



Hello all,

Welcome to *Volume 3, Issue 1* of *Swan & Stone*. We're kicking off a new volume coincident with the redesign of the [ChiArts](#) website. Henceforth, *Swan & Stone* articles will be cataloged there and on the [Swan & Stone](#) YouTube channel. "Coherent Breathing" articles will continue to be published at [Coherence.com](#) and on the [Coherent Breathing](#) YouTube channel. This is an attempt to unravel my writings on Coherent Breathing® from those involving esoterica, where over the years I've mixed the topics liberally. This being explained, the topic of this article is *Dissolution*.

Dissolution is a quintessential experience and outcome of [Wuji Qi Gong](#), where the ancient context for dissolution is becoming one with the 4 primordial elements. In Kashmiri Shaivism *knowing and living dissolution* is considered enlightenment.

I don't know if dissolution can be experienced any other way than via Wuji Qi Gong (or its equivalent by another name). It is the way I experienced it, and to my understanding is consistent with ancient philosophical writings on the matter.

Figure 1, at the right shows the Samkhyan model of manifestation and its reverse, circa 3500 B.C.E. The foundational model is that of the 4 primordial elements, Air, Earth, Fire, and Water, the basis of the Bagua – or it could be the other way around, historically. My perspective on it is that there was a great mixing of theory and practice in the zone encompassing northern India, Pakistan, Kashmir, Tibet, and China, the Silk Road being a major channel for the communication and sharing of such information.

What does *dissolution* mean as used here? The easiest way to conceive of the experience is that our sense of being physically separate ceases – our physical boundary dissolves and with it our energetic boundary, such that our energetic being is no longer limited to that which exists within the skin. In Taoist parlance one is able to extend "the Yi", the mind, and with it the Qi. Of course this is central to the practice of internal martial arts as well, and in my experience is necessary to cultivate "fajing", the ability to repel an opponent with one's energy. It is also necessary for expansion of one's senses, our sphere of awareness literally increases in size. We can practice this deliberately, and with practice our consciousness extends further and further out, a goal being to extend it outwardly until we are aware that the physical body doesn't exist. This is the sense of complete dissolution.

In my experience, the practice of [Wuji Qi Gong](#) is a prerequisite to what I describe here, this because it sets up the conditions for cultivating dissolution. The fundamental yogic requirements are *Man United With Heaven And Earth*, that requirement being symbolized in Figure 1 as the straight line between Earth and Brahman, the body connecting between Heaven and Earth like the string of a harp. The second requirement is *Coherent Breathing (cultivation of the Air element)*, this because it causes the string to play. Both of these steps are subtle and require work to cultivate and understand. Note that we are cultivating the sushumna or chong meridian. Once we are comfortable with the first 2 steps, we carry them with us all the time, i.e. we strive to maintain our connection between Heaven and Earth at all times, and we strive to breathe coherently at all times, circumstances permitting. With this the sushumna comes alive in us.

With these capabilities well established, step 3 is cultivation of the Fire element, attaching the mind to the navel.

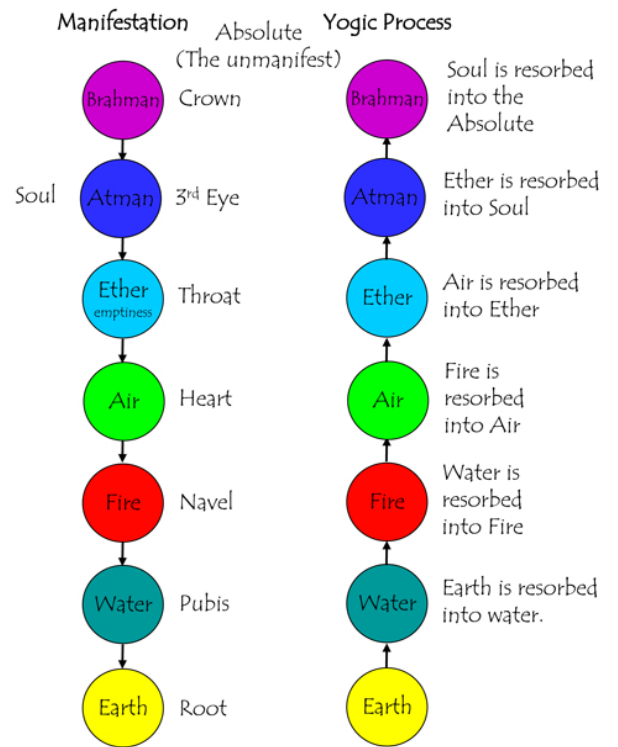


Figure 1: The Process Of Manifestation And Dissolution



We can see the philosophical notion here, Fire turns the body into a few handfuls of dust. Why the navel? Because the navel is our point of physical origin. It has a very special place in esoterica. By attaching our mind to it, and cultivating the experience, we find that the navel extends outwardly, i.e. it is a “*dvadashanta*”, a *celestial stem* in Taoist parlance. While our umbilical cord is severed at birth, it still exists etherically and with practice can be clearly perceived. The lost understanding of *dvadashanta* is “the 12 ends” which in Shaivist parlance connect us to Shiva and in Taoist parlance connect us to Tao. The navel stem is the original stem and is the pathway back to our origin.

Experientially, with focus on the navel, our sphere of energy begins to grow and with it our sense of dissolution. These 3 steps are foundational, but cultivation of the Earth element is also ultimately necessary. The essence of Earth is *relaxation*, and here I mean *learning to let it all go*, every ounce of tension in the body. Any tension in the body prevents our energetic sphere from expanding, it is possibly the greatest inhibitor to this practice. We developed *The Six Bridges* to help facilitate this process, eliminating “knots” that prevent us from *letting it all go*. I like to refer to this condition as *lowering our shield*, an energetic boundary that surrounds us but that is built of tension.



Photograph by Stephen Elliott

If we back up for a moment, you can see that we are cultivating, Earth, Fire, and Air elements, in Taoist parlance, Earth, Fire, and Heaven, Heaven and Earth both having double entendre relative to the practice. There are additional practices that enhance this process, one of which is to imagine our dissolution into Air, Earth, & Fire. Water is also a critical element in the process but it is complex and comes a bit later as is explained in *Wuji Qi Gong & The Secret Of Immortality*.

While I’ve practiced yoga and Eastern martial arts for many years, I came to understand what I am describing by practicing personal EEG, discovering or “re-discovering” Coherent Breathing, and reading and cross referencing Eastern esoteric writings from different regions and cultures, this and my introduction to Wuji Qi Gong, which ultimately yielded its secrets to me, those secrets being keys that connected the dots. I find Figure 2, a statue of bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara or Guanyin to be a beautiful expression of the significance of the chakras and the special place the navel holds in enlightenment. The statue is a perfect representation of the practice I describe. The head is held high, the body is on a line between Heaven & Earth, the mind is “attached” to the navel. The idea is to practice this to the point where we can carry it with us throughout the day with maybe 5 or 10% of our attention on it at all times. Don’t worry about this attention distracting us from other things that we may be doing. In fact it heightens our awareness of those things, so there is return on our investment of energy and attention.

Ancient Taoist writings urged one to find a peaceful place in a natural setting to practice. This is even more important in today’s modern world due to electrical devices that both interfere and present a hazard to one’s sphere. The sphere is electrical in nature and can become entangled with strong electromagnetic fields. Therefore, if one practices to the extent that one can extend one’s sphere significantly, be careful not to do it around electrical machines, the more powerful, the riskier.

Figure 2:
Avalokiteshvara Guanyin
depicting navel,
chakras, channels, &
circulations

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