Featuring Yang-style Long and Short Forms,
Pushing Hands, and San Shou.

All Levels Welcome

Five-day format – \$300; Weekend – \$150.

For more information call or write:

Taoist Sanctuary of San Diego
2527 University Avenue
San Diego, CA 92104
Ph. (619) 692-1155

On January 10, 1989 Wu Do-Nan, the Tai Chi Master, died in Beijing, China. Anyone who has a regular subscription to this newsletter remembers this name as a symbol of the good health and longevity brought by Tai Chi. Because Wu Do-Nan was sickly as a child, he began Tai Chi at an early age and benefited by living a long life. He was 107 years old when he died. (But when calculations are made to transfer from the Chinese calendar, he is 110 years old!) Let his example be an inspiration to us all!

THE TAO SERIES

by Jou, Tsung Hwa

1. The Tao of Tai Chi Chuan

Way to Rejuvenation

Third revised edition.

hardcover, \$17.00

2. The Tao of Meditation

Way to Enlightenment

hardcover, \$15.00

3. The Tao of I Ching

Way to Divination

hardcover, \$20.00



To order the book, send check or money order to:

Tai Chi Foundation
POB 828
Warwick, NY 10990

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NAME _____

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SUMMER WORKSHOP

DATES OF COURSE _____

COURSE TITLE _____

CABIN/CAMPING _____

TOTAL AMOUNT _____

CHANG SAN FENG FESTIVAL

I WILL ATTEND: _____ Friday
_____ Saturday
_____ Sunday

CABIN/CAMPSITE _____

TOTAL AMOUNT _____

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