

# THE DOCTRINE OF THE ELIXIR

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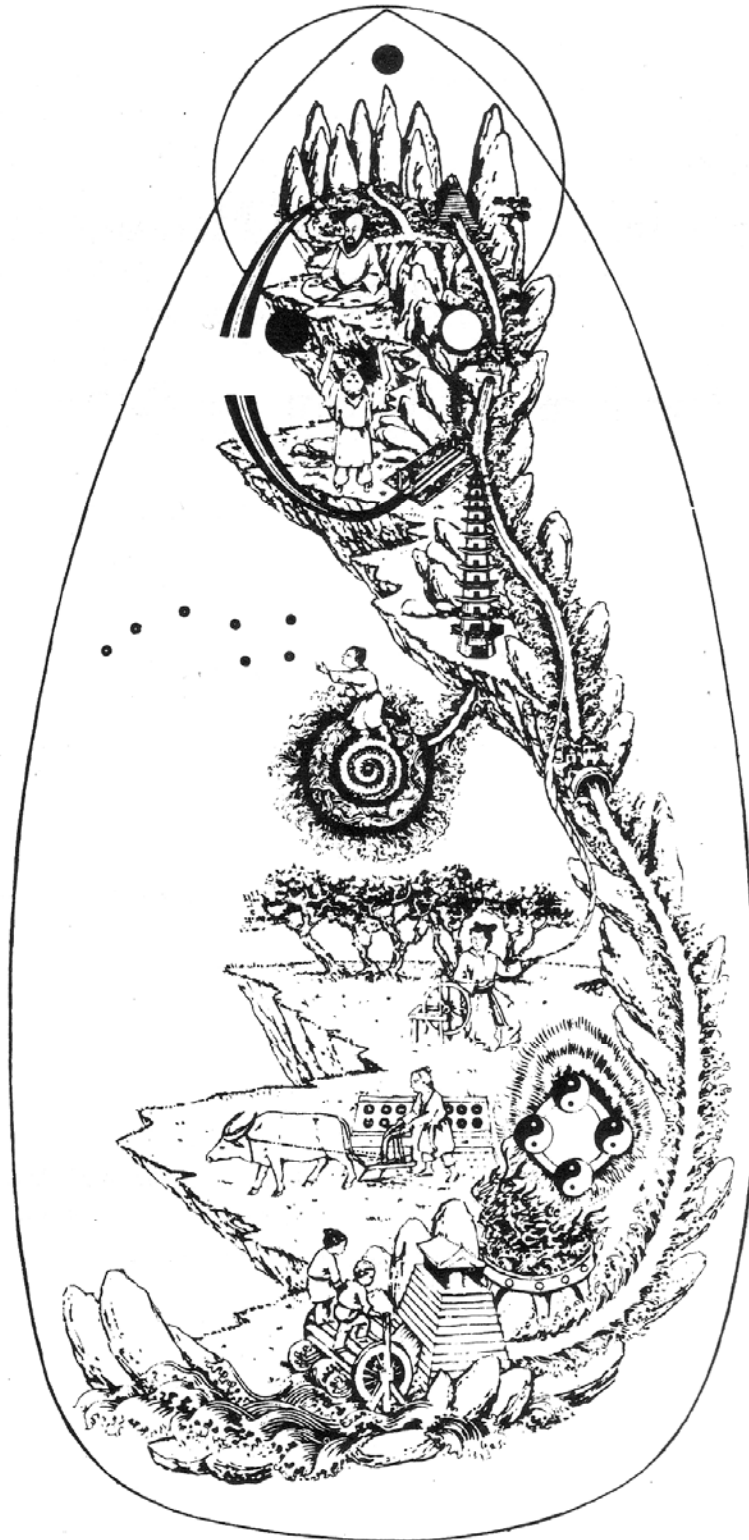


Lü Tung-pin

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# The Doctrine of the Golden Mercuric Sulphur (Cinnabar)

## The Fire of the Unitive Path



# THE DOCTRINE OF THE ELIXIR

R. B. Jefferson

According to Irwin Rouselle, the *Doctrine of the Gold Elixir* is the most significant tradition of living Taoism. It derives chiefly from the Patriarch Lu Tung-pin (b. 798). In it, a number of individual teachings and traditions have been fused into a single system for the transformation of man that embraces the quintessence of the entire Taoist tradition.

Taoist alchemy is an ancient science which teaches the stopping of the flow of the generative force inherent in every man, so that instead of being discharged to procreate offspring or to waste away, it is retained in the body for purification and transmutation into positive vitality. This restores the original spirit which existed before the world came into being, so that it can return to its Primal Immortal state.

The diagram representing the doctrine is taken from two sources: one a rubbing from a stone tablet found in the Monastery of the White Clouds near Peking, and the other a coloured scroll painting on which the tablet was based. The tablet is dated 1886.

It is a symbolical representation of a lengthwise section of the (male) human head and torso, together with the spinal column. Nowhere is there any realistic anatomical portrayal, but various allegories are alluded to through symbols and human figures. The body section is surrounded by an almond-shaped aureole, whilst the head is circled by a halo and within this halo is a small circle.

The whole painting depicts a strange poetic landscape embracing Heaven and Earth and the murky waters of Hades - a landscape representing man in many aspects including the spiritual, psychic and animal. All representations of human beings in the picture - with the exception of Laot'se - are shown as children or young people to indicate that they express Eternal Youth. Laot'se as an old man refers to the Treasure of ancient Eternal Truth which was disclosed to him, the Perfect Man.

The picture is also a map by which the aspirant may see in pictorial form the cardinal points of the teaching which he may encounter in the very precise exercises he must practice, in a definite order, through a series of specific stages.

Before studying the picture in detail some introduction is necessary. There are five main concepts of Chinese medicine related to aspects of the chemistry or alchemy of Life and Spirit in their relation to Taoist symbolism and techniques of meditation.

- 1 The Three Rivers
- 2 The Main Pulses
- 3 Sublimation
- 4 The Archaic Anatomy of Individual Organs
- 5 The Cosmic Analogy

## 1. The Three Rivers

The three rivers or 'humours' which flow through the body are the *Spirit*, the *Breath* and the *Seed* - or, loosely, the Spiritual force, the Vital force and the Generative force or force of Immortality. These are regulated, guided and united through meditative practices. From their union arises the Immortal Man - the *Diamond Body*.

## 2. The Main Pulses

Within the body is a network of pulses or channels of breath belonging to the circulatory system - the 'Inner Warp'. Thus, in the painting, the heart and the lungs are depicted as one. In contemporary practice these breath pulses are not conceived as being physically visible. They are understood to lie partly outside the body in open space, and a differentiation is made between

inner and outer air, i.e. between the Pulses and the Arterial system. Also, ancient Chinese physiologists observed that in slaughtered animals the veins were seen to be full of blood, whilst the arteries were found bloodless but full of air.

However, certain vital points are localized with anatomical precision and acupuncture is based on these. The points are known as 'cavities' or 'hollow passages' (*hsueh tao*). The cavities are places where energies either accumulate or disperse and from them arise the two main Pulses of breath - *Yin* and *Yang* - situated on either side of the body and connected to twelve minor pulses.

The main pulse of Yang (positive, active) -the Guide Channel or Channel of Control - arises from the area of the junction of the bones of the pelvis between the legs at the front of the body, and ascends by way of the spinal cord - the 'Milky Way'- to the brain, passing through the forehead to the bridge of the nose.

The main pulse of Yin (negative, passive) - the Channel of Function - arises in the genital zone and rises upwards through the vicinity of the navel and continues on through the neck to the lips.

Through the meditative union of the two channels within a closed circuit, the powers of Spirit, Life and Immortality contribute (as in the conception of the corporeal child) to the birth of the Eternal child, and the Immortal Man is realized.

### 3. Sublimation

In science, sublimation is the conversion of a substance directly to vapour by means of heat and then allowing it to cool and solidify. In psychology, it is the transmutation of a primitive energy into a higher form.

All the main traditions - Far Eastern, Indian and Near Eastern - affirm a connection between the central nervous system and the generative force or sex energy. The 'brain fluid' flows downwards through the spinal chord to fulfil the generative function, but in the process its potential as a self-transformative substance is lost or dissipated. Hence, in the Taoist view, there is reason to oppose the downward flow by special regulated breathing and meditative practices to induce the 'River of Heaven' to flow upwards through the 'Milky Way'. As soon as the generative force moves to find its usual outlet, it is turned back and then, driven by the inner fire that is kindled by regulated breathing, passes into the *Microcosmic Orbit* for sublimation.

The microcosmic orbit begins at the base of the spine - called the *First Gate* (*wei lu*) - rises in the spinal column to the *Second Gate* between the kidneys (*chai chi*) and goes to the back of the head - called the *Third Gate* (*yu ch'en*) - before reaching the *Fourth Gate* in the brain (*ni wan*). It then descends down the face, chest and abdomen to return to where it arose, and so completes a full circuit.

### 4. The Archaic Anatomy of Individual Organs

In Chinese meditation techniques, the physiological representations of internal organs correspond only partly to their actual form. In part, they also reflect another condition related to forms that have long since disappeared in human physiology on this planet (Carl Jung has referred to these remaining in the human mind mental counterparts of extinct internal organs). The following are some examples:

The Third Eye which, as in the case of deep-sea fish, both sees and illumines objects.

The unbroken connection between the kidneys and the testicles - in Chinese, there is only one word for both organs.

The situation of the Vital Centre or 'field of Cinnabar' (sulphide of mercury) in the solar-plexus.

The 'Three Burners' or water-secreters which fill the lower body at the level of the stomach, navel and bladder - the 'Sea of Breath'.

In connection with the Three Burners, Taoism delineates Three Psychic Centres which are called *Tan t'ien*, translated as the 'field of the drug', where the 'drug' or alchemical agent is produced (tan is cinnabar, or sulphide of mercury).

- (1) The Lower Tan t'ien, 1.3 inches below the navel, where the Generative force is retained (so that it does not slip down and drain away) in order to purify it.
- (2) The Middle Tan t'ien is in the heart where the Generative force is transmuted into Vitality. (Lu Kuan Yu - Charles Luk - in Taoist Yoga describes it as being in the solar plexus).
- (3) The Upper Tan t'ien, the 'Original Cavity of the Spirit', is between and behind the eyes, where Vitality is transmuted into Spirit.

Although there is no literal correspondence between the Three Burners and the Three Psychic Centres, it can be noted that in the terminology used in Taoism a *cauldron* refers to a cavity in which the process of alchemy transmutes the Generative force into Vitality and Vitality into Spirit through each of the Tan t'ien; whereas a *stove* refers to a cavity where the inner fire is kindled by regulated breathing to put the Generative force into the microcosmic orbit and transmute it into Vitality. The stove remains in the lower Tan t'ien throughout the process of alchemical change. (These notes may be helpful when looking at the *Tripod of the Elixir* in the painting.)

The breath, of which there are Five Vital Breaths, is related to the Five Elements. Together with their displacements, they are:

- |    |       |                           |
|----|-------|---------------------------|
| 1. | Wood  | Liver and Gall            |
| 2. | Fire  | Heart and Small Intestine |
| 3. | Earth | Spleen and Stomach        |
| 4. | Metal | Lungs and Large Intestine |
| 5. | Water | Kidneys and Bladder       |

The arrangement of the Elements related to Tan t'ien are:

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| Earth | in the centre of the body (in Indian Yoga, Earth is placed bottommost) |
| Fire  | just below the centre and further back                                 |
| Water | at the very bottom aside from the spine                                |

## 5. The Cosmic Analogy

Within the structure of Taoist symbolical representation is inextricably mingled the magi-animistic system which dominated ancient Chinese cosmology and the peculiar (to the Western scientific view) structure of traditional Chinese medicine and physiology. Cosmology and physiology are woven together in analogies, symbolic images, beliefs and terminology - all representing Man and Cosmos, Cosmos and Man.

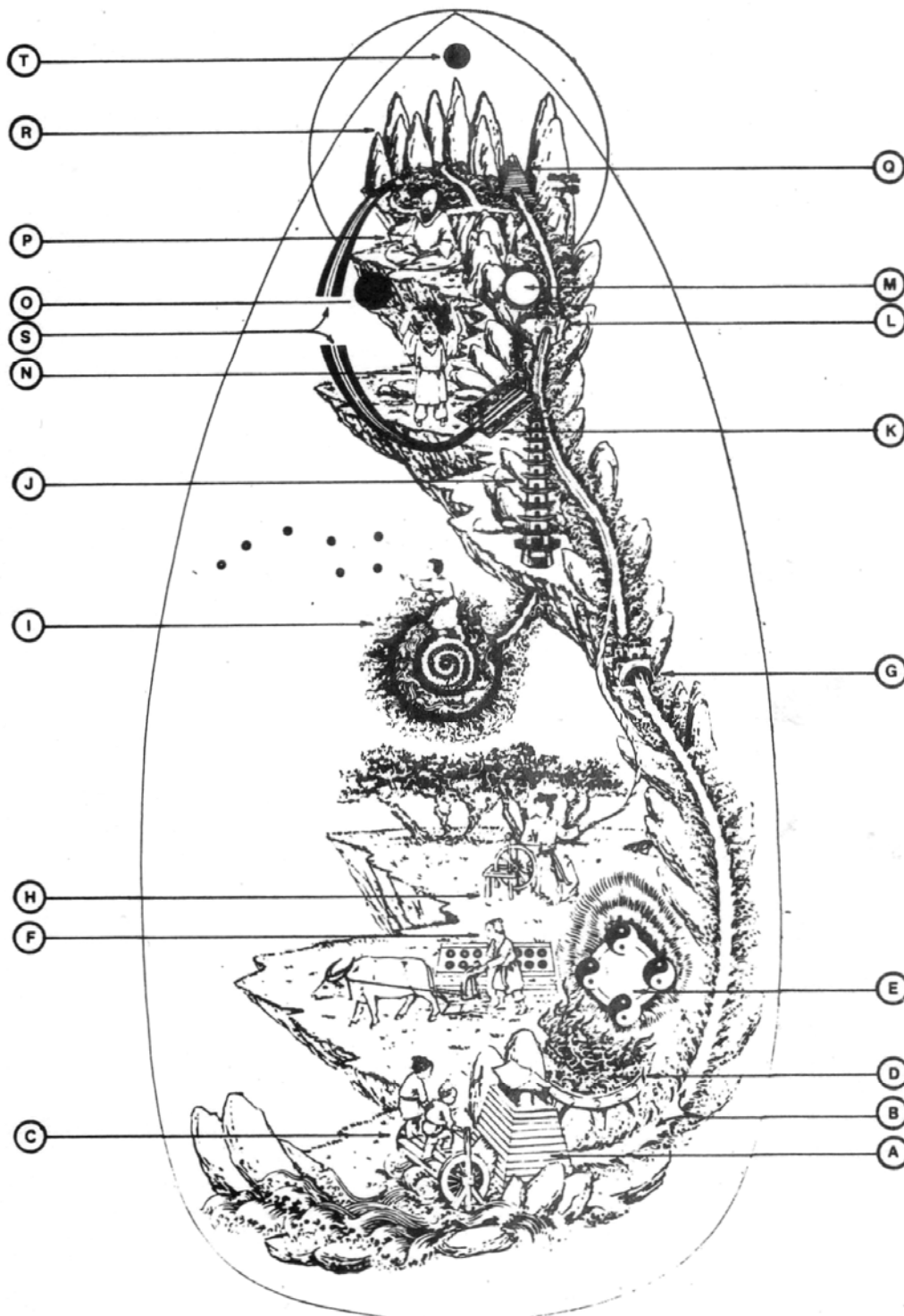
Here his Spirit is the Heavenly Jade City where Lao'tse has his throne. His spinal substance is the Milky Way or the 'River of Heaven'. The two constellations of the Cowherd and the Weaving Maiden are at work in the heart and kidneys. The abdomen is the Ploughed Field of Earth or the 'Supreme Ultimate'; it is here that there is the Yin Yang gate of the underworld and the region of the groundwater.

In addition to these analogies of the Microcosm and the Macrocosm, the Yin Yang system embraces the Five Elements and there is a complete system of number symbolism to be understood as a joint expression of the Cosmic Order and Man.

There are three alchemical agents:

1. The Microcosmic Outer Agent is produced by fresh air breathed in and out in order to purify it, restoring the Generative force which has been drained away or wasted and transmuting it into Vitality.
2. The Microcosmic Inner Agent is produced by the Vital Inner Breath in the body which trans mutates Vitality into Spirit.

3. The Macrocosmic Agent is gathered from Vitality to break through to the Original Cavity of Spirit in the brain, in order that the mortal man may become immortal - i.e. for the integration of Microcosm into Macrocosm.



*The Painting based on the stone tablet in the Monastery of the White Clouds near Peking.*

## The Picture

In the picture there can be seen:

1. Allegories referring to transmutation - i.e. the death of the ordinary man as well as the reversal of the flow of Generative energy from the base of the spine to the head.
2. The Circulation of the Light which extends from the head to the middle of the body and back up again - i.e. orientation and awakening. Various exercises and meditation methods which are preserved in the Taoist tradition can be traced with the aid of the painting.
3. The Growth of the New Immortal Man.
4. Images which suggest or reflect the Perfect State.

Beginning at the bottom of the picture and working upwards, the individual parts which compose it, together with their description and interpretation, are as follows.

### A. Rump Village

The First Gate, The Gate of Immortality - *wei-lu*.

*K'an*, the House of Water, is in the lower abdomen. Vitality in *k'an* is Eternal Life. At this gate, the Channel of Function begins.

### B. The River of Heaven

The Milky Way, the Supreme Valley - the spinal substance.

This is the Channel of Control. The natural flow of energies carried by the spinal substance is downward from the brain. The reversal of the flow of the River of Heaven through the Channel of Control is the means by which the Generative force is sublimated.

### C. The Water Wheel Treaders

This is where the reversal of the Generative force begins and its sublimation is represented by the two children, a boy and a girl. The seminal glands, like the kidneys, are conceived of as male on one side and female on the other, embodying Yin and Yang, the negative and positive principles. The children stand on the mystery of Yin and Yang, the treadmill.

In the stone rubbing, the text given here for the sublimation is, "Repeating and continuing, circulating step by step, as the wheel turns, the water flows eastward. Even in the spring that is ten thousand fathoms deep, the bottom must become visible. This sweet stream flows upwards to the summit of the Southern Mountains {the top of the skull}."

### D. The Tripod of the Elixir

The pond where fire and water cross and turn to vapour - *shui huo chi chi* - water and fire in equilibrium.

When fire is immersed in water, it stops soaring up, thereby causing the heart to be empty (of passion); and when the water is scorched by fire, it becomes steam and stops flowing down. This water and fire in equilibrium will produce true Vitality. Immersion of fire in water is described as 'concentration on the Lower Tan t'ien'. In Taoist Yoga, eighteen different kinds of fire are differentiated:

4 kinds of fire which are kindled by breathing to transform the generative fluid into Generative force,

7 kinds of fire which are derived from Spirit to transform the Generative force into Vitality,

7 kinds of fire which are derived from prenatal vitality, to purify the breathing and contribute to the manifestation of the Original Spirit.

The Tripod symbolizes concentration on the Lower Tan t'ien to direct the element of fire in the heart to scorch the element of water in the lower abdomen, thus emptying the heart of passion and stopping water flowing downwards in order to achieve a stable equilibrium.



## **E. The Supreme Ultimate**

The Mysterious Gate, The Mysterious Cavity: it is a gate when it appears in front of the practiser and a cavity when it lies hidden in the body.

In front of the Cavity of Spirit (between and behind the eyes), true Vitality looks like a radiant circle which is called 'The Supreme Ultimate' (t'ai clii), "The Golden Elixir of Immortality<sup>1</sup> (chin tan) and "The Original Awareness' (yuan chueh). Hence, the prenatal Heaven and Earth and the Lower Field of the Elixir (under the navel) are called 'the four Yin Yang' (szu ko yin yang).

Taoist scriptures say, "This cavity lies in the centre between heaven (the head) and earth (lower abdomen) in the human body."

"It is wrong to seek it in the body and equally wrong to seek it outside. For when it manifests it becomes a cavity and when it does not it is undiscoverable."

"The Mysterious Cavity is boundless; the awareness of it, free from all clinging, is real achievement. The Mysterious Gate manifests in the condition of utter stillness but, if a thought arises, it immediately slips into the postnatal realm and vanishes without trace. If it is further sought, it cannot be found because of clinging to form."

The Supreme Ultimate is also described as the circle of T'ai chi wherein the real positive Vitality and Essential Nature unite to emit the light of Vitality, which is the light of True Nature in the precious cauldron of the brain, and that of True Life in the lower abdomen. It stands above the Tripod of the Elixir where fire and water cross and turn to steam. In the painting, the steam is represented as finer energies radiating from the centre of the Supreme Ultimate in which is embodied the Four Yin Yang - the prenatal Heaven and Earth and the postnatal Heart and Abdomen, i.e. the four positive and negative principles.

## **F. The Cowherd**

The Iron Cow and the Ploughed Earth.

The cowherd is the representation of the metaphysical Divine Soul, the psychic consciousness, or the Diamond Body. In the picture, we find him diligently at work preparing the field - i.e. stimulating the Vital Centre and its energy. The cow is the animal correspondence to 'Earth'. "The Iron Cow ploughs the earth in order to grow gold coin."

Persistent work on this vital region is symbolized by the ploughing iron cow. The earth is prepared to receive the seed of higher life and yield the true blessing. Immersion of the thoughts and gaze in the Vital Centre is known as 'ploughing'.

"In my house I plow only my own field,  
In it are spiritual shoots that can live ten thousand years,  
The blossom is like yellow gold, and the colour changes,  
The seed is like grains of jade and the fruit is all around.  
The planting here is based solely on the earth of the middle castle,  
And the watering depends solely on the source of the Supreme Valley."

The whole region from the navel down through the abdomen to the kidneys is known as the 'Elixir Field'. This is the Vital Centre, the field of Cinnabar, the Centre of Life where the source of the junction of the Three Main Pulses and twelve subsidiary pulses are to be found (the ancient unbroken connection between the kidneys and the testicles?).

## **G. The Cave of the Mystery of the Kidneys**

The Second Gate - chai chi.

After the Elixir field has been powerfully plowed, its energy is conveyed to this region of the kidneys - also called 'the axle of the river'. From here, the Yang control pulse is directed up the River of Heaven through the Third and Fourth Gates.

"The godhead of the kidneys is mysterious and impenetrable; it can itself engender children." The inscription pertaining to this gate reads, "In this pan, mountain and water boil."

## **H. The Weaving Maiden**

The Maiden is a representative of the metaphysical animal soul and she is pictured set close to the kidney region. She is also representative of the negative force Yin, as is also the thread that she spins.

An allegorical story tells how the Heavenly Boy (the Boy Stone Cutter) in his Cowherd aspect, once upon a time stole her clothes as she was bathing. But, as the Supreme Lord has willed it, he may unite with her only once a year on the 7th day of the 7th month. On that day, she goes to him, crossing the River of Heaven by a bridge formed by magpies.

In the painting, the connection can be seen between the pulses from the heart, which pass up the Twelve-Storeyed Pagoda to the Heavenly Pool, and the thread of the Maiden, ending in the Celestial Jade City. Connecting these two pulses is the channel from the occiput (the Moon) through which the Golden nectar flows.

The animal soul controls the seed and the breath and strives to draw the conscious soul into its orbit as the Yin and the Yang; or, as in the star-myth, the Weaving Maiden draws the Cowherd. But, the two are one, though separated by the River of Heaven; so man should not be overpowered by the 'weaving maiden', the force of Yin, but use it as a means to rise to his higher soul. If the higher soul keeps itself free from Yin, it rises, in Spirit, to the Heavenly regions.

## **I. The Divine Boy Stone Cutter**

Also, the Northern Bushel - the Great Bear, the Big Dipper, or the Plough.

The Godhead of the Heart is the Divine Boy Stone Cutter, the true Alchemist, and it is he who preserves the true Spirit. In his divine play, he plucks gold pieces from the centre of the heart (which, in his Cowherd aspect he has grown in the Elixir field) and tosses them into the firmament. He arranges them on threads to form the Northern Bushel from whence the Supreme Cosmic Source emanates. The seven gold pieces are also a reference to the seven openings of the heart (reference should also be made to the seven kinds of fire derived from Spirit, as described in Charles Luk's Taoist Yoga).

The Godhead of the Heart is the seat of the conscious soul and the alleged producer of the red blood cinnabar. Near to the heart in the original painting is written, "Earth of Immobility" - which corresponds to 'Mountain Keeping Still' in the Book of Changes - and, beside it, "The Godhead of the Heart is the Source of Cinnabar and itself preserves the Spirit". It is also the seat of Fire (passion) while the lower abdomen is the seat of Water (sexual pleasure). The Fire should be driven down into the water below, which will be scorched to become vapour, and then lifted to wipe out passion in order to achieve equilibrium and harmony.

"Fire kindled by breathing transforms the generative fluid derived from the digestion of food into Generative force. Fire derived from Spirit transforms the Generative force into Vitality. Fire derived from {prenatal} Vitality purifies the breathing and contributes to the manifestation of Spirit. Spiritual Fire sublimates Spirit which will return to the state of Nothingness. Thus, from start to finish, the successful practice of Immortality is by means of Fire." (Feng Huo Ching)

Before the umbilical cord is cut, the baby's essential nature (chen hsing) and eternal life are inseparable. This state is called prenatal. At birth, his body becomes mortal because the postnatal conditions of Nature and Life are no longer united but divided in two.

The heart and the lungs appear to be drawn as one organ, since blood is the carrier of air.

## **J. The Twelve Storeyed Pagoda of the Throat**

The throat here is symbolized as a channel, both for energised air from the heart (and lungs), and for the transfer of the ambrosian liquid (Golden Nectar) into the Channel of Function. At its base it is connected with the heart and lungs and at its apex with the mouth and tongue.

## **K. The Bridge over the Heavenly Pool**

In the painting, a spring which arises in the occiput (optical centre) pours into the "Pond where the Red Dragon wallows" - i.e. into the breath conceived of as condensed into spittle -and the pond is crossed by a drawbridge or 'Magpie Bridge'. There is a cavity in the palate through which vitality flows down to drain away, hence the tongue as a bridge is lifted to plug it. This makes a bridge for the Vitality, in the form of Golden Nectar, to flow from the cavity (hsuan ying - the mysterious Bridle) into the Channel of Function down to the Lower Tan t'ien centre.

Golden nectar is a liquid produced by the macrocosmic alchemical agent that has been successfully gathered by the practiser. When the mouth is full of this nectar, it is swallowed with a gulp to drive it into the Channel of Function to the lower Tan t'ien to seal Vitality there. The sublimation of the Generative force, Vitality and Spirit in the brain produces the ambrosia which, flowing into the mouth, becomes a liquid which, when swallowed, makes sounds in the lower abdomen. This ambrosia produces and nurtures the Immortal Seed in the Vital centre, whence it radiates, lighting up the heart to reveal the formation of the Immortal Sea.

It is useful to note that there are three different 'bridges':

The Upper Magpie Bridge - the nasal duct

The Middle Magpie Bridge - the tongue

The Lower Magpie Bridge - the anus

## **L. The Celestial Jade City**

The Third Gate - yu ch'en - or the Cave of the Spirit Field.

This is the gate where the thread of the Weaving Maiden ends. It is situated behind the occiput (optic centre) where the spine enters the skull. Leading from here is another negative Yin connection with the Moon, and yet another with the Heavenly Pool (also a negative Yin symbol). It is here, in the Jade City, during the 'Circulation of the Light', that the novice collects the currents ready for the next part of the process (see K. The Bridge over the Heavenly Pool).

## **M. The Moon**

The occiput or the optical centre.

This is the producer of the Golden Nectar. Near the Third Gate, there is a spring of ascending truth (dharma), or purity, which takes its ambrosian liquid from the Moon, which in its turn has drawn moisture from the depths.

## **N. The Blue Eyed Barbarian Monk**

Besides the Monk in the original painting a text reads, "The Blue Eyed {properly, 'jade eyed'} Barbarian Monk holds the heavens in his hands." He is depicted standing looking upwards, with both hands raised in an attitude of supplication, supporting everything that is above him. The shape formed by his arms is an allusion to the two zygomatic arches (cheek bones) which support the eyes.

The Blue Eyed Barbarian Monk is an old designation for the Buddhist patriarch Bodhidharma, founder of the meditation order which emigrated from India to China in 520. He had vainly stared at a rock wall for nine years before the 'Heavenly Eye' opened within him, his persistence bringing success. The Monk (the Friend of Tao) is admonished to show similar endurance and direct his vision downwards to the centre of life and warmth (approximately at the height of the solar plexus and navel) where the source of the three main pulses and the twelve subsidiary pulses is to be found. This immersion of the gaze and thoughts in the Vital centre is known as ploughing. Hence, he takes on another aspect in the painting lower down, in the form of the Cowherd.

## **O. The Red Sun**

The Third Eye.

In the original painting, both the Red Sun and the Moon are represented as concealed organs; whereas certain eye exercises prescribed for the control of energies refer to the two eyes of ordinary sight as the Sun (left eye - positive Yang) and the Moon (right eye - negative Yin).

Once the vital force in the lower body (the Ocean of Breath) has been stimulated, it is reinforced by the Third, Celestial Eye - the radiance of our innate nature. The Eye must be aroused to produce the desired result; reinforced with the vital energy it begins to glow in meditation, growing slowly and sending forth its rays further and further. We see what we irradiate (we recognise only what is illumined by the light of consciousness).

"Between the eyes it darts forth and illumines the ten thousand worlds."

This is the 'Hall of Illumination' in which the emperors of old met for illuminating discourse with great men.

The Circulation of the Light is the foundation for three higher stages of instruction. In the original painting, placed close by are the words, "Here is the origin of the best path to a good life". Also, part of another inscription reads, "Between the eyebrows gleams the radiant white fuzz - in all creatures it can destroy the misery of rebirth."

Taoist teachings distinguish five kinds of 'eye':

1. The Heavenly Eye which sees all things in the 33 Heavens.
2. The Earthly Eye which sees the 18 Hells.
3. The Eye of Vitality which sees past and future events in the World.
4. The Human Eye which sees happenings before birth and after death.
5. The Ghostly Eye which sees through mountains, earth and metals.

## **P. Laot'se**

One of the Three Pure Ones in the Beyond.

Born in 604 BC and named Li Erh or Li Po Yang, he was a native of a district in Ch'u state (now Hupeh province). For a long time, he was a censor under the Chou Dynasty but, seeing it beginning to decline, he left the country for an unknown destination. At the request of the official defending the pass at the frontier, he wrote the Tao Teh Ching.

According to the legend then current, he was already old at birth. Hence he was called Lao Tsu or 'Old Son'. Lao Tsu was determined to revive the ancient tradition which was prevalent at the time of the Emperor Huang Ti (2698 - 2597 BC). Since Huang Ti was the founder of the Taoism which Lao Tsu later revived, it is sometimes called 'the doctrine of Huang-Lao'.

In the picture, Laot'se symbolizes the Taoist path of Salvation. His figure lives in the soul of the Taoist as summation, archetype and prototype: the Taoist becomes Laot'se. This is not only the man who lived on earth, but also one of the figures in the Taoist Trinity of the 'Three Pure Ones'.

## **Q. The Palace of the Mud Ball**

Ni wan - The Fourth Gate.

This ironic title refers to the centre of the brain, frequently referred to as 'The Original Cavity of the Spirit'.

## **R. The Nine Peaks**

The Eternal Southern Mountains of K'un lun.

These are a symbol of Eternity rising immaculately into the light.

**S.** Below, at the base of the peaks, an emanation represented by two red lines sweeps forward over the front of the face. This is the completion of the path of the Circulation of the Light. There is a break midway and the two red lines sweep down into the mouth and over the Bridge crossing the Heavenly Pond. This represents the beginning of the path of circulation.

#### **T. The Red Pearl**

Resplendent, the Pearl rises, the 'desirable treasure' - the sign of the Immortal over the head, which has become 'the House of the Rising Sun'.

The Macrocosm has opened. After uniting in himself all depths and polarities, man has become the universe: "the whole world is contained in one grain" (literally, a grain of millet seed, here referred to as 'the Pearl'). According to the Taoist view, this stage can be realized only by a man of sixty.

In the middle of the Vital centre, the germ of the new immortal man gradually condenses until it is born, appearing over the crown of the head like the image of Buddha on the lotus blossom - the immortal genius hovering over its human counterpart. Crystallization has occurred in the Third Eye; in the midst of its light a new point of light has appeared and, suddenly, the seed pearl is present. The True Divine Primal Man (Humanus - the vehicle of divine essential nature) and Natural Man (Homo) have united their seed and all polarities have found their synthesis. The New Immortal Man has been *conceived* in the Vital centre.

#### **There then follow two more stages:**

1. The birth of the New Man. For ten lunar months the golden embryo is nurtured until the immortal essence rises up, bursts through the skull in the region of the third eye and, with a shout that is echoed by the heavens, is born. Up until now, he has still been living in his phenomenal or 'transformation body'. Here on Earth he still has his task to perform, which is to fulfill his phenomenality with profounder meaning. According to Indian tradition, phenomenality has five components: the body (rupa); feelings or sense perceptions (vedana); perception (samjna); potentialities (samskara) and consciousness (vijñāna).

Until this moment, the new man - the 'diamond body' has dwelt separated and above his whole being. He has been the Son of Buddha. Now each conception takes form according to the five components of being; but the diamond body possesses sacred emptiness and becomes increasingly empty.

2. Lastly, on the highest plane possible, the activity of the Blue Eyed Barbarian Monk resumes once more. In recognizing empty form he 'stares at the wall' like Bodhidharma and he becomes the Unified Illumined Man, the one without the two. He preserves the Axis of the World and works here and now at the spot in the cosmos which has been assigned to him. He exerts influence without willed intent.

#### **The Picture**

Letters in the figure refer to the text. Parts of the figure are coloured as follows (not shown in colour)

**Red** the two emanations at S

the outer and inner circles in the heart, the outer circle branching into two lines which join the base of J

the red line continues up the pagoda to the top, showing at the door of each storey

the flames at D

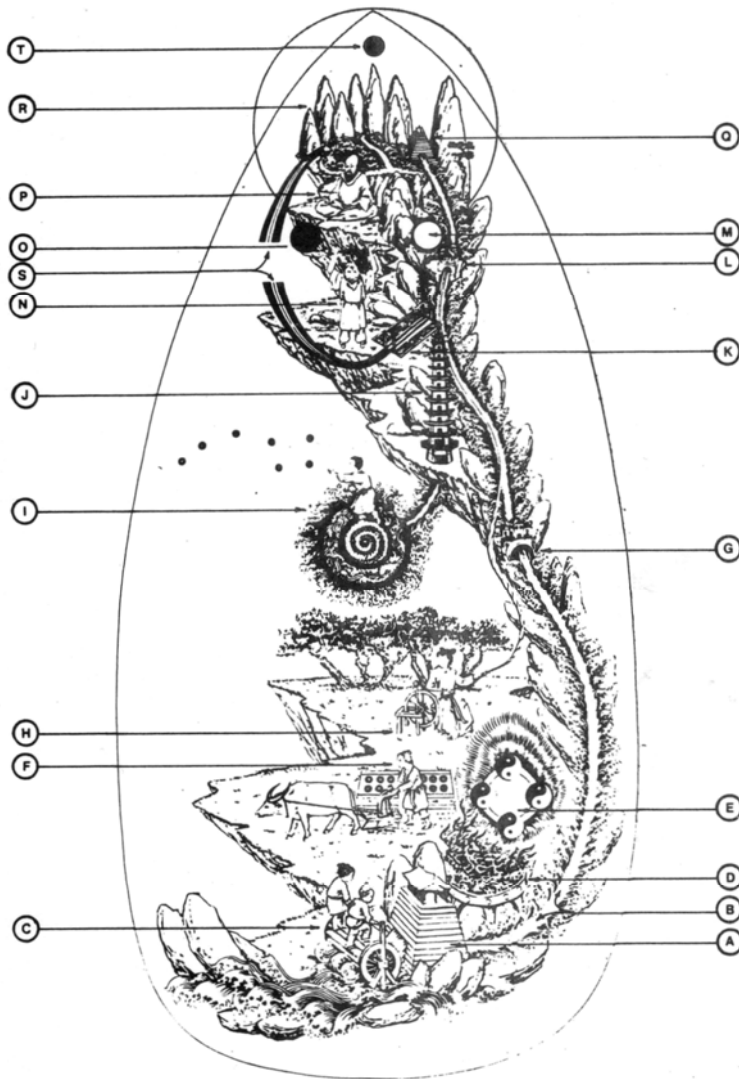
the red pearl at T

the red sun at P

**Gold** the curving line joining M and K

the coins which form the northern bushel at I

the coin at the centre of the heart at I the coins in the field at F



*The Painting based on the stone tablet in the Monastery of the White Clouds near Peking.*

## Bibliography

Extensive quotations have been made from the following two sources:

1. *Spiritual Disciplines*, Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks the Paper entitled 'Spiritual Guidance in Contemporary Taoism' by Irwin Rouselle, published by Princeton University Press, 1960. This has reproductions of the original painting and stone tablet rubbing.
2. *Taoist Yoga*, by Lu K'uan Yu, published by Rider & Co., 1970.

For the original teaching of Lu Tung-pin, the reader should refer to Pax Wen P'ien, or the *Hundred Questions* (a dialogue between two Taoists on the macrocosmic and microcosmic system of correspondences), translated by Rolf Homann, published by E-J.Brill - Leiden, 1976.

Lu Tung-pin and his teacher, Chung-li Ch'uan, were two of the "Eight Immortals", pa-hsien. While a fugitive after an abortive Chinese military expedition against Tibet, Chung-li Ch'uan encountered Master Tung-hua. He "earnestly begged for the secrets of immortality. Master Tung-hua thereupon imparted to him not only an infallible magic process for attaining longevity, but also the method to produce the Philosopher's Stone." (From *The Eight Immortals*, by T.C.Lai, Hong Kong, 1972).