



DINAMICA

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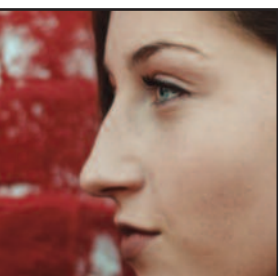
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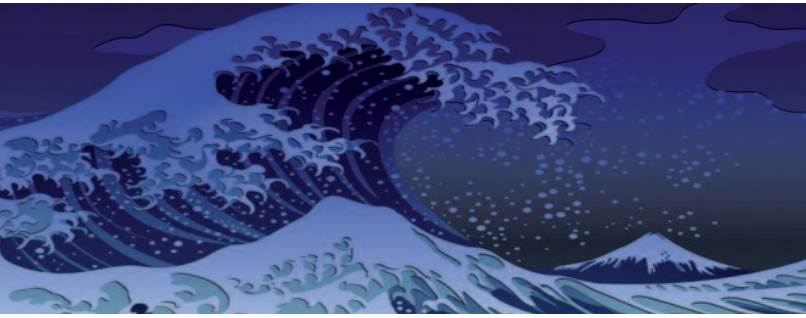
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The journey is the prize - How we took part in an international Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan competition

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The Dinamica Tai Chi Chuan and Association Arts A.S.D. was born from the union of people who are willing to activate and share their potential through the arts and psychophysical disciplines, specifically the Tai Chi Chuan. Alongside Tai Chi Chuan, it proposes other arts and activities: meditation techniques, breathing and Qi Gong, Taoist Yoga (Tao Yin). The association is affiliated to the International Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan Association (IYFTCCA ©). Its aim is to promote Tai Chi Chuan and to offer the opportunity to learn and practice the traditional Tai Chi Chuan following the method and teachings of Master Yang Jun, the current 5th generation lineage holder from the creator of the Yang style Tai Chi Chuan.



"A stone hits another stone. The sunlight reaches my skin. You, the reader, are reading these lines."

In his recent book, Carlo Rovelli, a world famous physicist and communicator affirms that ***"The world is the network of these interactions"***

Rovelli starts from the main interpretation of the Quantum Mechanics to explain that the reality that surrounds us and which we are all part of can be defined and has its meaning, properties and manifestation not as such but only when it is in relation; so objects with objects, entities with entities, starting from the particles of the atoms and ending with plants, animals, and the human beings : "...instead of independent entities with specific properties there are entities that have characteristics in respect to the others, and only when they interact". It means that every aspect of reality exists when it enters in relation with something else: it may be an object, a chemical element etc.

Of course that is not the unique theory to explain the functioning of Quantum Mechanics, which is a considerable branch of Physics containing a perfect structure of calculations and procedures, whose system anyway remains still unknown. Other physicists talk about multiple worlds, hidden variables, physical collapses, etc

We, as Tai Chi Chuan practitioners, may experience this kind of life relationships, which subtly connect us to each other and make us enjoy the energy that pervades us every time we practice together, in addition to the energetic flow between the masters and their students. This concept reminds us of how important the in-presence lessons are, as our teacher Anna Siniscalco explains in her interview published in this new magazine.

While acknowledging that during the period of closure the computer connections helped us not to be isolated and that they will remain an available tool for the future, Anna Siniscalco reminds us of the physical relationship, when in person, among the students themselves and between the teacher and the practitioners, fundamental step for both an individual and a collective growth : 'No doubt that when practicing together, students directly experience what it is to be in harmony with those around them, to measure themselves without competing, to have the pleasure of growing together. Here is the value of a relationship in a community.

As Grand Master Yang Zhen Duo said: "Tai Chi Chuan helps people meet". Beyond each person's roles and abilities, it makes people grow together and in respect of each other. As a matter of fact, everyone can get to know oneself and others.

It is true, growing together is fine, as we all experience on several occasions, such as practicing in the parks, editing this magazine together, exchanging suggestions and advice.

Last but not the least, let us put our attention on the experience described in this issue by Diana Alliata regarding the commitment shown by a small group of practitioners when filming the 22- movement Form performance in unison, in order to take part in the September 2020 Yang Family International Contest.

Obviously, for the in-presence practice, we still have to face many problems related to the pandemic, i.e. the safety measures to be respected, or the difficulty in practicing at home in small spaces, etc.

For these various issues, in her interview Anna Siniscalco launches the watchword of a return to the origins: "Tai Chi Chuan is a natural Art, but us Westerners, are used to practicing in gyms. In China, they have always practiced outdoors, so we too must meet outdoors, breathe outdoors, practice outdoors. We need to resume the original way..."

Roberto Seghetti

Tai Chi Chuan practice implies a relationship with nature: so let's perform outdoors

By Anna Siniscalco



"Tai Chi Chuan is a natural Art, but us Westerners, are used to practicing in gyms. In China, they have always practiced outdoors, so we also must meet outdoors, breathe outdoors, practice outdoors. We have to resume the original way..."

In the months of absolute closure and forced distancing that have been necessary to prevent Covid-19 from causing even more damage, technology helped us maintain our relationships, by hearing, talking and meeting friends on line, even though physically isolated and most importantly, providing continuity in education of all kinds and at all levels.

Tai Chi Chuan practitioners took advantage of this opportunity as well.

Grand Master Yang Jun organized on-line international lessons, performing in person or asking some qualified instructors and disciples to give open lessons on various theoretical and practical subjects. As it often happens with initiatives adopted to face a temporary inconvenience, the experience did not finish with the end of the so-called lockdown. On the contrary, online training programs have now become part of the normal courses of education in schools, universities etc. For this reason, it is important to reflect on the experience we have had in these months, in order to better understand what can still be positive and which limits still remain

insurmountable. For example, between April and May, our teacher Anna Siniscalco, organized various on-line educational lessons for Dinamica's members using the zoom platform. Which are her conclusions on this matter? have these on-line lessons been useful and sufficient? And in the future, could they become the way for a teaching program in Tai Chi Chuan?

A.S. "Certainly the on-line classes were very useful. Thanks to the digital platform, I have been able to keep on teaching, and this method will be still further used, to let many practitioners follow the on-line classes in case they cannot attend in person for personal reasons. This will be of help to us in the future."

Should another closing be scheduled, this experience lets us perceive that today we have the technical possibility of not interrupting the relationship between master and students. Well. However, the on-line classes seem to continue even if, fortunately, no more lockdowns

A.S. "I think so. Thanks to technology today we have learnt that even students who don't have the opportunity of attending the standard in-presence lessons may get in touch with their teacher. If you think for example of people who often cannot attend classes because of their work and distances. They may arrange on-line meetings with their teacher. This is an important opportunity which will allow even those who are geographically distant to follow the teacher they have chosen. In fact, we say that the student chooses their teacher and not the contrary."

Can we record and download the lessons to follow them along whenever we want....?

A.S. "It's not the same thing. In the live classes, the teacher can correct the students, can intervene directly and establish a specific relationship with them. A simple video can just serve as a template, to memorize. In addition, the live meeting requires a different attention, so you learn more."

Can on-line classes be enough to improve?

A.S. "This is another matter. First of all, it is essential that the teacher and every student know each other well. If a direct and established relationship already exists between them, they can easily understand each other. Otherwise the teacher must be really expert in teaching not only the gesture, but the deep sense of each movement as well. Nobody can improvise, nor is it enough to "imitate" like a parrot the suggestions broadcasted everywhere: on the web nowadays you can find everything, so a student has to discern, in order to avoid the risk of meeting unskilled teachers who simulate a false knowledge without any competence of the Tai Chi or Qi Gong movements ; all teachers with high expertise are embarrassed to see this kind of improvisation, though well sold. Every student must inquire carefully, it is the first action of respect for oneself: to choose a qualified teacher".

However, the question remains: can this be enough?

A.S. "This can be sufficient but not exhaustive. The value of presence lacks on the on-line relationship. It can be helpful to teach (and learn) the correct form movements, the philosophical and energetic theory. And this offers a consistent and sure benefit. But as soon as the student has consolidated his practice under the supervision of their teacher, they need more than ever the teacher's support to grow further: the energetic exchange between them is a fundamental



vehicle, clearly contemplated in the teaching, and not only in our discipline. Besides the presence and the contact with a teacher is essential to learn Tui Shou, to feel and apply the energies of Tai Chi Chuan in relation with the others".

In conclusion we can say that the online training is useful in moments when collective and individual meetings are not possible, but not beyond a certain level. When in presence, there is energy, which is necessary to grow....



A.S. "There is no doubt about it. When the students practice together, they directly experience what it means to be in harmony with those around them, to measure themselves without competing, to have the pleasure of growing together. Here is the value of a relationship in a community. As Grand Master Yang Zhen Duo said: Tai Chi Chuan helps people meet. Beyond each person's roles and abilities, it makes people grow together in respect of each other

As a matter of fact, everyone can get to know oneself and others."

Group meetings can also be arranged online. Dinamica has already organized them during the Covid-19 isolation. Which were their positive aspects and their limits?

A.S. "The closing has been a very strong experience. Several people were suffering from isolation and meeting each other, even if only through a screen, broke the spell. In addition to the work on the technique, being together and reconnecting people had a high value. Moreover, the practice of Tai Chi Chuan supports the state of mind, promotes a positive mood. The practice produces physical and psychological balance, consequently helps the proper functioning of the immune system. What I am saying is not a form of fanaticism. Numerous clinical studies give evidence of this. That's why I felt that my duty was to be close to my students."

In conclusion, technology has helped us and will continue to do so in the future

A.S. Absolutely yes. Even in this field, technology can help us keep in touch..."

But it is important that we also resume the usual individual and group meetings.

A.S... Much more

What do mean by much more ?

A.S. "I think we don't have to stay closed, and isolated. Depression is more and more widespread, so it is necessary to restore the relationship with the nature. Tai Chi Chuan is a natural Art, let's not forget that. Us Westerners are used to meeting and practicing in gyms. In China, they have always practiced outdoors, as you can see in every film on this subject. I believe that we too must begin to meet outdoors, breathe outdoors, practice outdoors. We need to resume the original way..."

Also In winter, when it is cold?

A.S. "If it's cold we can cover ourselves. We can put on our hats and scarves. Nothing can stop us from practicing Tai Chi Chuan outdoors, as it has always been done. In this way I'm sure our energy will move. It is no use saying that to prove it. We have to experience it."

After the experience of on-line classes, will this be the new frontier?

A.S. "I'm sure that this new experience will make us grow, feel good and that we will be satisfied about it".

"The die is cast", in short: those who wish to follow the lessons with the teacher Anna Siniscalco can do that in Rome in the assigned locations, in the parks and on-line. Having clarified the limits, opportunities and advantages, the choice is yours.

For Info: **www.dinamicataichi.it**



The way of martial arts and the way of benevolence

Roberto Seghetti



The Master said: "In private a young man should love his parents and in public respect his superiors, be conscientious and sincere, love indiscriminately and cultivate friendship with those who are endowed with benevolence. If he has energy left, he should devote it to study."¹

The Master said: "The noble man of spirit is not quarrelsome. But if he is, it is only in the archery ceremony, where, however, he bows in greeting and gives up his place on the way up (to the hall) and on the way down offers a chalice. Even in disputes he is always a noble man."²

"....A man endowed with benevolence, desiring to be firm, causes others to be firm, desiring to progress makes sure others progress. Take as an example what you can do for those around you: that is the path to benevolence."³

"Keeping calm and treating the interlocutor with benevolence: this is required of the samurai. To mistreat a person is miserable behaviour."⁴

Since ancient times, three currents of thought have contributed to forming the universe of Chinese and Japanese martial arts: Taoism, Buddhism, particularly the Chan current (Zen in Japan) and Confucianism.

It is no coincidence that in the post-Greek-Roman West, martial arts have often been relegated to the physical aspect alone, and the passionate warrior-scholar of the arts has become a rarity.

In the East, the way of the warrior and of the fighter has never been separated from the cultivation of studies and the arts, from meditation and mental centring, from respect for social rules and respect for others.

Of course, history has also shown us many exceptions to these rules. Just think of the invasion of China by Japan and various events of the Second World War.

However, this is what the teachings of martial arts that originated in China and Japan are all about: study, self-control, education, respect. A good master is therefore considered to be the one who, together with the practice of the various techniques of defence and offence, helps the student to undertake the 'way', that is, to grow as a person in the world, to know himself or herself, to be centred, to find the right relationship with others.

This type of evolution, namely respect for family and social rules, respect for the master and for others, study, the practice of the arts, 'benevolence', are the legacy of Confucian thought. This is an extraordinary heritage to be proud of, which every master worthy of the name should perpetuate and which every true martialist should transform into life practice.



1 Dialogues, Confucius. By Tiziana Lippello. Einaudi 2006. I/6 page 5

2 Ibid. III/7. Page 23

3 Ibid. VI/30. Page 65

4 Bushido, the way of the warrior. Feltrinelli 2013. Citation from Hagakure by Yamamoto Tsunetomo, The samurai code. Page 156

Breathe in, breathe out and don't underestimate smells

By Alberta Tomassini

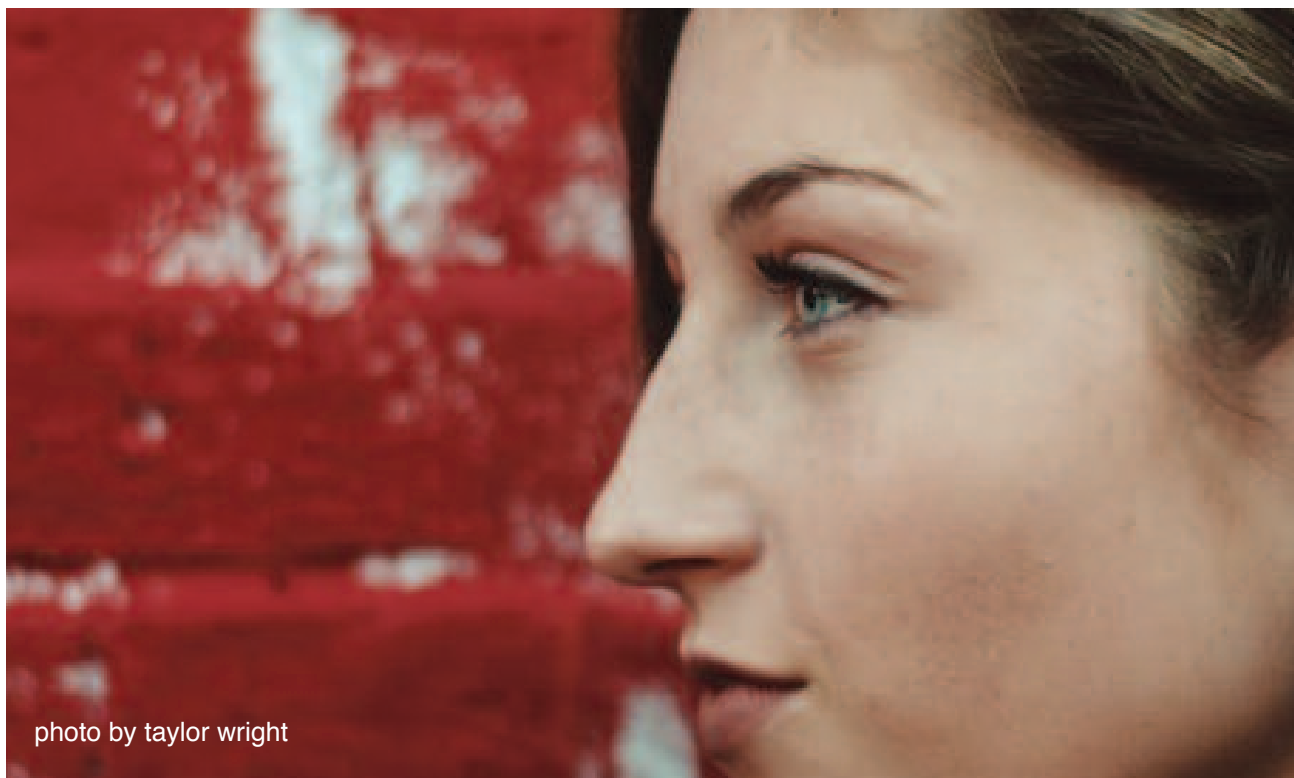


photo by taylor wright

"Smell immediately tells you, without error, what you need to know; there are no more precise words or information than what the nose receives" - Italo Calvino

'We live in a world of smells, where only the absence of smell is remarkable.'

(Moncrieff 1970: 17)

'We live in a world of smells, where only the absence of smell is worth mentioning!' This could be the slogan for an early diagnosis of COVID-19, according to studies that have shown that loss of smell and taste is a common symptom in the early stages of infection.

The sense of smell is one of our weakest senses, especially compared to other animals. And yet we are surrounded by the smells that, in nature, come from flowers, trees, bushes, grasses, animals, decaying matter, insects. How these odours affect our health and wellbeing is a question that has been little studied.

In humans, the sense of smell is functional as early as the end of the twelfth intrauterine week and the foetus, through the placenta and amniotic fluid, receives the aromas of food taken in by the mother. Similarly, during breastfeeding, aromas reach the baby through the mother's milk. Odours can have strong effects on our mood and behaviour. One of the ways in which odour molecules can influence us is through the link between the sense of smell and the limbic

(emotional) system. Emotions and odours are interconnected to the extent that anosmia (inability to perceive odours) or dysosmia (inability to distinguish odours) can manifest in depressive episodes. It has been shown experimentally that the smells of summer air (leaf alcohol!) and beeswax are associated with a sense of happiness and that an experience in a scented garden can induce an increase in calmness and an improvement in mood in participants. The natural smell of lavender is capable of altering brain activity as measured by electroencephalography. In one study, it was found that men and women could tell whether other individuals were happy or frightened based on smelling pads that had collected their sweat.

On the other hand, the interest in nature as a therapeutic resource has ancient foundations. Hippocrates emphasised the need for 'air, water and uncontaminated places' for physical and mental well-being, and ancient Roman texts suggested a beneficial role for the countryside and green areas. In the Middle Ages, gardens in monasteries were considered necessary 'not only for food, but also for outdoor recreation, to aid the healing of the sick, preserve health and improve the well-being of those engaged in spiritual studies' as written by the Franciscan Bonaventura in 1260.

As far back as 2000 BC, the ancient Greeks and Chinese used smell to diagnose infectious diseases such as tuberculosis. The doctor would set fire to the patient's spit and make the diagnosis by recognising the particular smell of the fumes.

The smells of infectious diseases have fascinated mankind for many years. For example, the typical smell of gaseous gangrene was described as early as the Middle Ages. During World War I and World War II, many soldiers suffered from such an infection with an approximate 50% mortality rate. With no other diagnostic techniques available, doctors relied solely on their senses, particularly their sense of smell.

The urine test was in ancient times (Egyptians, Babylonians, Arabs, Chinese) one of the main diagnostic tools available (see: "The excellent treatise on urine" by Avicenna) in which the observation of the odours emitted by the body and their droppings is dealt with, while in 1911 Sir Henry Salomon Wellcome published "The evolution of urine analysis: a historical profile of the medical examination of urine" where he listed the three main indicators to be considered: colour, odour and taste, like real sommeliers!

Doctors honed their olfactory skills with time and practice, using colour charts depicting sensory profiles (colour, appearance, taste and smell), called 'urine wheels'.

Normal metabolism produces countless volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that can produce specific odours that vary with age, diet, gender and physiological or pathological state. Well-known examples are the smell of acetone on the breath of patients with diabetic ketoacidosis or the smell of mould in patients with hepatic encephalopathy. Many metabolic diseases are accompanied by particular odours and are sometimes named after them. This is the case with trimethylaminuria, also known as 'fishy smell disease', or maple syndrome, in which patients smell of caramel or maple syrup.



In the late 1980s, a dog trainer who became increasingly concerned about a mole after his dog smelled it persistently and sometimes tried to remove it by chopping it off, decided to consult a dermatologist who diagnosed melanoma. Since then, many studies have evaluated the use of dogs as a diagnostic technique and there are numerous prototypes of electronic noses for medical use.

Right there in the centre of the face is our organ for odour analysis, the nose, which, with its countless shapes and proportions, is a particularly important somatic and identifying feature. No later than 1820, a scientific work stated that 'a long, pointed nose is a sign of acumen. A short, rounded nose marks a simplicity of mind, easy to deceive and with little foresight. A small,

narrow and mobile nose denotes a mocker. Large noses are indicative of heaviness and crooked noses are a sign of tortuous minds, while an aquiline nose denotes strength and courage, a flattened one an inclination to lust'.

In 1848 George Jabet published a book (Nasology: indications on the classification of noses) in which he proposed a division between nose types associated with different character attributes. He established six classes: Roman nose (aquiline), Greek nose (straight), cogitative nose (with wide nostrils), Hebrew nose (pronounced and upturned), camused nose (short and flattened), celestial nose (upturned). Each type with positive and negative variants



Photo by patrick-hendry

and characteristics.

On the other hand, as reported in an article in the Dublin University Magazine in 1866, it seems that Napoleon Bonaparte chose his servants according to the length of their noses.

And if you stop looking in the mirror now, let's move on!

As with noses, attempts have also been made to chemically classify 'odorous' molecules by type, but we end up being surprised by certain molecules which, despite being very similar, even mirror-like, have completely different odours. This is the case with the D-limonene molecule, which has a citrusy odour, and L-limonene, which smells of turpentine.

Attempts to classify odours date back to Aristotle in Europe and the Ying-Yang theory in Asia. In 1763, Albrecht von Haller proposed a tripartite division of odours: pleasant (musk, camphor, mint, apple, violet, rose); medium (wine, vinegar, wormwood and burnt smell); and fetid (animal breath, corpses, etc.). A year later, in 1764, the Swedish botanist Charles Linnaeus introduced a new seven-class scheme, aromatic, fragrant, ambrosial, alliaceous, goatly, gloomy (?) and nauseating.

On the other hand, it is well known that different individuals from different populations living in different parts of the world show different and particular preferences for odours. These preferences may depend on age, gender as well as social class, but are often related to the social, cultural and physical environment of the people. Shepherds in Sudan and East Africa, for example, anoint and smear themselves with the bodily products of their cows, especially urine and dung, while the smell of butter made from the same cows milk is associated with female 'perfume' and fertility. Papuans rub their bodies with scented plants to make women fall in love

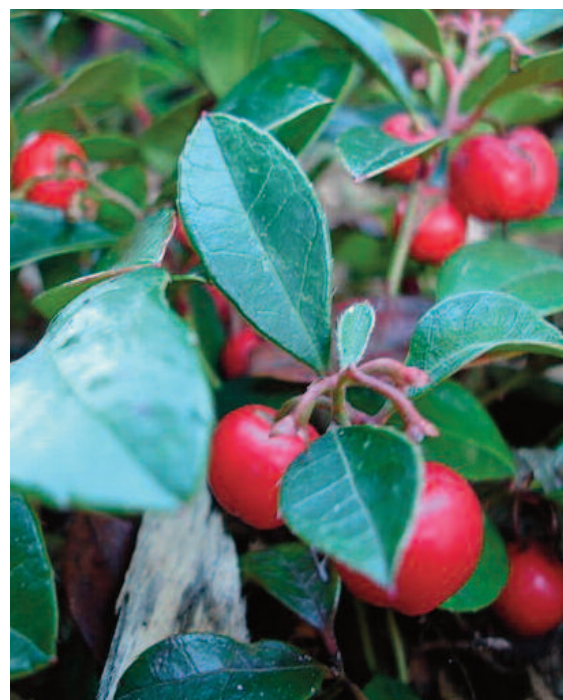
with them, and for African Bushmen, the most beautiful smell is that of rain! And speaking of environmental influences, the smell of citronella in laundry is pleasantly accepted by Europeans where citronella is linked to the concept of cleanliness, while it is rejected in the United States where the most common use of citronella oil is in insect repellent candles. In the mid-1960s, Moncrieff did a study in Great Britain of a large population asking them to evaluate a range of odours. At the bottom of the list was wintergreen, a Canadian evergreen, which was particularly undesirable. The study was repeated in the United States, and wintergreen still came out on top, but at the top of the popularity list. How could this be? In America, wintergreen is used to flavour sweets and drinks, while in Europe it is used in medicines and disinfectants!

Olfactory preferences are often linked to food. The Dogon people of Mali, for example, like to rub their whole bodies with fried potatoes, because their smell is by far the most attractive fragrance a young man or woman can wear! The Japanese used to refer to Europeans or Americans as 'butter stinkers (batakusai)' and, in turn, they were referred to as 'soya and Brylcreem stinkers', while northern Europeans called Mediterraneans 'garlic stinkers'.

Smells, fragrances, stinks or perfumes, therefore, seem very personal, but some are found in many different cultures. One example among many? Incense, which was, and still is, burned to ward off the enemies of the dead or to commemorate them. The ancient Egyptians believed that "the gods exuded a sweet odour, and safe passage to the afterlife could be assured if the corpse was endowed with sufficient fragrance"; they called incense "the divine odour" and it was the sweat of the gods that had fallen to earth. Buddha was thought to be "fragrant" and it was believed that the smell of incense could evoke the presence of Buddha.

One who understood all about olfactory marketing was Cleopatra. She owned a spa on the Dead Sea, in the area that Herod had had to cede to her under pressure from her lover Mark Antony, with a real cosmetics and perfume workshop. According to Plutarch, she covered her body with perfume, so that her arrival could already be perceived by nose. When she first presented herself to Mark Antony, even the sails of her boat were sprinkled with perfumes so that, with the wind, a perfumed breeze would announce her arrival.

So odours, perfumes, smells, essences and the ability to perceive them are not so irrelevant to human beings if the US Department of Defence has for years been trying to develop a 'stink bomb' to be used instead of tear gas to disperse crowds in the event of riots or violent demonstrations.



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Teens and adolescence: towards the unknown which is in us

By Fausta Romano



***...and it reminds me the eternal
the dead seasons and the present one
lively with her sound.
So my thought drowns in this immensity,
and how sweet is shipwreking in this sea
To me.***

(G. Leopardi, L'Infinito)

Have you ever seen the blossom of a cactus flower? In one night, with a little bit of patience, you could see it blooming right in front of your eyes...

In the same way the mind of a child who is becoming an adolescent watches in astonishment the transformation of one's own body, overnight! Yesterday it was a familiar body, a childish one, today it is a new body, a different one, a foreign one.

The child is like a traveller who after having laboriously climbed a mountain, reaches the summit

and sees in front of him an huge valley: an endless and unknown space to roam into, to discover, to live, all what they are not yet, all what is going to be, their future...it is breathtaking! Bewilderment, sense of solitude, fear, but also fascination, determination, bravery in front of all that.

A body which is changing without any possibility for the mind to control it: arms and legs are becoming longer (too much? too little?);the nose is changing, the hair are too straight, or too curly; the breast is growing, too little, too big; too tall, too short...

New and unknown sensations... shall I go and look for the other? How? What shall I do?

"I'd like to hold out my hand towards that girl...but my arm does not move, and I stand still. How do I do it? I've never done it before."

Everything is the first time, everything is new and nothing like before, nothing like it was, like you knew, nothing from the old world could be of help now.

"I have a recurring dream: a blinding light strikes my eyes...I know there is the rest of the dream around me and I'd like to open them, but I can't....I can half-open them, but not really open them...I can't tell the details, till when I wake up and then I realize it was a dream, a nightmare...I wake up in distress."

This dreamlike image of a twelve year old girl shows the condition of the change to adolescence: the emerging of the corporal dimension in the eyes of an unexperienced and unprepared mind, not ready to face the great deal of intense and unknown sensations and perceptions coming from their body dazzles them, like a gaze hurt by a too intense and sudden light .

Adolescence is something that only human beings experience, and it is also, due to its characteristics, an enormous potential, an opportunity to be able to find your own being, what you are, from now on and for all your life. Therefore it is also a new opportunity in those situations where childhood was full of difficulties.

This a fundamental passage for human beings, a second significative possibility to build their own balance, their own identity, to negotiate a new relationship between body and mind: adolescence, the second challenge, between the new being and the world.

For this peculiar condition, which will never arise again in our life with the same complexity, adolescence has its own characteristics, different from childhood or adulthood.

Claustrophobic feelings (a mind trapped in a foreign body which is sometimes felt as an enemy) or agoraphobic: a sudden opening on an immense horizon of possibilities.

The Unknown, Myself Unknown in an unknown world: everything to explore.

Time becomes impossible to control the more I desperately try to stick to my yesterday.

Do you know those kids who from 10 to 13 years old keep everything in their room? From old tickets to t-shirts two sizes ago, to broken tennis balls?

Or they see the same movie over and over again.

Then time suddenly stops: I will never be 18. Or it suddenly accelerated, and it si anyway irreversible. As an arrow of time (Hawking, 1988), the discovery of irreversibility: past cannot come back, present is unknown, the future is not there or looms over.



Photo by Jjoseph-gonzalez



"...così tra quest'immensità s'annega il pensier mio"....
 " So my thought drowns in this immensity.."

"I lost my future" "I'm not interesting: nobody is interested in what I say" "I'm not visible, I'm transparent, no one notices me, no one sees me"....

These words express a deep and desperate longing for life and at the same time an equally deep and desperate fear not to make it.

The old world is dead, it will not come back. The new world is to be born, unknown.

Solitude and the impossibility to communicate. A girl had a best friend, since when they were toddlers. They discussed of fairies and gnomes seen in the wood and immediately shared any new things happening to them...till when something incredible happened to her: she got her period! And while she was running to share this amazing new event, she suddenly froze: "How can I tell him? Could he ever understand me? I think he won't". So she didn't say anything. Alone with her silence.

If you follow an adolescent through their growth, rather than telling them what to do or how to be, requiring adults behaviours, you should first of all discover unknown to yourself and uncover what shows for the first time in front of your eyes which can support the youth in learning from their own experience: knowing what you are necessarily implies taking

responsibility of your own way of being, feeling, thinking and acting, and their consequences. If you put aside this essential process, it will recur later in life, in adulthood, when some choices have already been made and with uncomfortable effects, sometimes even devastating. This moment in life cannot be eluded: it is a compulsory step, a kind of pillars of Hercules, we all have to go through it one way or another if we want to own our life.

Therefore, for the adolescent the only choice is to follow through his own transformations, finding a way to stay in this passaging which is so disturbing on one hand but also so passionate on the other, the possibility to start a journey towards yourself and the world, the most exciting adventure for the human being, tolerating that special and paradoxical situation in which you have to do to know, while you would say it is necessary to know in order to do.

This situation should start with the adolescence, coinciding with puberty and I believe it may never end: our body changes continuously, our mind is perpetually facing this change, transforming itself. Our being changes continuously and this makes it difficult to fit into pre-formed models: fashion, theories, protocols....

All this means we need to tolerate the uncertainty of what is new in every instant.

Hard, but not tragic.

If you can accept it, little by little, you can discover that in the end our first and most loyal friend is our body, that we are ourselves for ourselves, we can then open to the other with less fear. Less fear of what is different, less unfamiliarity, since in every day first of all I meet and try to face the stranger in me, the stranger I am to myself.

In this peculiar time in our history, our life, we are all facing an unknown world: I believe that fear is a characteristic of our time. Terrorism, whose voice and sense we are not able to understand, migrants arriving in huge quantities on our shores, desperate people, survivors — our mind struggle to understand it and would like to withdraw; and now the Virus, which quickly spreads all over the world.

Many think the old world is dead and will never come back. The Virus: this coming from afar enemy which is contaminating us, killing us, transforming us.

But we do not realise that the Virus is part of us, of our body, it nestles in our cells and we therefore cannot attack it and kill it without killing our cells as well, our body.

We can though make ourselves stronger, caring and respecting ourselves and this precious and unique life we have been given.

This reminds me of a cartoon, The sword in the Stone, and the fight between Merlin and Madame Mim: after having tried to defeat each other by transforming themselves into all the possibly imaginable animals and monsters, Merlin becomes the measles, invading Madame Mim's body and winning the fight.

Maybe instead of fighting (there is now a 'war language' that fills the

communications by the media on the evolution of the medical reports) we can deal with how to make our psycho-physical system stronger: we know that in China, in the hospitals, doctors and nurses supported Covid-19 patients in the practice of Tai Chi Chuan. We know that taking your time slowly, filling every instant, instead of rushing around, creating opportunities for activities which can help the mind to turn to your own body with respect and care, can promote an overall improvement of your own psycho-physical resources and the immune defences.

Exercise, team or individual sports, practising internal or external Martial Arts, all these activities make a more well-balanced connection between

body and mind, or spirit and matter, possible. Among these, daily practice of Tai Chi Chuan gives you the possibility to breath, to trust and feel yourself connected between the energies to the earth and the sky, more useful than ever, since now we are all passing through a very hard time. The Virus is part of our mind: it is what we did not consider, the unknown we thought we could drive out, with our comfortable lives, ignoring the evils in the world.

So what?

Maybe we can finally become adolescents:

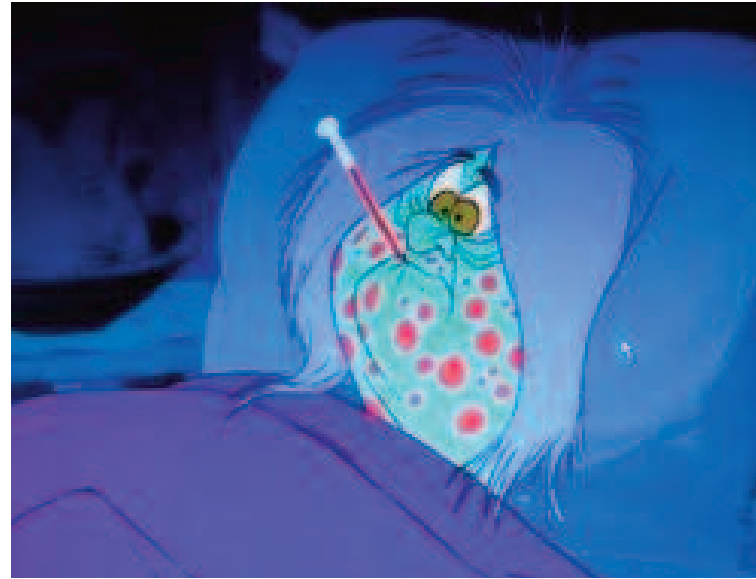
asking ourselves who we are, how we can be, and maybe choose if we want to indulge in a depressing isolation, or if we want to become interested in ourselves and in others. We can overcome the isolation, necessary to stop the virus, streatching out an ideal hand towards what is other from me,

towards my neighbour, at last start to talk honestly with ourselves and with others.

"Humanity must make a choice. Does it want to continue on the path of division or take the path of global solidarity? If it chooses division, it will not only prolong the crisis but probably cause even worse catastrophes in the future. If it chooses global solidarity, it will be a victory not only over the new coronavirus, but also over all future epidemics and crises that may arise in this century."(Yuval Noah Harari, Internazionale, 27/3-2/4, 2020)

The isolation that is necessary today, might teach us about solitude, like the girl who had a best friend: it is the condition of the human being to be alone, and only if we accept that we can open up to a relationship with the other, discovering the deep sense of solidarity.

"... how sweet is shipwreking in this sea to me."



The journey is the prize

How we took part in an international Tai Chi Chuan competition by Yang Family

By Diana Alliata



It's 6:30 in Colle oppio, Rome has just woken up, with just a few cars with lights still on. The Colosseum is silhouetted against the light-blue sky which has just started to brighten up, its empty arches filled with light, like warm sleepy eyes.

We are also tired, but very excited as well. What else could bring you at 6am in front of the Colosseum, enjoying this wonderful monument famous all over the world, if not an international Tai Chi Chuan competition, organised by the Yang Family?

Training and the participating to the competition has been an exiting experience for the Dinamica team.

We trained every day, for a couple of hours a day, in order to find the delicate balance between our different ways of moving, a laboriously searched unison, through perseverance and commitment. We were happy to practice together, never nervous or too hard on ourselves, never looking for perfection, but for the best of our abilities. We build up our practice together. Finally we videorecorded our essential form.

Choosing the background music took a lot of our time and energies, from copyright concerns regarding O' sole mio, which at that time seemed in perfect harmony with our movement, to the gem found by our technician, a Nessun dorma by Puccini which resonates in a crescendo that incredibly culminate in the last kick. Unfortunately they both broke copyright laws, and we

dutifully adapted choosing an already tested and safe music.

One of our colleagues said it out loud, what was already in everybody's heart: it is not important to be first, but the journey we did together. And it was a wonderful journey full of practice, commitment, laughter and problem solving.

Then, few minutes in front of the computer uploading a video, the sound of the video sent, the delivery message and It's done.

No matter what the result will be, we did it, and we did it together.



DINAMICA

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太極拳

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TOMAS-20

This is not needle at the
bottom of the sea...
I'm just looking for a
physical therapist!

