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# THE ILLUSTRATED CANON OF CHEN FAMILY TAIJIQUAN

by Chen Xin (Chen Pin San)

Wen County  
Henan Province

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陳氏太極拳圖說

Published by  
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## EDITOR'S NOTE

“The Illustrated Canon of Chen Family Taijiquan” is universally acknowledged by the Taoist community and Taiji practitioners as the seminal sourcebook of Taiji philosophy and techniques. A work of intense scholarship which took over fourteen years to complete, this tome was intended by its author to be both the first ever written repository of Taiji lore, and a referential resource for Taiji instructors and practitioners for generations to follow.

The English translation of this canon marks the first ever attempt to translate into English Chen Xin's highly esoteric and detailed technical explanations of Chen-style Taijiquan techniques, including his meticulous inscriptions for over 400 illustrations. Given the complexity of the material, the main objectives of this translation are twofold. First, to render the work accessible to as wide an audience as possible by modernizing and simplifying the language while conserving the integrity of the author's intention and instruction. To this end, the Pinyin transliteration system has been used to standardize the spelling of all Chinese nouns, and footnotes have been added wherever additional clarification was deemed necessary. The second objective is to encourage its usage as a reference book by improving on the user-friendliness of its structure. Hence, minor adjustments were made in the order and naming of the chapters, and more importantly, the order of inscriptions explaining the illustrations have been clarified through a detailed numbering system.

While many areas for translation and editorial improvement remain, it is hoped that readers will find this first edition a useful introduction into the philosophy and techniques of Chen Taijiquan and a valuable source of knowledge as their practice and understanding evolves.

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# A SONG OF TAIJIQUAN

## BY CHEN PAN-LING

**in commemoration of the publication of this book**

The great beginning of heaven and earth  
Springs from *Wuji*, the Ultimate Nothingness,  
As well as from the Grand Terminus of *Taiji*,  
Which gives to the myriad things their completion.

Hence everyone has the *Taiji* motif in their bosom;  
A human being is created in the image of heaven,  
Whose nature is to return to his origin.  
The pre-birth jing essence, the post-birth *qi* energy,  
And the eternal *shen* spirit are managed upon one principle,  
The all-embracing pattern.

Running to the extreme of greatness and firmness,  
You can pass on heaven and earth, these two extremes,  
The mysteries of which are fathomless and out of count,  
But incomparable in their courage.

Our Chen family is from Wen County —  
Upholders of the outstanding abilities of Master Chen Ying-yi;  
True guardians of the great ancestors' traditions in boxing,  
Entitled by the all-embracing name *Taiji*;

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---

Inheritors of Taijiquan's prosperity and flourishing;  
Researchers and explainers of the Book of Changes,  
We try for people's understanding  
That Inner and Outer work in accord with each other.

Stupid and ignorant people today create the art of this country-  
You can see a great many of them in every sphere and field;  
But those who employ the spirit of *gong-fu* are very few  
And cannot be compared in number.

Develop your strength and enjoy your potential,  
Tacitly pursuing your purpose;  
Be aware of the Classics and never cheat others —  
These words you can take as your lifetime motto!

Enjoy this book's long-awaited publication,  
Pages wherein you'll find many things of interest.  
Admire and respect them with goodwill,  
And encourage your good friends to read this book too.

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**INTRODUCTION:  
THEORY &  
PHILOSOPHY**

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When learning *Taijiquan*, the practitioner cannot afford any display of irreverence. Outwardly, one must show respect to one's masters and friends. Inwardly, one must respect the body and mind. If one cannot practice self-control and restraint, how can the art of *Taijiquan* be mastered?

When learning *Taijiquan*, one cannot commit any violence, otherwise one will inevitably get into trouble. All manner of violence or assault is inadmissible. One should demonstrate tactful behavior; otherwise, any display of violence will inevitably lead to damage within.

The *Taijiquan* practitioner should never be conceited nor self-satisfied, otherwise she who is complacent provokes trouble. As the saying goes, "No one can attain final perfection." This means that only a modest practitioner is able to sufficiently purify her mind to adopt the teachings of the master. Isn't this what is known as "goodness and perfection"? Why not produce more good in the hope of perfection? By sharing good with others, we multiply goodness.

The *Taijiquan* practitioner must apply ceaseless efforts to make his mind penetratingly aware of each tiny transformation taking place in the postures. If not, he who doesn't pay attention to his movements and postures will lose control over his senses and as a result, provoke confusion and disorder. This will manifest in the upper body as awkwardness and sluggishness, while the lower body becomes unbalanced and 'uprooted'.

One must always be very careful and sensitive, keeping the eyes open. Otherwise, the blood arteries and energy channels will become impassable, leading to fragmentation of the entire *Taiji* routine, irregular and abrupt *qi* flow, resulting in a loss of integrity and harmony of *yuan-qi* or primordial energy.

The *Taijiquan* practitioner must first of all study the theory and learn the classics to grasp the nature and core principles of *Taijiquan*. This will make the practice and mastery of *Taijiquan* easier.

The *Taijiquan* practitioner should understand the principles of *yin* and *yang*, opening and closing, as well as her own body, which is the natural embodiment of universal macrocosmic principles. A good master will have no need to add or detract from these principles, abiding them as the flawless doctrines of the Golden Mean.

Although *Taijiquan* does not play a significant part in modern society, it exists still in some countries thanks to dedicated followers who do not treat it as a martial art, but focus instead on studying the theory of the art, applying its laws and principles during infantry exercises and marches.

Compare this, in contrast, with the indifferent and negligent officials of this country, who during infantry exercises or combat, place more importance on using strength and brute force. How can such ignorant philistines hope to save society and maintain the integrity of this country? So, keep your mind open and do not be misled nor deluded by the words of such “grass and firewood collectors”!

The *Taijiquan* practitioner should not be involved in any vice such as robbery, gambling, adultery, sexual seduction, immoral acts, which only corrupt his heavenly soul and provoke the spirits and the wrath of gods. What can such a ‘practitioner’ contribute to the world? How can he possibly be of help to others?

The *Taijiquan* practitioner should not be impulsive nor fierce, a bully nor an oppressor. Those who indulge in these traits will be driven to crime.

If the reader encounters any errors, omissions or missing words in this book, please do not hesitate to contact the publisher for corrections.

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2 + DIAGRAM OF NO EXTREMES OR ULTIMATE NOTHINGNESS  
(WUJI)

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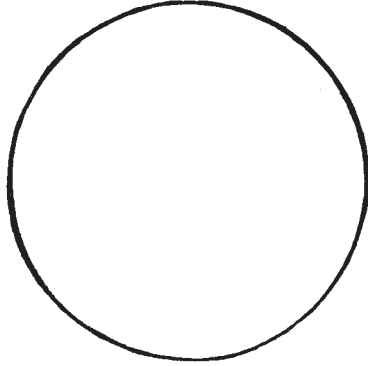


FIG. 0.2.1 NO EXTREMES OR ULTIMATE NOTHINGNESS (WUJI)

---

3 + DIAGRAM OF SUPREME EXTREMES (TAIJI)

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FIG. 0.3.1 SUPREME EXTREMES (TAIJI)

4 • EXPLANATION OF THE HE RIVER MAP (HE-TU)

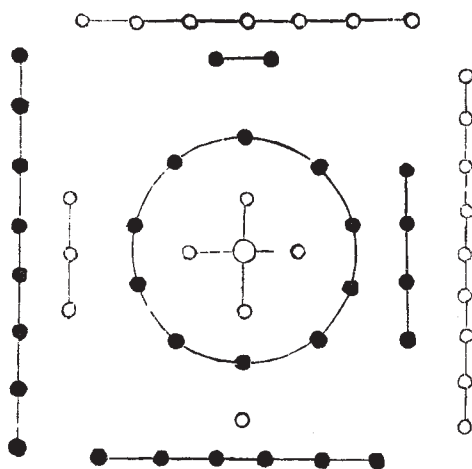


FIG. 0.4.1 THE HE RIVER MAP (HE-TU)

The Book of Changes says: “To heaven belongs the number one<sup>[1]</sup>; to earth two<sup>[2]</sup>; to heaven three; to earth four; to heaven five; to earth six; to heaven seven; to earth eight; to heaven nine; to earth ten.

Five numbers belong to heaven: one, three, five, seven and nine. Five numbers also belong to earth: two, four, six, eight and ten. These two series of five numbers correspond to each other, each number matched with a ‘mate’ in the sequence, as shown in the following: one and six correlate with water; two and seven with fire; three and eight with wood; four and nine with metal; five and ten with earth.

When one is added to four, or two to three, the result is five. When six is added to nine, or seven to eight and five to ten, they all total fifteen. Also, when one is combined with nine, or two with eight, three with seven, and four with six, the total is always ten.

[1] An odd number.

[2] An even number.

The heavenly numbers<sup>[3]</sup>, one, three, five, seven and nine, total twenty-five; the earthly numbers<sup>[4]</sup>, two, four, six, eight and ten, amount to thirty. Adding numbers of both heaven and earth we get fifty-five. It is these patterns that keep the spirits and gods in motion, thereby effecting changes and transformations.

5 • EXPLANATION OF THE LUO RIVER WRITINGS (LUO-SHU)

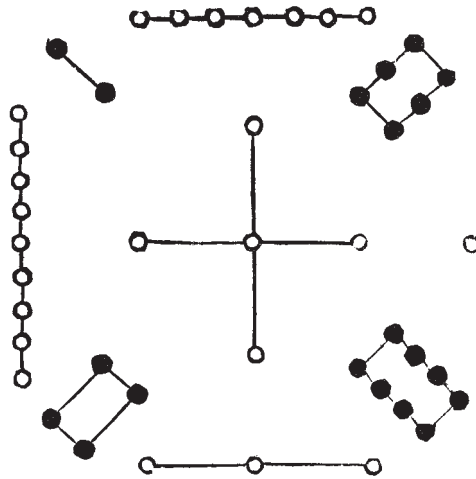


FIG. 0.5.1 THE LUO RIVER WRITINGS (LUO-SHU)

The numbers in the Luo River Writings come to a total of forty-five. The odd numbers (one, three, seven, nine) correlate with the four cardinal directions (*si zheng*): heaven, earth, water and fire. The even numbers (two, four, six, eight) correspond to the four corners (*si yu*) respectively: thunder, wind, mountain and marsh.

[3] Heavenly numbers are odd numbers.

[4] Earthly numbers are even numbers.

The number five is located at the center (*zhong*) of the motif, which is the place of the Sovereign and of *Taiji* (Supreme Extremes). The vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines correlate with the Eight Sections or Solar Terms (*ba-jie*) and they total fifteen. They comprise of:

- the three Stems at the bottom;
- the four Chords in the right lower corner;
- the Five Phases in the center;
- and the Eight Screens in the left lower corner.

Thus crossing the four cardinal directions and the four corners, we get the He-tu diagram or the He River Map, which encompasses the all-embracing *Taijiquan* cycles and zigzags performed according to the Law. Nothing exists beyond this external manifestation.

6 + ILLUSTRATED EXPLANATIONS OF THE EIGHT TRIGRAMS  
ACCORDING TO THE SEQUENCE OF FU XI

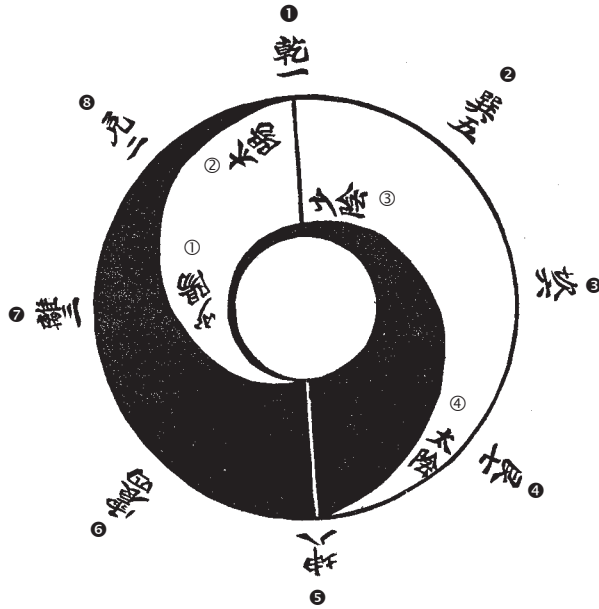


FIG. 0.6.1 THE EIGHT TRIGRAMS ACCORDING TO THE SEQUENCE OF FU XI

*Inscriptions around the circle :*

- ① Qian · One;
- ② Xun · Five;
- ③ Kan · Six;
- ④ Gen · Seven;
- ⑤ Kun · Eight;
- ⑥ Zhen · Four;
- ⑦ Li · Three;
- ⑧ Dui · Two.

*Inscriptions within the circle:*

- ① SHAO-YANG;
- ② TAI-YANG;
- ③ SHAO-YIN;
- ④ TAI-YIN.

7 • ILLUSTRATED EXPLANATIONS OF THE EIGHT TRIGRAMS  
ACCORDING TO THE SEQUENCE OF KING WEN

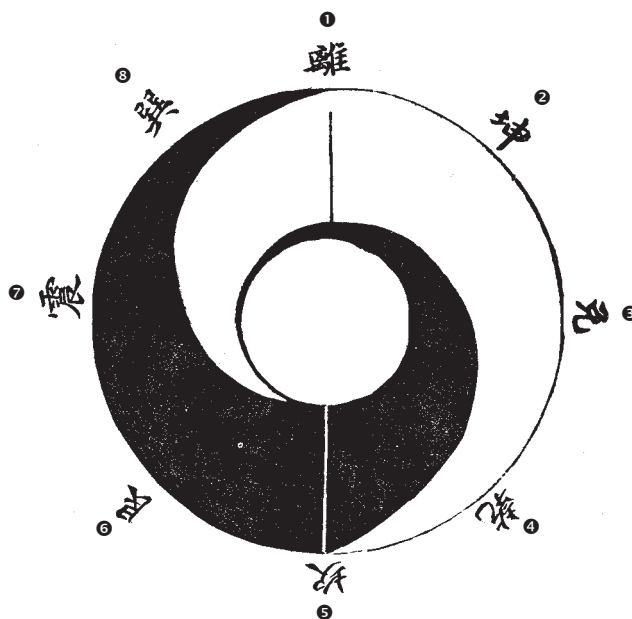


FIG. 0.7.1 THE EIGHT TRIGRAMS ACCORDING TO THE SEQUENCE OF KING WEN

*Inscriptions:*

- |         |                        |
|---------|------------------------|
| ❶ Li;   | ❺ Kan;                 |
| ❷ Kun;  | ❻ Gen;                 |
| ❸ Dui;  | ❼ Qian;                |
| ❹ Qian; | ❽ Xun <sup>[5]</sup> . |

[5] The Eight Trigrams correspond to natural elements: Li (fire), Kun (earth), Dui (marsh), Qian (heaven), Kan (water), Gen (mountain), Zhen (thunder), Xun (wind).

All Confucian scholars base their writings regarding King Wen's sequence of the Eight Trigrams on Master Shao-Zi's interpretation, which states that the Light-coloured half of the *Taiji* motif exists in opposition to the dark half.

King Wen begins his sequence with the *Zhen* figure (thunder). Though no further comment on this point seems necessary, Master Zhu-Zi<sup>[6]</sup> states that King Wen's arrangement is still as yet ungraspable because there remains many unresolved issues. Comparing King Wen's sequence with that of Fu Xi, it seems to me that most people still do not comprehend their meaning, not to mention their application in practice. As a consequence, the most distributed representation of the Eight Trigrams has defaulted to one showing images of the annual seasons — spring, summer, autumn and winter — in a sequence corresponding to the creation of the Five Elements — wood, fire, earth, metal and water respectively. Let us look at Confucius' explanations regarding this:

*“According to King Wen's arrangement, God is represented as the heavenly virtue of integrity whose energy in the yearly cycle begins in spring. Thus he comes forth in Zhen, the symbol of stimulus to movement. He puts forward his processes of communication into full and equal action in Xun (wind or wood), the symbol of penetration, in the time of penetration into summer. This process is called 'Xun'. Xun is placed at the southeast. Communication of the myriad things here brings full and equal action. Zhen is followed by Xun, which carries the image wood. Li (fire) symbolizes what is bright and beautiful, so all things face in His direction in Li. Then Li meets with Kun (earth). South correlates with fire but fire gives birth to earth. Earth, in turn, can produce metal; therefore, Kun (earth) and Gen (mountain) both correspond to the realm of earth, while wood and water correlate with the southeast, and metal and fire with the southwest.”*

[6] Also written as Zhu Xi.

*“All myriad things are manifested in full accordance with the abundance of the four seasons, receiving their nourishment from earth. Therefore there is time for completion and there is time for beginning. Kun (earth) is the symbol of docility — it is always calm and never resistant. Kun is followed by Dui (marsh), symbol of pleasure and satisfaction; all things succeed and thus rejoice in Dui. Qian (heaven) symbolizes strength, so vigorous people struggle a lot in Qian. Kan (water) is a drawback or hazard, and symbolizes what has fallen down. He who ascends to the superior position must be at ease and Light while those below in difficult circumstances must work hard and suffer much. Therefore Kan is the symbol of hardship, and is followed by Gen (mountain), symbol of completion. The energy of the year completes its work in Gen, which in seasonal terms, corresponds to late winter and the beginning of spring.”*

Of prime significance in Confucius' explanations of the Eight Trigrams is the meaning allocated to the word 'resistance' or 'fighting,' which though never maintained in *Kun* (docility), is very much productive in *Qian* (heaven or strength). This word, also known as 'hardship,' is borne in *Kan* (water), which all Confucian scholars interpret without exception as a symbol of peril and evil.

One is the number that gives birth to water while six is the number of its completion. *Kan* (water) is placed under *Zi* (1), the number of birth and completion of water<sup>[7]</sup>. Therefore, *Kan* belongs to water.

Two is the number that gives birth to fire while seven is the number of its completion. *Li* (fire) is located under *Wu* (7), the number of birth and completion of fire<sup>[8]</sup>. Therefore *Li* belongs to fire.

[7] While the number one denotes the birth of water, it also implies the completion of water in the preceding phase, hence it is the number of both the birth and completion of water.

[8] While the number seven denotes the completion of fire, it also implies its birth in the next phase, hence it is the number of both the birth and completion of fire.

Three is the number that gives birth to wood while eight is the number of its completion. *Zhen* (thunder) is placed at the east while *Xun* (wood) at the southeast. Three is the number of heaven while eight is the number of earth; therefore *Zhen* and *Xun* belong to wood.

Four is the number that gives birth to metal while nine is the number of its completion. *Dui* (marsh) is located at the west while *Qian* (heaven) at the northwest. Four is the number of earth, while nine is the number of heaven; therefore *Dui* and *Qian* belong to metal.

Five is the number that gives birth to earth while ten is the number of its completion. *Gen* (mountain) and *Kun* (earth) are placed at the northeast and southwest respectively, midway between the heavenly five and the earthly ten; therefore *Gen* and *Kun* belong to earth.

The above sequence of the Eight Trigrams is arranged in accordance with the numbers of creation under the principle of the Five Phases. As to the monthly climate according to the lunar calendar, eight is the number of completion that corresponds to spring, seven corresponds to summer, nine to autumn and six to winter.

Why does the heavenly number one give birth to water, the earthly number two give birth to fire, the heavenly number three give birth to wood, the earthly number four give birth to metal? According to arrangement of the Eight Trigrams, this is explained by the heaven-earth and *yin-yang* concepts which state that the binomial *yin* and *yang* issue forth from *Kan* (water) and *Li* (fire) and are placed under the numbers *Zi* (1) and *Wu* (7).

*Yang* is clear and bright, *yin* is dark and chaotic. If we try to reflect things from the position of clear and bright *yang*, we will see that *yang* is hidden deep within *Kan* (water), while dark and chaotic *yin* is placed outside. Hence water is able to reflect things from within but not from outside. The brightness of *yang* is manifested externally in the image of *Li* (fire), while the darkness of *yin* is manifested from within in the image of *Kan*. Thus fire is able to reflect things from the outside but not from within.

Looking at this, we see how *yin* and *yang* create the internal and external manifestations of *Kan* and *Li*, despite the fact that when the *yang* of *Kan* is placed within it, the *yang* substance comes forth under the number *Zi* (1). That is why it is said that the heavenly number one produces water. Once water is mature, wood can be born. Therefore the heavenly number three produces wood as well. Since *yin* of *Li* is placed within it, the *yin* substance is engendered under the number *Wu* (7). That is why it is said that the earthly number two produces fire. Once fire is ripe, earth must be born, which, in turn, gives birth to metal.

The earthly number four produces metal too, following the clockwise order from *Kan* and *Gen* to *Zhen* and *Xun*, in other words, from a northerly position to east. The sector under numbers *Zi* (1), *Chou* (2), *Yin* (3), *Mao* (4), *Chen* (5) and *Si* (6) correlate with the *yang* substance procreated by heaven so the numbers from *Zi* (1) to *Si* (6) denote the heavenly half of the *Taiji* diagram, or the pure *yang* or positive pole.

Upon arrival at *Wu* (7), the procreated *yin* flows from *Li* to *Kun*, then to *Dui* and *Qian*, in the direction from the south to west, and is manifested as *Wu* (7), *Wei* (8), *Shen* (9), *You* (10), *Xu* (11) and *Hai* (12) respectively.

Procreated by earth substance, *yin* arrives at *Hai* (12) and represents the earthly half, the dark *yin* (negative pole or 'fish') in the *Taiji* motif. Therefore the *yang* substance of *Gen*, procreated under *Zi* (1) and positioned between north and east, belongs to the heavenly engendered *Kun* located between south and west and thus identified as the product of earth.

If we look at *Fu Xi*'s pre-birth and *King Wen*'s post-birth sequences of the Eight Trigrams, it is quite difficult to see that the former forms an integral part of the latter. In actual fact, the whole of heaven (if we speak about it in these terms) encompasses everything discussed in the previous paragraphs. This includes the concepts of virtue (*de*), awareness (*ming*), sequence (*xu*), good or ill luck (*ji-xiong*) displayed through the idea of the binomial pre- and post-stratum of one's *gong-fu* as the system of internal energy cultivation. All these things must be combined into one power, from which the

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VOLUME ONE:

**OVERVIEW**

**&**

**POSTURES 1-12**

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PART 1:  
**OVERVIEW**

陳氏太極拳圖說

陳鑫

When learning *Taijiquan*, the practitioner cannot afford any display of irreverence. Outwardly, one must show respect to one's masters and friends. Inwardly, one must respect the body and mind. If one cannot practice self-control and restraint, how can the art of *Taijiquan* be mastered?

When learning *Taijiquan*, one cannot commit any violence, otherwise one will inevitably get into trouble. All manner of violence or assault is inadmissible. One should demonstrate tactful behavior; otherwise, any display of violence will inevitably lead to damage within.

The *Taijiquan* practitioner should never be conceited nor self-satisfied, otherwise she who is complacent provokes trouble. As the saying goes, "No one can attain final perfection." This means that only a modest practitioner is able to sufficiently purify her mind to adopt the teachings of the master. Isn't this what is known as "goodness and perfection"? Why not produce more good in the hope of perfection? By sharing good with others, we multiply goodness.

The *Taijiquan* practitioner must apply ceaseless efforts to make his mind penetratingly aware of each tiny transformation taking place in the postures. If not, he who doesn't pay attention to his movements and postures will lose control over his senses and as a result, provoke confusion and disorder. This will manifest in the upper body as awkwardness and sluggishness, while the lower body becomes unbalanced and 'uprooted'.

One must always be very careful and sensitive, keeping the eyes open. Otherwise, the blood arteries and energy channels will become impassable, leading to fragmentation of the entire *Taiji* routine, irregular and abrupt *qi* flow, resulting in a loss of integrity and harmony of *yuan-qi* or primordial energy.

The *Taijiquan* practitioner must first of all study the theory and learn the classics to grasp the nature and core principles of *Taijiquan*. This will make the practice and mastery of *Taijiquan* easier.

The *Taijiquan* practitioner should understand the principles of *yin* and *yang*, opening and closing, as well as her own body, which is the natural embodiment of universal macrocosmic principles. A good master will have no need to add or detract from these principles, abiding them as the flawless doctrines of the Golden Mean.

Although *Taijiquan* does not play a significant part in modern society, it exists still in some countries thanks to dedicated followers who do not treat it as a martial art, but focus instead on studying the theory of the art, applying its laws and principles during infantry exercises and marches.

Compare this, in contrast, with the indifferent and negligent officials of this country, who during infantry exercises or combat, place more importance on using strength and brute force. How can such ignorant philistines hope to save society and maintain the integrity of this country? So, keep your mind open and do not be misled nor deluded by the words of such “grass and firewood collectors”!

The *Taijiquan* practitioner should not be involved in any vice such as robbery, gambling, adultery, sexual seduction, immoral acts, which only corrupt his heavenly soul and provoke the spirits and the wrath of gods. What can such a ‘practitioner’ contribute to the world? How can he possibly be of help to others?

The *Taijiquan* practitioner should not be impulsive nor fierce, a bully nor an oppressor. Those who indulge in these traits will be driven to crime.

If the reader encounters any errors, omissions or missing words in this book, please do not hesitate to contact the publisher for corrections.

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## II ♦ THIRTEEN SECTIONS OF THE TAIJI FORM

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### SECTION 1

*Postures:* 1. Buddha's Warrior Attendant Pounds with Pestle  
(*Jin-gang Dao Dui*)

*Note:* This is the only *Taiji* form in which the principle of yin and yang proportions is completely manifested.

### SECTION 2

*Postures:* 2. Holding One Lap Pull on the Robe (*Lan Zha Yi*)  
3. Single Whip (*Dan Bian*)  
4. Buddha's Warrior Attendant Pounds with Pestle  
(*Jin-gang Dao Dui*)

*Note:* These three postures give birth to the Two Forms (*Liang-yi*). The repetition of *Jin-gang Dao Dui* forms the focus of this section.

### SECTION 3

*Postures:* 5. White Goose Reveals Its Wings (*Bai E Liang Chi*)  
6. Brush Knee and Twist Step (*Lou Xi Ao-bu*)

*Note:* These two forms create the Four Symbols. Starting from *Bai E Liang Chi* and followed by *Lou Xi Ao-bu*, these two postures represent the four symbols of *Qian*, *Kun*, *Kan* and *Li* in their four positions respectively.

#### SECTION 4

- Postures:* 7. Posture of Previous Implication (*Chu Shou*)  
8. Walking Obliquely and Twist Step (*Xie-xing Ao-bu*)

*Note:* Both postures represent the moment the Four Symbols give birth to the Four Cornered Figures of the Eight Trigrams: *Dui, Zhen, Xun and Gen.*

#### SECTION 5

- Postures:* 9. Second Posture of Implication (*Zai Shou*)  
10. Lower Stance in Front of Chamber and Twist Step (*Qian Tang Ao-bu*)  
11. Screening Hand Strike with Hidden Forearm (*Yan Shou Gong Chui*)  
12. Buddha's Warrior Attendant Pounds with Pestle (*Jin-gang Dao Dui*)

*Note:* The true purpose of these four postures is to store *jing* essence until its complete outward manifestation through reverting to the primordial motif of *Taiji*.

#### SECTION 6

- Postures:* 13. Turn Body and Punch (*Pi Shen Chui*)  
14. Turn and Lean by Shoulder and Back (*Bei She Kao*)  
15. Fist Beneath Elbow (*Zhou Di Kan Quan*)  
16. Step Back and Whirl Arms as a Coiling Silk Thread (*Dao Juan Hong*)  
17. White Goose Reveals Its Wings (*Bai E Liang Chi*)  
18. Brush Knee and Twist Step (*Lou-xi Ao-bu*)

*Note:* These six postures represent the technique of turning round, bending and retreating. All transformations, if performed

correctly within the framework of this section, are generally sufficient.

## SECTION 7

- Postures:*
19. Fan Through the Back or Flash Arms Like a Fan (*Shan Tong Bei*)
  20. Screen Hand and Punch (*Yan Shou Chui*)
  21. Holding One Lap Pull on the Robe (*Lan Zha Yi*)
  22. Single Whip (*Dan Bian*)

*Note:* These four postures represent the requirements for turning the body around and reverting to a single plane.

## SECTION 8

- Postures:*
23. Wave Hands Like Clouds (*Shang Yun Shou*) – 1<sup>st</sup> performance
  24. High Pat on Horse (*Gao Tan Ma*)
  25. Rub with Right Foot
  26. Rub with Left Foot (*Zuo You Ca Jiao*)
  27. Well-balanced Single Whip (*Zhong Dan Bian*)
  28. Strike Down like Planting into the Ground (*Xia Yan Shou*)
  29. Double Raise Kick (*Er Qi Jiao*)
  30. Look at a Violent Beast (*Shou Tou Shi*)
  31. Kick with Toe (*Ti Yi Jiao*)
  32. Kick with Heel (*Deng Yi Gen*)
  33. Screen Hand and Punch (*Yan Shou Chui*)
  34. Small Catch and Push (*Xiao Qin Na*)
  35. Grasp Head and Push Mountain (*Bao Tou Tui Shan*)
  36. Single Whip (*Dan Bian*)

*Note:* All thirteen postures represent the technique of moving sideways with waving hands and cutting in with left and right kicks. It includes techniques of crouching step, bending the body, jumping and closing motions through balancing the four extremities.

The application of *Ti Yi Jiao* and *Deng Yi Gen* (Kick with Toe and Kick with Heel) represent two big round turns. *Xiao qin Na* represents a skipping step. *Shou Tou Shi* represents the defense of the heart area and knees.

All thirteen postures can be expressed within a small circle to enable the practitioner to defend against multiple opponents attacking from all sides. In the case of sustained aggression, the wall of defense cannot be broken nor cut off, so all the postures must be performed at one go without any breaks.

## SECTION 9

- Postures:*
37. Roll Forward (*Qian Zhao*)
  38. Roll Backward (*Hou Zhao*)
  39. Wild Horse Shakes Its Mane (*Ye Ma Feng Zhong*)
  40. Single Whip (*Dan Bian*)
  41. Fair Lady Works at Shuttles (*Yu Nu Chuan Suo*)
  42. Holding One Lap Pull on the Robe (*Lan Zha Yi*)
  43. Single Whip (*Dan Bian*)

*Note:* All seven postures oriented forward or backward represent the way the upper and lower extremities move synchronously, with eyes kept on the leading hand.

Wild Horse Shakes Its Mane on Both Sides denotes the swift technique of stepping up; Fair Lady Works at Shuttles consists of about-turns to the right; Single Whip is used to return *qi* to the DAN-TIAN, calming down and pacifying the

mind and heart. All seven postures have significant functions in hand-to-hand combat.

## SECTION 10

- Postures:*
44. Wave Hands Like Clouds (*Zhong Yun Shou*) – 2<sup>nd</sup> performance
  45. Shake Foot (*Bai Jiao*)
  46. Crouch Step Like a Snake Creeping Out of a House (*Yi Tang She*)
  47. Golden Rooster Stands on One Leg (*Jin Ji Du Li*)
  48. Raise Lamp Toward heaven (*Chao Tian Deng*)
  49. Precious Pearl Rolled Back into Curtain (*Zhen Zhu Dao Juan Lian*)
  50. White Goose Reveals Its Wings (*Bai E Liang Chi*)
  51. Brush Knees and Twist Step (*Lou-xi Ao-bu*)
  52. Fan Through the Back or Flash Arms Like a Fan (*Shan Tong Bei*)
  53. Screen Hand and Punch (*Yan Shou Chui*)
  54. Holding One Lap Pull on the Robe (*Lan Zha Yi*)
  55. Single Whip (*Dan Bian*)

*Note:* All twelve postures represent the technique of kicking with toes and heels into different parts of the body. Golden Rooster Stands on One Leg and Rise Lamp Toward heaven are used to attack the upper part of the body with the knee and foot. The next seven postures may be performed in this section as an option. Note that performing all twelve postures at one go as a single form may be useful against sustained aggression.

## SECTION 11

- Postures:* 56. Wave Hands Like Clouds (*Xia Yun Shou*) – last performance  
57. High Pat on Horse (*Gao Tan Ma*)  
58. Slap on Foot with Crossed Hand (*Shi-zi Jiao*)  
59. Punch to Crotch (*Zhi Dang Chui*)  
60. Green Dragon Out of the Water (*Qing Long Chu Shui*)  
61. Single Whip (*Dan Bian*)

*Note:* All six postures demonstrate the technique of crossing legs, also known as *Shi Zhi Kao*. Punch to Crotch is used to restrict the opponent's ability. Green Dragon Out of the Water means to jump upward and forward with or without turning around.

## SECTION 12

- Postures:* 62. Ground Covered with Brocade (*Pu Di Jin*)  
63. Step Up to Form Seven Stars of the Dipper (*Shang-bu Qi Xing*)  
64. Crouch Step to Stride Over the Tiger (*Xia-bu Kua Hu*)

*Note:* These three postures are done in a single sequence: stretch out the right leg whilst in a sitting position on the ground, then step up and crouch down; and then raise the body.

## SECTION 13

- Postures:* 65. Shake Foot (*Bai Jiao*)  
66. Head-on Blow (*Dang Tou Pao*)

*Note:* These two postures represent the technique of turning around and kicking, thus defending at the level of the face and chest.

The above thirteen sections of the *Taiji* form start from cultural doctrines and intellectual concepts and end with boxing techniques and martial skills.

## III • DIAGRAM OF WUJI OR NO EXTREMES

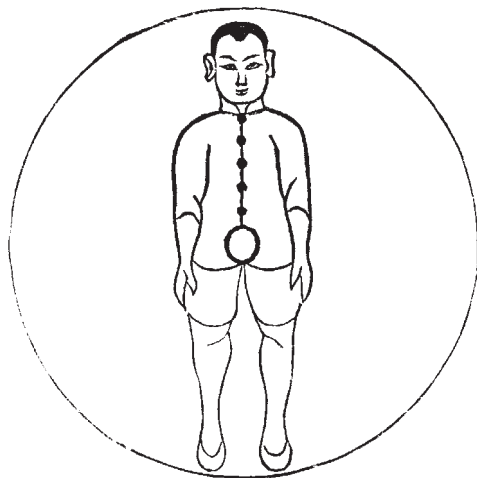


FIG. I.III.I DIAGRAM OF WUJI OR NO EXTREMES

*Wuji* or Nothingness is the Grand Primordial state called the Great Chaos. This is the moment of initial arrival, when the practitioner appears on stage at a boxing performance, standing upright and looking directly ahead, stabilizing his physical and mental state and establishing natural breathing.

It is important to seek stillness from within through conscious effort rather than postural rigidity. Hang shoulders loosely and drop the elbows, relax and lower the arms, turn both palms inward to face the thighs. These adjustments will prevent the shoulders and elbows becoming angular and blocked. Keep the shoulders in a natural and relaxed position, the feet shoulder-width apart and the toes pointing forward parallel to each other. Stillness of the body means stillness of the mind. Empty the mind of thought — the mind should be full of nothing, not a single thought. A still center represents the Great Chaos or *Wuji*, its name describing the initial cosmic state of non-differentiation prior to the appearance of forms. Therefore the form is also called Ultimate Nothingness.

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IV + DIAGRAM OF TAIJI OR SUPREME EXTREMES

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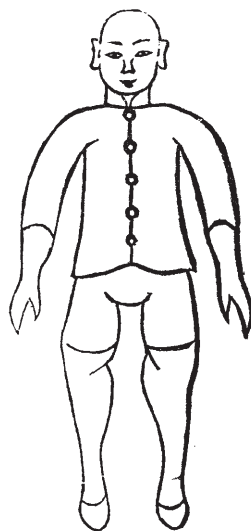


FIG. I.IV.1 DIAGRAM OF TAIJI OR SUPREME EXTREMES

*Taiji* is born of *Wuji* or Ultimate Nothingness. Although this state represents something shaped with a sound, it is still known as Absolute Nothingness. Conversely, the state of *Wuji* (Ultimate Nothingness) can also be defined as *Taiji*.

Although *Taiji* is known as shapeless and soundless, the pre-origin of the seed of a great fruit begins to take form, which will eventually transform into a seedling. This is the formless newborn mechanism of motion and motionlessness, not yet sufficiently formed to be launched or represented as a seed. heaven and earth are still in the state of the shapeless Oneness or the Great Chaos, *Wuji*, a traditional name describing the initial cosmic state of non-differentiation between *yin* and *yang*. Still, the mechanism of differentiation already exists, marking the condition just prior to the ap-

pearance of forms, a pivotal point between opposing impulses from which creative activity emanates.

This transition from external stillness to readiness for movement is known as going from *Wuji* to *Taiji*. Movement will cause clear *qi* to ascend to heaven, and 'muddy' or impure *qi* to fall to earth. Prior to this, there is no differentiation between clear and impure *qi*. Thus, the ancestors used the term *Taiji* to denote the non-separated state depicted by heaven and earth, *yin* and *yang* and the Five Phases, a state beyond any name or concept. So when we talk about *Taiji*, we mean the initial form of *yin* and *yang* and the Five Phases.

At the starting position of the *Taiji* performance, although the four extremities are still motionless, the internal mechanism of *yin* and *yang*, opening and closing, growth and decline, full and empty contained in the mind/heart and abdomen is maintained properly due to the adjustment of all the body's parts. At this very moment, unification of volition and the concentration of spirit will occur if the starting position of the form is treated respectfully and carefully, whilst the dualistic principles of *yin* and *yang*, opening and closing, growth and decline, full and empty and so on are still beyond visual manifestation and thus cannot be defined or named. For the sake of clarity, we use the term *Taiji* to describe the initial or preparatory stage of the entire routine.

Preparation is necessary to establish one's balance and bearing prior to movement. Though not visible to the eye, it is crucial. Before starting to practice the *Taiji* routine the student must first purify her heart and empty her mind of thought. As a result, she will possess a look of serenity, and her physical and mental conditions will be completely mobilized to launch the mechanisms of *Taiji* motion. The aim of the practitioner is to unite the two extremes into one in order to return to *Wuji* through practice and accomplishment of the *Taiji* routine.

陳氏太極拳圖說

陳鑫

PART 2:  
**POSTURES 1-12**

POSTURE I  
**BUDDHA'S WARRIOR ATTENDANT  
POUNDS WITH PESTLE<sup>[1]</sup>**

JIN-GANG DAO DUI

1. *Diagram of the posture*

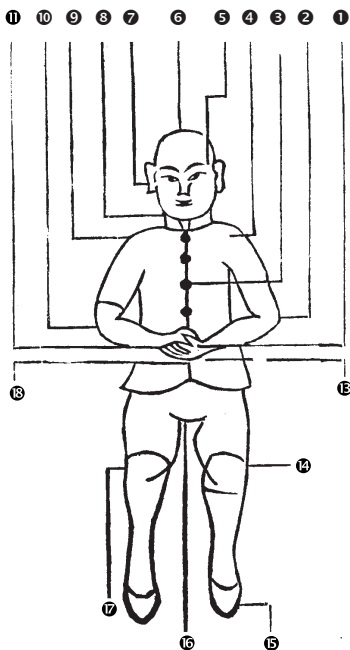


FIG. I.1.1 BUDDHA'S WARRIOR ATTENDANT POUNDS WITH PESTLE  
(JIN-GANG DAO DUI)

[1] This posture is also known as 'Fist to Protect One's Center'.

*Inscriptions:*

- ❶ the left wrist faces upward and correlates with the nose;
- ❷ the left elbow drops down and must be placed slightly to one side to prop up the right fist;
- ❸ calm your mind/heart; once the mind is calm, *qi* flows smoothly in full harmony;
- ❹ the left shoulder is relaxed and dropped down; do not lift it up, otherwise it will be angular and blocked;
- ❺ look straight ahead and do not cast your eyes sideward, otherwise the mind will be scattered and volition in disarray;
- ❻ the whole body's spirit is focused and led by the top of the head, hence the crown of the head is called *ding-jin*; it has a guiding function and seems to lie between existence and non-existence;
- ❼ concentrate wholeheartedly on what can be heard by your ears and what is out of hearing;
- ❽ keep your neck upright;
- ❾ relax and let the right shoulder sink down;
- ❿ hang the right elbow down, not lifting it up even a little;
- ⓫ the right fist lies in the left palm 5-6 *cun* below the chest.
- ⓬ return *qi* to the DAN-TIAN;
- ⓭ bend the left knee, otherwise the crotch area will not be opened properly;
- ⓮ hold the left foot parallel to right one, toes pointing forward. Shift your body weight slightly forward to press firmly on the acupoints in the big toes: DA-ZHONG, YIN-BAI and DA-DUN;
- ⓯ the crotch must be rounded-in and empty so that the *jing* essence can develop in the legs; don't press the crotch from both sides;
- ⓰ slightly bend the right knee, otherwise the crotch will not be opened properly;
- ⓱ let the intrinsic force in the waist sink down to make it more substantial.

During *Taijiquan* practice there is usually no need to orient one's initial position strictly to the cardinal directions. However, since the Big Dipper is placed north, the practitioner should respectfully face in this direction, since it is the source of inherent energy in the human body, known as *Zhong-qi* or Centralized Intrinsic Energy. Hence all diagrams presented in this book faces north, with the back to the south, the east at the right and west at the left.

To determine the way of heaven you need to resort to the *yin* and *yang* substances; to establish the way of earth you need to apply the concept of soft and hard; to find the way of humans you need benevolence and righteousness.

Fill up your legs and arms with silk-reeling energy; lift up your head and look straight ahead. When sitting, be like a door-hinge; while standing, be like an empty room.

Confucius said, "Coming across irreverence, don't look at it; coming across irreverence, don't listen to it; coming across irreverence, don't even talk about it; coming across irreverence, don't move it." Practicing *Taijiquan*, try to engage honourably and respectfully with it as a natural part of the process. Following the established practice and rules, look at the *Taiji* form, listen to it, talk about it and move to it from within. When not practicing the *Taiji* form, calm your mind and heart and pacify your *qi* to blend into the *Taiji* spiritual motif. During practice, quieten your spirit and still your *qi* to allow the upper and lower limbs to move freely and naturally without pretense. Try to initiate the mechanism of *Taijiquan* properly in accordance with intrinsic norms and rites. The rites of *Taijiquan* state that one should not let slow inert *qi* flow through the body. If this sluggish energy 'thickens,' you will need to use a great number of movements to prevent the forming of a myriad diseases by driving this energy out from all parts of the body.

The rites are based on respect and joy emanates from peace and harmony. If you can be respectful and maintain peace and harmony, you will become a good practitioner of *Taijiquan*. It is said, "*Taijiquan* is the way of art." As

the Master states, "If the established rules are extremely strict, even a highly skilled sage will not be able to follow them despite his *gong-fu*." If it is the subject of art, what should be done to grasp it? It is also said that through *Taiji* practice you learn to cultivate your morality, correct your character and protect your life. As Mencius states, "Without learning established practice and rules, one cannot be compliant and restrained in behavior."

Practicing the way of *Taiji*, one who does not transgress the classical writings and shows respect to every single word from the very beginning to end, can devote himself to the wholehearted study of *Taiji*. Improving his volition until it is released from the ambitions trapped in his chest, he will reach the state of Oneness in accord with the single principle of *Taiji*. This principle or Oneness will be studied in the pages below.

## 2. Diagram of left yang and right yin

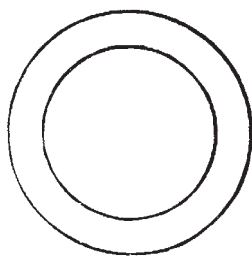


FIG. 1.1.2 DIAGRAM OF LEFT YANG AND RIGHT YIN

The first posture requires the upper and lower limbs to be moved and turned according to the diagram. The left hand corresponds to the internal circle of *yang*, where the left hand and left foot are in motion. The right hand corresponds to the external circle of *yin*, where the right hand and right foot are in motion. Without deviation from the form, all becomes substantial and operates in unison at one go: the left hand is slightly ahead while the right hand is behind; the left hand is inside while the right hand is outside.

According to the mechanism of motion, *yang* is followed by *yin*, so *yang* is inside while *yin* outside.

This diagram depicts the interaction between *yin* and *yang*, resulting in the creation of myriad things. So *yin* and *yang* can be considered as one aspect of *Taijiquan's* application.

3. Diagram of the mechanism according to which *qi* moves throughout the body

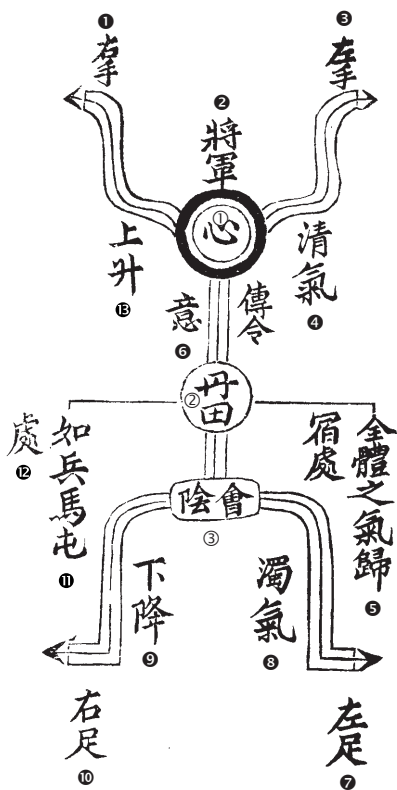


FIG. 1.1.3 DIAGRAM OF THE MECHANISM ACCORDING TO WHICH QI MOVES THROUGHOUT THE BODY

*Inscriptions around the figure:*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ① right hand;                                     | ⑥ impure or muddy <i>qi</i> ;                              |
| ② commander;                                      | ⑦ descend;   |
| ③ left hand;                                      | ⑧ right leg;   |
| ④ clear <i>qi</i> ;                               | ⑨ this place resembles an assembly of infantry and horses. |
| ⑤ issued order;                                   | ⑩ consciousness;   |
| ⑥ the place of the whole body's <i>qi</i> return; | ⑪ ascend.  |
| ⑦ left leg;                                       |  |

*Inscriptions down the vertical axis:*

- ① mind/heart;
- ② DAN-TIAN;
- ③ acupoint HUI-YIN.

As Mencius states, “Volition is the commander of *qi* which fills the whole body up.” The mind/heart is like the general while *qi* is like the infantry; the general gives orders and the troops carry them out obediently in the following order: clear *qi* ascends to the hands while muddy or impure *qi* descends to the feet. *Qi* that flows to the fingers is true *qi*, and its nature is to ascend. Flowing with impure *qi* that descends, the entire *qi* flow resembles two stakes made from the same piece of wood whose purpose is to link up all the parts and internal organs of the body.

The mechanism of *qi* is set to reel energy, starting from inside the forearm and threading *jin* force<sup>[2]</sup> along the upper and lower extremities.

[2] intrinsic force.

4. Mechanism of qi reeling along the arms

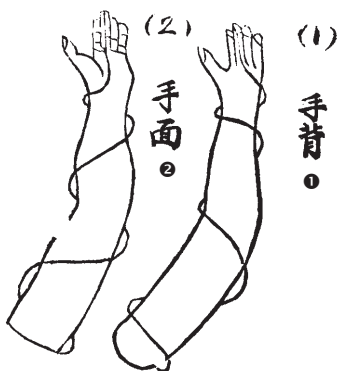


FIG. I.I.4 MECHANISM OF QI REELING ALONG THE ARMS

Inscriptions:

- ❶ posterior (external) side of arm;  
This form represents *jin* or intrinsic force flowing from the shoulders toward the fingertips.
- ❷ inside of arm;  
This form represents *jin* force flowing from the fingers toward the armpits and shoulders. The first figure depicts *jin* force flowing out; the second figure depicts *jin* force coming in.

The arm's *jin* force emanates from the mind/heart and runs through the shoulders and elbows toward the fingers. Thus it flows in direct rotation (*shun*) from bone to skin, from shoulder to finger, releasing *jing* essence outwards.

*Jing* essence flowing in reverse direction from fingers to shoulder is known as 'jing essence getting in,' and can be used to attract opponents to advance and hence fall into emptiness.

5. Diagram of the sharp-pointed crotch

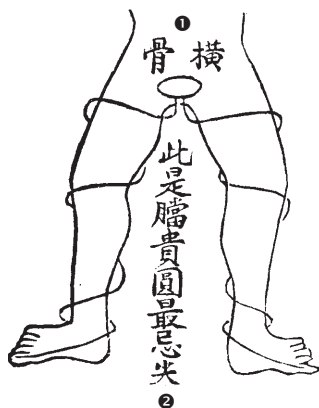


FIG. 1.1.5 DIAGRAM OF THE SHARP-POINTED CROTCH

Inscriptions:

- ❶ acupoint HENG-GU;
- ❷ the crotch should be rounded, don't narrow it too much with a high stance.

*Jin* force of both legs emanates from the toes to coil upwards along the ankles, knees and thighs toward the crotch, also known as acupoint HUI-YIN. Upon reaching the heel of the foot, *jin* force gradually enters the TONG-GU and DA-ZHONG acupoints located on the outside of the foot, then passes through acupoints YIN-BAI, DA-DUN and LI-DUI on the toes, eventually merging directly with the ground.

The name for this posture, *Jin-gang*, consists of two characters which when taken together literally means 'steel', but has spiritual connotations when treated separately: the latter character *gang*<sup>[3]</sup> denotes *jing* essence while the former character, *jin*<sup>[4]</sup> stands for firm and unbending qualities. In fact,

[3] translates literally as 'firm'.

[4] a general term for all metals.

when spoken as a phrase, the four characters of the *Jin-gang Dao Dui* posture resonate like a cannon-shot, suggesting a sacred incantation.

The posture's name also conjures the image of a warrior holding a magic pestle in his hands, as if ready to pounding grains in a mortar. Reflecting this, the right hand is clenched into a fist in imitation of a heavy pestle while the left hand has its palm facing upwards to form a cup-like mortar. Imbued with their respective firm and heavy qualities, both hands clamp down together firmly into a cup to protect the heart area, that is, the central part of the body. This is how the name of the posture was derived.

In the initial position, the nose can be considered as the dividing line between the right and left sides of the body. In addition, the left hand controls the left half of the body while the right hand controls the right. The arms and legs on each side of the body move simultaneously to protect the trunk from both sides. This means that great attention needs to be paid to the flow of *qi*, since the movement of the hands effect the correct positioning of the elbows and upper arms, and the movement of the whole body. *Qi* flow in both arms starts when the hands lift upwards, so they should not be too high, otherwise the position of the upper body will be stiff and blocked. The movement of the hands leads the movement of the lower body and vice versa, while the position of the central body (including the torso) is naturally defined through the connection between the upper and lower body. Once *qi* flows throughout the body, the whole posture will be expressed properly. Keep the torso upright and the elbows down, sink the shoulders and hang the arms naturally. Keep both feet a shoulder-width apart, toes pointing forward. Slightly bend the knees to open the crotch area for *jin* force to pass through.

Once the crotch is opened and empty, the heart *qi* commences its flow from the left hand and follows the left foot's half step forward. Then the right hand leads the right foot, drawing a circle upward until it stops in front of left hand. Both hands form a hold-ball<sup>[5]</sup> gesture. Lower the right hand

[5] as if one is holding a ball in both hands.

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POSTURE 13

**SHIELD BODY AND PUNCH**

BI SHEN CHUI

This posture is a smooth extension of the *Jin gang Dao Dui* posture.

First, take a wide step about 1 *chi* and 4-5 *cun*<sup>[1]</sup> with the right foot, then turn the right shoulder to the right and downward in a semi-circle close to the right knee. After brushing the right shoulder over the right knee, move it upward and back in a closing leaning stance called *Kao* (Shoulder-stroke). This stance is quite difficult to perform as the shoulder passes 7 *cun*<sup>[2]</sup> over the knee. Despite leaning to the right, the right shoulder must be upright enough to brush eastward and up over the knee in a wide semi-circle. When it passes over the right knee, press the upper part of torso downward in a striking movement, your forehead pointing obliquely down. Then brush the left hand over the left knee, moving the hand back in a wide circle until it forks at the waist from the left.

This movement requires both hands to move synchronously: when the right hand moves forward, the left hand moves back; when the left hand is up, the right hand is down and vice versa, thus keeping the body balanced in between.

[1] about 45 cm.

[2] about 20 cm.

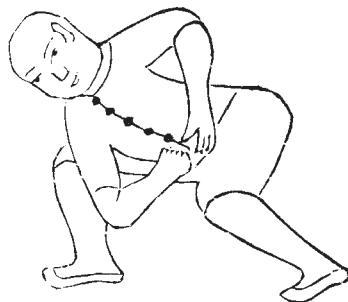
1. Diagram of the first half of Shield Body and Punch (*Bi Shen Chui*)

FIG. 2.13.1 FIRST HALF OF SHIELD BODY AND PUNCH  
(BI SHEN CHUI)

FIG. 2.13.1 depicts the first half of *Bi Shen Chui*, which must be performed at one go to allow the mechanism of *qi* to work smoothly. Therefore the '7 *cun Kao* method<sup>[3]</sup> is depicted here as follows: the upper body leans down to bring *Zhong-qi* and top energy<sup>[4]</sup> down. Don't lean too deeply, otherwise the connection between the upper body, the crotch and the waist will be lost. Dig both feet firmly into the ground — the more strongly the heels are pressed down the better. The right shoulder moves as if it wants to touch the ground. The distance between the face and knee is about 20 cm. If your opponent tries to press your head down, place your right foot between the opponent's legs if possible, so that your body forms a perpendicular line

[3] TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: the first step in the *Bi Shen Chui* posture is critical to the success of the *Kao* shoulder strike, especially when the opponent is very close. The *Kao* strike can be divided into the shoulder and back techniques, where within the shoulder technique there exists elements of the back technique and vice versa. So when applying the shoulder technique, you must also be mindful of the back. Only by applying exact timing will you be able to fully unleash the power of the *Kao* technique. Like rock pounding against rock, all will be lost if there is no balance. Here, we see *Peng-jin* (Ward-off force) being sent through the shoulder to express itself as *Kao-jin* (Shoulder-stroke force).

[4] *Jing* essence focused at the top of the head.

to his body. Point your right shoulder at his lower abdomen to lift him up suddenly from below as if with a hook, then throw him off during exhalation. Exert your force through the shoulder. The energy of the Kao technique requires that the whole body works as an integrated unit.

## 2. Description of the body positions

The *Bi Shen Chui* posture provides the technique for turning around and looking backward. The torso faces west. Keep the head and neck upright and look downward to the front, toward the east.

Shift your weight slightly forward onto the right half of the body and feel the whole body working as one unit.

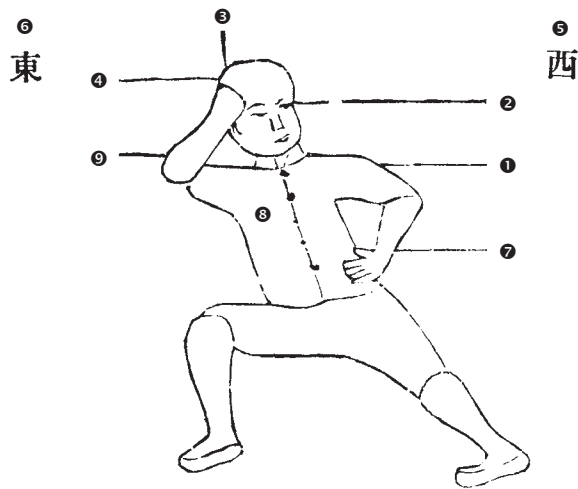


FIG. 2.13.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE BODY POSITIONS

*Inscriptions:*

- ❶ the left and right elbows accumulate *jing* essence; the elbow tip extends outward, pointing west;
- ❷ look down and focus your attention on the left toes;
- ❸ focus *jing* essence energy at the top of the head so that *Zhong-qi* sinks down to the coccyx;
- ❹ slant the torso east and rotate the waist west; bow forward so that the head is between both arms and aligned in a straight line with the shoulders; needless to say, the relaxed shoulders and arms should be sunk down; don't lift the shoulders as this would make the heart area hollow and agile;
- ❺ west;
- ❻ east;
- ❼ both hands are aligned with the face to gather *shen* (spirit) and *jing* essence in one movement; the waist's *jing* essence is positioned downward and slightly rotated west;
- ❽ gather the chest to establish a connection with the *jing* essence of both elbows;
- ❾ when punching, the right hand is in a straight line while the left hand presses on the left side of the waist; the *jing* essence of both the chest and elbows are linked together.

The posture is performed facing north, so north is the main direction from beginning to end; the person pictured on this page faces also northward.

### 3. *Diagram of jing essence regenerated in Bi Shen Chui*

FIG. 2.13.3 depicts the posture's position oriented north.

The right elbow is bent, drawing forward to make an oblique path with the extended left elbow tip. If the movement is well formed, the *jing* essence of

both arms will connect to produce *Zhong-qi*, which passes through the top of the head and along the spine down to the 21st vertebra.

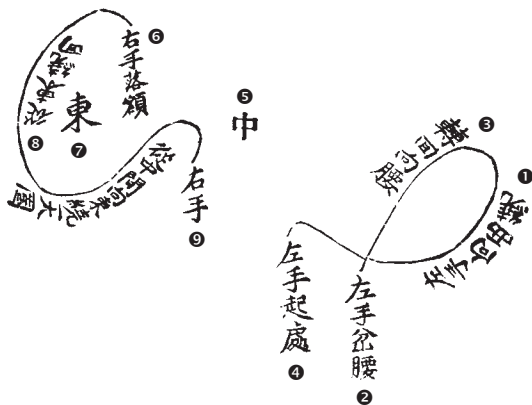


FIG. 2.13.3 DIAGRAM OF JING ESSENCE REGENERATED IN BI SHEN CHUI

*Inscriptions:*

- ❶ starting point of left hand's movement;
- ❷ the left hand coils westward;
- ❸ turn round toward waist;
- ❹ fork the waist with left hand;
- ❺ the center [between left and right arms];
- ❻ the right hand coils from the middle toward the east in a big circle;
- ❼ east;
- ❽ from the east it coils back;
- ❾ the right hand stops in front of the right side of the forehead.

The name of the *Bi Shen Chui* posture indicates that the stroke is performed with the back while turning the torso around. In fact, the posture is divided into the shoulder and back techniques, wherein within the shoulder technique some elements of the back technique are also applied. Fully exploited, the posture explodes like the pounding of a pestle. Carefully maintain the center of your gravity to succeed, if not, no achievement is possible. As for the position of the feet, the requirements are generally the same as for other postures.

4. Diagram of internal jing essence



FIG. 2.13.4 DIAGRAM OF INTERNAL JING ESSENCE

*Inscriptions:*

- ① the right shoulder drops down to the level of the opponent's chest;
- ② now the right shoulder turns around;
- ③ now it moves outward;
- ④ now it moves up.

When performing this posture, you must employ your whole body's strength in order to strike and turn the torso simultaneously. When making the Shoulder-stroke, you should focus mainly on accumulating *jing* essence of the whole body instead of employing your shoulder's strength. If the opponent grasps your upper elbow with both hands, try to close-in on him by leaning forward and pointing your right shoulder straight into his chest. First move the right shoulder outward so as to turn it sharply backward into the Shoulder-stroke, rotating the arm as an option. If the opponent is not deterred, try the posture depicted in FIG. 2.13.4 again. The point is that the strike can only be effected successfully after *jin* force is accumulated through closing.

### 5. Shield Body and Punch (*Bi Shen Chui*) or Split Body and Punch

The *Bi Shen Chui* posture refers to the covered punch, while its other name, *Pi Shen Chui* (Split Body and Punch), implies that both hands split the body into two equal halves, the left and right as well as upper and lower parts.

Another name for the posture is 'Turn Body and Punch,' referring to its continuation from *Jin gang Dao Dui*, when the right hand leads the right foot in taking a step eastward to the right. After this step, lean the upper body downward by bending and rotating the waist. Simultaneously turn the head back and look at the left toes. The right side of the chest is drawn forward to turn around an imaginary pivot located in the middle of the torso which 'splits' the body into two halves. Slightly bend the torso at the waist to allow *Zhong-qi* to flow upright. Point the right toes northwest, drawing the right knee inward to hold the closing stance. The left toes are in a hook foot stance pointing northeast. Look down at the left toes.

After taking a step right, bend the torso at the waist to bring the right shoulder down to above knee level using a brush-knee gesture. The downward shoulder movement must be performed naturally, matching your

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POSTURE 37

ROLL FOWARD

QIAN ZHAO

1. Diagram of the posture

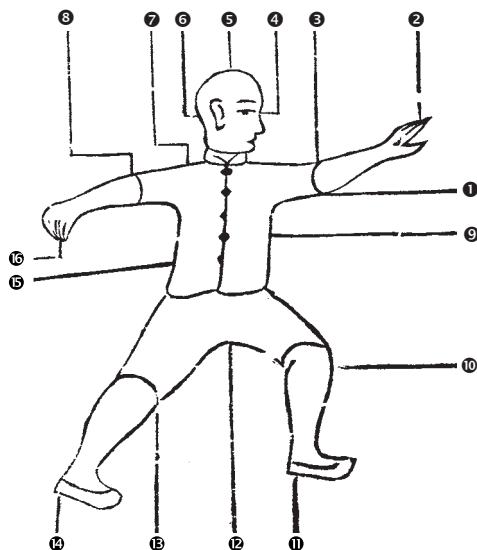


FIG. 3.37.1 ROLL FORWARD (QIAN ZHAO)

*Inscriptions:*

- ① hang the left elbow down;
- ② the five fingertips are stuck together at the middle and lower knuckles;
- ③ bend the left elbow slightly about 3-4 cm;
- ④ look at the middle finger of the left hand;
- ⑤ focus the energy (*jing* essence) at the top of the head to guide the whole body force;
- ⑥ listen to your surroundings to avoid unexpected attacks from behind;

- ⑦ relax the shoulders in the area of acupoints JIAN-JING and FU-TU;
- ⑧ the right elbow tip faces up;
- ⑨ hollow the chest, leaning slightly forward in closing;
- ⑩ bend the left knee about 1-2 cm;
- ⑪ set the empty left foot on the ground;
- ⑫ round-in the crotch;
- ⑬ bend the right knee;
- ⑭ flatten the right foot on the ground;
- ⑮ sink down the torso, waist and crotch in one movement;
- ⑯ form a right hook hand gesture by gathering the five fingertips together and turning them downward from the wrist.

## 2. General description

The *Qian Zhao* posture requires you to look straight ahead and also at your left hand as it threads its way forward toward the opponent coming from the west. As a result, you are able to avert his punch with your left hand, drawing his arm up and north, then southward in a small circle with the back of your hand and the outside of your forearm. This parry specially requires quick observation and adequate reaction, otherwise you will definitely find yourself losing control to the opponent.

When the leading left hand moves forward, sink the waist and crotch down so that when the upper body turns smoothly, the lower body will not be sluggish. Bend the right knee and withdraw the left foot so that it takes an empty and naturally correct position in front, allowing the right hook hand behind the body to settle in comfortably, while the leading left hand moves south to north in a small circle. Move the left and right hands simultaneously: the left hand rotates inward to the north while the right hand rotates outward to the south. Overall, the upper and lower body must be integrated into a whole to move as a unit with a single effort.

### 3. Internal power (*nei jing*)

The diagrams depicted on this page show the final movements of the *Qian Zhao* posture, including the method of footwork, and the above-mentioned rotation of the hands which produces a reeling effect. The way that *Zhong-qi* rises and descends determines the whole *Taiji* form, which has to be performed naturally according to the doctrine of opening and closing.

A) DIAGRAM OF THE LEFT HAND DRAWING WESTWARD IN DIRECT ROTATION

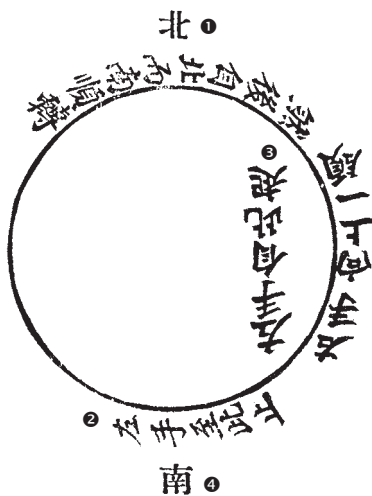
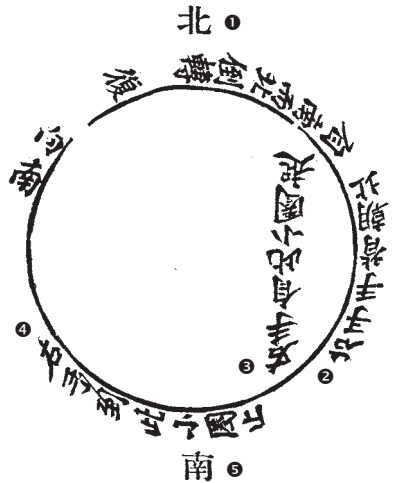


FIG. 3.37.2 DIAGRAM OF THE LEFT HAND DRAWING WESTWARD IN DIRECT ROTATION

Inscriptions:

- ❶ north;
- ❷ move the left hand up, then from north to south in direct rotation; move the left hand until it stops at this point;
- ❸ start to move the left hand from this location;
- ❹ south.

B) DIAGRAM OF THE RIGHT HAND DRAWING EASTWARD IN REVERSE ROTATION



轉必手轉手圈手隨右  
 倒勢左順右轉左手

FIG. 3.37.3 DIAGRAM OF THE RIGHT HAND DRAWING EASTWARD IN REVERSE ROTATION

*Inscriptions:*

- ❶ north;
- ❷ move the right hand in reverse rotation from south to north; the back of the hand faces north; then turn the right hand southward again;
- ❸ start to draw the right hand in a small circle from this location;
- ❹ move the right hand until it draws a small circle and stops at this point;
- ❺ south;
- ❻ the right hand follows the left hand and draws a circle in direct rotation, while the left hand rotates in reverse.

The two diagrams above depict the circular movement of both hands. Boxing techniques are built entirely on applying the mind/heart, which induces the hands to move upward in circles. In fact, before you move your hands, you should draw a pattern of this movement in your mind/heart. To determine the position of your hand, look at it first to see if its position reflects your mental pattern, that is, the intention in your mind/heart. The three organs — hands, eyes and mind/heart — should dictate the whole body's stance. If one of these elements are short, you will not be ready to meet the opponent's attacks.

You can define each detail of your opponent's stance with respect to your own position by looking at her hands. Your advances and retreats are completely reliant on your eyes, which are in fact the outward representation of your mind/heart. Your eyes enable you to discern the level of your body's readiness to execute the orders of the mind/heart according to your mental state. Once the internal mechanism of the mind/heart is activated, all four limbs will start to move nimbly to carry out its orders precisely. Hence when you look at the position of your opponent hands, you can determine her internal condition, her thoughts and her state of mind.

c) DIAGRAM OF THE LEFT HAND REELING IN DIRECT ROTATION

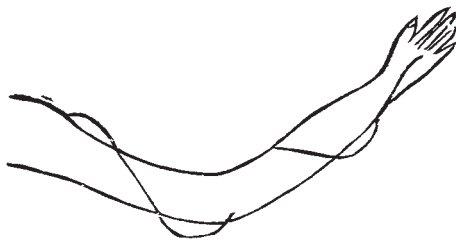


FIG. 3.37.4 DIAGRAM OF THE LEFT HAND REELING IN DIRECT ROTATION

*Inscription:*

- Raise the left hand and draw a circle with the fingers to reel energy rising from the thighs along the forearm toward the hands. The power of the legs cannot be accurately defined until it is demonstrated through the movement of hands.

D) DIAGRAM OF THE RIGHT HAND DRAWING IN REVERSE ROTATION



FIG. 3.37.5 DIAGRAM OF THE RIGHT HAND DRAWING IN REVERSE ROTATION

*Inscriptions:*

- The left hand plays the leading role in the *Qian Zhao* posture, so focus your eyes on it to concentrate the power of the whole body into it. Draw the left hand eastward with the back of the hand facing up and adhering against the inside of the opponent's arm. Your right hand guards your back in readiness for a rear attack.

The *Qian Zhao* posture follows Single Whip, hence inheriting the latter's stance and position of the arms, which are spread out sideways to guard against opponents from the east and west. So, since the arms are already spread out, you do not need to spread them further, but just slightly bend the elbows and raise the left hand by reeling energy in the inside of the arm to parry the opponent's attack from the left.

This is a natural sequence of movements created in boxing to transform a posture according to the changes in the environment. Such posture transformations must be light but effective against the opponent's punch. If the opponent dares not approach closer, you needn't lift your left hand up and bend the left elbow to parry his attack; but if he does attack, deflect his hand with your left hand in an ostensibly light and graceful gesture, which is in fact filled with concentrated energy from your whole body. This move should release great force from behind the left hand, which will enable you to surmount any problem. This is implied by the images of hexagram Sun (41), the symbol of lessening placed below, and hexagram Yi (42), the symbol of addition placed above. Hence the image of Sun (41) effectively expresses the movement of going up and ahead.

4. *Seven-character a line verse dedicated to the Qian Zhao posture*

Keeping the eyes on the left hand, you perform *Qian Zhao*;  
Move the left hand up but punch downward,  
Once an unbidden guest approaches you.  
Assume immortals come from all four sides  
To attack you violently,  
In open combat your success depends on the skill  
To draw your hands with agility and fluidity.

POSTURE 38

**ROLL BACKWARD**

HOU ZHAO

This figure depicts the final movement of the *Hou Zhao* posture as a continuation of the preceding *Qian Zhao* posture but in the opposite direction. From beginning to end this posture applies energy flow along the inner sides of the arms and legs.

1. Diagram of the *Hou Zhao* posture

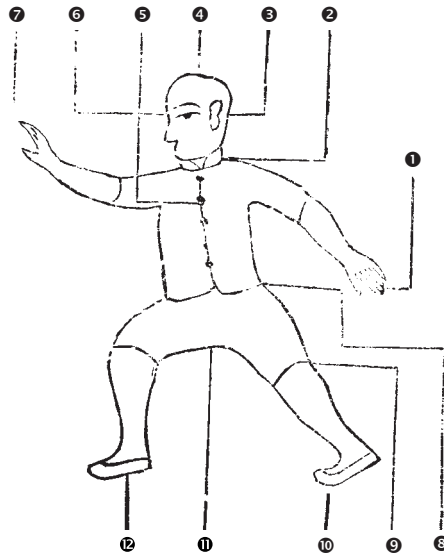


FIG. 3.38.1 ROLL BACKWARD (HOU ZHAO)

*Inscriptions:*

- ❶ keep the fingers of the left hand gathered together, as though you are going to lift them up;
- ❷ relax and drop the left shoulder down;
- ❸ listen to what is happening behind you;
- ❹ focus the energy (*jing* essence) at the top of the head as the guiding force of the whole body;
- ❺ hollow the chest like an empty vessel;
- ❻ focus the eyes in front on the right fingertips;
- ❼ point the right fingers obliquely upward;
- ❽ sink waist energy (*jing* essence) downward, letting the torso lean forward in closing;
- ❾ bend the left knee;
- ❿ the left foot is positioned in readiness to step forward;
- ⓫ keep the crotch rounded-in to accumulate *jing* essence through closing;
- ⓬ withdraw the right foot.

**2. General description**

The *Hou Zhao* posture requires you to focus your eyes on the right hand which draws forward from behind to keep the opponent at bay. This technique of drawing the arms forward in rotation from behind against an imaginary opponent is a part of standard everyday *Taiji* exercise. However, if many aggressors come to you from the east, you have to complete the preceding *Qian Zhao* posture and quickly turn around from west to east, first with your head then with your torso and right arm.

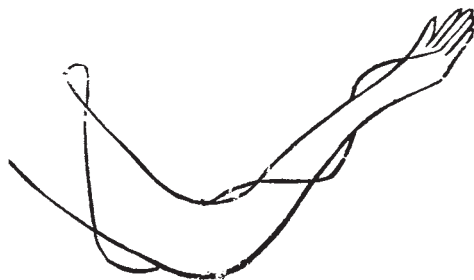


FIG. 3.38.2 DIAGRAM OF ENERGY FLOWING IN DIRECT MOVEMENT ALONG THE RIGHT ARM ACCORDING TO THE SILK-REELING METHOD

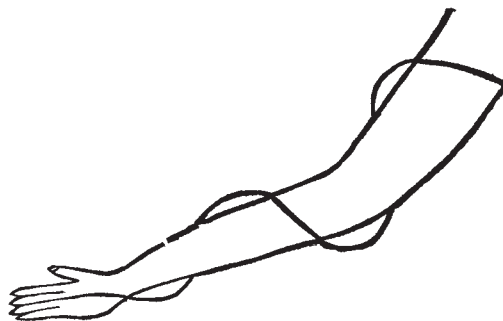


FIG. 3.38.3 DIAGRAM OF THE ENERGY FLOWING IN REVERSE DIRECTION ALONG THE LEFT ARM ACCORDING TO THE SILK-REELING METHOD

*Inscription:*

- Hang the left hand down with the back of the hand facing north.

### 3. *Internal power (nei jing)*

In this posture, face both feet eastward and cross the opponent's arm by circling your right forearm from south to north. As soon as your arm reaches north, bring it down south again to hit your opponent in the torso, making sure to bend your right elbow so that your right hand is positioned about 30 cm in front of the opponent's chest. In this posture, always bend your elbow when circling the arm so that you can stretch it out in counterattack. Both the circular motion and bending should be done in one movement using one integrated effort.

In the preceding *Qian Zhao* posture, the left hand rotates in direct movement (*shun* or inward) while the right hand rotates in reverse (outward) direction, so that the left arm assumes the position of Host while the right arm takes the rear position of Guest. In the current *Hou Zhao* posture, when the opponent counterattacks by quickly turning his body and parrying your preceding *Qian Zhao* movement, your right arm takes the turn of Host while your left arm becomes the Guest. At the beginning of *Hou Zhao*, the right hand (back facing forward) moves from south to north to parry the opponent's attack. Upon crossing the opponent's arm, it then rotates in a circle in direct movement back south in counterattack using the *yin-jin* technique (see the comments above), stopping when it reaches waist level at the east, the back of the hand facing north and slightly downward. While this takes place, use your left hand to attack the opponent with a smashing blow.

For the *Hou Zhao* posture, bend your right knee in the manner of the lower right bow step, and turn your right foot slightly inward, digging it into the ground. Following the saying, 'Inside the most solid contains empty,' most of your body weight should be on the front right leg while the rear left leg takes the left empty step westward, toes pointing forward. Thus the principle of 'motionlessness within motion' is fully expressed in this posture.



FIG. 3.38.4 INTERNAL POWER (NEI JING) OF THE RIGHT HAND ROTATING IN DIRECT MOVEMENT

Inscriptions:

- ❶ the right palm rotates to face north;
- ❷ the back of the right hand faces north;
- ❸ the right arm moves from south to north while the right hand rotates in direct movement (*shun* or inward) to draw a circle using the *yin-jin* technique.



FIG. 3.38.5 THE WAY TO WITHDRAW THE RIGHT FOOT

Inscriptions:

- ❶ withdraw the right foot until it stops at this point;
- ❷ the right foot points east.



FIG. 3.38.6 DIAGRAM OF THE CHAN-SI OR SILK-REELING METHOD USED IN THE RIGHT LEG

### 3. *Symbolic meaning of the posture*

The *Hou Zhao* posture does not require a large-scale rotation technique, but rather a small-scale turn which is adequate for producing agile movements directed by your eyes moving from west to east, in readiness for any easterly threats. Next, quickly turn the torso east and bring the right arm forward from its rear *Qian Zhao* position. Meanwhile, replace the right arm with the left in the technique of *Ye Ma Fen Zong* or Parting the Wild Horse's Mane. Now the right hand draws ahead and the left hand is placed behind. Thus the *Hou Zhao* posture is a small transition leading on to the large-scale posture performed in the image of hexagram *Xiao-guo* (62), symbol of excess in small things, which overcomes the preceding hexagram, *Zhong Fu* (61), symbol of true sincerity, with the image of a bird on a wing.

The *Xiao-guo* hexagram is formed by the trigrams for mountain below and thunder above, with two yang/strong undivided lines in the middle representing the body of a bird, while the four divided lines its wings (two above and two below). The internal lower trigram, that is, lines 2-3-4, is *Dui* (marsh), which represents the mouth and tongue or speech and any produced sounds.

Thus when the opponent approaches from behind, your eastward move should resemble a flying bird emitting silent sounds of flight. The deceiver, that is, he who attacks from behind, will then certainly be punished. Hence the lowest divided line shows its subject "as a bird flying and ascending to heaven without any sense of measure, until the issue is evil," and nothing can be done to avoid this issue. The middle (third) undivided line in the center of the inner *Dui* (marsh) undivided line shows its subject "taking no extraordinary precautions against danger, which consequently finds opportunity to assail and injure him. There will be evil." And how great this evil will be! Trigram *Dui* is allocated to the west according to arrangement of King Wen or the post-birth sequence, while *Xun* (wind) to the east.

Therefore turn around from west to east in the image of the fifth and topmost lines which say, "There is no rain coming from my place at the border to the west." These lines also show "the prince shooting his retrievable arrow in a cave." So while turning eastward, attract and attack the approaching opponent at the same time with your right hand, as if shooting a bird with "a retrievable arrow" or arrow-shaped blade, taking it effortlessly out of your hunting-bag. There is no way to miss hitting your opponent's head or the upper body, it being so large a target, like a cave's entrance. Nevertheless, your moves should be nimble as it is not easy to make large-scale movements quickly. The posture's amplitude should be within the bounds of a small-scale movement to provide agile and effective rotation. In other words, smaller movements allow faster rotations. That is why it is said in the martial arts that, "softness overcomes hardness", and that with softness in the central place you can attain happiness indeed. How great that would be!

4. *Seven-character a line verse dedicated to the Hou Zhao posture*

All of a sudden turn your face eastward,  
 And a myriad aggressors will be defeated.  
 If it is not because of the body's great agility,  
 Why is this so? Within a flash of thought  
 They must be destroyed to put an end to aggression.

5. *Five-character a line verse dedicated to the posture*

In the twinkling of an eye make clearly eastward;  
 Can it be that you become a small hero?  
 The only thing you need to do is to protect your head;  
 To be afraid of a crowd means to scare people like you.

POSTURE 39

**WILD HORSE SHAKES ITS MANE  
ON BOTH SIDES  
OR PARTING THE WILD HORSE'S MANE**

YE MA FENG ZONG

Postures such as *Shan Tong Bei*, *Er Qi Jiao* and *Dao Juan Hong* are categorized as large-scale boxing techniques. As such, *Ye Ma Feng Zong* also belongs to this category of postures.

1. *Diagram of the Ye Ma Feng Zong posture*

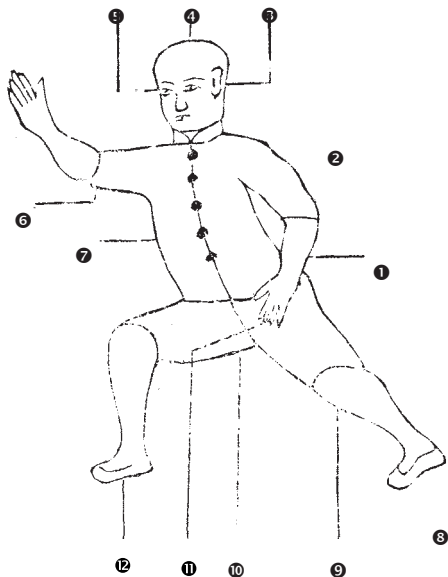


FIG. 3.39.1 WILD HORSE SHAKES ITS MANE ON BOTH SIDES  
(YE MA FENG ZONG)

*Inscriptions:*

- ❶ sink the waist energy down;
- ❷ drop the left hand down and apply energy (*jing* essence) to the fingers, the back of the hand and the elbow;
- ❸ listen to the situation behind you;
- ❹ focus the energy (*jing* essence) at the top of the head to stimulate the energy of the whole body;
- ❺ glance quickly to the left and right;
- ❻ draw the right hand forward and up to apply energy to the upward pointing fingers and the back of the hand, in a manner similar to the left hand;
- ❼ hollow the chest to fill it with energy;
- ❽ the left foot is in a ready position to step forward;
- ❾ bend the left leg at the knee but do not relax it;
- ❿ sink down the crotch energy (*jing* essence), the lower the better;
- ⓫ the right wrist faces down with fingers pointing forward;
- ⓬ stamp the right sole on the ground to increase the stability of the stance.

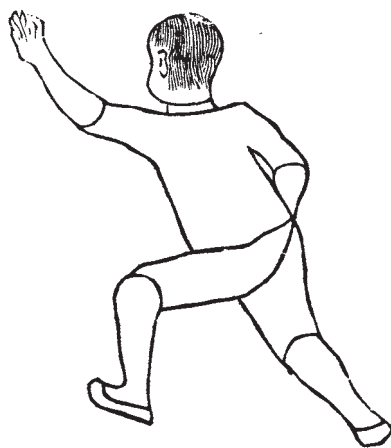


FIG. 3.39.2 REAR VIEW OF YE MA FENG ZONG

## 2. *General description*

The *Ye Ma Fen Zong* posture implies that both arms separate and spread out to imitate the image of a wild horse such as a mustang, which shakes its mane left and right, hence the origin of its name. As mentioned earlier, this posture is seen as one of the large-scale *Taijiquan* forms, so lean the body forward and slightly sideways while advancing. The whole body is lead by the energy at the top of the head. Both knees are bent, the crotch is empty and rounded-in so as to allow energy (*jing* essence) to pass through.

If an attack comes from the left, draw the left arm leftward and up with palm facing out (up), while resting the right hand at crotch level beside the right thigh. Conversely, if attacked from the right, circle the right arm rightward and up in direct rotation with the palm facing out, while the left hand rests at crotch level on the left. This move is employed to attract the opponent to advance further into emptiness while counter-attacking at the same time. It can also be applied against multiple aggressors coming from all sides by enabling you to penetrate their ranks, thus defeating them in small groups. In fact, this technique is quite difficult to beat even with many opponents attacking.