

Jakob Bol

Chinese Alchemy

Chinese Alchemy has a long and ancient history and is deeply rooted in the religions of Taoism and Buddhism. One of the major aspects of Chinese Alchemy is the practice of qigong, which we will examine here in some detail. Qigong developed much more under the Taoists than under the Buddhists, since the Buddhists were after the goal of Buddhahood or Enlightenment, and the main goal of the Taoists was to live a long and healthy life. Indeed, many Taoists were rumored to be hundreds of years old. Indeed, I will give you one such story that has proven to be true.

Li, Qing-Yun was born in 1678 A.D. in Qi Jiang Xian, Sichuan province. He died in 1928 A.D. at 250 years old. His story is reported by authorities to be true. Li spent most of his life in the mountains, and was an herbalist and practitioner of qigong. His story proves that with skill and right living it is possible to live a long life of over a century.

The prescription for Taoism is to live a long and happy life before secluding oneself to the mountains for meditation. And meditation is the key to spirituality.

In the beginning, the Taoists emphasize the cultivation of the Three Essentials: Jing, Qi, and Shen. These can be considered to be like the Salt, Mercury, and Sulfur of Western Alchemy. Jing refers to one's essence and is often equated with semen in men and hormones in women. Qi is the life-force or energy. Shen is the Soul or Spirit.

Jing can be preserved and cultivated by abstaining from sex and eating the right foods. Qi is cultivated through martial arts and qigong. Indeed some martial arts include qigong as part of the training, especially the so-called 'soft' or 'internal' styles.

I have personal experience with qigong, being a practitioner for over ten years now. My teacher trained in China under several qigong masters and went on to teach a style that he called 'Unified Fitness' after combining aspects of both Eastern and Western approaches to fitness. His theory was that the movement of Qi built up in qigong combined with blood, lymph in nerve cells in a sort of 'pulse' that could be used to palpate inside the body and directly attack disease. After fighting of a nose cold in only a few hours I was hooked.

Another goal of qigong besides fitness is the goal of Enlightenment. Qi is led up the spine to the brain where a sort of 'spirit baby' is born and nurtured and when this spirit baby is strong enough it can be led out of the body in a sort of out-of-body-experience, similar to the goal of coagulation in Western Alchemy.

Another approach to meditation in Taoism besides the birth of the spirit baby is the approach of 'just sitting' and looking within. When one does this practice there is no goal except the practice itself. One does not need a reason for sitting. In a way, this is much like the practice of Zazen in Japanese Zen Buddhism.

I hope this short essay serves to inspire the reader to look more into Chinese Alchemy, especially qigong. I know it has been beneficial to my life.

Bibliography

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Mission Statement

When I was only 19, I had a mystical experience that changed my life forever. I felt at one with Divinity and intuitively realized that God was one and the same with the presence that looked out the eyes of every sentient being, but especially humans. I also saw that what I thought was myself was only an illusory ego made up of a whirlwind of different things that essentially had no independent existence, and my true Self was one with God. I also intuitively knew that Buddhist meditation alleviated suffering through controlling the mind, and that suffering was mainly caused by and out of control mind. This was all I knew concerning Buddhism, apart from images of maroon robed monks sitting cross-legged. Thus, I started to research, first Buddhism, then the mystical side of every other religion around the world, which has finally led me to alchemy.

My goal as a practicing alchemist is to spread enlightenment throughout the world, the Great Work, and to further my own enlightenment. I will do this by offering weekly lessons on alchemy, magick, Qabalah, and meditation to students at a sliding scale rate, and continue my own spiritual practices. It is my hope that such can enlighten the world.