

In this third article I (ks) would like to pick up where we left off with the second article. Let's review the table of contents from the first version of the Essence Cleansing Scripture found in Dr. Ding Jihua's book 中国传统养生珍典 (The Traditional Life Nurturing Precious Canon of the Middle Kingdom).

《易筋洗髓二经》（友竹山房藏版，黄竹斋稿本）中洗髓经之目录

Table of Contents of the Essence Cleansing Scripture from *Scriptures of Muscle Changing and Essence Cleansing*, a print collection of Su Lvji (You Zhu Shan Fang, 1779-?), hand-written (but unpublished) by Huang Zhuzhai (1886-1960).

中洗髓经之目录

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Cleansing Essence Scripture postscript

Since we covered the first chapter (Overall Ideas) in the last article, we will start this article with the 'Concentrating Primordial Qi chapter'.

(Version 1)

元始钟气篇

To concentrate Primordial Qi chapter

1. 宇宙有至理, 难以耳目契。

There is an ultimate inner essence/unity (Li) in the universe;
It cannot be known by the eyes or ears.

2. 凡可参悟者, 即属于元气。

What can be known is the primordial Qi.

3. 气无理不运, 理非气莫著。

Qi without Inner Essence cannot move,
Inner Essence without Qi cannot appear.

4. 交并为一致, 分之莫可离。

Inner Essence and Qi are a set,
they cannot be separated from each other.

5. 流行无间滞, 万物依为命。

They move nonstop
which give life to every creature.

6. 穿金与透石, 水火可相并。

They can pierce gold (the precious) and stone (the mundane),
They can merge water and fire.

7. 并行不相害, 是日理与气。

Inner Essence and Qi
can coexist peacefully.

This chapter describes the relationship between Li and Qi.

Li can be defined as:

- grain (as in wood),
- inherent or informing pattern in an object, action, or idea
- intrinsic order
- reason
- logic
- truth

I (ks) favor 'coherence' (an organizing principle) as the definition.

So sentence 3 becomes: the coherence of a person and their enlivening energy cannot be separated.

8. 生处伏杀机, 杀中有生意。

In life there is danger.
In danger there is life.

9. 理以气为用, 气以理为体。

Inner Essence uses Qi as its function,
while Qi relies on the Inner Essence as its body.

10. 即体以显用, 就用以求体。

The Body (tǐ) shows its Function (yòng),
while the Function relies on the Body.

11. 非体亦非用, 体用两不立

The Body or its Function cannot exist alone,
and they cannot be separated.

12. 非理亦非气, 一言透天机。

Inner Essence or Qi cannot exist without the other;
this sentence is the secret of the universe.

13. 百尺竿头步, 原始更无始。

When you finish climbing the 100 foot stick (progress to the highest
level of enlightenment),
you are actually just beginning the next step.

14. 悟得其中意, 方可言洗髓。

Only when you understand this,
can the Essence Cleansing Scripture be discussed.

四大假合篇

The Four Elements Phenomena chapter

1) 元气常氤氲, 化作水火土。

The universe is full of Primordial Qi,
which can transform into water, fire, and earth

2) 水发昆仑巅, 四达注坑谷。

The Water originates from Mount Kun Lun,
and then flows into the lower places.

3) 静久生暖气, 水中有火具。

Long ago, calm/stillness came forth from steam,
All water possess fire (internal heat).

4) 交并为一致, 分之莫可离。

Occurring simultaneously because (they have) no differences,
none are able to divide them apart.

5) 生人又生物, 利物依为命。

It gives birth to humans and living things;
it benefits the world.

6) 水久澄为土, 火乃气之燠。

After a long time, water can dry into the earth;
when Qi gets too hot, it becomes fire.

7) 人身小天地, 万物莫能比。

The human body is a small universe,
it cannot be compared with anything.

This chapter describes the
ways Qi transforms.

It also describes how a person
is made up different elements.

We can use this 'false' Body to
find out 'real' body.

8) 具此幻化质, 总是气之余。

It has the potential of transforming in this way;
it is a part of Qi.

9) 本来非有我, 解散还太虚。

My body doesn't belong to me;
when it disperses, it returns to the universe.

10) 生是未曾生, 死又何尝死。

Never before actually born,
to once again die, dead. How?

11) 形骸何可, 垂老后天地留。

There is nothing of the body that one can leave on the earth;
when one gets old, one just returns to the universe.

12) 借假以合真, 超脱离凡类。

One only uses this false body to seek the real thing
and go beyond the ordinary ones.

13) 参透洗髓经, 长生无期尽。

When one truly understands the Essence Cleansing Scripture,
one can exist forever.

14) 无假不显真, 真假浑无隙。

Without the false,
the real (perception) will not appear.

15) 应作如是观, 真与假不二。

There is nothing between the false and the real;
one should understand that the false and the real are one.

16) 四大假合形, 谁能分别此。

The four elements make up this false body;
anyone with proper capacity can discern this.

凡圣同归篇

Saints and Sinners Reach the Same Goal chapter

1) 凡人多吃饭, 美衣饰其体, 徒务他人观, 美食日复日。

Ordinary people love to eat a lot of things,
they wear beautiful clothes to decorate
themselves,
they want to get the attention of others,
they eat delicious food every day.

This chapter describes the behaviors that can help a sinner achieve the same goals as a saint.

By cleansing our essence we can achieve the same goal as Saints.

2) 人人皆如是, 碌碌天地间。

It is like this with everyone,
in this commonplace world.

3) 不暇计生死, 总被利名牵。

They spend their life in this way, between heaven and earth;
they are too immersed in seeking fame or fortune to think about life and death.

4) 一朝神气散, 油尽而灯灭。

One day one's spirit (Shen) and Qi leave them,
just like a lamp that goes out when the oil is dried.

5) 身死埋旷野, 惊魂一梦摄。

When one dies one is buried in the wilderness,
it is like a nightmare.

6) 万苦与千辛, 幻境无休歇。

The endless toil
is endless illusion.

7) 圣人独认真, 布衣而蔬食。

The Saint is the only one who lives carefully;
the saint dresses simply and eats simply.

8) 不贪以持己, 岂为身口累。

The Saint desires nothing,
so the Saint can survive without being burdened by mouth or body.

9) 参透天与地, 与我同一气。

One should understand that heaven and earth
are also the same Qi as oneself.

10) 体虽有巨细, 灵明原不异。

Things may be big or small,
but their light and spirit are the same.

11) 天地有日月, 人身两目具。

The universe has the sun and the moon,
while the human body has two eyes.

12) 日月有晦明, 星与灯相继, 纵或星灯灭, 见性终不没。

The sun and the moon may rise and fall,
however there will be stars and lamps;
even if there are no stars or lamps,
one's true self (Buddha-nature) will always be there.

13) 纵成瞽目人, 伸手摸著鼻。

Even if one becomes blind
one can still use the hands to touch the nose.

14) 通身俱是眼, 触著知物倚。

One has eyes everywhere and
knows things through touching.

15) 此事心之灵, 包罗天与地。

This is the spirit of one's heart,
containing the heavens and the earth.

16) 能见不以目, 能听不以耳。

One can see without eyes
and listen without ears.

17) 若能常清静, 不为嗜欲起。

If one is able to calm down
and not be agitated by desires,

18) 自知原处来, 归向原处去。

one can know
that one can return to the place where one comes from.

19) 凡夫与圣人, 眼横鼻长直。

The Saint and the ordinary all have eyes and noses;
why do they come from the same place yet go to different places?

20) 同来不同归, 因彼多外驰。

It is because that the ordinary always
let their hearts run with the outside world.

21) 若能收放心, 提念生与死。

If they can call back their heart,
thinking about life and death,

22) 迩此强健身,精 进用心力。

building up their body,
diligently making progress,

23) 洗髓还本原,凡圣许同归。

cleansing their essence to return to their true self,
then the ordinary will reach the same place as the Saint.

物我一致篇

Self and Things Other Than Myself are the Same chapter.

1) 万物非万物,与我同一气。

All things are not things,
they are the same Qi as me.

This chapter describes how, by living a simple life, we can achieve longevity.

2) 幻出诸形相,辅助生成意。

Because of the transformations,
we have different forms and ideas.

3) 有人须有物,用作衣与食。

Humans need things
such as clothes, foods,

4) 药饵及器皿,缺一即不备。

medicine and vessels;
Humans cannot do without them.

5) 飞潜与动植,万类为人使。

Birds, fish, animals, and plants,
they are all for people to use.

6) 造化恩何洪, 妄杀成暴戾。

The universe is so kind to humans;
therefore if one kills too much, it is brutal.

7) 蜉蝣与蚊蝇, 朝而暮死生。

The floating creatures in water, mosquitoes as well as flies,
lives for only one day.

8) 龟鹤麋与鹿, 食少而服气。

The turtle, crane, and deer eat little
and absorb Qi.

9) 乃得享长年, 人而不如物。

So they enjoy longevity;
Human are less than them.

10) 只贪衣与食, 忘却身生死。

Humans lust after clothing and food;
they forget about life and death.

11) 若能绝嗜欲, 物我皆一致。

If humans give up those desires,
Self and things other than myself are the same.

行住坐卧篇

Walking, standing, sitting, lying-in every state chapter

1) 行如盲无杖, 自然依本分。

If you walk like someone blind, without the help
of a stick,
you naturally rely on your heart to recognize
things.

This chapter describes how
generating Qi is enough.

2) 举步低且慢,踏实方更进。

Lift up your steps so they are low and slow,
step down solidly, then take another step.

3) 步步皆如此,时时戒急行。

Every step can be like this,
don't rush at any time.

4) 世路忙中错,缓步保安平。

When you walk on the roads of the earth, you make the mistake of rushing;
make slow steps to ensure safety.

5) 住如临崖马,亦如到岸舟。

When you stop, it is like a horse stopping on the verge of a cliff,
or a boat arriving at a bank.

6) 回光急返照,认取顿足处。

Call back your light and shine it on yourself,
recognize the place you have stopped.

7) 不离于当念,存心勿妄动。

Never wander away from the current thought,
keep you heart, don't let it wander.

8) 得止宜知止,留神守空谷。

Know you need to stop when it is time to stop;
guard your spirit to guard the empty valley inside of you.

9) 坐定勿倾斜,形端身自固。

Sit calmly, do not lean;
your body naturally becomes solid in this upright position.

10) 耳目随心静, 止水与明镜。

Calm your eyes and ears along with your heart,
like still water and a clear mirror.

11) 事物任纷纷, 现前皆究竟。

Allow the endless flow of things to come one after another,
they appear in their true selves in front of you.

12) 坐如山岳重, 端直肃容仪。

Sit as heavy as a lofty mountain,
serious and upright. (final)

13) 闭口深藏舌, 出入息与鼻。

Your tongue is hidden deep inside your mouth,
your breath is through your nose.

14) 息息归元泽, 气足神自裕。

Every breath returns to the Primordial Sea;
when you have enough Qi, your Spirit (Shen) is enough. (final)

15) 浹骨并洽髓, 教外别传的。

It nurtures your bones and essence;
this is the teaching beyond words.

16) 卧如箕形曲, 左右随其宜。

When you sleep, you lie curvy,
left or right.

17) 两膝常参差, 两足如钩钜。

Your two knees are put differently;
your feet are separated to form a 45 degree angle.

18) 两手常在腹, 扞脐摸下体。

Put your hands on your belly,
touching the belly button and the lower part of your body.

19) 辜丸时挣搓, 如龙戏珠意。

You should roll the testicles between the fingers frequently,
just like a dragon playing with pearls.

20) 倦则侧身睡, 睡中不自迷。

When you are tired, sleep lying on one side of your body,
you will not fall into confusion as you sleep.

21) 醒来方伸足, 仰面亦不拘。

When you wake up, stretch your feet
and face upwards.

22) 梦觉浑无异, 九载见端的。

Whether you are sleeping or not sleeping, there is no difference;
it will have effects after nine years.

23) 超出生死关, 究竟如来意。

Then you will surpass the gate of life and death
and understand the Buddha's meaning.

24) 行住坐卧功, 只此是真谛。

This is the only truth
of walking, stopping, sitting, and sleeping. (final)

洗髓还原篇

Essence Cleansing to Return to the Original State

1) 易筋功已毕, 便成金刚体。

When you have completed the Muscle Changing Scripture, you achieve the Diamond Body (that of the Buddha with his merits).

2) 外感不能侵, 饮食不能积。

The weather will not hurt you, the food you eat will not harm you.

3) 还怕七情伤, 元神不自持。

You are still vulnerable to the seven emotions and cannot control your feelings.

4) 虽具金刚相, 犹属血肉躯。

You have the Diamond form, yet you are still flesh and blood.

5) 须遵洗髓经, 少食多进气。

Therefore, you should follow the Essence Cleansing Scripture, eat little and absorb more Qi.

6) 搓摩干沐浴, 按眼复按鼻。

Wash your face without water; massage your eyes and then nose.

7) 摸面又捻耳, 不必以数拘。

Massage your face and ears; how long should you do it depends on your own preference.

Practicing the Muscle Changing Exercises is not enough by themselves. Practice Essence Cleansing to return to the Original State.

Additional exercises are described.

8) 闭服常观鼻, 合口任鼻息。

When you close your eyes, you watch your nose;
close your mouth to breathe with the nose naturally.

9) 每去鼻中毛, 切戒唾远地。

Remove the hair from inside your nose;
don't spit into the far distance.

10) 每日五更起, 吐浊纳清气。

Every day, get up before dawn,
breathe out the turbid Qi and breathe in the fresh Qi.

11) 开眼去小便, 切勿贪酣睡。

When you open your eyes go to the toilet to urinate,
instead of sleeping more.

12) 厚褥跏趺坐, 宽解腰中系。

Sit cross-legged on a thick mattress
and unfasten your belt.

13) 右膝包左膝, 调息舌抵腭。

Cover your left knee with your right knee;
press the tip of your tongue against the roof of your mouth and adjust your
breath.

14) 胁腹运尾闾, 摇肩手推搦。

Move your upper body in a round circle,
move your shoulders and push your hands.

15) 分合按且举, 握固按双膝。

Spread your hands apart then bring them together, raise them;
firmly grasp and press down your knees.

16) 鼻中出入悠, 绵绵入海底。

Breathe long and slowly through your nose;
let it flow endlessly to the bottom of your sea (abdomen).

17) 有津续咽之, 以意送入腹。

If there is saliva in your mouth, swallow it;
send it into your belly with your mind.

18) 叩齿鸣天鼓; 两手俱摩脐。

Open and close your jaw and click your teeth together, press your ears with palms and knock the back of your head with your fingers;
massage your around your belly button with two hands.

19) 伸足扳其趾, 出入六六息。

Stretch your right leg and touch your right toes (with both hands),
the time duration for the touching is 6 breath in and 6 breath out.

20) 两手按摩竟, 良久方拳立。

When you finish touching the right toes,
after a while, you should put your hands into fists.

21) 左脚亦如然, 按摩功已毕。

Stretch your left leg and touch your left toes (with both hands);
after this, the exercise is completed.

22) 徐徐方站起, 行稳步方移。

You rise slowly,
step solidly before make another step.

23) 忙中恐有错, 缓步为定例。

There maybe a mistake in rushing,
so slow steps are the norm.

24) 三年并九载, 息心并涤虑。

In three years and another 9 years,
put out the fire in your heart (settle your heart) and get rid of all the worries.

25) 浹骨更拾髓, 脱壳飞升去。

Your bone and essence are both nurtured;
you can leave the body and ascend to heaven.

26) 渐几浑天化, 未后究竟地。

Gradually you will become a part of the earth and heaven;
finally you will be forever free of worries.

27) 即说偈曰:

This is a Buddhist verse:

28) 口中言少, 心头事少, 腹内食少, 自然睡少, 知此四少, 长生不老。

less words,
less thoughts,
less food,
less sleep consequently,
knowing the four 'less' wisdoms,
you will gain longevity and immortality.

There was no Postscript included in the Version 1 section.

We (ks, yl, and hc) hope you have enjoyed this translation of version 1 of the Essence Cleansing Scripture. We are presently working to secure additional versions of this delightful scripture so we can deepen our understanding of its teachings.