

What is Chi?

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Many, many, sages, scholars, researchers and laymen have attempted to answer the perplexing question of – What is Chi?



The simplistic answer most often used is that Chi is “vital energy” or Chi is the “life force”, but this answer falls well short of addressing the apparent complexity of Chi.

Referring to Chi as just vital energy would be like me saying that I am Rod Morin. A name is just a label. A name does not address the millions of intricacies that combine to make me, who and what I am.

This essay cannot speak to all of the complexities of this subtle topic, but I will attempt to detail my understanding to the layman in such a way that a basic yet comprehensive understanding may be digested by the reader.

To do this we must start from the beginning:

The tao that can be told
is not the eternal Tao
The name that can be named
is not the eternal Name.

The unnamable is the eternally real.
Naming is the origin
of all particular things.

Free from desire, you realize the mystery.

Caught in desire, you see only the manifestations.

Yet mystery and manifestations
arise from the same source.
This source is called darkness.

Darkness within darkness.
The gateway to all understanding.

~[Tao Te Ching](#) Chapter One

The material Universe is not what it seems to be. Personally, I like to refer to the material Universe as reality. Re-ality. Whenever the suffix "re" is used in a word it means that the subject is not fundamental to the concept. Look at words like reflection and recollect. The image you see in the mirror is the re-flection of the actual subject and not the subject itself. The thoughts you pull from memory are not the original thoughts but a replica of the original.

This reality we sense as the material Universe is just a reflection of Actuality. Actuality (my term) is what is fundamental. The passage below refers to a "Substantial Reality" but then goes on to use the phrase "Mental Creation", so while I agree with the content, I don't agree with the vocabulary.

"THE ALL is MIND; The Universe is Mental."

This Principle embodies the truth that "All is Mind." It explains that THE ALL (which is the Substantial Reality underlying all the outward manifestations and appearances which we know under the terms of "The Material Universe"; the "Phenomena of Life"; "Matter"; "Energy"; and in short, all that is apparent to our material senses) is SPIRIT, which in itself is UNKNOWABLE and UNDEFINABLE, but which may be considered and thought of as AN UNIVERSAL, INFINITE, LIVING MIND. It also explains that all the phenomenal world or universe is simply a Mental Creation of THE ALL, subject to

the Laws of Created Things, and that the universe, as a whole, and in its parts or units, has its existence in the Mind of THE ALL, in which Mind we “live and move and have our being.”

This Principle, by establishing the Mental Nature of the Universe, easily explains all of the varied mental and psychic phenomena that occupy such a large portion of the public attention, and which, without such explanation, are non-understandable and defy scientific treatment. An understanding of this great Hermetic Principle of Mentalism enables the individual to readily grasp the laws of the Mental Universe, and to apply the same to his well-being and advancement. The Hermetic Student is enabled to apply intelligently the great Mental Laws, instead of using them in a haphazard manner. With the Master-Key in his possession, the student may unlock the many doors of the mental and psychic temple of knowledge, and enter the same freely and intelligently. This Principle explains the true nature of “Energy,” “Power,” and “Matter,” and why and how all these are subordinate to the Mastery of Mind. One of the old Hermetic Masters wrote, long ages ago: “He who grasps the truth of the Mental Nature of the Universe is well advanced on The Path to Mastery.” And these words are as true to-day as at the time they were first written. Without this Master-Key, Mastery is impossible, and the student knocks in vain at the many doors of The Temple.”—The Kybalion

The unnamable is the eternally real. – [Tao Te Ching](#)

The Material Universe Does Not Exist

Today’s scientists are finally accepting what the evidence of numerous experiments and calculations have been showing them for over a century and what the sages of old have been speaking of for millennia.

“Like the appearance of silver in mother of pearl, the world seems real until the Self, the underlying reality, is realized.” –[Shankara](#)

“Maya is not illusion as it is popularly interpreted. Maya is real, yet it is not real. It is real in that the Real is behind it and gives it its appearance of reality. That which is real in Maya is the Reality in and through Maya. Yet the Reality is never seen ; and hence that which is seen is unreal, and it has no real independent existence of itself, but is dependent upon the Real for its existence. Maya then is a paradox—real, yet not real, an illusion, yet not an illusion. He who knows the Real sees in Maya not illusion, but reality. He who knows not the Real sees in Maya illusion and thinks it real.” –[Swami Vivekananda](#)

“For ages man has thought of matter as being substance. Posterity must learn to think of matter as motion only.” –[Walter Russell](#)

“All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force... We must assume behind this force the existence of a conscious and intelligent Mind. This Mind is the matrix of all matter.” –[Max Planck](#)

“What we have called matter is energy (light), whose vibration has been so lowered as to be perceptible to the senses. There is no matter.” –[Albert Einstein](#)

Or, more recently...

“There is no spoon”. -Neo, from the movie, [The Matrix](#)

Wrapping you head around the fact that there is no substance in this seemingly material Universe is going to be the biggest challenge for any and all who wish to truly understand the true nature of reality and or Chi.

The following excerpt might help you to grasp this concept:

Misconception of Substance in Matter

Sense of observation has led to the erroneous conclusion that there are 92 different substances of matter. This universe is substance less. It consists of motion only. Motion simulates substance by the control of its opposing wave pressures of motion which deceive the senses into seeing substance where motion alone is.

The senses do not reach beyond the illusion of motion, nor do those who believe that they can gain knowledge of the secrets of this vast make believe universe even faintly comprehend the unreality of the mirage of polarized light-in-motion which they so firmly believe is real.

Motion is two-way, for all motion is caused by the division of an equilibrium, and its extension in two opposite directions to create the two opposite conditions of pressures necessary to make motion imperative.

One of these two conditions of electric motion thrusts inward toward a center to create a centripetal vortice to simulate gravity. On the other side of the dividing equator, the other condition thrusts from a center to create a centrifugal vortice to simulate vacuity.

Moving waves of oppositely-conditioned thought simulate substance, but there is no substance to the motion which simulates IDEA in matter.

If a cobweb could move fast enough, it would simulate a solid steel disk and it would cut through steel. If such a thing could happen, it would not be the "substance" of the cobweb which cut through the steel – it would be the motion which cut it.

Fast moving short waves simulate solids, while slow moving

long waves simulate the gases of space which surround solids. Waves of motion are substance less, however. They merely simulate substance. -Walter Russell – [A New Concept of the Universe](#)

Your legacy programming and in fact all of your sense derived experience will shriek that this cannot be so. Of course there is matter and substance. All one has to do is stub your toe or stomp on the ground to confirm the reality of matter and substance... But that would be like an actor becoming so engrossed in a character that they are portraying, that they forget themselves.

“The Matrix is everywhere. It is all around us. Even now, in this very room. You can see it when you look out your window or when you turn on your television. You can feel it when you go to work... when you go to church... when you pay your taxes. It is the world that has been pulled over your eyes to blind you from the truth.” -Morpheus, from the movie, [The Matrix](#)

The Electric Universe

What we perceive as the material universe is completely subjective due to the fact that everything that we perceive is accomplished through our senses.

Our senses (sensors) are programmed to interpret very specific information just as a carbon monoxide sensor in your home can only react to carbon monoxide levels and not heightened levels of radioactive cesium 137.

Our senses are in fact VERY limited in their working range and thus cannot be relied upon when trying to decipher the “big picture”. In fact our senses are only parts of a system that work in conjunction with the pre programmed software of the brain.

“The senses are limited to but a small range of perception of the EFFECTS which they sense, and even that small range is saturated with the deceptions and distortions created by the illusion of motion.” -Walter Russell – [A New Concept of the Universe](#)

“All variation in sense of feeling is due to a difference of electric conditioning in pulsing wave “matter”.” -Walter Russell – [The Secret of Light](#)

“What is real? How do you define ‘real’? If you’re talking about what you can feel, what you can smell, what you can taste and see, then ‘real’ is simply electrical signals interpreted by your brain.” -Morpheus, from the movie [The Matrix](#)

Our senses can be likened to a data collection system and the data that the senses collect is the vibration of thought wave forms.

Similar to data that flows through a computer; our senses rely on electricity to power the system.

Science today defines electricity as:

e·lec·tric·i·ty: a form of energy resulting from the existence of charged particles (such as electrons or protons), either statically as an accumulation of charge or dynamically as a current.

Now, relating back to what the sages and physicists are now in agreement upon, which is; that matter does not exist, then how can there be charged particles?

Electricity is not the energy resulting from the existence of charged particles.

Electricity as defined by the late great Walter Russell:

Electricity is the strain or tension set up by the two opposing desires of universal Mind thinking: the desire for balanced action and the desire for rest. This electric universe is a complexity of strains caused by the interaction of these two opposing, interchanging electric desires. All matter is electric. All matter is conditioned into greater or lesser strains according to the intensity of desire which is the cause of all electric strain to which it is subjected. The farther removed from rest, the greater the strain or tension. That which we call high electric potential is merely great strain to maintain a condition which is far from the condition of rest. -Walter Russell – [The Secret of Light](#)

“Desire of Mind expresses its desire through the electric process of thinking. Thinking divides IDEA into pairs of oppositely conditioned units of motion which record a simulation of IDEA into thought forms.” -Walter Russell – [A New Concept of the Universe](#)

Electricity is the force that is fundamental to motion.

“All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force.”
–[Max Planck](#)

Electricity is the effect derived from a cause which is the desire for creation.

Electricity is dualistic just as all “things” must be dualistic in order for an effect to manifest. The dualistic nature of electricity simultaneously performs just two tasks:

1 – Rhythmic Balanced Action (vibration)

“Nothing rests; everything moves; everything vibrates.” –[The Kybalion](#)

“This Principle embodies the truth that “everything is in

motion”; “everything vibrates”; “nothing is at rest”; facts which Modern Science endorses, and which each new scientific discovery tends to verify. And yet this Hermetic Principle was enunciated thousands of years ago, by the Masters of Ancient Egypt. This Principle explains that the differences between different manifestations of Matter, Energy, Mind, and even Spirit, result largely from varying rates of Vibration. From THE ALL, which is Pure Spirit, down to the grossest form of Matter, all is in vibration—the higher the vibration, the higher the position in the scale.

The vibration of Spirit is at such an infinite rate of intensity and rapidity that it is practically at rest—just as a rapidly moving wheel seems to be motionless. And at the other end of the scale, there are gross forms of matter whose vibrations are so low as to seem at rest. Between these poles, there are millions upon millions of varying degrees of vibration. From corpuscle and electron, atom and molecule, to worlds and universes, everything is in vibratory motion. This is also true on the planes of energy and force (which are but varying degrees of vibration); and also on the mental planes (whose states depend upon vibrations); and even on to the spiritual planes. An understanding of this Principle, with the appropriate formulas, enables Hermetic students to control their own mental vibrations as well as those of others. The Masters also apply this Principle to the conquering of Natural phenomena, in various ways. “He who understands the Principle of Vibration, has grasped the sceptre of power,” says one of the old writers. —[The Kybalion](#)

Electricity is the motive force of the creative thought wave expression that results in manifestation when absorbed through the senses. Electricity moves away from center, radiating and expressing the IDEA and then retreats or gravitates back to center after the expression of IDEA is completed.

This gravitation back to center is the recording of the

thought form derived from the cause of desire. (Another term for this would be – return to Source)

“The function of the One is now to return to the source” –[The Architect](#) from the movie, [The Matrix](#)

Electricity is the workhorse of the Universe. It alone is both Father and Mother of vibration. The electric force is the two-way continuous and opposing expression of radiation and gravitation which creates the dualistic environment which is then capable of infinite variation.

Wuji begat Taiji, Taiji is the Mother of the ten thousand things

Electricity is Taiji (The Supreme Ultimate of the manifest universe)

Electricity is Yin and Yang.

*Electricity is the “2” in the Fibonacci sequence.
0,1,1,2,3,5,8,13*

Where:

0 = Wuji (Mind)

1 = Desire

1 = Idea

2 = Electricity

(polarized thinking, Taiji, Yin/Yang)

3,5,8,13 etc (the spiral of manifest creation)

Yet mystery and manifestations

arise from the same source.

This source is called darkness.

Tao Te Ching Chapter 2

The Tao is called the Great Mother

empty yet inexhaustible,

it gives birth to infinite worlds.

[Tao Te Ching](#) Chapter 6

Electricity as Defined Above is Chi

The universe is mental not substantial. Chi is the strain or tension of thought wave forms simultaneously manifesting motion as vibration while instantaneously recording the same. The motion is happening due to the splitting of the one IDEA.

When people see some things as beautiful,

other things become ugly.

When people see some things as good,

other things become bad.

Being and non-being create each other.

Difficult and easy support each other.

Long and short define each other.

High and low depend on each other.

Before and after follow each other.

[Tao Te Ching](#) Chapter 2

This splitting manifests the dualism required by our senses to perceive light and dark, male and female, hot and cold, love and hate. The IDEA is like a pebble thrown into a clear still pond which results in waves carrying the simulation or the information of the pebble towards the shores of reality.

The splitting of the IDEA is the CAUSE of the effect, the effect being electricity or chi. Chi is the force that drives the thought wave form towards its expression and back to Source.

Understanding that chi is the motive force behind everything that can be sensed or perceived is just the beginning of the game. Learning how to use this knowledge requires the player to immerse themselves into the game of everyday life to experiment, practice and play in order to pursue Mastery.

It is always present within you.

You can use it any way you want.

[Tao Te Ching](#) Chapter 6

The Tao is like a well:

used but never used up.

It is like the eternal void:

filled with infinite possibilities.

[Tao Te Ching](#) Chapter 4

Look, and it can't be seen.

Listen, and it can't be heard.

Reach, and it can't be grasped.

Above, it isn't bright.

Below, it isn't dark.

Seamless, unnamable,

it returns to the realm of nothing.

Form that includes all forms,

image without an image,

subtle, beyond all conception.

Approach it and there is no beginning;

follow it and there is no end.

You can't know it, but you can be it,

at ease in your own life.

Just realize where you come from:

this is the essence of wisdom.

[Tao Te Ching](#) Chapter 14

So yes, Chi is vital energy, it is the life force, it is the rock and the rose and the sky. Chi is everything and simultaneously no-thing.

About the Author

Rod Morin operates Barrie Tai Chi & Qigong studio in Barrie, Ontario, Canada, focusing on Yang-style Tai Chi, Taiji Qigong and Ziran Qigong. Rod has taught hundreds of students basic tai chi and energy work while striving to incorporate the profound teachings of taiji philosophy into his daily life. Please visit his website at www.barrietaichi.com.

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