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ABSTRACT

The topic of this MA thesis is the early Chinese notion of enlightenment (*ming* 明). My approach to this topic is loosely based on my own experience of the Shaolin martial arts, for which enlightenment is a highly valued achievement. For Shaolin, enlightenment refers to the enlightenment of the body and the spirit, and its use of this notion has a long history in the tradition of Chinese philosophy. This thesis intends to examine the notion of enlightenment as it is found in the early Chinese philosophies of Daoism. More specifically, this thesis examines the notion of enlightenment in the Daodejing by Laozi. In this context, I aim to emphasize the significant embedding of the Daodejing in Chinese culture, its focus on self-cultivation (*yangsheng* 养生), and a little scholarly comment on the most fascinating term *ming* which refers to the transformation of the Sage's body. I intend to examine how this text use the notion of enlightenment, because it represents one of the major notions of Chinese philosophy, as seen even in the teachings of modern Shaolin martial arts.

KEYWORDS: shaolin kung fu, martial art, self-cultivation, enlightenment, body

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Introduction

Three to five years of diligent practice in *Songshan Shaolin* 嵩山少林 is enough to become a well-demanded instructor in your country. During this time, the practitioner can achieve certain successes in athletic form: flexibility, agility, speed, endurance, as well as touch the theoretical part, which is revealed only in the process of practice: emptying (*wa* 洼), exhausting (*bi* 弊), reducing (*shao* 少) and excess (*duo* 多) (DDJ 22). Here and further on, I will use an abbreviated reference in *Daodejing*, such as chapter 22 by record (DDJ 22). Three years is the period of review. The master, having satisfied himself of the practitioner's ability to follow the culture, can call him student (disciple), as indirectly stated in the Analects 1:11 “If for three years he does not alter from the way of his father, he may be called filial.” (*sannian wu gai yu fu zhi dao kewe xiao yi* 三年无改于父之道，可谓孝矣). “There is no name” (DDJ 1) to the state that self-cultivation (*yangsheng* 养生) leads to, but there are glimpses of it are occur more than ten times in *Daodejing* and are called *ming* 明.

According to Shaolin tradition, the practice begins at dawn and ends at sunset: from 5 am to 7 pm in summer and from 6 am in winter. As Master Shi Yanchen 释延晨 says, practitioner can learn many *taolu* 套路 in three years: *Shaolin wu bu quan* 少林五步拳, *Shaolin lianhuan quan* 少林连环拳, *Shaolin xiaohong quan* 少林小洪拳, *Shaolin wuxing bafa quan* 少林五形八法拳, *Shaolin qixing quan* 少林七星拳, *Shaolin xiao luohanquan* 少林小罗汉拳, *Shaolin pao quan* 少林炮拳, *Shaolin chang hu xinyi men quan* 少林长护心意门拳, *luohan shiba shou quan* 罗汉十八手拳 including *taolu* with *bingqi* 兵器 (“weapon”): *Shaolin yin shou gun* 少林阴手棍, *Shaolin meihua dan dao* 少林梅花单刀, *Shaolin shisan qiang* 少林十三枪, *Shaolin jiujielbian* 少林九节鞭, as well as training performed in pairs *duilian* 对练: *liuhe dui lian* 六合对练, *dunpai dao po qiang* 盾牌刀破枪, *san jie gun po*

qiang 三节棍破枪. As well as the forms *qigong* 气功: *baduanjing* 八段经 and “hard” (*ying* 硬) *qigong*: “the head smashes a scrap iron” (*tou kai gangban* 头开钢板) and “the needle flies through the glass” (*zhen chuan boli* 针穿玻璃) but the Master knows perfectly the one movement and everyone will know about him, is illustrated indirectly by DDJ 22 *shengren bao yi wei tianxia shi* 圣人抱一为天下式.

Shaolin kung fu is more than a fighting technique-it is the art of knowing self-body. Those who feel this state will dissolve the question of comparing Western and Eastern martial arts at least in terms of fighting in the ring.

Difference between combat techniques and martial arts.

Going out of sync with the title, I conclude that the difference between Western and Eastern martial arts lies in the way of learning, which means that the two sides are equally important and do not oppose, yet are efficient tools in achieving different tasks.

Speaking of two sides, from the point of view of the body and technique of performing movements or techniques of martial art, I want to find the points of support in the Daodejing. To begin with, I want to refer to Daodejing, specifically chapter 54, which says:

One who is excellent at being anchored cannot be uprooted.

One who is excellent at embracing [the One] cannot be denuded.

善建不拔，善抱者不脱 (DDJ 54)

In the first line, the one strengthens, i.e. act independently, as if the ship needs to be anchored. In the second to lean, “snap” “hold” as if the released anchor should lie to the bottom. Even the most powerful anchor is helpless without a foothold.

This suggests that there is internal work and external work to achieve the same goal. It is necessary to simultaneously apply diligence, but alone not to achieve success. In Chinese martial arts (CMA) practice, two types of work are distinguished: *neigong* 内功 and *waigong*

外功. For more details, see the appendix for the first translation of “The book of Shaolin Kung Fu” , taking the Essentials on Shaolin Kung Fu Practice (xi lian shaolinquan shu yaojue 习练少林拳术要诀).

As Western techniques, I will imply boxing or mixed martial arts (MMA), just as an example, since these are the techniques that pop up in the debate, “which is better, one year of boxing or ten years of Shaolin.” From the letters of my followers, it is mentioned more than once that the “boxer “will knock out” your monk”. Briefly parrying, I will answer, giving as an example a quote from B. Allen about how he understands Western kung fu in which I can only agree with him:

Western boxing is not a martial art in the sense that I use in this book. It is a combative sport, an athletic competition, a game with rules. Martial arts are none of those things. (Allen, 2015, p. 107)

In contrast to CMA, which encourages “softness,” these Western techniques favor strength and mass. A clear physical (muscular) dominance is often proportional to the advantage in gained combat (Allen, 2015, p. 31). It is just as easy to discern a fighter of Western martial arts in a crowd: imagine if you have a heterosexual boxing team in front of you, there is an active predominance of muscular development, even among those who are not naturally predisposed to this. The gender comparison is given only for the purpose of emphasizing physiognomy because martial arts can be practiced by people of any gender and age. Going on with the example of a multi-gender team, you can now imagine *taiji quan* 太极拳 team, we will not be able to visually determine that we have a martial arts team in front of us, rather it can be confused with representatives of acrobatics, gymnastics, or yoga. And that is that I'm undeterred this is not proof, entailing a wide range of exceptions, but it is still a prime example where everyone can feel the difference between combative sport and martial arts, outer and inner form.

A Master in Shaolin Kung Fu welcomes waiting and inaction. The most effective movement is not a perfect movement. A strike is born into will. The will is calm while the body is safe. The danger outside disturbs the will, and it affects the body's reaction, not the thoughts or ideas. Diligent practitioner B. Allen has experience in several eastern martial arts: “kung fu, wushu, taijiquan, wing chun, karate, and hapkido”. After many years of training, I came to believe that:

The Dao of Asian martial arts, it seems to me, lies not in deception but in achieving an “effortless” response to incoming violence. What is artful in the martial arts is a response to violence that is at once maximally effective and minimally exposing. (Allen, 2015, p. 11)

Therefore, the long road of studying Eastern martial arts are provided for every beginner. Practicing Eastern martial arts is a little impossible, once starting we train for a lifetime. If in the Western martial arts, the culmination is considered to be a victory in a duel, then in the eastern, the culmination is self-cultivation every day, and not fights, which in most cases are completely excluded.

If you still do not understand why you need to study eastern martial arts, I suggest you turn to the work of another famous author in the direction of martial arts who said: “Martial arts has positive associations with traditional manners, formality, response, and building self-confidence, coupled with exercise and learning some techniques of self-defense. It is also a little bit exotic and foreign, adding a cultural broadening aspect to its practice” (Lorge, 2016, p. 907). Therefore, as you practicing, it is important to realize that arts happen at the intersection of two fields. If you read the translation and do not understand it, do not be too eager to deal out the translator.

Keep Readers and Translators tandem intact

From foreign languages, *Daodejing* was first translated into French in 1842 by Stanislas Aignan Julien (1797-1873). Thanks largely to the French translation, the first English translation was born in 1866 from the pen of the Scottish Protestant missionary John Chalmers (1825-1899). Only half a century later, in 1948, the first translation was added, made by the Chinese sinologist *Lin Yutang* 林語堂 (1895-1976), who lived most of his life in the United States.

And in Russian, *Daodejing* was first translated not fully in 1893. Based on German and French translations, the famous Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) was among the first to decide to start a dialogue with the ancient Chinese text. Based on a partial translation, the first published Russian translation was completed by a Japanese specialist in Russian philology and translator Masutaro Konishi (*Xiaoxi Zengtailang* 小西增太郎) (1862-1940) in 1892 under the direction of Leo Tolstoy. Only the third translation, published in 1950 by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, was made by Chinese *Yang Xingshun* 杨兴顺 (1904-1989) in Moscow. To date, it is the most widely distributed well-known, and cited translation in Russian. I will cite a rather large quotation from Pereleshin, which concerns the translation of a classical Chinese text created by him in 1971:

The translator of “Daodejing” into any European language immediately runs into huge obstacles. The main one is terminology. To start by saying that the keyword “Dao” is untranslatable. This, of course, is not “The Way”, not “The Mind”, not “the moral principle”, not “the way of action” and not “the cosmos”. The closest approach to it is the Logos of Hellenistic philosophy, but the introduction of this term would introduce into the translation completely foreign to China Neoplatonic and Christian shades. The word Logos is also unacceptable for reasons of style: after all, Logos is also a non-Russian word!

How to translate “Dao”? Following Zheng Lin (described in more details below) I translate “Dao” as “Truth”, though I make a reservation, just like he did in his preface, that “Dao” is not Truth, that it is more specific and more active (Laozi, 2000).

The reader should beware of false assessments of the new and original where they do not exist, namely, in poetic stereotypes that form a kind of universal chrestomathy. On the contrary, he should look for something truly new in what at first glance seems incomprehensible to him, and so the Chinese insufficiently erudite reader should do, which, in my opinion, Pereleshin did not do.

Constant recourse to a comment turns reading into a kind of decryption. Therefore, reading ancient classical texts should not be associated with weekend reading. This is the problem of the European reader: he/she is looking for something new in Chinese literature, but what is new and truly original can only be grasped despite many difficulties that deprive the reader of immediate aesthetic pleasure, to fully understand, as far as possible, the idea, the image, and all the greatness. Beware of false assessments, new and original where it does not exist, and always remember that only the original itself is capable of this, of course. (Alekseev, 2002, p. 114)

When we (born not in China) read the Bible, Tolstoy, Shakespeare, we can navigate through our education, allowing us to see the work in the correct chronological ratios, in known terms, and established concepts. Moreover, only by narrative can an experienced reader distinguish one European writer from another. Unfortunately, the situation with China is completely different. Indeed, even a long preface describing the time, place, time of year, the name of the ruler can even give a clear idea of this time? (ibid.)

We see now that the fate of our translations of Chinese literature depends on the reader no less than on the translators themselves. Therefore, I argue, to understand Chinese literature,

we should adhere to a tight tandem between reader and translator. The translator must understand who is reading the text, and the reader must understand that the reading should be prepared.

It seems that the conclusion that suggests itself is not to translate anything for the public, but rather for ourselves, i.e. for sinologists. However, to move on you need to make an effort. As an effort, I suggest that you put is to provide the reader with knowledge. For example, to recommend for study the sources of Chinese history and Chinese culture in advance.

It is also necessary for the Western reader to admit that vivid headlines are “translated from Chinese” nothing more than an optical illusion, that, alas, this alone is not enough to conclude that this text is now in my language.

The translator should recognize their native language, as the language served, in this case - Chinese (Alekseev, 2002, p. 104). The reader who is keen to take the word for only one translation is in danger of being misdiagnosed. Explore translations of different translators, only so can be somewhat strengthened in the idea of Chinese philosophy.

The analysis of several translations of one ancient Chinese text in the framework of the master's course of Beijing Normal University in English suggested: The Chinese worldview is immobile from the point of view of heaven and earth, but it becomes useful only if it is set out under the time. Each translation relates to the time it is published, but the Chinese original itself is equally relevant.

Any novice student of Shaolin Kung Fu already has many questions even before the first training session begins. Given my personal experience of training in martial arts city *Dengfeng* 登封市 for several years from 2015 to 2019, and the experience of generating answers to frequently asked questions, in particular: “how do I get to Shaolin?” My arguments are based on personal experience and analysis of hundreds of emails from those interested in

Shaolin Kung Fu from all over the world, which I received after publishing a big interview. (*Russian in Shaolin – Mastering Wisdom and Kung Fu at 30 Years*, 2019).

I dare say that the point of view from which I will tell you is unique. On the one hand, the experience of training Shaolin kung fu (*gongfu* 功夫) from 2015 to 2019 in Dengfeng without stopping. I ate, slept, and trained side by side with Shaolin monks, rather than just trying to train “like them” for weeks or a month, as is usually the case with foreigners. I adopted a simple course of life, the course of monastic ascetic life.

On the other hand, after the publication of the interview with my participation, which as of mid-2021 has more than 7 million hits, I received several hundred emails with the same type of questions that keep me in the reality of the modern world. The experience gained is correlated with the questions asked and finds positive feedback. Thus, I dare guess that I have an objective understanding of what we know about Shaolin kung fu in theory and what of this is true in practice.

In the age of electronic madness, when there is no time for physical training, attention should be directed to practice. I wish to warn the reader that I am quite critical of the dry scientific approach without practice. Practice, even without an experiment, metaphorically speaking, like launching a fish into an aquarium. To engage in philosophy scientifically should not only mean flaunting evidence or juggling sources, you should also leave the library and launch a “fresh fish”. “I feel it in the hand and respond from the heart, the tongue cannot put it into words, there is a knack in it somewhere which I cannot convey to my son and which my son cannot learn from me” (Graham, 1981, Chapter 2).

Citing examples from the personal experience of one, at first glance I realize not an authoritative person – it is difficult to get recognition from the international scientific community – yet I am desperate to be useful to the people, therefore, one of the goals of this work I set to present thoughts that would support people without experience and theory in the

aspect of CMA, who, being inspired, will begin their transformation in the world among the “myriad of things” *wanwu* 万物.

1 Shaolin Kung Fu practice

One of the challenges of philosophy is to bring together different shapes of knowledge, to present a new perspective on earlier questions, most often concerning human existence. The Chinese culture includes, on average, a greater number of directions, unlike in other countries. For example, in Russia boxing is not an asset of our culture, even though it is highly revered, while Wushu (kung fu) in China is a cultural treasure. In this chapter, I want to explore why the practice of Shaolin kung fu is not just a sport, but as a method of attaining the one on the way to the state of sage (DDJ 39). This should help to dispel the “haze” that has formed as a result of the popular films and other ways of mystifying real techniques. As much as you do, I hope that we will be able to avoid a new “haze” of ignorance.

Professor Aleksey Aleksandrovich Maslov¹ (1964-) for 2006 was the only foreigner included in the “Schemes-Chronicles of Shaolin Monks-Fighters” (2006). Since 1991, he trained in Shaolin under the guidance of the monk *Shi Deqian* 释德虔 (1939-2008), who was the keeper of the chronicle tradition of the Shaolin monastery archive.

At every martial arts school in China, there was a written moral or “martial code” *wude* 武德 which every apprentice should have known by heart (Maslov, 1990, Chapter 1.2). The code of Shaolin Monastery, states: “The main purpose of someone who studies this technique is to strengthen the body and spirit. He should be engaged from dawn until nightfall and cannot stop classes as soon as he likes” (ibid.)

¹ Alexey A. Maslov, PhD, Professor, acting director of the Institute of Far Eastern Studies RAS (Moscow, Russian Federation), professor of HSE University (Moscow, Russian Federation) amaslov@asianinstitute.org

1.1.1 First feature: The practitioner trains every day from dawn until nightfall

Exceptions are days when weather conditions do not strengthen the body and spirit. Such days are determined at the discretion of the Master by visual analysis of celestial space. It also follows from the first rule that the time of wake-up changes along with the time of year. If in summer the wake up at dawn at 5:00 am, then in winter at 6:00 am, and also in summer the quiet hour lasts 2 hours, and in winter one hour - the mode of the day is precisely defined and gently set.

From the point of view of establishing order, we can notice a variation in the establishment of Confucius names (Analects, 13:3). Where it is said that the incorrect definition of names leads to a false determination of the purpose and, as a result, confusion. The time of day is determined and corresponds to the time of year. Following the right order is discipline, did Confucius want to say about it?

I see the relationship with the Chinese system of chronology *tiangan dizhi* 天干地支, which is a combination of “Ten Heavenly Stems” pairs (*shi gan* 十干) and “Twelve Earthly Branches” (*shier zhi* 十二支) of the decetheric and duodecal cycles, respectively. Their combination, in turn form a 60-year cycle, which is a cycle of sixty terms and is used to record time intervals: year month day and hour. Regarding the order of their location, until today it is authentically unknown, but among the Chinese rural people, there was an opinion that it is connected with the biological rhythms of twelve animals see ***Table 1***

Matching the time of day with the animal.

Table 1

Matching the time of day with the animal

Early branch	Corresponding hours	Meridian (M)	Chinese zodiac
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子	23:00-01:00	M of the gallbladder	Rat
丑	01:00-03:00	M of the liver	Ox
寅	03:00-05:00	M of the lungs	Tiger
卯	05:00-07:00	M of the colon	Rabbit
辰	07:00-09:00	M of the stomach	Dragon
巳	09:00-11:00	M of the spleen	Snake
午	11:00-13:00	M of the heart	Horse
未	13:00-15:00	M of the small intestine	Goat
申	15:00-17:00	M of the bladder	Monkey
酉	17:00-19:00	M of the kidney	Rooster
戌	19:00-21:00	M of the pericardium	Dog
亥	21:00-23:00	M of three heaters	Pig

It becomes curious to combine time, which corresponds to the Chinese astrological sign with the routine of the day. We will be able to observe how the activity or habits of the animal correspond to the activity of the practitioner at one time. **Table 2:**

Table 2

Shaolin kung fu traditional school timetable in summer

Schedule Time	Activity
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5:00	Wake-up call
5:20	Morning Training
7:00	Breakfast
8:30	Classes or Extra Training
12:00	Lunch
13:00	Nap
15:30	General Training
17:30	Dinner
19:00	Evening training
20:30	Sleep time

Note. Daily routine. (2020, February 22). Traditional Shaolin Kung Fu Learning Center. <https://yanchenwuguan.com/docs/in-school/daily-routine/>

The superposition of these tables one on top of the other yields something to think about: getting up and morning training during the activity of the “rabbit” sign and the activity of the colon meridian; breakfast during the “dragon” and the activity of the stomach meridian; educational classes or additional training for older students with a Master during the “snake” and the activity of the spleen meridian; lunch during the “horse”; daytime sleep during “goat”; basic training during “monkey”; dinner during the “rooster”; evening training during “dog”; sleep starts during “pig”. The setting of the schedule most likely correlates with the activities of the sign and meridians. I have taken a separate study of the topic, but we can probably find

answers in the sections of traditional Chinese medicine. My observations show that digestion is normalized. The breakdown period of the products is shortened. Metabolism increases. Morning stool occurs without skipping. Activity from within can be felt literally. It gets sleepy after breakfast. Afternoon naps developed into a habit. Lights out in summer and winter until 21:00. Getting up at 5 a.m. never became a habit, but there was not a single morning workout, after which I would regret waking up in the morning.

1.1.2 Second feature: Four trainings per day, the same but not repeated

To achieve the skill of *gong* 功 must train every day, repeating the movements of hundreds, and even thousands of times for more than one year. Despite this, the training of one day differs not in essence, but in emphasis. Although running starts every training session as a way to warm up the body, training at dawn is associated with running to a greater extent than any other. Morning training - for endurance.

After breakfast, apprentices are divided into two categories, those who attend general education classes and those who train martial arts. Most often, this division is caused by age, so the second training session is attended by older apprentices of the master, they are also coaching in small groups. In other words, the second training is the time when the Master teaches his older apprentices-coaches. As you might suggest training for older apprentices should be different from training for those groups where older apprentices are coaches.

Training sessions for older apprentices may be no different, or may include techniques that younger apprentices could only hear, but not practice. This includes techniques of iron qigong, application of *taolu*, as well as preparation for performances, competitions, where any apprentice can participate already.

The third training after midday sleep is the main. In the process, Shaolin traditional basic methods and techniques of *shiba shi* 十八式 are studied. The fourth training session is repetition. The practitioner repeats *taolu* and movements three times each. If the sweat doesn't

break out on your forehead at the end of the training session, you'll have to wait a while to get better.

1.2 Taolu forms

Taolu 套路 forms is routine exercises consisting of a sequence of movements. Each movement has an inner meaning, sometimes not obvious. *Taolu* is also used by actors of theatre and Beijing opera, as well as in some “entertainment institutions” (*washe* 瓦舍) (Filipiak, 2010, p. 34).

The study of *taolu* or how foreigners also call them “forms” is probably comparable to *xing* 形 and is a kind of apogee for the practitioner. If you measure the time allotted for *taolu* during the training process and compare it with the time given for other body practices within a specific period, we can record that for *taolu* is not more than 20% of the time. Despite this, the presentation part of the show, or as my Master says, “gongfu show” (*biaoyan* 表演), consists only of *taolu*, namely a sequence of several *taolu*. It can be concluded that the body is trained to Master the *taolu*. A set of methods and techniques trains the body to catch the “right” rhythm of movements, position, meaning, and beauty.

The skill of the practitioner is “gradually” (*manmanlai* 慢慢来) molded into *taolu* in training to become able to demonstrate their mastered skills (*gong* 功) if necessary. As the Chinese saying goes: “Ten years of practice for one minute on the stage” (*taishang yifen zhong taixia shinian gong* 台上一分钟，台下十年功).

Significant controversy is the Shaolin teaching method, in which the study of forms of *taolu* is at top of mind. Studying strikes without a partner and sparring does not help in real combat—a favorite formulation of Western martial arts practitioners at this point, they seem to forget that a warrior's bullet flies faster than a fist. What is the meaning of *taolu* forms for modern martial arts masters?

Taolu forms never sought to replace real combat. The author of the first treatise on wushu, the Chinese military and national hero *Qi Jiguang* 戚继光 (1528-1588) (see Huang, 1982, Chapter 6) wrote in *Ji xiao xin shu* 紀效新書 (New Treatise on Military Efficiency) that the forms and practice in the ring should be combined. He said that learning one form without practice in real combat is not of great practical use. The form is only a set of likely events of a real duel. Understanding the principles of combat or a particular school to which specific form, methods, techniques, and theory refers. As an example, the form contains block and strike options in different combinations, considering the style. On a level with this, the study of the form does not require special equipment that we can afford today at a sports or fitness center on the adjacent street. For building up experience, the practitioner needed knowledge of the form and the time he spent on its execution. Mastering the skill could last a lifetime without stopping, from year to year revealing the more subtle and inner aspects of the practice. Thus, the practitioner prepares himself for the surroundings far from a safe world using time and improvised training equipment.

The forms of *taolu* are visually different, everyone can easily distinguish an imitative style among themselves, but not always such a difference is caught by a beginner or practitioner of Western MA. When for a trained person, the difference is similar to how a person can distinguish between the linguistic dialects of their nation.

The difference in forms is also catching, depending on the nature of the occurrence—I mean nature as mountains, rivers, and plains, as well as the Master and his goal. There are forms with a pronounced predominance of work with the arms or legs, the movement is long or short, with acrobatics or movement in a circle. “For a practitioner fully to understand the system of instruction they are following, they must understand that every system was constructed in the past by individuals with their own biases, under specific circumstances, and with particular goals in mind” (Lorge, 2016, p. 905).

The form bears the characteristics of a particular school, so the fulfillment of the form by the Master is a reference or a model of ideal for apprentices studying a particular style. So, the practitioner can clearly understand at what level he is, without resorting to the methods adopted on the battlefield or ring.

In addition to the visible component, such as flexion and extension of the extremities, there are also internal components, such as the moment of inspiration and exhalation. When an apprentice is practiced by performing taolu, the Master can stop him at any moment to correct the movement. I happened to watch as my Master under the guidance of his Master trained taolu. In this process, all I could see was subtle adjustments to the position of the hands, feet, and fingers by elusive millimeters, as well as short verbal expressions in Chinese, which at that time I could not translate, so now I do not have the opportunity to share in this work.

A person living in the old days probably had time to watch animals for hours on the fly, and taolu imitating animals were born (Allen, 2015, p. 17). By observing how the animals survived, what tactics and techniques were used in the process of fighting with other animals, a person could conclude and adapt the movements by transferring them to *the forms of taolu*.

Apart from combat applications, performing form is a good exercise requiring strength, flexibility and speed. The snake form requires a special approach to flexibility, the tiger form requires a special approach to acrobatic elements with varying levels of attack, the drunken fist also requires certain skills that are not related to drinking entertainment drinks (jiu 酒), but are related to diving with a simulated state. As *Shi Yanchen* says, “over time, I see who is suitable for what style, everyone has different predispositions.”

The forms of taolu in peacetime, such as in 2021, are used to demonstrate mastered and beautiful movements, in mesmerizing combinations with partners. Elements of entertainment are used: body skills, nurtured by the practice of iron qigong. In the described entertaining

manner, taolu move through time: from generation to generation; on the ground: from country to country; in culture: they carry the symbol of the peoples, becoming a source of national pride.

Thus, through the practice of a particular form, we pay tribute to the martial art (school) where it originated along with the morality and rules that correspond to this school and develop the correct body habits. If the eye fixes the flying fist on the bridge of the nose, then the trained body of the practitioner, combined with the developed form, without mental analysis, will produce a combination of actions in a matter of milliseconds. It is impossible to say exactly what consequences this will lead to, then how do you know the real skill of the person standing in front of you?

1.3 Qi and Qigong

Qigong plays an important role in the Shaolin kung fu school, but not for children. At school, *Shi Yanchen* masters are engaged from a small age. According to the rules and traditions, children under the age of 6 are not accepted to the school, but there are exceptions. At the age of 16, the Master helps apprentices take part in off-site permanent shows, such as an open-air theater, which recall historical battles from the past, participation in the filming of movies and TV series, and permanent performances at institutions. Such events, be they temporary, one-time, seasonal, etc., also happened when we went with a performance to the opening of the master's brother's “gongfu” school.

During the period of my training, the Master conducted “meditation” (*zuochan* 坐禅) sessions for me or other adult foreign students, which is probably what Zhuangzi *zuowang* 坐忘, *baduanjing* 八段锦 qigong complexes, says. Practicing martial arts apprentices among the Chinese have never been seen in meditation and even the practice of qigong complexes. Sometimes at Saturday training sessions, which presage the only well-deserved day off, we run higher into the mountains. In a short expedition, we take a travel ration and spend 4-6 hours in the mountains. At such training, we are engaged in qigong. The Master calls the oldest

apprentice to come forward and start performing the *baduanjing* sequence all the apprentices repeat after the elder, and the Master passes between the rows and corrects the movements.

Despite the early time, given to the practice of qigong in forms, the terminology of working with energies *qi* 气 is widely used. For a native of China, this part needs no explanation, because Chinese medicine and Chinese culture are also inextricably linked. Knowledge of meridians and qi energy movement is common.

If the apprentice has a cold, the Master takes the apprentice “to the physician of Chinese medicine” (*zhao yisheng kanbing* 找医生看病). The physician listens to the pulse and, based on a visual assessment of the skin, the shape of the tongue, and other factors, asks his assistant (who is usually the wife) to collect a certain set of pills. All the pills are neatly divided into portions and packed in paper pieces. One piece contains for the western person a large number of pills from 2 to 7, on average 4. One piece—one intake, in one day from two to four intakes before or after eating, the physician prudently talks several times. On average, with a cold, the patient is given several dozen bags, which are enough for one to two weeks. My story of visiting a Chinese physician, I was prescribed 150 pills for 10 days. Chinese medicine in China is an ordinary trip to the physician.

According to my Master, Chinese medicine is called slow, and Western—fast. Sometimes I was asked to look in my medicine basket for a headache pill if someone had a migraine.

1.4 Dantian 丹田

The cinnabar field (*dantian* 丹田) is focused in three parts of the body: head, chest and abdomen, so the three fields are collectively called three elixir fields (*san dantian* 三丹田) (Komjathy, 2013, p. 374). In Ge Hong's treatise *Muhong* 暮洪 (283-343), the elixir field is referred to as the place of purification of the primary constituents of the personality (Kohn,

2000, pp. 465-466). Another name, “alchemical furnace” also occurs as the upper (*shang dantian* 上丹田), middle (*zhong dantian* 中丹田) and lower (*xia dantian* 下丹田) cinnabar field, respectively (Fava, 2009, p. 357).

Despite the fact that the word elixir (from the Greek “xérion” – the philosopher's stone) has literally a philosophical context, the cinnabar field, as in Chinese medicine, is used as quite real and is characterized as an ocean of *qi* (*qihai* 气海) (Kohn, 2008, p. 7). *The book of Shaolin Kung Fu* (*Shaolinquan jing* 少林拳经) says that *qi* breaks out of *dantian* and all power rushes into the hand (*qi zi dantian tu quanli zhu zhangxin* 气自丹田吐，全力注掌心) (*Shaolinquan jing*, 2009, Chapter 6).

The cinnabar field occurs once in the sixth chapter and three times in the eighth chapter of the book. The eighth chapter, “Harmony of the internal and the external is achieved through the possession of *qi*” (*neiwaijianxiu zhongshi yong qi* 内外兼修重视用气) as the name implies, is devoted to the control of *qi*.

If Daoist texts show us that the cinnabar field acts as an element of cultivation for achieving perfection, then in the *Book of Shaolin Kung Fu* there are direct instructions on how to use this energy. The question of the cultivation of energy remains outside the brackets, as if hinting that this field is not only present, but also used in martial arts.

In practice, the Master often uses the word *dantian* when the student is constrained in movement and uses physical force to strike. The Master makes it clear that strength does not come from muscles and lather, but rather from *dantian* and intent (*yi* 意). With practice, little by little it is assumed that the student begins to feel the field physically. So, I come to believe that the goal of practice is to feel the inexplicable, that which cannot be described in words, and the theory has the function of archiving knowledge and transferring it in space-time. The division into comprehensible—practice and comprehensible with a reservation—theory.

In classical physics, there is a division into the limits of applicability of mechanics. Developing this analogy, I am suggesting that the theoretical study of west martial arts is limited as classical Newtonian mechanics, and CMA practice is limitless as relativistic mechanics.

2 Self-cultivation in terms of Chinese philosophy

2.1 Body in Chinese philosophy

Body and soul are two specific concepts for a Russian man. On the one hand, the “Russian soul” (*rususkaya dusha*) was used by several writers of the previous century to describe the distinctiveness of national identity. (Nikolai Gogol, Leo Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoyevsky). For example, Dostoevsky wrote:

It’s frightening how free a Russian man’s spirit is, how strong is his will! No one has ever been so much torn away from his native soil, as he sometimes had to be; nobody ever took a turn so sharp, as he, following his own belief! - Fyodor Dostoevsky. (F. Dostoevsky n.d.)

On the other hand, Russia has been brought up for more than 1000 years under such circumstances where:

The Christian thought treated flesh as an independent ontological, bearing divine and spiritual features of reality, whereas, according to scholiasts (from Boethius to Thomas Aquinas) body and soul constitute unity, with the soul being the substantive form of the body, and the body is revived owing to a subsistent character of the soul, i.e. the soul is an distinct substance (Styopin et al., 2001, p. 26).

In our minds, there is a substance—a soul and there is flesh—a body. For the last millennium, we have been brought up recognizing a fine line where the manifestation of the beginning is life (flesh) and death, as the end of life is the beginning of the soul, yet the concept of yinyang does not divide, but rather informs of coexistence.

In the Chinese tradition, the concept of body and soul is markedly different from that in the West. First of all, it is worth noting the fact that Chinese philosophy does not dispose of a single concept of the soul that would correspond to the Western one. This is so because the

whole range of phenomena falling under the Western insight into the soul in China does not seem to be as uniform, which results in “terminological splitting of the “soul” into a spectrum of narrower concepts” (Roubetz, 2009, p. 148). Professor R. Wang mentions that in the process of funerary ceremonies according to the concept of Feng Shui “theory of the division of the soul or life forces into *hun* and *po* as early as the Zhou dynasty” (2012, p. 110). This entails that the Chinese perception of the world involves two souls rather than one, as in the perception of the representative of the Western view. In fact, there are not even two of them, but this will remain outside the scope of this work. From the point of view of yinyang cosmology, such an approach speaks evidently of coexistence, and not of opposition.

Now that we have presented that the soul in terms of Western perception can only take one form, the soul of the same in the Chinese sense can be *hun*, and the soul can be *po*. It would be more accurate to say that the soul that goes to heaven or hell for a Christian, for a representative from China, moves both up and down after death:

Hun is a kind of qi that belongs to yang; it comes from heaven and will ascend to heaven; po is a kind of qi that belongs to yin, which has a specific form and will go down to earth, the ground. (Moeller & Whitehead, 2014, p. 74)

Zhuangzi begins with a passage referring to fish and birds, which may be a reference to the mythological character Pangu, who was born at a time when the universe was imagined to be like a chicken egg. “Pangu grew inside the undifferentiated source as in an egg, broke his way out of it with an ax, and separated Heaven from Earth”. (Jullien, 2015, p. 56) In the myths of ancient China, written by Yuan Ke (1916-2001), there is a version of the origin of everything that exists from the body of the deceased Pangu:

The sigh that broke out of his mouth turned into wind and clouds, the voice turned into thunder, the left eye became the sun, the right one the moon, the torso with arms and legs became the four cardinal points and five famous

mountains, blood became rivers, veins became roads, flesh became soil, hair on the head and mustache turned into stars in the sky, skin and body hair became grasses, flowers and trees, teeth, bones turned into shiny metals, strong stones, sparkling pearls and jasper, and even the seemingly utterly useless sweat that appeared on his body turned into raindrops and dew (Yuan, 1965)...

The left eye turned into the sun and the right one the moon – a reference to *yinyang*, and partly *san wu*, a fundamental methodological category of numerology, expressed, among other things, by the five famous mountains, can be observed. Altogether, where the human body or human organism appears as a link between heaven and earth—*tianrenheyi* 天人合一, that gives birth representation of the unity of the macrocosm (*tian*) microcosm (*di*) through human (*ren*) (Roubetz, 2009, p. 151).

The concept of “Body” in Chinese in the closest sense to the Western meaning is expressed, by word, *shenti* 身体. Individually, each of the characters *shen* 身 and *ti* 体 inside the binomial also mean “body”, yet in different meanings. Let's figure this out.

The two keys “man” 亻 and “root” 本 form the character *ti* 体 (body/form). It is appropriate to use while referring to the “Cartesian body”. This may be hinted at by the common spelling of the hieroglyph, where the key on the left was “bone”. Thus, to refer to the concept of a corpse in modern language, the binomial *shiti* 尸体 meaning “dead body” or “remains” is used. Other measures of body temperature *tiwen* 体温, “body weight” *tizhong* 体重, as well as consider the body as an object unconscious. Along with this, it may seem strange that “growth” *shengao* 身高, also refers to an unconscious body, but a person's height can be measured only when he is standing, which means he is alive. Thus, *ti* means exactly the physiological side of the body (Roubetz, 2009, p. 149).

Quite a number of philosophers agree that Chinese philosophy has its own peculiar features. But what does Professor Wang (2012) mean when citing the arguments of the modern philosopher Zhang Zailin, who said that “Chinese philosophy is most fundamentally a philosophy of body” (p. 184)? Chinese philosophy is not where the study of Dao is, not where the study of virtue is, and not where the perfect person *zhenren* 真人 is. He probably means that if philosophy is presented as a book, then the body is not merely the title of one of the chapters, but rather the title of the title page.

Professor Wang (2012) goes on:

The central importance of the body appears most clearly in the Chinese term, *shen* 身 (body). *Shen* is the word most analogous to “self or person,” which is how it is often translated, however, it refers to the body rather than the consciousness or mind. *Shen* contains a strong sense of what is close or direct. *Shen* is not simply a noun defining an object but rather a verb that indicates action and practice – the self as a living body. (2012, p. 184)

Despite the fact that the context of the passage is mentioned in a different perspective, namely in opposition to the Western view on depreciation of the body and the underlining of the soul and mind, we can clearly see the position as *shen* is not just a noun, but sometimes also a verb that expresses action or practice.

I believe that Western understanding will require careful study on the border between *ti* and *shen*, and perhaps this will suggest why *xin* 心 in Chinese thought is used both as “heart” and as “mind”, which is difficult to realize from the Western perspective.

Thus, I want to emphasize that *shen* is a conscious body: “represents the sum total of our inner life and learned conduct manifest in physical presence and visible to others” (Kohn, 2015) as Luis Bunuel, who has a memory, says: “You have to begin to lose your memory, if only in bits and pieces, to realize that memory is what makes our lives. Life without memory

is no life at all... Our memory is our coherence, our reason, our feeling, even our actions” (Sacks 1985, 22 as cited in Kohn, 2015, p. 168).

In addition to the two proposed *shen* and *ti* involved in determining the meaning of the word “body”, there are some more. In a broader sense, Sommer (2010) considered that: “Early Chinese notions of the body and have distinguished different fields of meanings associated with such terms as *gong* 躬, *shen* 身, *xing* 形, and *ti* 体” (p. 212). I see the proposal as sound, but the broader formulation suggested by Sommer is outside the scope of the formulation I am considering. From this point of view, *xing* probably means more of a form, as if we were talking about geometric figures *yuanxing* 圆形, for example, when “body” is “receptacle of life” (*xing zhe sheng zhi she ye*, 形者生之舍也) probably with a reference to “vessel” (*tuxing* 土形), which is also mentioned by L. Kohn “*Xing* Denotes the physical, visible form of the body. A mainly material entity, this flag is often contrasted with *qi*” (2000, p. 96).

To make *shen* more connected with the spiritualized body, it should be stated that the hieroglyphs *gong* 躬 and *tang* 躺 mean bowing *gong* and lying *tang*, which is only peculiar to humans and is not applicable, for example, to a dog or a cat. Although I can argue that *tang* is still used for pets, but it is only used in extreme cases, canonically *tang* suggests a pose a creature lying on his back face up, which is peculiar only to man (Aoshuan, 2004, p. 18).

2.2 Three treasures sanbao 三宝

Three treasures are mentioned in chapter 67 Daodejing 道德经 context of perfection:

I have three treasures that I hold to and embrace: The first is compassion. The second is frugality.

And the third is not daring to put myself at the forefront of the world. (Michael, 2015, p. 262)

我有三宝，持而保之。一曰慈，二曰俭，三曰不敢为天下先。

The very expression of the “treasure” speaks of the importance of the term, yet *Laozi* doesn't say how to cultivate these treasures, we can only guess and state their importance. The mention in the fundamental treatise gives us the reason to consider *sanbao* sometimes the same with a reference to *sandan* 三丹 is a Daoist term and associated with Chinese culture in general. As says C. Despeux: “The ideas and practices associated with each term, and with the three terms as a whole, are complex and vary considerably in different contexts and historical periods. This entry is mainly concerned with their understanding in inner alchemy (**neidan*)” (Despeux, 2008, p. 562). The mentioned *neidan*, where the constituent part of the binomial *dan* is called “Cinnabar field”, the same hieroglyph used in the term *sandan* above.

Valuable note if you ask how we can use Daoist *sanbao* when talking about the Shaolin Buddhist temple and its martial art technique. Although the question is quite broad and it remains outside the scope of this study, nevertheless, to counter the question, I will cite as an example the quote by L. Komjathy: “This is, of course, a Daoist adaptation of the Three Refuges of Buddhism, namely, Buddha, Dharma” (Komjathy, 2007, p. 137) Now we will get to an understanding that although the term is Daoist, during the rise of Daoism, the terms were borrowed from Buddhism. For this reason, not all contexts of the three treasures will be used in the work, but only a part of them. For a more detailed study, refer to the first Chinese medical classic the Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine or *Huangdi neijing* 黄帝内经 and the collection of scientific and philosophical essays from the court of Huainan *Huainanzi* 淮南子.

Before diving into a detailed explanation of each individual treasure, it is important for us to feel their connection and order. The *Daodejing* states:

Dao gives birth to one, one gives birth to two, two gives birth to three, and three are all creatures. All beings carry yinyang within themselves, are filled with qi,

and form harmony. (DDJ 42)

道生一，一生二，二生三，三生万物。万物负阴而抱阳，冲气以为和

As interpreted by T. Michael in the second chapter of *The pristine Dao: Metaphysics in early Daoist discourse*:

In brief, the Daoist sequence begins with the Dao; the Dao gives birth to the qi, the qi gives birth to yin-yang, yin-yang give birth to the three realms of Heaven, the Human, and Earth, which in turn give birth to the ten thousand things (*wanwu*), all phenomena. (Michael, 2005, p. 13)

“One” gives birth to *qi*. *Qi* in the sequence of the Daoist concept is the first after Dao, which means the first that exists in the material world. A visual representation of how the Chinese tradition perceives *qi*, although not visible (like air), but a material substance. *Qi* gives life *yinyang*, and *yinyang* consistently mixing literally produces existence that can already be perceived in the world for of a person at least in terms of sexual relations between a man and a woman.

In this same book T. Michael emphasizes that, in early Daoism, *yinyang* precedes existence or, as Laozi calls it, *wanwu* 万物 (“all things”) and becomes “as the generative source for its gradual formation from the body and movements of the pristine Dao” (Michael, 2005, p. 9).

2.2.1 Qi

The generating source from the body and movements should start somewhere. And as we noticed above it starts with *qi*. Practice improves the external body. If the external aspect is not in doubt, then speaking of Eastern martial arts one has to think and look for an answer. When asked if I own *qigong*, what *qigong* is meant? The misrepresentation of the word *qigong* is quite often associated with demonstrations in which monks demonstrate outstanding and exciting performances with needles, spears and iron plates. From the faces of the monks, you

can see that they endure pain that is difficult for an unprepared person to endure. The described result is also led to the execution of the *qigong* 气功 or *ying qigong* 硬气功 (hard qigong) methods, however, as beginners mistakenly believe, this is not limited.

In practice, the term *qi* appears immediately. The Master appeals with the term *qi* from the first class. The Book of Shaolin kung fu practice state that *qi yao suishou* 气要随手 (*qi* should be at hand) (Shaolinquan jing, 2009, p. 22). Therefore, as foreigners, we should not independently bring the magic character to the term *qi*. In the Chinese understanding of the world, everything consists of *qi*, therefore, starting to practice, one should adapt and accept everything as it is suggested. The order to understand everything first, and then do is wrong; first to do, and then understand this is the order of the “along the path”. A special feature of a Western man who wants to first understand prevents training in CMA. Further, in talking about *qi*, I will imply that any doubt between its presence or absence is leveled. This aspect can be understood if you look at the eyes of a child: “break down traditional or habitual ways of thinking” (Allinson, 2015).

Continuing about what the monks have, they include “the head breaks the scrap iron” (*tou kai gangban* 头开钢板) and “the needle flies through the glass” (*zhen chuan boli* 针穿玻璃) and others. It may seem that such techniques are achieved through meditation or some other way of inner self-cultivation. Although such a judgment cannot be called erroneous and probably worries a novice trainee, there is a second side. Turning to the question, the term of the Chinese culture *qi* 气, which in Daoist terminology is one of the “three treasures” (*sanbao*, 三宝) will surely appear more serious.

Gas, air, smell, weather, to make angry, to annoy, to get angry, vital energy—*qi* 气—is one of the fundamental and most specific categories of Chinese philosophy. In this paper, we will consider the term only from the point of view of spiritually-material and vital-energetic

substance, although this concept is much broader. If we turn to the graphic writing of the hieroglyph, then the hieroglyph is represented as “steam over boiled rice” (Titarenko, 2009, p. 549).

I adhere to this understanding of Chinese terms in which a rigid framework is excluded. These are possible, but the goal is not to find the most accurate definition, but to give the opportunity to find it yourself. Therefore, if I give a definition, it does not mean that what is not included in the definition is not true. For example, the concept of *qi* is polysyllabic, and even if we can identify it at all levels of human cognition, I don't think the benefit will be tangible in any practical way. Along with this, I will try to give most of the known and, in my opinion, important interpretations of the term *qi* from the point of view of the body and its cultivation.

It was commonly recognized in Chinese philosophy that *qi* was a non-quality primordial substance of which the Universe consisted in the initial phase of its development, called “chaos” (*hundun*, 浑沌), “Great limit” (*taiji*, 太极), “Great one” (*taiyi*, 太一), “Great beginning” (*taichu*, 太初), or “Great emptiness” (*taixu*, 太虚). The initial forms of differentiation of this substance are yinyang and “five elements” (*wuxing*, 五行) (Titarenko, 2006, p. 550).

The term *qi* appears as a single substantive beginning, “permeating the darkness of things” (DDJ 42). The provision on the transformation of *qi* into concrete objects due to condensation and rarefaction, which has become generally accepted in Chinese classical philosophy, was first voiced in The Zhuangzi, where these processes in relation to *qi* were interpreted as synonyms of life and death. This also indicates the connection between the thickening and rarefaction, the rise and fall of “pneumatic” substances with the psychoemotional sphere (Titarenko, 2006, p. 550).

Well known Daoist *Cheng Xuanying* 成玄英 (608 CE-669 CE) identified the primordial pneuma with the “Great Beginning” (*taichu* 太初) cosmogenesis, and *Zhang Zai* 张载

(1020~1077) associated *qi* with the concepts of “infinite” (*wuji* 无际) (see *taiji* 太极) and “Great Void” (*taixu* 太虚), emphasizing on lack of ability to eliminate “pneuma”, thickening and rarefaction of which is realized in the world changes and transformations (*bianhua* 变化), forming transient “forms” (*xing* 形) and “images” (*xiang* 像) (ibid).

At the anthropological level, *qi*, while being associated with blood circulation, represents a filler of the human body, capable of refining to the states of “seed soul” (*jing* 精) and “spirit” (*shen* 神). “The man who trains his heart to cultivate vapor (*qi*), essence (*jing*), and spirit (*shen*)—these being the basic elements of human physiology” (Harper, 2009, p. 112). In Guanzi 管子 (4-3 centuries BC), described as a spiritualized pneuma, spirituality, mind, divine power—it is denoted *lingqi* 灵气, which dialectically possesses the properties of Dao—such “smallness” that “there is nothing internal”, and at the same time such “greatness” that for her “there is nothing external” (Guanzi, 49 Neiye). And “Meditation in the “Neiye” is this heart/mind training, which produces “perfect virtue” (*chengde* 成德) and consequently wisdom” (Harper, 2009, p. 112)

In Xicizhuan 系辞传 *qi* connected with the concept of *jing* (seed, seed soul, spiritual seed, essence), expressing in *Daodejing* giving rise to the potency of Dao, and in Guanzi the originating and life-giving (*shen* 神) beginning of all things: “essential/seminal pneuma (*jingqi* 精气) forms things” due to the fact that “male and female [beginning] tie seed”. There are also further statements relating to *jing* from the point of view of the rational principle, which are similar to passages from Guanzi, where *jingqi* 精气 is actually identified with spirit *shen* 神 as a psychic principle.

Dong Zhonshu 董仲舒 (179-104 BC) proposed to consider the “primordial pneuma” (*yuanqi* 原气) as being identical with the qualities received by a person from parents and with

a universal substance. In Huainanzi 淮南子, *qi* is viewed in the cosmological and anthropological terms as one of the generative principles along with the spirit *shen* 神 and seed *jing* 精 and at the same time uniting them - “that which fills all things” (Titarenko, 2006, p. 550).

Wang Chong 王充 (27 - 1100CE) proposed to interpret what is embodied in *qi* as a “spiritual principle” *shenqi* 神气, and “thinning” *jingqi* 精气, and comparing the thickening and rarefaction of *qi* with the formation of ice and its melting: a person is generated by “spiritual pneuma” (Condensation) and returns to it with death (rarefaction). Wang Chong's concept of *shenqi* can be interpreted as synonymous with “primordial pneuma”, in which “there is no separation [into cloudy and pure]” (Titarenko, 2006, p. 550).

2.2.2 Jing Essence

The Essence *jing* 精 is mentioned in chapter 21 of *Daodejing*, where it says that the hidden and the mysterious have *jing*: (*yao xi ming xi qizhong you jing* 窈兮冥兮，其中有精) and “it is so pure that she can be trusted” (*qi jing shen zhen qizhong you xin* 其精甚真，其中有信) (DDJ 21). If we turn to the graphic writing of the hieroglyph, then the hieroglyph is presented as “peeled rice”, peeled as without husks, virgin and defenseless, so you can “trust” it. Therefore, *jing* is said to “represent the germ of life contained in the Dao” (Pregadio, 2008, p. 562).

Jing is quite often literally described as sexual energy, expressed by semen in men or menstrual blood in women. The ancient poem states:

Swallow the jade moisture in the Flower Pool (*huachi* 華池)
multiple times.
The firstborn mistress of the Purple Council (*zifu* 紫府)
will rush straight up.

If you do so for a long time so that the Qi Flow rushes through the outposts, then essence [jing] will be filled by itself, spirit [shen] will appear in the valley. (Hong, 1991)

The poem describes the cultivation method for women, but as I. Belaya emphasizes this method of becoming celestials *xian* 仙 is used for both men and women, it (the path of Dao) was not different in the past and the present “completed the Dao-Path, returned to root, turned to the source according to the same pattern. Eliminate everything that is wrong. There is no other way but this” (Belaya, 2016, p. 393). As part of the term *jing* being analyzed, the metaphor of “jade moisture” which should be swallowed many times in a “flower pond” gets interesting. This passage not only mentions *jing* which is filled, but also illustrates the cultivation method and denotes the order *qi* → *jing* → *shen* according to Daoist alchemy.

As I mentioned earlier, rice is selected, the best of the best or “refined”, which is not *cu* 粗 unselected rice *cu* 粗. Going on with the comparison with rice in yinyang terminology, let's imagine how we might harvest. There is pure rice that is naturally *jing* 精, and there is one that is processed or polished *cu* 粗. You can collect the best harvest at once, or you can harvest a certain harvest. The one who harvested the best crop worked well in the field all season from sowing to harvest, and the one who takes the crop after harvesting for one part that is clean and the other that is not suitable, works doubly. Furthermore, part of the harvest will be thrown away or not eaten. Rice harvesting and *jing* cultivation are not entirely similar, but provide an indication of the right time to be diligent.

As we were convinced of the connection *jing* as the seed of life, we can conclude that it depends on what kind of person a person is born, and, accordingly, what his body will be like. Therefore, speaking about *jing* and its purification we talk about the cultivation of the

body as an important aspect or part of its cultivation. Thus, *jing* is more of a material substance, which is one of the three treasures in the material world.

As a material substance, it is both born and gives birth. From the point of view of yinyang, an attribute of a healthy body is the preservation of yang in men and the release of yin in women: “In sexual intercourse are for the man to refrain from ejaculation to prevent the leaking of yang body fluid, and for the woman to have multiple orgasms to release yin body fluids, for the man to gather” (Wang, 2012, p. 160).

From the point of view of Western psychology, a protective mechanism is built into the body, which, by redirecting energy to socially acceptable goals, relieves internal psychological stress. Freud talked about this mainly in terms of sexual energy, but from the point of view of yinyang, this is balance and retention of *jing*. It is important to distinguish, the difference between sublimation and abstinence. Outwardly, in essence, expressed by the absence of coitus, sublimation and abstinence are the same, but internally it is not so. Abstinence has no controlled consequence, but sublimation is a controlled redistribution.

After starting intense training, practitioner, may get a state of asceticism in terms of sexual intercourse. Then thoughts are pure and desires are limited. Practitioner may want to use every free ten minutes to get some sleep, sleeping in a quiet hour was perceived as a blessing, so two hours of sleep in the afternoon flew by instantly. The fatigue in the muscles did not leave the body for the first six months. Practitioner may not realize that they are entering the stage of sexual asceticism because it happens gradually. The nature of desire is not suppressed but naturally sublimated

The environment in which they train does not have a visual stimulus like it is in a big city, the order of training implies a lot of physical activity, so practitioner naturally understood what it means to hold *yang*. Read more in the chapter “Yinyang Metaphors”.

2.2.3 *Shen Spirit*

I will not be mistaken if I start the description with the words “this is one of the most difficult terms” that we have to understand in the practice of Shaolin kung fu. Yet, speaking only about the practical side, we will consider the multi-layered term only from some sides. The complexity of perception is also due to the other “different” perception of the world. “Spirit” (*shen* 神) interpreted as ghost, or deity, is also difficult for our perception, because for us the spirit is always otherworldly.

Shen (“spirit” or “spiritual” also translates as “divine” or “numinous”) is an integral part of a person, but can also refer to gods and spirits, sages, ancestors, ghosts, monsters, and various inhabitants of mountains and waters. Its complexity is indicated by the range of binomials in which it occurs, including: *guishen* 鬼神 (demons, deities, supernatural powers), *jingshen* 精神 (refined spirit or essence and spirit), and *shenling* 神灵 (Spiritual strength, spiritualized), and others (Raphals, 2017, p. 136). All that has been said as a whole is in the understanding of our (Western) worldview. Spirit is an internal component of a person or what we call otherworldly, when we do not find an explanation for the observed or experienced phenomenon. The Huainanzi passage focuses on the importance of body, spirit and qi in the life experienced:

The body is the dwelling place of life; qi is the source of life; Shen is the ruler of life. If [even] one loses its place, then [all] three will suffer. (Huainanzi 1:21)
夫形者，生之所也；气者，生之元也；神者，生之制也。一失位，则三者伤矣。

In the process of transformation and creation, yinyang is also *shen*. If yinyang is a controlling first process and it is incomprehensible, then therefore it is *shen*. Huangdi neiijing states the following:

The birth and growth of the myriad things we call hua. Growth to the extreme point we call bien. The mysteries of yin and yang are not graspable. We call this

shen. To be able to grasp the underlying principles, and to be capable of applying them flexibly, is called sheng. This means sage or wise one. (Ni, 1995, Chapter 66)

故物生谓之化，物极谓之变，阴阳不测谓之神，神用无方谓之圣

That which is elusive yinyang is called mysterious *shen*, today we might call it mystical. “*Shen* often occurs with *ming* 明” (Wang, 2012, p. 188). The word *shenming* 神明 occurs seven times in Zhuangzi alone. Once at Inner Chapters (勞神明為一，而不知其同也，謂之朝三), twice at Outer Chapters, and four times at Miscellaneous Chapters. The character *ming* 明 is composed of two parts: the sun (*ri* 日) and the moon (*yue* 月), which includes several meanings from brightness and clarity to enlightenment.

2.3 Enlightenment 明

I wanted to understand what can be found if you search thoroughly. In my case, I searched in the process of practice, but did not know what I was looking for and how it was called. It seems obvious that if you want to find something, you need to know what it is, right? But that is not always possible. It was not clear to me. First, did the thing I intended to find have a name or form? And second, was that what I wanted to find a momentary feeling or constant experience? Therefore, I conventionally defined it, in a word, enlightenment. But also, because the word “enlightenment” has gained a certain popularity over the past few decades, so to be honest, I hope that this word in the headline will do a good thing so that it doesn't mean.

The major focus of Daodejing is the path (Dao 道) and virtue (de 德) through body cultivation (*yangsheng* 养生). One who has acquired these qualities can be called the Sage *shengren* 圣人. The Sage plays a significant role in Daodejing; therefore, this is of particular interest to describe the qualities that he is required to possess to “attain the One” *baoyi* 抱一 one of them is *ming* 明.

In terms of body practice that I talk about through the course of my work, as well as a fresh perspective on synthetic reading Daodejing in terms of *yangsheng* body cultivation that T. Michael (2015) talks about where “I attempt to provide one possible reading of the Daodejing that finds its home in a mountainous milieu where masters and disciples pursued a program of physical cultivation called *yangsheng* 養生” I have a keen interest in analyzing the meanings of the mentioned hieroglyph in Daodejing.

There is currently no consensus among the Daodejing translations in circulation pertaining to the meaning of the word *ming*. It often appears translated as knowledge, understanding, wisdom, or enlightenment. A large variable set of definitions already provides for raising this concept to a separate rank and put it alongside *Dao* or *qi* etc. I want to be perfectly honest with you, so you should be aware of the fact that my native language is Russian. In this regard, my analysis related to the selection of the exact word for *ming* should be taken into account by you with an error raised to the second power. Despite this, I do not resist the task, but rather readily undertake, believing that my personal experience of *yangsheng* may bring the reader new fruits (*shi* 实), instead of flowers (*hua* 华).

MDBG dictionary define *ming* 明 (on the left 日, and on the right 月) as: bright, clear, to understand, next, public or open, wise; additionally, the Unihan definition comprised two extra meaning: light and brilliant. It's time to address the fact that when reading and recognizing ancient Chinese scripts there is a problem² that now concerns us indirectly, but it is so challenging to prove and contains a lot of controversy around it that I cannot touch it in any way through this work, so I will simply indicate the definition of another hieroglyph *ming* 𠄎

² For a deeper dive into the problem, you can arm yourself with an amazing work by Chen, Z. (2018). A Study of the Graph Míng 明. Australian Journal of Linguistics, 38(1), 1-30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07268602.2018.1393858>

(on the left 囧, and on the right 月) which, according to the Unihan definition, in addition to the above meanings in English, can also be translated as: intelligent and to illustrate.

The character ming 明 occurs 12 times in Daodejing.³ Chapters 10, 16, 22, 24, 27, 33, 36, 41, 55, 65 feature it once and chapter 52 has it twice. It has a natural mnemonic description the sun (*ri* 日) makes the moon (*yue* 月) bright (*ming* 明).

An interview with Joseph Nye features the quote “Listen to both sides and you will be enlightened; heed only one side and you will be benighted” (Zhang, 2017, p. 96), which is a translation of Mao Zedong's expression *jian ting ze ming, pian xin ze an* 兼听则明，偏信则暗 (Zedong, 1937, p. 323-24) the first part of which, along with *ming* 明, is used in the novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (Sanguo Yanyi, 83.32). I suggest not using this as evidence, however, in order to illuminate all opinions on the interpretation of *ming*, it is still worth mentioning.

I will proceed further to indicating the chapter number and giving my point of view regarding the issue of perceiving the character *ming* 明. For convenience, I will also cite R. Ames & D. Hall, R. Eno and T. Michael's, translations for ease of reading and your analysis.

Chapter 10:

Chinese: 明白四达，能无知乎？

Ames&Hall: With your insight penetrating the four quarters, Are you able to do it without recourse to wisdom?

Eno: As your brilliant awareness penetrates everywhere can you refrain from employing it in action?

³ For this, I used the Wang Bi version (226–249). Dao De Jing. Chinese Text Project. Retrieved June 1, 2021, from <https://ctext.org/dao-de-jing/>; My research further showed that in chapter 47 on the website of Professor Hilmar Alquiros Retrieved June 1, 2021, from <https://www.tao-te-king.org/47.htm> for the Wang Bi version there is a direct indication of 明 instead of 名, and in *Beida* 北大 in the same place 命 is written

Michael: In understanding all within the four reaches—can you do it without using knowledge?

What do we do while standing at an intersection (*sida* 四达) not knowing which way to go? The state where the Sage is going in the right direction non-intentionally will be called *ming*. This state lies in the sensory area, and from the point of view of body practice in the reflex area. What should be done when the opponent's fist is aimed at the eye? How can I choose from knowledge? Action is performed by the body reflexively according to accumulated practice (*yangsheng*) I call understand nature.

Chapter 16:

Chinese: 复命曰常，知常曰明。

Ames&Hall: Now as for equilibrium—this is called returning to the propensity of things,

Eno: Knowing the constant is called enlightenment

Michael: Knowing constancy is to be bright.

Here and in chapters 52 and 55, *ming* is to be *yue* 曰 (be called), which draws specific focus. For the analysis of *ming* in Chapter 16, I propose to turn to the etymology of the word, where glow is denoted as sunlight reflected by the moon. I therefore want to emphasize the difference between *ming* 明 and *guang* 光. “Light” *guang* 光 is a light source like a torch that we can use to shine onto the wall, when the reflected “light” *ming* 明 can be used to illuminate the back side (of the earth). I surmise that in this example the sequence “A leads to B, B leads to C, and so forth” (Michael, 2015, p. 204) is broken before *ming* precisely to emphasize that the constant bright (like the sun) is given by nature and (use knowledge) to attain its place means “act blindly for disaster” *wang zuo xiong* 妄作凶 (Michael, DDJ 16). In this sense, to be *rong* 容 means to contain all the energy given by nature and direct it in non-intentional ways.

Understanding this natural unity as a whole describes the Buddhist meaning of enlightenment, which is generally defined as a holistic and complete awareness of the nature of reality.

22:

Chinese: 不自见，故明；

Ames&Hall: Those who do not show off shine,

Eno: Not revealing himself, thus bright;

Michael: He does not show himself and thus he is bright.

Chapter 22 begins as if with words from the *Shaolinquan jing* 少林拳经 which I translated in the appendix. For example, DDJ says “Bending leads to intactness. Twisting leads to straightness” (*qu ze quan, wang ze zhi* 曲則全，枉則直) and “It's flex is not unchanging flex. It's straight is not unchanging straight” (*qu er buqu zhi er buzhi* 屈而不屈，直而不直) in *Shaolinquan jing*. Therefore, in this connection, the familiar Sage *shengren* 圣人 is perceived as a martial arts master *shifu* 师父. Then it becomes as: “He [shifu] does not show his skills, but [everyone knows] how *brilliant* he is” (*bu zi jian guming* 不自見故明).

I have analyzed just three chapters of the Daodejing, yet one can already see that understanding in each chapter differs from the other. In chapter 10, the meaning of “understand” *ming* 明 refers more to the sensual realm, so it can be interpreted as “understand nature”. In chapter 16, *ming* 明 being investigated has 曰 so I dare to call it enlightenment with the emphasis on “understanding the origin of nature” excluding religious or sectarian interpretations. I am aware of the fact that the use of *ming* cannot be taken as a generally accepted interpretation of “brilliant”, but regardless of this, by changing circumstances with the introduction of the new protagonist *shifu* 师父 such an interpretation can also find its application, which once again emphasizes the versatility of the term *ming*, which if not translated as enlightenment is best left as *ming* or bright.

One of the concepts in Chinese that I can apply when describing the quality attainable by practice is *shenming* 神明. A compound binomial contains two hieroglyphs and each can be used in the material world. At the same time, *shenming* can be associated with a state that exists outside the material world. Therefore, this term can combine both components and connect the material world and everything that we associate with the non-material space, in other words, the spiritual world. R. Wang cites two quotes: “could refer to either a divine being or a spirit-like intelligence” (Brashier, 1996 as cited in Wang, 2012, p. 189), and also quotes the Huainanzi translation, which perceives the phrase *shenming* 神明 as a miraculous influence, magical effectiveness or spiritual enlightenment. This is a way to explain the world beyond the narrow vision of human beings, pointing to mystical experience, inexpressibility, but ethical equality, transience and passivity. (Major et al., 2010, Chapter 1)

Only through self-cultivation or cultivation, identification and elimination of bias can one achieve *shenming* as the testimonial texts of the “ten questions” that associate this process with yinyang say: “eat yin and secure yang; attain spirit illumination” (Harper, 2009, p. 122). To understand how this works, the text further states that as soon as one can understand the nature of the sky, then yin and yang will become rulers. Thus, attaining the state of *shenming* is to understand and follow nature. To this end, the *jing qi shen* should be cultivated, and then the Dao will be attained.

2.4 The concept of *xian*, its origin and stages of ascension

In the program of the Chinese Philosophy course at *Beijing Normal University*, an open meeting was once organized with Professor R. Campany, who shared his vision of the terms transcendent (*xian* 仙), which generated a lot of interest. At first, I thought Campany was expressing the opinion of Western thought in general. Therefore, I planned to highlight the work of the Russian scientist A. Maslov and offer a different point of view, as *xian* can be understood in the Russian scientific community. It appeared that in the same aspects where R.

Campany claims that *xian* is indeed a concretely immortal person, professor T. Michael also refuses: “he applies his translation of *xian* in reference primarily to the writings of Ge Hong” and “in the historical evolution of the term ... it also denoted beings and actions earlier and other than “transcendence” (2015b, p. 120). The key argument that Zheng Ji also notes is that in the “transcendental” R. Campany only observes the motive of “ascent” which is analogous to the biblical image of the transfiguration of Christ.

Different traditions have different terms that describe the highest degree of perfection or human ideal. For example, when discussing the human ideal, *Zhuangzi* uses the terms “true man” (*zhenren* 真人) or “spiritual man” (*shenren* 神人), but still it is “perfect” *shenren* that is the most common concept in *Zhuangzi*. According to A. Maslov, the “immortal” *xian* 仙 has a thematic predecessor in the early tradition this is the Sage (*shengren* 聖人) and among the early Daoists the Sage is axiologically above all others, and the “true man” or “spiritual man” are rather the qualities of this sage (Maslov, 2020, p. 11). This formulation of the question asserts, first, that *xian* is not a primary state, and second, that *xian* is a sage quality.

Several scholars agree that *shengren* represents a central figure among early mystics, such as Laozi, *Zhuangzi*, who represents the highest ideal of teaching (in *Zhuangzi*, this term occurs 114 times, i.e. more than any other characterizing a person). However, in the later tradition, the transcendental properties of the sage *shengren* are transferred to *xian*, while the Sage himself becomes a secondary term for the Daoist and Buddhist traditions, a denomination of famous characters of the past such as *Yao* 堯, *Shun* 舜, *Dayu* 大禹, *Zhougong* 周公, *Kongzi* 孔子, and it is noteworthy that the term *xian* is not found in such a key Daoist work as *Daodejing* (2020, p. 11).

A. Maslov explains that in *Zhuangzi* the term *xian* occurs, but in a slightly different interpretation. In particular, chapter 12 “Heaven and Earth” tells about the great ruler of antiquity Yao, who was reputed to be a Sage *shengren* and, in the end, “after thousands of years

left this world and soared as *xian*” (*qiansui yanshi qu er shang xian* 千歲厭世，去而上仙), but no interpretation of the term is provided. It gets clear from the text that he only “ascends” or “rises” (*shang* 上) to a different level. Maslov and Michael's remark is important for understanding the cause of *xian* occurrence in Daoism. As I see it, the absence of the above interpretation can be understood ambiguously. Firstly, it may be because the explanation is not important in itself, and secondly, the explanation is difficult enough to describe. It is difficult to imagine a situation when an important term is presented without explanation. If the term is difficult to describe, and in Zhuangzi's opinion, the best description would be to say that the property of a person who can be called *xian* has the ability to “rise”.

In addition to “rising”, if there is one observable property that T. Michael describes with the term *yangsheng* 養生, which is also characterized by a moderate diet:

The longevity that comes as the consequence of a perfected and transformed body, ability to ascend or soar to either mountainous regions or paradisiacal lands, and the rejection of normal foods for taking nourishment from natural products like dew; motifs that are not yet but soon will be associated with *xian* are alchemy and immortality. (Michael, 2015b, p. 122)

Of course, it is important for us to trace what properties a sage possesses. For example, in *Chuci* 楚辭 “Wandering Away” we read about a certain “ascension”: “honored the marvelous *de* 德 of the *zhenren*, and coveted those of the past who had ascended to *xian*” 貴真人之休德兮，美往世之登仙 (*gui zhenren zhi xiu de xi mei wang shi zhi dengxian*) (Michael, 2015b, p. 121), as well as in Zhuangzi they speak of the sage as one who possesses transcendental qualities, “wandering beyond the mundane dust and dirt”, “Leans on the sun and the moon, holds the universe in his hands, unites himself with things and phenomena... is present in myriads of years and achieves simplicity in himself” (ZZ 1).

So, the author emphasizes the numerous numbers of times about the absence of superpowers: it is this image of a sage— “a wanderer in the worldly dust” and not formally characterized by any miracles, not possessing no paraferalia (from Greek παράφερνα [parapherna]), was borrowed by later Daoist, for example, the founder of *quanzhen* 全真 by Wang Chongyang 王重阳 (1113-1170) (For more details, see: [Komjathy, 2013]). It was he who began to widely use the term that existed before him, but was not in active circulation, that is *xian* 仙. For him, *xian* is a stable descriptor for one who has achieved “purity and tranquility” (qing jing 情境), uniting his inner primordial nature (xing 性) and “vitality”, that is, mundane reality (ming 命). Maslov continues, “The Syanians [the who is xian] do not have any high moral qualities, they do not do good, they do not help people. These are strict individualists who, thanks to their acquired abilities, have achieved extraordinary properties” (Maslov, 2020, p. 12).

Thus, we can conclude that the person who is called *xian* is a person who himself achieved purity and tranquility, connected with nature and reality, which should not do good and help people, although they are not disidentified with the latter. For example, in the famous Daoist text called “A tree without roots” (*wugenshu* 无根树), attributed to *Zhang Sanfeng* 張三丰 (Komjathy, 2003, p. 51), *xian* leads a completely free life and does not limit himself in pleasures: “Flowers and wine are here are the companions of the syan [xian] from ancient times to the present. Oh, shelters of clouded with flowers (that is, brothels), oh, halls of wine and meat! Never reproach yourself for fast food, do not blame yourself for debauchery”. Libation of various somatic “drinks” (*jiu* 酒) is a way to maintain yourself: “Every day you get drunk from a glass of warmed wine. Here it is, the *xian* recipe – the resurrection broth!”. If there are any difficulties in alchemical practice, you just need to “come to *xian* and ask them all carefully”. Here, states Maslov, it is clearly visible that *xian* abides simultaneously among

people (that is, possesses a physical body) and is in some “chamber *xian*” or “city *xian*” is *xiandu* 仙都. (Maslov, 2020, p. 12)

To achieve the properties, Maslov provides a whole chapter, which I will not consider in this work, however, I will give a partial conclusion, which says that the achievement of the state of *xian* was precisely a special kind of method of combining various techniques, each of which leads to a certain level of “*xian* alike”. Thus, the comment made by Master *Taixu* 太虚 towards the Daoist treatise “Precious raft of paired nurturing for the women of Li Nivan” (li ni wan nürü zong shuang xiu bao fa 李泥丸女宗双修宝筏), indicates that to reach the Heavenly *xian* level, one should combine principles described in the “True Directions of the Golden Flower in 18 Principles” and in fact in the treatise “The Precious Raft”, but “if you use only the” True Directions”, then this will only be the achievement of the level of Earthly and Human *xian*”, that is, an order of magnitude lower...

It appears that there is a certain order of becoming for those who are called *xian*, and on the way to this, a certain order is presented. One of these is meditation. We find a similar system of gradual ascent in the treatise Discourse on Sitting in Oblivion (*zuowanglun* 坐忘论). The *zuowang* technique, which is in fact apophatic (empty) meditation, provides for the complete tranquility of the mind, which ultimately leads to “self-forgetfulness” and consciousness going beyond the bounds of one's body. As a result of this practice, a person must “forget” about the existence of his body, consciousness, get rid of illusory ideas about reality and completely dissolve himself in emptiness, in the path of Dao (Maslov, 2020, p. 18). Maslov wants to say that one of the possible ways to achieve the *xian* state is meditation, which is accompanied by a calming down of consciousness, which leads to self-forgetfulness and the exit of consciousness. Perhaps the “exit of consciousness” has the background to the *shan* 上 (up) that *Zhuangzi* speaks of.

The Sitting in Oblivion technique considers seven stages of cultivation, or “seven cuts”, that is, *qitiao* 七條, which can also be understood as seven stages of initiation. It is noteworthy that *Sima Chengzhen* 司马承祯 did not accidentally use this concept, since he himself learned a lot from the Buddhist school “The Tiantai, or Lotus School of the perfect teaching, or the one vehicle” *tiantaizong* 天台宗, which main purpose is “cessation and observation” (Kohn, 2010).

Thus, we came to the description of the seven stages that precede the transformation of a person into *xian*, which can be briefly described: “honor and believe”, “cut off karmic reasons”, “concentration consciousness”, “simplify matters”, “achieve true vision”, “serene contemplation “And of course” attaining Dao”.

The first stage of “honor and believe” *jingxin* 敬信 involves deep faith in the possibility of attaining the Dao and trust in the teachings of the teachers.

The second stage is “cutting off the causes: (*duanyuan* 断缘), in other words, cutting off the karmic causal causes (Skt. Pratyaya) of everything that has happened and will happen to a person.

The third stage is “concentration of the heart” or “concentration of consciousness” (*shou xin* 收心) is a stage that involves calm meditation while sitting (*jingzuo* 静坐), regulating breathing and stopping all disturbing and distracting thoughts.

The fourth stage is “simplification of cases” or “abandonment of cases” (*jianshi* 简事), which consists in reducing the number of activities that a person does in this life: “superfluous gratifications of passions and desires”. Get to know what is essential and what is insignificant, compare how serious or frivolous it is, and then you will understand whether you should get rid of it or accept it.

The fifth stage is the stage of “true vision” (*zhenguan* 真观), which provides for the development of a special intuitive understanding of the follower of what and how to do. At this

stage, the disciples begins to feel his “unity of body” with Dao and finally overcomes the boundaries of his own body and “I” as such.

The sixth stage is “serene” or “calm contemplation” (*taiding* 泰定). This stage is associated with the technique of contemplation-dhyana (*ding* 定), when, after going through all the previous stages, the adept can plunge into meditation in a calm and pure consciousness.

The seventh stage is “attaining the Dao” (*dedao* 得道). This one is the stage that corresponds to full connection with the Dao. Overcoming both life and death, that is, the “wheel of rebirth.” The physical body (*xing* 形), “hiding”, that is, in fact, dying, becomes identical to the spirit (*shen* 神). The very existence of a person from this moment depends only on himself, and not on circumstances.

If, at the previous stages of transformation only the consciousness or “heart” (*xin* 心) of a person was thrown down, here we witness a mystical transformation of the entire physical body (*xing* 形), as well as the entire set of physical and spiritual properties (*shen* 身), which are understood as a man's “personality”. A “true body” (*zhenshen* 真身) is born, invisible to the ordinary eye. The man himself, having transformed both physically and mentally, becomes *shenren* 神人 “a spiritual person”.

The seven steps to enlightenment were first published in L. Kohn *Zuowang lun, Seven Steps to the Dao* (1987) and later republished in *Sitting in Oblivion: the Heart of Daoist Meditation* (2010) (Kohn, 2010, p. 60)

The complex description of the *xian* state appeared later than other concepts of Sage after Zhuangzi, but this may not be a stumbling block. I want to stress that the important is the disidentification of immortality and *xian*. Perhaps *xian* encompasses immortality, yet then we have a method of attaining it. As L. Kohn puts it, practitioners should have a measure of respect and faith: “Practitioners begin with “Respect and Faith”, that is, they have to have heard of the

practice, believe that its promises are real, and trust that they have the capacity and energy to attain them” (ibid). Therefore, the question of immortality falls into the zone of trust.

2.5 Nurturing life: *yangsheng* 养生 and *zuowang* 坐忘

According to T. Michael, the cultivation methods in the Daoist tradition are split into two categories. The first one arising from the analysis of the *Daodejing* text is *yangsheng*, and the second arising from the analysis of the *Zhuangzi* text is defined as *zuowang* 坐忘. The author highlights major points. The first one is related to the fact that both methods, although they have a common goal, are different by the process, but he finds it important to separate these methods. The second point has to do with the place of practice where the process takes place, so practice in mountains for *yangsheng* and urban centers and wilderness for *zuowang* (Michael, 2015a, p. 145).

I share T. Michael's thought in the sense that the presence of several methods leads to the comprehension of Dao or “encourage uniting with Dao” in the Laozi perspective “*yangsheng* it means to embody Dao in a physical way” and in the *Zhuangzi* perspective “to unite with Dao is to merge with it spiritually “However, from my point of view, the division itself does not follow that Dao is unity, not division, because Dao gives birth to one (*dao sheng yi* 道生一). Therefore, I suppose that the most valuable conclusion that can be drawn is that there are several ways to attain Dao, but not highlighting one of the methods as the most valuable or perfect.

I find several theses agreed in terms of the Shaolin style. First, that the central component of *Yangsheng* is *daoyin* 导引, a system of healing exercises that is largely based on the movements and behavior of animals that is present in the practice of the Shaolin style. The main taolu used commonly to understand the movement of which animal the trainee is most prone to is called *wuxing bafa quan* 五行八法拳. The second thesis is that the *yangsheng*

teachings are non-verbal, because the apparent esotericity is actually related to the fact that the end goal goes beyond the language and therefore they are best taught personally and through exercise.

As for the *zuowang* technique, this correlates with the technique taught in the Shaolin style and is called *zuochang* 坐禪, which is also part of the taught methods, which, as T. Michael put it, “*Zuowang* is the technique to obliterate both the constructed self and the external other, resulting in the full identification with the authentic self” and leads to spiritual freedom” apophatic meditation believed to lead to an intense freedom” (Michael, 2015a, p. 145).

Regarding the practice site or the practitioner's habitat, which is repeatedly emphasized for “*yangsheng* hermit in the wilderness; although this is not exactly a mountain“, “*yangsheng* lifestyle...deals with the choice of a living environment, mountains or urban centers” and “*yangsheng* hermits living in mountains and... *zuowang* recluses living both in urban centers and in the wilderness, it still gives intriguing depictions of *yangsheng* adepts in a more reclusive setting” (Michael, 2015a, pp. 147,156,145). I find it valuable to know that the environment determines the way we live.

First off, mentioning mountains does not always mean living on top of the mountains. “He sets out to find *Guangchengzi*, a hermit residing on Mount *Kongtong* 空同之山”. We know five sacred mountains in China, one of them is *Songshan* 嵩山, where the Shaolin Temple is located. We can say that Shaolin monks are practicing in the mountains, obviously not. In fact, they take their practice in the vicinity of the monastery, which is located at the foot of the mountains. Still, if you ask a traveling monk where he came from, he is more likely to say that from the *Songshan* Mountains. On the other hand, I believe that the distinction between practicing in the mountains or in an urban setting still takes place from the point of view that solitude does introduce a new characteristic. The “Loss of *Dao* in society” (Michael, 2015a, p.

153) is therefore extremely important in this sense. It is society that determines the environment, which means which ways it is possible to follow. (See the Yinyang metaphors chapter on DNA) There is a phrase, the source of which I cannot confirm, but it is widely known among city dwellers “It is easy to be a saint sitting on Mount Taishan. It is way more difficult to remain a saint while sitting at the market”.

2.6 Eastern martial arts classes are good for health

Serious sports often bring injuries, it happens that injuries cause irreparable damage to the body. In the example of boxing, which is shown on TV, you can clearly see what damage you can do to yourself in the process of achieving the result. Hence the reasonable question arises whether it is possible to start doing CMA “at my age”. I have heard this question from people between 20 and 60 years old because it is also the most popular category for those who are looking for spiritual growth, but I will tell you more about this later.

Regarding the evidence, I want to give an abstract of the work of a number of authors led by Sandra Origua Rios (2018) and suggest reading the article separately, since I do not have a medical education:

Participation in organized sports is promoted as a means of increasing physical activity levels and reducing chronic disease risk in adults. Hard martial arts practice (i.e. using body contact techniques), has gained in popularity over time. This review explores the evidence for the health benefits of “hard” martial arts practice within the adult population. A systematic electronic database search was conducted, and quality assessments applied the Effective Public Health Practice Project tool. Twenty-eight studies met the inclusion criteria, examining balance, cognitive function, muscular-skeletal status, psychological, cardiovascular fitness, and metabolic effects. The majority of studies reported positive effects resulting from hard martial arts practice, showing some improvement and maintenance of balance, cognitive function, and psychological health. Benefits may be obtained regardless of the age of practice

commencement. However, quality of the evidence is affected by methodological weaknesses across the studies. “Hard” martial arts seem to have potential to improve balance and cognitive functions that decline with age, which can lead to poorer health outcomes among the elderly (e.g. cognitive decline, falls and fractures). Benefits should be further investigated with improved intervention studies, representative samples and longer follow-up periods in order to establish associations with morbidity and mortality in the long term. (Origua Rios et al., 2018)

The article examines the impact on the health of adults, but the study does not include the health of children. From my experience, I will give an example of the reasons why parents (not Chinese) want to attach their children to CMA classes in China from two to four weeks, and sometimes from a month to a year. Here are these reasons:

- Keeping fit, combine with learning Chinese language and Chinese culture;
- Hyperreactivity in adolescents and/or poor behavior at school;
- Features in the body (infantile cerebral palsy).

The last case is of particular importance to me. A boy from Russia with a diagnosis of infantile cerebral palsy (ICP) lived side by side with me. At the time I met his parents, the boy was 12 years old. His mother, with the last hope in her voice, asked me to be his big brother, for any price. I refused the money, but I decided to try to persuade Shifu to adopt this child. Telling about the situation, he said that here you can only try, let them come. So Yura spent more than 6 months with me.

With the permission of Yura's parents, I bring a personal letter from his mother to me, which describes the result of training as part of the school of Master Shi Yanchen for 6 months:

Yura often remembers China and you, gladly tells how he lived there. The most important result of our joint work with Yury, he categorically did not want to study in an ordinary school earlier, now he can't wait, the second point is that everyone who asks him proudly tells about his life in China, he is engaged in exercises with dumbbells, I am sure that

he is very handsome, so I am very happy with the dynamics of Yurik's development and we will definitely meet. I like that all the memories about you and about the school in general are positive, I am very grateful to all of you, Lesha. I want you to tell all this to Shifu, of course, to all parents who doubt whether or not to leave their child. (S. Boyko, personal communication, April 21, 2018)

3 Yinyang metaphors

Because of practice, you felt yinyang in yourself and it gave a new perspective on all around things. Based on my multifaceted experience, here's what I was able to notice.

3.1.1 Binary number system

Computer technology is based on a binary calculus system. An electric current flowing through the transistor creates the pulse 1 in case transistor is open (seems as yang —) or does not create the pulse if transistor is closed 0 (seems as yin --) is described 1 bit of data. One byte is called the smallest unit of information in computer science. Thus, from 8 combinations of bits 0 and 1 from 000 to 111, 1 byte is formed, eight combinations, which exactly corresponds to eight trigrams (☰☷☱☲☴☵☶☸). The Xici Zhuan explains “Together, the two generate all the myriad things through their interaction” (Wang, 2012, p. 65). Likewise, bytes generate myriad things in computer science. This similarity was described by Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646-1716), but I managed to see it on my own. Leibniz finds Yijing not only a consistent system, but actually confirms it mathematically, and also believes that Yijing is similar to his own philosophy. No wonder Leibniz is called the first programmer and forefather of the computer. Leibniz left behind a prototype of a mechanical machine that uses perforated paper (see Leibniz, 1989; Mungello, 1971; Ryan, 1996). I would like to emphasize that human-made computing machines represent the prototype of the world in which we live, and this realization proves that the Yijing divination and the yinyang concept are valid working principles.

My thoughts on imaginary numbers in mathematics and the principle of superposition in quantum mechanics lie exactly in the yinyang dimension. Imagination and superposition look natural from the point of view of Chinese philosophy. Daoist alchemy looks magical to

Westerners, but this does not prevent Daoists from using it. Scientists meet the limits of knowledge, and ignoramuses use the limitless.

3.1.2 DNA. *Information or instructions for use?*

There are two interesting coherent aspects for us. First, 100% DNA contains some information “5% of genes”, and much information “95% are instructions”. [idea: the human being evolves depending on the environment] Second, the gene can generate 7 different proteins in different parts of the body, rather than one as thought before. [idea: bagua in DNA] Moreover, in different periods of life, under different conditions, different people can decipher the same chain of DNA in different ways. The environment is associated with genetic effects, the environment determines who does what. From the online lectures Sapolsky says: “Seven different proteins can be obtained from a single gene” reminds 1 byte in computer science, “The same genes produce different proteins in different parts of the body”, “The medium determines who does what” “DNA just 5% are genes, and 95% are instructions when to activate genes” (Stanford, 2011, 03:15—05:21). I believe that knowledge of Yijing and yinyang can help researchers understand the structure of DNA, but most importantly, both computer science and the human gene seem to obey the same laws.

I’m not a biologist to make this kind of conclusion, so I will cite as an example work in which the indicated connection finds a place to be valid, for example, in an attempt to connect water and fire from the point of view of the *bagua*. F. Rainer believes that the connections of string theory, namely in the part where the observed things obey the known laws in our world and the hidden layer where such laws do not obey, can be represented as a combination of Earlier Heaven (*xiantian* 先天) and Later Heaven (*houtian* 后天) in Chinese ways of thinking (Rainer, 2015).

3.1.3 Light and not light. wuwei 无为

A possible way to scientifically explain what is *wuwei* 无为 seems fascinating to me, an example is the absolute speed of light, which has not really been measured yet. The presence of a shadow, which is nothing more than the absence of light—the shadow itself does not exist; it has no wavelength, and in other words, the shadow has no properties of light, but the presence of a shadow is not questioned. There is an experiment that we can repeat at home. You can put your hand against the wall and shine a flashlight on it, so that the shadow from the hand falls on the wall. If you move your hand, it turns out that the shadow moves faster than the hand itself. This means that the speed of the shadow may appear to be faster than the speed of light (Gibbs, 1997).

From this point of view, it is interesting to apply the same methodology to knowledge. I want to say that “knowledge” is always less than “not knowing”. The more we learn, the more we learn what we don't know. There is an interesting Dunning-Kruger effect, which is that people who do not have sufficient knowledge are easier to make and more difficult to realize their mistakes, while people with sufficient knowledge tend to underestimate their abilities (see Krajc & Ortmann, 2008; Kruger & Dunning, 1999; Schlösser et al., 2013) Therefore, the act of *wuwei* is not greater than the act of *wei*, in other words, the source of *wei* is *wuwei*, so the one who knows everything acts *wuwei*.

3.1.4 Pascal's triangle conceals the Dao

Curious how science can move in leaps and bounds. Science in honor of science played a cruel joke with Ludolph Van Ceulen (1540-1610). It took Van Ceulen ten years to calculate pi with an accuracy of 34 decimal places “head-on” in a known way. Therefore, his intent to carve the calculated value on the funeral grave seems to be the least that we could do for him. However, Newton already saw a new pattern and presented a new method for calculating the

pi number. At the age of 23, Newton was literally playing with the expression $(1+x)$ during the Bubonic Plague in 1666. As a result, Newton not only calculated the number pi, but also saw new patterns that led him to Pascal's Triangle. Let me remind you that Pascal's triangle appeared in many cultures almost simultaneously in the 10th century in India and Iran, in the 14th century in China it was called the triangle of *yanghui* 杨辉 (1238-1298) (Veritasium, 2021).

My observations are enclosed in the space between natural and imaginary numbers. Newton defined that the expression $(1+x)$ raised to a positive power is finite, and raised to a negative power is infinite (see Binomial theorem). From a philosophical point of view, I find it interesting that in a triangle the positive and negative sides are symmetrical to each other, so I assume that the Binomial theorem sheds light on the operation of the Dao. Dao starts from 0 to 1 and further, and the second is that the material world is a binomial in a positive degree (finite) and the intangible world (spiritual world) is a binomial, raised to a negative degree (infinite) (Veritasium, 2021).

3.1.5 Essence accumulation as reservoir accumulation

According to the Cambridge dictionary, dam is called “a wall built across a river that stops the river's flow and collects the water, especially to make a reservoir (=an artificial lake) that provides water for an area”. It is so beautiful! We humans have long been using structures for “putting things in order”, but we forget about the order within ourselves.

A dam or sea wall is built to use water resources to restore order: protection from flooding, to regulate river beds, etc. The principle that the structure serves can be equally called imbalance if there is a negative effect or restoration of balance if there is a positive effect. From the yinyang point of view, it is all about reaching a balance. If you change one, the other will change. Therefore, under the preservation of yang in men, this is a positive sexual abstinence to restore order. Like a dam, the man conserves jing resources for protection and regulation.

4 Conclusion

I have introduced the terms of body cultivation used in the teachings of modern Shaolin martial arts and the concepts of early Chinese Daoist philosophy that I have personally experienced in Shaolin. This was primarily to investigate the meaning of enlightenment *ming* 明 in the Daodejing by Laozi.

Despite the fact that enlightenment is a broad concept by itself, my research has shown that *ming* in Daodejing, if it can be interpreted as enlightenment excluding religious or sectarian interpretations, but in the sense of knowing nature. From the Shaolin perspective, it is through knowing the nature of one's own body *yangsheng* 养生 to knowing the nature of all things *baoyi* 抱一.

My next new discovery concerns the investigation of T. Michael who argues that the early Daoist reading of Daodejing must be viewed synthetically and strive to remain open to it as a poetic, mythic, philosophical, political, religious and imaginative work with a bias toward the cultivation of *yangsheng*.

I argue that self-cultivation *yangsheng* is prior to human life activity and is the root of quality life, which is why the practice of Shaolin kung fu is so sought after to this day.

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6 Appendix

6.1 Translation of The Book of Shaolin Kung Fu

Translation from “Shaolinquan jing” 少林拳经 (The Book of Shaolin Kung Fu) illustrates and unites theory and practice with proper understanding. As Daodejing opens the doors to the reader in theory, so *shaolinquan jing* closes the extra doors for the practitioner. The first translation of the script is not perfect, but sufficient to complete the practice. I invite you to share your views at <https://shaolin60.com/en/the-book-of-shaolin-kung-fu/>

№	Original	Translation
1	习练少林拳术要诀	Essentials on Practice Shaolin Kung fu
2	一、练拳诀语	I. Key Phrases on Practice
3	少林拳一条线，屈而不屈，直而不直。	Shaolin kungfu as a thread. It bends, but not crooked. Straight, but not linear.
4	开始演练,两脚在一线，向外开，脚齐平肩.双手抱拳，与腰使平，中气宜领，站在中央。	When practice begins, keep both feet in one line. Start by kicking outward, feet should be in the same level with shoulders. Clasp both hands in a fist, let them be in the same level with your waist, and stand in the center.
5	两眼使平，向前高看。	Let both eyes be horizontal and look at the front high.
6	气要随手，换气主要，气发四梢，气要走平。	Qi (energy flow) must follow your hands, the flowing of energy is the key. The energy should reach the four <i>shaos</i> (hair, tongue, teeth, fingers) and go flattened.
7	开始行动，运用五行，五行相克，五行相合。	When start moving, apply the generate and prevail of the five elements.
8	动如风，站如钉，重如泰山，轻如鸿毛。	Move like wind, stand like a nail, heavy as Tai Mountain, light as a feather.
9	欲要上身动，还须后腿蹬。	The movement of the upper body needs glute kick.
10	抬手打人不见形，见形技艺不为精。	Raise the hands and beat the enemy without any shape. If any shaped easily recognized, the practice is not fine enough.

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|--|
| 11 | 软如棉花硬如钉，软能克硬，硬能克软。 | Soft as cotton and hard as a nail. Soft prevails hard and hard prevails soft. |
| 12 | 发声如雷响，气发如脆齿。 | Sound like thunder, energy flow like the clear sound from the teeth. |
| 13 | 如此天天练功夫，九牛二虎力量升。 | Keep practice kung fu like this and the strength will be grown strong. |
| 14 | 拳谱一日： | Kung fu Manual One: |
| 15 | 屈而不屈，直而不直。 | It bends, but not crooked. Straight, but not linear. |
| 16 | 短者伸直，长者则屈。 | Shorts should be extended and longs flexed. |
| 17 | 快要加速度，力求疾中疾。 | Speed up and get the fastest movement. |
| 18 | 出拳如螺旋，阴阳妙理玄。 | The fists are like spiral, and the magic of Yin and Yang included. |
| 19 | 拳谱二日： | Kung fu Manual Two: |
| 20 | 少林功夫天下勇，拳场大小不受限。 | Shaolin Kungfu makes people brave in the world, there is no limit for the size of kung fu field. |
| 21 | 卧牛之地练拳脚，闪展腾挪把势全。 | Practice fists and kicks in the ox-lying areas, and master all skills include twist, spread, prance and shift. |
| 22 | 似走非走当真走，似进非进当真进。 | Look like moving but not moving, it's real moving; Look like advancing but not advancing, it's real advancing. |
| 23 | 卧牛之地练武艺，四面八方顾周全。 | Practice Kungfu in the ox-lying areas, and take all directions in account. |
| 24 | 囚鸟笼内若任飞，出笼本事倍加添。 | A bird fly free within a cage, it will be even much better when got out of the cage. |
| 25 | 雪地劲草能葆翠，来春脱袄艺层添。 | The thick grass under the heavy snow keeps its green, and the Kungfu makes a progress in the coming spring. |
| 26 | 二、阴阳起落要诀 | II. Key Phrases on Up and Down in Yinyang. |
| 27 | 起落进退分阴阳，阴阳主要讲实伴。 | Rise, fall, in, out, all are divided into Yin and Yang, which is depend on the actual practice. |

- 28 实变虚，虚变实；阴变阳，阳变阴；起变落，落变起；进变退，退变进。 Solid to Void, Void to Solid; Yin to Yang, Yang to Yin; Up to Fall, Fall to Up; In to Out, Out to In.
- 29 遇软须硬进，遇硬须柔磨。 Softness should be reacted by hardness, hardness should be rubbed by softness.
- 30 四两拨千斤，进退不离身。 Four ounces move thousands pound, keep this no matter in or out.
- 31 进步低，退步高，不得其门不妄进，看准破绽不失机。 Making progress is low and stepping backward is high. No rash enter when inaccessible. Do not miss the flaws and catch the chance.
- 32 三、出拳要诀 III. Key Phrases on Kung fu
- 33 拳打一气连，兵战杀气勇，一身气力合，神仙拦不着。 Fight with fist with a continue flow of energy, and will get a full courage. When all flows of energy are gathered in the body, nothing can block.
- 34 内要提，外要随，起要横，落要顺，打要近，气要催，拳如炮，龙遮身，力四齐，遇敌好似火烧身。 Promote inside and adapt outside, up unexpectedly and down casually. Beating in a near distance and let the flow of energy go fast. Fist is a cannon and the body protected by a dragon. Strength fill all parts and the whole body fill with energy when enemies come.
- 35 四、进退要诀 IV. Key Phrases on In and Out
- 36 进步捷如风，失机退宜疾。 Move forward fast as the wind, make a quick withdrawal when lose the opportunity.
- 37 乘势侧锋入，神速向前扑。 Take advantage of the oblique attack and make a quick pounce forward.
- 38 掌实即须吐，发声使惊怪。 Throw up immediately when the palm is solid, then make a surprising sound.
- 39 变化如闪电，迟快决胜败、 Changes are like lightening, win and lose are based on fast and slow.
- 40 五、趋避法诀 V. Key Phrases on Approach and Avoidance
- 41 趋避眼须快，左右见机行。 Viewing should be quick in approach and avoidance, act according to circumstances in both sides.
- 42 趋从避中取，实从虚处生。 Approach is from avoidance, solid is generated from void.

- 43 功力虽制我，隙开莫消停。 Even the power controls, no stop once it begun opening the gap.
- 44 势猛休要恐，顺势拨千斤。 No fear at the fierce, take the advantage of it and move it.
- 45 六、少林学诀 VI. Key Phrases on Basic Practice
- 46 气自丹田吐，全力注掌心。 The energy flow is from Dan Tian (elixir field), and all strength to the center of the palm.
- 47 按实始用力，吐气须开声。 Apply the strength and press it still, shout when the energy flow is out.
- 48 推宜朝上起，紧逼短马蹬。 Push from the upper space and keep close to the short kicks.
- 49 掌根力量大，着点小天星。 The root of the palm have the strongest force and point to the Xiao Tian Xing.
- 50 (注) 小天星即掌尺脉上之锐骨。 Note: Xiao Tian Xing means the sharp bone on the palm ulnar vein.
- 51 七、秋月大师掌诀 VII. Key Phrases on Palm Practice by Master Qiu Yue
- 52 练到骨节通灵处，周身血气任横行。 When the flow goes through all bones, the vigour will go through the whole body free.
- 53 学心力从足心印，一指霹雳万人惊。 The hard working of practice is begun from the feet. Just one finger amaze all people.
- 54 八、内外兼修重视用气 VIII. Both Inner and Outer Parts Developed, Applying Qi should be Preference.
- 55 收腹气在丹田沉，鼓肚气从丹田出。 Adducting abdominal muscles let the flow of energy sink at the Dan Tian; Bulging the stomach let the flow of energy run out of Dan Tian.
- 56 气贯四梢一霎间，全身力大无人迎。 Just in an instant time the flows of the air go through the whole body. No one can rise to the challenge.
- 57 拳打脚踢撞靠顶，均有丹田把气冲。 Fist, kick, bump, hit, all of this are of the energy flow of Dan Tian.
- 58 此乃内炼一口气，外练筋骨手身足。 Inner part a flow of energy trained, outer part muscles and bones, hands and feet.

- 59 内外兼修刚合柔，气壮力雄显威风。 Both Inner and Outer Parts Developed, hardness and softness integrated. Strength and power make the majestic-looking.
- 60 九、十二型 IX. Twelve Styles
- 61 动如涛，静如岳，起如猿，落如鹊， Move as wave, motionless as mountain, up as an ape, down as a magpie, rotate as a wheel, 转如轮，折如弓，立如鸡，站如松， bend as a bow, remain in a position like a cock, 快如风，缓如鹰，轻如叶，重似铁。 stand as a pine tree, fast as the wind, unhurried as an eagle, light as a leaf, heavy as the iron.
- 62 十、练功难度递增歌诀 X. Key Phrases on Difficulty Increase of Practice
- 63 学拳容易练拳难，练拳容易练好难。 Learning kung fu is easy, practice is difficult; practice is easy, be proficient is difficult.
- 64 练好容易拆破难，拆破容易实战难。 Be proficient is easy, to break is difficult; To break is easy, to combat is difficult.
- 65 实战容易封闭难，进步容易撤步难。 To combat is easy, to close is difficult; forward is easy, backward is difficult.
- 66 出手容易回手难，艺精容易夸口难。 Making opening move is easy, setting back is difficult; being skilled is easy, boasting is difficult.
- 67 讲论容易问世难，涉世容易无咎难。 To talk is easy, to apply is difficult; to experience is easy, to be no fault is difficult.
- 68 十一、少林习武总要 XI. The General Rules of Practice Shaolin Kungfu
- 69 舒衫立势袖填拳，掌按阴阳次第间。 To make the clothes feel comfortable, stand in a strong disposition, and fill the sleeves with fist, then the palm presses in the instant gap between yinyang.
- 70 审势分明知躲闪，防身斜仪识端偏。 Clearly judge the situation and understand the approach and avoidance, realize the dos and don'ts at the time of self-protection.
- 71 进攻推托步偷半，插打搬拿学贵全。 Attack and plead in half, every skills should be learn completely.
- 72 欲不临场心手乱，闲居发奋读武典。 Working hard on the classics of the skill and there will be no confusion when facing competitors.
- 73 十二、身法指要 XII. Key Rules on Body

- 74 头端面正手平分，直竖身昂腿护阴。 Let head and face both in regular position, hands on two points with an equal proportion. The whole body be straight and feet to protect Yin.
- 75 斜立足分丁八字，势如跨马挽弓形。 Both feet stand at an angle with an equal proportion like the shape like drawing a bow on a horse.
- 76 脚腿不浮身便稳，足趾须分抓地灵。 Feet stand stable without floating, toes should catch different points on floor.
- 77 脚动腿跟同进退，肩投腰弓身齐行。 Heels should move with all parts of the legs, let the shoulder bring the waist and drive the whole body move.
- 78 反身复缩随舒卷，偏闪腾挪势势承。 Let every movements be flexible, and twist, spread, prance and shift are connected each other.
- 79 练习常如寡敌众，横冲直撞莫留停。 Practice is always like fight a strong competitor when being hopelessly outnumbered. Just barge about it without any stop.
- 80 又曰： In Other Words:
- 81 少林身法九刚猛，起落进退侧收翻。 The ninth key rule on body of Shaolin is upright and fierce. Rise, fall, upward, backward are closed on a side.
- 82 更有反侧身法妙，起横落顺一条线。 There is a wonderful method of the opposite side, unexpected rise and casual down are in one line.
- 83 收如伏猫放如虎，瞻前顾后是武仙。 Take in like a cat and release like tiger, make a view to both front and back, you will be the excellent one.
- 84 左右遇敌速侧身，退则引敌陷伏圈。 Move sideways when enemies come from the left and right, leave the enemies to the ambush area when retreats.
- 85 利则飞进驱虎豹，良机可乘雀翻山。 To take advantage of the chance and drive away the beasts, then ride a bird to cross over the mountain.
- 86 十三、手法指要 XIII. Key Rules on Hands
- 87 撑拳托掌若风烟，劈砍抓拿势贵偏。 Rise fist and palm like winds; chop, cut, catch, grab will be better when biasing.

- 88 挺去牵来脚管硬，勾搬裹挽削披连。 To be hooked and let the feet be solid, and link the ticking, moving, wrapping, pulling, paring and draping.
- 89 三盘内外须纯练，前后高低浑打全。 The practice within three rounds should be purely practiced inside and outside, and fight should cover front, back, high and low places.
- 90 一日无闲三岁满，手法便捷推倒山。 Keep practice day and night for three years and the tricks will have powerful energy.
- 91 又曰： In Other Words:
- 92 少林手法奇妙灵，起落手法屈直攻。 The manipulation of Shaolin is wonderful and flexible, flex and straight attack for rise and fall.
- 93 防后手如燕取水，起前手似鹞钻林。 The back hand is like a swallow taking water, and the front hand is like a harrier getting into a forest.
- 94 猛攻斗手两手护，劈如分砖起如风。 Make a protection with both hands when there is fierce attack, splitting like a split brick up like the wind.
- 95 发手犹如虎扑食，非屈非直似蛟龙。 Rising hands like a tiger pouncing on food, its non-flexible and non-straight like a dragon.
- 96 十四、步法指要 XIV. Key Rules on Steps
- 97 两腿微屈力自然，撑前箭法练成坚。 Both feet slightly bent and let forces be natural, support the front arrow and practice better.
- 98 随从顺闪腾挪步，步经斜出反回圈。 Followed by a smooth flashing and moving step, step through the diagonal out of the backing area.
- 99 翻覆旋风肩平硬，膝雄跟踹带钩镰。 Overturning whirlwind and let both shoulders flat and hard, knees and heels kick as if there are hook and sickle.
- 100 跟落指悬神化用，轻浮坚固步中玄。 Heels getting down and fingers hanging will make an amazing performance, light floating and solid step in the mystery.
- 101 又曰： In Other Words:
- 102 少林步法妙如神，五尺站步两弓准。 The wonderful rules on steps of Shaolin lets two bow act accurately within five feet standing step.

- 103 寸站快箭速轻稳，距临丈余跳箭步。 In a small area stand quickly and steady, and made a rapid stride within a ten-foot area.
- 104 近则寸步速上前，形如虎蹿飞马奔。 Step forward with a rapid stride in an area with short distance, let the movement like the shape of a tiger leap like a flying horse run.
- 105 十五、眼法指要 XV. Key Rules on Eyes
- 106 两眼睁睁若望星，头端审势更分明。 Open both eyes as if looking at the stars, examine of the situation more distinct from the beginning.
- 107 瞻前顾后疾如电，展动周旋似转轮。 Making a view to both front and back in a speed as lighting, spreading and circling like a spinning wheel.
- 108 观定敌人身手脚，乘虚攻击法如神。 Observe the enemy's movements by bodies, arms and legs, and take advantage of attacking the weakness.
- 109 临场对敌人难进，全在双目练得清。 Clear eyes will prevent all enemies from entering the spot.
- 110 又曰： In Other Words:
- 111 少林眼法活锐盯，盯准对方周身行。 The Shaolin's rules of eyes require focus on every part of the enemies.
- 112 以目注目审敌势，敏捷判准手足动。 Examine the enemies eye to eye and judge their movement of hands and feet quickly.
- 113 锐目识破虎狼心，严防双目染风尘。 Sharp eyes to see through the bad hearts, strictly prevent the eyes from unwanted things.
- 114 两眼灵活观八方，眼心协调拳如神。 Both eyes see all eight directions in a flex way, the coordination of eyes and mind makes fist wonderful.
- 115 十六、气法指要 XVI. Key Rules on Energy Flows
- 116 紧闭牙关口莫开，口开气泄力何来。 Closed teeth mouth do not open, or the flow of energy will go away.
- 117 须知存气常充腹，然手休将气放怀。 Do remember the flow of energy should fill the abdomen, then lease hands and let the flow go.
- 118 回转翻身轻展动，贯通筋骨壮形骸。 Turning around and moving lightly, penetrating the muscles and bones and strengthening the body.

- 119 朝夕习练常如是，体质坚牢胜铁胎
Practice like this day and night and the body will be strong like iron.
- 120 十七、百法同源
XVII. All Rules are of One Origin
- 121 艺中奥妙在深玄，道在师传学在专。
There is marvel in the deep place. The way is from the master and learning should be in the specialization.
- 122 拳法千般学不尽，机关万种卒难言。
There are thousands of kung fu ways, not all can be learned; there are millions of skills, which is too much to say.
- 123 总之熟练能生巧，处处相承节节连。
In short, practice makes perfect, and every place is connected with each other.
- 124 十八、六合指要
XVIII. Keys on Six Matches
- 125 手与足合，肘与膝合，肩与胯合，心与意合，意与气合，气与力合。
Hands match feet, elbows match knees, shoulders match hips, heart matches will, will matches Qi, Qi matches strength.
- 126 左手与右足合，右手与左足合。
Left hand matches right foot, right hand matches left foot.
- 127 左肩与右胯合，右肘与左膝合等。
Left shoulder matches right hip, right elbow matches left knee, etc.
- 128 法是拳，力是气，炼气行功，送去必用呼，接来必用吸，运气贵乎缓，用气贵于急。
Rule is fist, strength is a flow of energy. Aspiration is for exhale, receive is for absorb. Transfer the flow should be slow and consume should be fast.
- 129 气在先行，力在后随。
Energy first and strength followed.
- 130 十九、道勿乱传
XIX. No Unreasonable Spreading
- 131 百般砥砺始能成，费尽精神用尽心。
The accomplishment is based on many practice, many practice and effort.
- 132 剪暴除奸方可用，持强逆理莫欺人。
This is only for eliminate traitors. No bully and oppress.
- 133 贤良秘授救危困，邪妄休传害众生。
People of virtue spread this for assisting the weaks and those who in danger. Do not spread to those who have evil thought, otherwise they will do harms to the public.
- 134 大道等闲若轻授，须防良民遭祸殃。
If the essence is taught in hasty, it is necessary to prevent the good people from being scourged.

