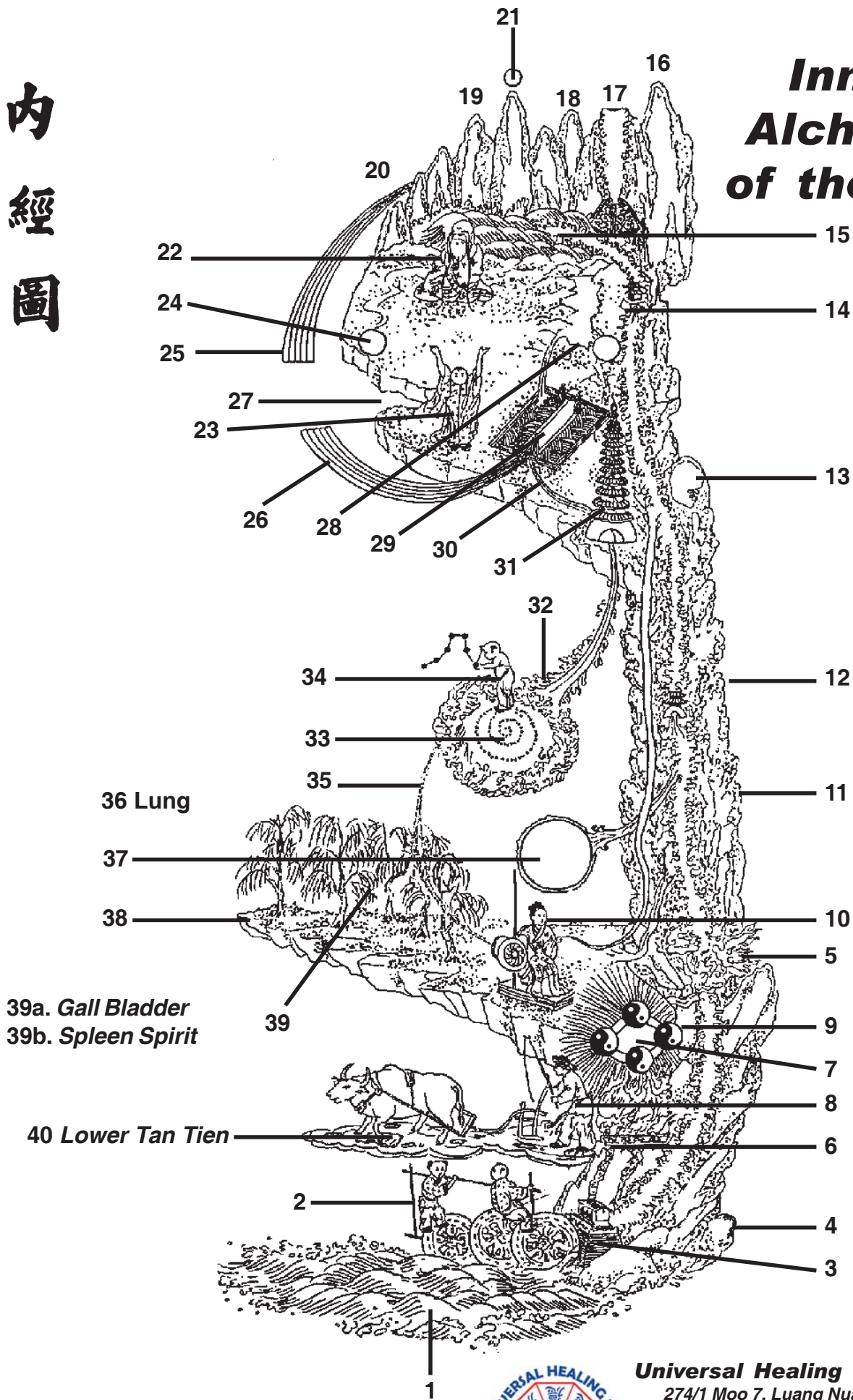


內經圖

Inner Alchemy of the Tao



39a. Gall Bladder
39b. Spleen Spirit

40 Lower Tan Tien



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Inner Alchemy of the Tao

(Historical Overview)

This ancient rendering illustrating the internal alchemy method was probably originally drawn by a highly achieved Taoist from China's Tang Dynasty period (7th century C.E.). This was a golden period of internal alchemy, with many Taoist and Chan Buddhist schools (mixed Tao-Buddhist teachings later known as "Zen" in Japan) and monasteries receiving imperial support. Many dynasties later, it was discovered by a Taoist adept, who added this inscription at the bottom of the chart:

"The original chart was found hanging in the library at High Pine Mountain, where it was concealed from public view for many hundreds of years. Perhaps the diagram of the inner world hidden within our own body was too deep and mysterious for it to be well understood by the outer world. The original chart was clearly drawn and printed, so it was easily reprinted after its importance was realized. When I first saw it I decided it was too precious not to be shared with everyone. So I humbly offer again to the world that spirit".

—Sun Tun

In the same spirit as the internal alchemists living in ancient China, the Universal Tao again offers this chart to the public, only this time we decode its strange symbols so that modern people can understand the mysterious relationship between their body, nature and the universe.

The ancient Taoist saw the human body as a microcosm of the natural world. Our physical anatomy is an inner landscape with its own rivers, forest, mountains, and lakes that reflect their harmony with the outer landscape of the planet earth. You can see the outline of the spine rising to the spiritual peaks within the head and brain.

The drawing refers to the meridians of the microcosmic orbit (the small heavenly circle). This is the warm current circulation which is a central part of the Taoist alchemy. The true purpose of alchemy is the internal development, purification, and transmutation of our vital organs and our sexual energy.

Outline of the Drawing

Sexual energy is the major ingredient of the Inner Alchemy. The key to this illustration is the **(1)** sea of water (river of sexual energy) which flows downstream. To be able to make the water (sexual energy) flow up stream is the beginning of the Inner Alchemy, the higher spiritual practice. The **(2)** boy and girl at the perineum (CV-1) are referred to as the testicles and the ovaries, or the left and right eyes. When we feel sexually aroused or feel orgasm and can simultaneously become aware of a loving feeling, we can start the inner alchemical process. By using the power of our mind and heart, along with the rolling of our eyes, to move the energy of our sexual organs, we can begin to blend the energies of sex and love, and to change their properties until they become light and begin to flow to the first gate. This gate, as it is explained in the text, lies to the east at the tip of the **(3)** coccyx, or the gate of the tail. This center is a reunion point between both kidneys. This is the first step on a ladder (GV-1) ascending to the celestial heights. No matter how much sexual arousal or orgasm energy we have—referred to in the text as a lake with a depth of ten thousand fathoms—this method will transform it and pump it upward.

- The next center is the **(4)** sacral hiatus (GV-2), shown as a long slab of rock with eight holes. It is also known as the immortal caves, which are able to receive the energies of the earth and blend them with the sexual energies.
- The energy then moves up to the **(5)** House of the Two Kidneys, (CV-4).
- This alchemical process starts from the lower abdomen in the navel area (Lower Tan Tien) as a **(6)** cauldron burning with fire. The flames are cooking and transforming the sexual energy.
- The **(7)** four yin and yang symbols within one circle are moving the life force and sexual energy which has been accumulating from the burning cauldron in the Lower Tan Tien. The four yin/yang symbols also represent the 8 Trigrams of the I Ching and move in harmony to manifest the physical body. The area is also known as the True Tan Tien **(9)**. This is experienced as a warm, glowing, radiating feeling in both a vortex and centrifugal form known as Chi.

- The **(8)** Buffalo corresponds to the earth energy and stubbornness. The **(8)** Plow Boy symbolizes the need to cultivate the inner self before the seed (Immortal Fetus) can be planted and its fruits can be harvested or the gold coin can be minted. The earth (spleen-yellow earth) is the central ground of our being and the source of fundamental nourishment.
- The **(9)** True Tan Tien is below the kidneys in front of the spinal cord. When you concentrate on the right point you will feel the Chi build up and rush up to the crown.
- The **(10)** Weaving Maiden, represented by the right kidney, is yin and is the genuine water that stores the inner yang attracting the active yang.
- The energy moves up through the rocky vertebrae to the center at **(11)** Thoracic 11 (GV-6) in the middle of the spine, which is the point between the adrenal glands.
- The energy moves up to the next center **(12)** Thoracic 5 (GV-11), which is the spirit path in the tower at the same level of the heart. This is seen as a vantage point from which our spirit can survey our journey before going into the Higher Spirit Path.
- As we ascend through the rocky vertebrae, we come to **(13)** Cervical 7 (GV-14), the Big Hammer, where all yang meridians are united.
- The next gate is at the **(14)** Base of the Skull, the Jade Pillow (GV-16).
- Then the energy flows upward to the head, and ultimately through the crown, where it connects with the **(15)** Sea of Brain Marrow.
- The energy moves to the top of the head, where the **(16) (17) (18) (19) (20)** Nine Peaks of the Mountain and their Caves are located. This is Kun Lun Mountain, which is one of the sacred places in the Tao. It is the Land of Immortality. These peaks connect to the crown points, which have a close connection to the Universal Force.
- Immortal Realm Peak, along with the **(21)** Pearl above it, represents the essence of the life force and sexual energy transmuted into spiritual and wisdom energy. The purpose of this transmutation is to reunite the Higher Self represented by the Pearl, with the Spirit.
- The **(22)** Wise Man, Lao Tzu is sitting in the original cavity of our spirit at the Mid-eyebrow (GV-24) in the Spirit Hall of the Court Yard.
- Bodhidharma, the founder of the Zen Buddhism in China, is the **(23)** man holding up his hands to connect to the Heavenly Energy.
- The **(24)** Two Circles are the eyes, which are the boy and girl stepping on the water wheel to move energy in our body.
- The bands of **(25) (26)** rainbow stripes represent the Governor and the Conception meridians meeting at their exit points. The five lines in each band show that they carry the five predominantly yang and yin energies of the organs.
- When we touch the **(27)** Tongue (Drawbridge) to the upper palate, these two meridians connect together and complete the circuit of Chi.
- The sweet nectar or elixir pours downward from the **(28)** Dew Pond, which gives inner nutrition to the brain into the **(29)** Mouth Pool (GV-28), called the Mouth Crossing. At this point (CV-24), we receive the fluid forming the **(30)** Heavenly Pool.
- The flow of the nectar and Chi continues down the throat **(31)** Twelve Stories Pagoda (CV-22) or the Heaven Rushing Out.
- The stream of nectar flows into the **(32)** Flaming Balls of Fire at the pericardium, which helps cool and irrigate the heart.

- At the center of the heart is a **(33)** Spiral of Rice Grains, which is one of the 12 symbols used in imperial decoration. The rice grains symbolize abundance. One tiny grain of rice contains the whole universe within.
- The **(34)** Divine Cowherder places the stars in the Big Dipper. This provides a guide for both the seasons and the location of the Pole Star. This also helps collect the astral power, which we learn to gather.
- The **(35)** Milky Way helps make the connection between the heart and the kidneys, harmonizing the forces of water and fire.
- The **(36)** Lung Spirit (Hwa Hao) finds fullness in the empty space then the function of the lung is completed.
- The **(37)** Solar Plexus is known as the Middle Tan Tien.
- We move down to the **(38)** Outer Ring of the Forest representing the edge of the rib cage.
- The **(39)** Forest of Trees connects to the liver, the wood element.
- The **(39a)** Gall Bladder Spirit (Lung Au) is called the majestic and bright spirit.
- The **(39b)** Spleen Spirit (Chaeng Tsai) is called the soul pavilion.
- The energy finally descends back down to the Lower Tan Tien which includes a **(40)** Boy Plowing with an Buffalo, the **(6)** Burning Cauldron and the moving of the **(7)** Four Yin and Yang (Tai Chi) balls. The flow of Chi (Life Force) travels back down to the **(1)** Sea of Water to make a complete circle. Each time the Chi flows back down it becomes more refined. When we pump it up again and again we continue to transform and refine the energy further. In this way we activate a natural process of energy recycling, which provides us with a never-ending supply of Life Force.

—Master Mantak Chia

Detailed Explanation

- (1) *Reverse the Flows of Water*** is our sexual energy, which always flows downward. We have to learn to reverse the flow. Sexual energy is the most vital life force that humans inherit from their parents. We need this energy (orgasm force) to run our life each day. This sexual energy is like water, which tends to run down and out. Each day we lose this force through sexual desire, greed, or unnecessary materialism. We need to reverse the flow of sexual energy and pump it up to the crown using the Universal Tao practices of Testicle and Ovarian Breathing, Power Lock and the Big Draw. We can draw the energy through the spine to fill the three energy reservoirs: the Lower Tan Tien (kidney and sexual centers), the Middle Tan Tien (solar plexus and heart the center), and Upper Tan Tien (brain and crystal room). During its passage through the spine into the brain center the sexual energy is transformed. After the upper reservoir is filled, the energy flows down the palate through the tongue, and down through the throat to nourish, cool, and irrigate the heart.
- (2) *Turn the Yin and Yang Water Wheel*** is located at the (2) perineum (CV-1). The boy and girl represent the testicles and ovaries connecting the kidneys and eyes. The boy and girl are working on the water treadmill, pumping the water (sexual energy) upward step by step. This movement upward, which is involved with testicle and ovarian breathing, is the beginning of the Healing Love practice. By starting to roll the eyes like a ball down the front and up the back, we begin to become aware of the testicles and the ovaries rolling together with them. At the same time, we experience a loving feeling coming from the heart. Through this process the sea of sexual energy in the Lower Tan Tien will be transformed into a lighter, more-subtle force flowing upward through the spine to rejuvenate the brain, glands, and organs.
- (3) *Pump the Water until It Rises*** represents the yin and yang mystery (the boy the girl, the testicles and the ovaries, the mind and the eyes) continuously turning the wheel, that will activate the great pumps (the coccyx and the sacrum) to make the water (arousal of sexual energy and orgasm) rise to “the East”, the (3) coccyx (GV-1). Even in “a lake 10,000 meter deep” (1) (Hui Yin), the lake

of sexual desire where all the yin energies of the body meet at the perineum, we should penetrate to the bottom—we should continue to transform these energies until our sexual desire disappears. It is from the bottom of this lake that a sweet spring flows upward to the top of the mountains after passing through the (4) sacrum (GV-2) from the perineum, up the spine to the crown, where it gushes forth like a spring fountain.

- (4) **Sacral Hiatus** is the sacrum (GV-2), which has the eight immortal holes connecting directly to Earth Force energy.
- (5) **House of the Two Kidneys** (GV-4) is the Ming Men or Door of Life; it is also known as the door of fire—the gate that the sexual energy must pass through to be transformed. In Taoism we divide the left and right kidneys into yang and yin; the Ming Men is located between lumbar 2 and 3, midway between the two kidneys. The right kidney, which is yin, is represented by a Weaving Maiden who stores the essence of sexual energy (sperm and ovum), as well as the inner yang that attracts the active yang known as the gate of life (Ming Men). The left kidney, which is yang, is known as the true kidney, the activator of the stored energy of the kidneys. It is like a pilot light, which activates combustion in the cells of the body. It is often referred to as the ministerial fire, or the genuine fire, but is different from the imperial fire of the heart. We can see it as a flame bursting forth on the both sides of the spine, helping to transform the energy that rises upward through its path.
- (6) **The Burning Cauldron** is the cauldron located at first in the lower abdomen (below the Lower Tan Tien, about three inches below the navel). In later practices it moves up to the heart (Middle Tan Tien), and finally, to the brain (Upper Tan Tien). We can cook the natural forces of the mountains and rivers, the universal forces of the stars, moon, and sun, and the primordial forces of the cosmic particles—combining them within ourselves, and transforming them into a higher force to feed the *Immortal Fetus*.
- (7) **The Four Tai Chi** (the yin and yang symbol) represent the moving force (Chi) of radiance. By using the mind, the eyes, and abdominal breathing, we can move the accumulated sexual energy into the cauldron and begin to cook it transforming it into steam (Chi), which will radiate throughout the channels of the entire body to repair and energize the cells. The four yin/yang symbols representing the 8 trigrams of the I Ching move in balanced harmony to manifest the physical plan.
- (8) **The Buffalo Plows the Land and Plant the Gold Coin** is located at the Lower Tan Tien near the navel. It is connected to the spleen, and thus to the earth. The spleen center is the seed of the spirit and the Life Force (Chi). Once we are able to reverse the flow of sexual energy, we can irrigate the dry land—allowing us to till the soil and gather the gold to forge the gold coin of self-cultivation. Once the land is ready, the seed of long life and wisdom (the Immortal Fetus) can be planted. All the land the plants (our soul, spirit, mind, organs, and glands) need sexual energy to grow. The stone carving child, our pure awareness, collects the scattered parts of our essence, soul and spirit, and strings them together into one whole.
- (9) **True Tan Tien** or the field of the elixir is located above the burning cauldron in front of, and below the kidneys just behind the navel, but closer to the spine. The same area as the four Tai Chi is where the first alchemical transformation takes place.
- (10) **Weaving Maiden Spinning at Her Loom** is the yin (right kidney and water element), and the Cowherd standing above her at the heart level is yang. The Weaving Maiden has the ability to store silky yin energy, and to go inward to maintain quietness. She weaves silk-like garments out of moonlight and the energies of the Milky Way. These energies are accumulated and stored in the Lower Tan Tien by using the mind, eyes, heart, and inner awareness with intention to the breathing that is gentle, soft, long, and deep. This kind of breathing, which is like spinning or pulling silk, draws in the Cosmic Force and weaves it into an internal chi web, or network. The Chinese legend says that the Cowherd and the Weaving Maiden were lovers once, but they neglected their duties and were changed into stars and put at opposite ends of the sky. But on the night of the seventh day of the seventh month of each year, on a day celebrated as “lover’s day”, the birds (magpies) make a bridge (the Milky Way) across the sky to join them together. Likewise our

heart (spirit, fire, compassion fire, love, and destiny) and our kidneys (earth nature, water, sexual energy, and physical body) have been kept separate from the day we were born. Only by reuniting the heart essence (the fire of love and compassion) and the kidney essence (sexual energy) can we give birth to and grow the *Immortal Fetus*.

- (11) **Kidney Spirit (Hsuan Ming)**, also called NOURISHING THE EMBRYO, is the ability of the kidneys to store the constitutional or inherited energy from our parents, and is fed to the inner child as it develops spiritually.
- (12) **Within the Many Hides the Doorway to the One**, located opposite the heart, has a close relationship with the heart, and generates the Big Aura protecting the heart and the crown. This point is where we can draw the Chi into the heart.
- (13) **Big Hammer, Cervical-7** is the point (big vertebra) opposite the throat. This center connects the tendons and energies from the upper and lower regions of the body. It also serves as a junction box for the nerves of the hands and legs. Any blockage at this center restricts the energy flow to the higher centers and redirects it to the hands and legs.
- (14) **Cave of the Spirit Peak** is the Jade Pillow, located between the first cervical and the base of the skull. It is known as the God mouth, the place where we can receive Universal Knowledge. This window of the sky is seen as the gateway into the sea of brain marrow. This gate must open and close appropriately if energy is to pass through smoothly. The small brain, which lies to the inside of the Jade Pillow, activates yin energy that helps balance the yang energy of the large brain and serves as a storage place for the refined sexual energy and the Earth Force energy.
- (15) **The Sea of Brain Marrow** is connected with sexual water and spinal cord fluid, when one is drained, the other will be affected.

The numbered areas 16 to 21 are a series of nine sacred mountain in peaks. These mountain peaks function as funnels guiding Universal Energy downward. This energy is then concentrated in the mountain caves. Taoist adepts go to these caves for initiation. In the human head there are also nine different centers (peaks or points). which are able to extend to heaven to make a connection to the Cosmos. The brain marrow cavity, as well as the various energy centers of the body, are like those caves in a mountain which you can concentrate, store, and transform energy.

- (16) **Top of the Great Peak** is located in the back of the head. When we tilt our head and push our chin back, our head reaches its highest point. This peak connects the North Star to the Pineal Gland, it is where we receive the descending Universal Energy.
- (17) **High Place of Many Veils** lies between the Muddy Pool and the Great Peak. It is where the spirit and soul bodies can leave and enter in horizontal flight.
- (18) **Muddy Pool** is located in the center of the crown (Bai Hui or the hundredth meeting point). When it is open it feels like soft mud. This crown point connects the Big Dipper to the Hypothalamus Gland. It is through this center, which functions as a two-way street, that you can project your energy (soul or spirit) upward or receive the energy flowing downward.
- (19) **House of Rising Yang** is the third eye. Located slightly above the middle of the forehead, this center is able to receive the energies of the sun and moon, which it uses to project the soul and spirit bodies into space.
- (20) **Nine Sacred Realms** are directly connected to the mid-eyebrow and has a close connection to the Pituitary Gland. This center is use to receive the Cosmic Force and to launch the soul and spirit bodies into the earthly or human plane for traveling.
- (21) **Immortal Realm** is located in the center just in front of the crown point. It is here that our energy is able to make a connection with the heavens to draw down even more powerful Universal Energies.

(22) **Lao Tze (One of the Founders of Taoism)** is the seated figure of the old white-haired man with eyebrows reaching down to the ground, where they connect with the energy of the earth. Lao Tze was born old, and his long eyebrows emphasize this. He embodies the one who is united with that which never dies—pure consciousness. His internal and external nature is in complete harmony and oneness with the Tao.

(23) **Bodhidharma (The Founder of Zen Buddhism in China)** is the blue-eyed standing figure holding up his hands to connect directly to the Heavenly Energy.

*The energies of Bodhidharma are mixed together with those of Lao Tze to form a new Taoist understanding, which is the practice of modern Taoism—the **Universal Tao System**. This system represents the blending and the harmonizing of our Heavenly Destiny and our Earthly Nature.*

(24) **The Two Circles representing the Sun and the Moon within us** are the left and right eyes. By learning how to roll our eyes in a circular motion, these energies, along with our sexual energy, will rise up to the crown. When we roll the eyes downward looking toward the Lower Tan Tien, these blended energies move down to our lower energy centers where they can be stored.

(25) **Governing Meridian** starts at the perineum, goes up the spine to the head, then down to the palate.

(26) **Conception Meridian** starts at of the lower jaw and goes down the front of the body to perineum.

(27) **The Drawbridge** is the tongue, and the **Pool of Water** is the mouth which holds the saliva. In the Taoist practice, when you touch the palate with the tongue (the Source of Rising Saliva known as the Heavenly Pool), you connect the circuit between the Governor Channel (yang) and the Conception Channel (yin). Once the tongue touches the palate, the Chi is activated. The sexual energy is pumped up to the brain, activating the hypothalamus, pituitary, and thymus glands, which begin to secrete more hormones. The sexual energy, especially orgasm energy, will help draw in the Heavenly Force from above and the Earth Force from below. Mixing these two forces with the sexual energy stimulates the secretion of hormones. This creates an abundance of Chi and fluid. This fluid flows like a waterfall down to the palate, then across to the back of the palate, then down to the mouth and the throat (Twelve Storied Pagoda), where we are able to swallow it downward to fill the other two Tan Tien. This water is also known as the Nectar, the Water of Life, and the Golden Elixir.

(28) **Dew Pond** is located behind the soft palate and is connected to the Pituitary Gland. The **True Jade Upper Gate** is the water gate near the throat, which connects to the brain.

(29) **Mouth Pool** (GV-28) is called the Mouth Crossing, which contains the elixir flowing down from the Pituitary Gland. This elixir can mix with the Cosmic Energy inhaled through the breath.

(30) **Heavenly Pool** (Hsuan Ying) is the **Source of Rising Saliva**, which connects the tongue to the palate with the saliva.

(31) **Twelve Storied Pagoda**, or twelve story tower, is the throat center (CV-22). During its passage upward through the spine into the brain center, the sexual energy is transformed. As the transformed energy continues downward from the **Drawbridge**, it flows through the throat to nourish the heart.

(32) **Flaming Balls of Fire** is located at the pericardium. **I cultivate my own Energy Field** (Middle Tan Tien or Elixir Field), means that I cultivate my own virtues—my love, compassion, and kindness. Inside this field is a magical sprout (the Immortal Fetus or the unborn spirit) that “lives 10,000 years”. The color of its flower—flowers which represent the opening to consciousness and wisdom—resembles gold. These flowers never wilt. The seeds of this magical sprout are like Jade pebbles. Its fruits are round. To cultivate it, I root myself in the earth of the middle palace (the solar plexus). To water it, I reverse the sexual so it flows upward to the crown. Text says: “After many years, I achieve the Great Tao and wander freely over the earth; I am an Immortal of the story Island of Peng Lai (the High Astral Plane).

- (33) ***Spiral of Rice Grains*** represents the great mystery—the world in a grain of sand, the microcosm of the human organism reflecting the macrocosm of the universe. Once we learn to understand and control our mind and ourselves, we will understand the mysteries and laws of the universe. The law of heaven is called destiny, and the law of the earth is called nature. The harmony between destiny and nature is the Tao, the Great Way. Those who follow the Tao fulfill their spiritual destiny and enjoy the fruit of their earthly nature. The Taoist way of life is to tap into the energies of heaven and earth while blending and harmonizing these energies with the human energy in order to cultivate and conserve the Vital Force our bodies. Heavenly forces manifest themselves as celestial energy whose power appears to us as thoughts, consciousness, fate and destiny. Some systems and religions separate heaven and earth making us choose between them, while the Universal Tao is the practice of connecting and harmonizing heaven (destiny) and earth (nature) in our own being.
- (34) ***Cowherder Boy Connects The Stars*** symbolizes the yang elements of the heart—the fire of love and the fire of compassion. The Cowherder looks like a child, which we call yang heart or ***Heart Spirit (Tan Yuan)***. He is also called ***Guarding Spirit***. Both the Christian Bible and ancient Taoist texts refer to this transformation as “becoming like a child again”—the symbol of spiritual wisdom, innocence, and simplicity. Extending out of the Cowherder’s crown, you find the Big Dipper, which symbolizes the heart’s quest to seek harmony with the Cosmos. The Taoist regard the Big Dipper as the cosmic timepiece. During the course of the year, the Big Dipper makes a 360 degree rotation, pointing to all the stars which collect the Universal Power in the Big Dipper’s cup. If we know how to make the connection with the Big Dipper we can easily gather the Astral Power for our own transformation.
- (35) ***Milky Way*** is the bridge made of (magpies) birds connecting the Cowherder (the heart, the fire of love) to the Weaving Maiden (the kidneys, the water of sexual energy).
- (36) ***Lung Spirit (Hwa Hao) finds Fullness in the Empty Is Completed*** is the power and ability of the lungs to empty themselves so they can receive more. Each inhalation and exhalation of our body is the breath of the universe expanding and contracting.
- (37) ***Solar Plexus*** is also known as the Middle Tan Tien.
- (38) ***Outer Ring of the Forest*** represents the edge of the rib cage, where the diaphragm is anchored.
- (39) ***Liver Spirit (Lung Yien)***, also called ***Growing Wisdom***, is the forest of trees connection to the liver (wood element), the largest organ of the body. In Taoism, we regard the liver as the controller of the Chi and blood. Too much Chi in one place can cause stagnation or congestion, and too little can cause weakness and depletion. Both conditions are the result of a liver imbalance. The Weaving Maiden (kidneys), who receives water from the sexual energy, also makes water which helps the wood (liver) to grow while the liver provides fuel for the heart’s fire. The organs all depend on one another.
- (39a) ***Gall Bladder Spirit (Lung Au)***, also called ***Majestic and Bright***, is located in the middle of the liver.
- (39b) ***Spleen Spirit (Chaeng Tsai)***, also called ***Soul Pavilion***, is located in the spleen area.
- (40) includes a (40) boy plowing with an buffalo, the (6) burning cauldron, and the moving of the (7) four yin and yang (Tai Chi) balls.



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