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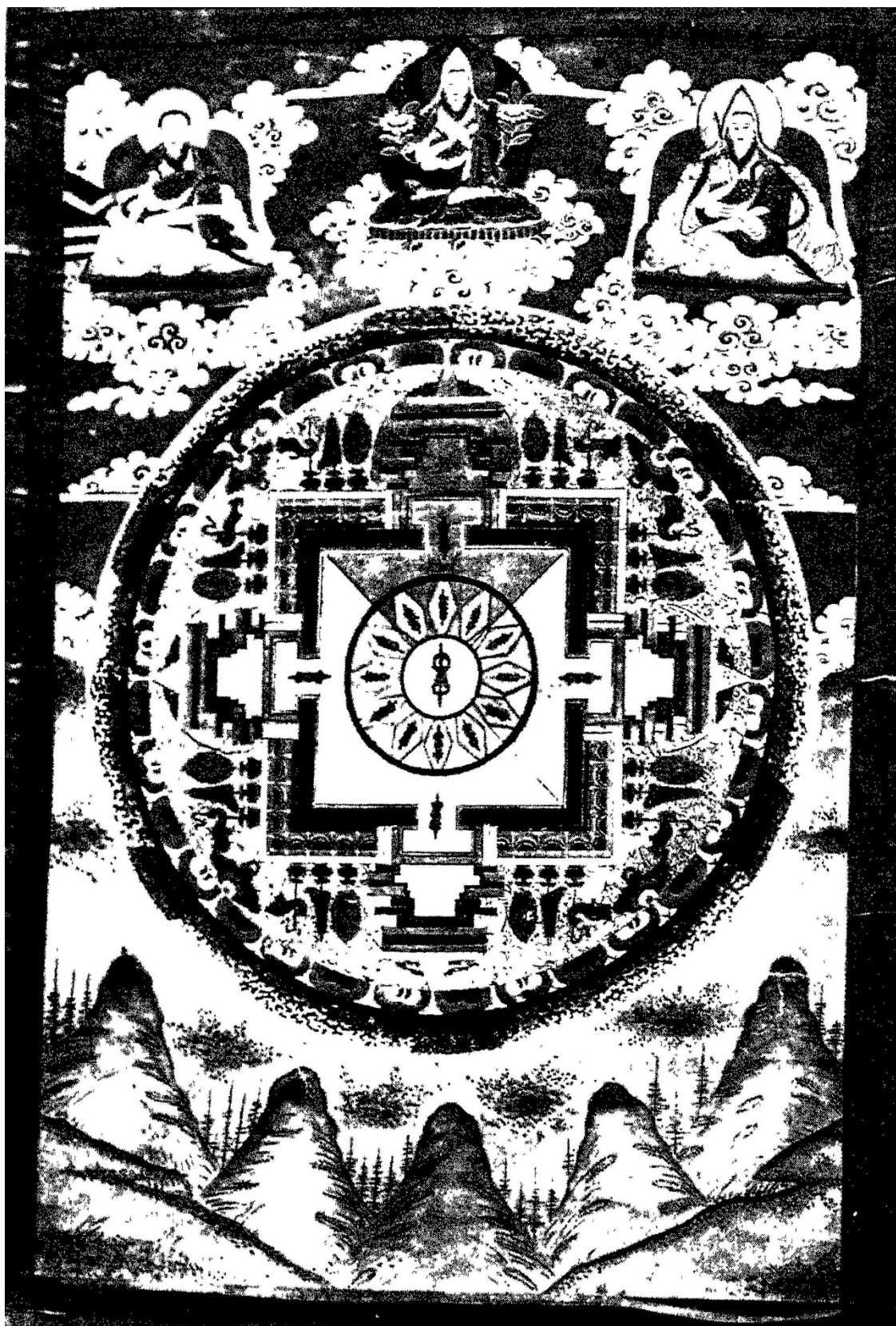
**THE SECRET
OF
THE GOLDEN FLOWER**

A Chinese T'ai I Chin Hua Tsung Chih - Book of Life

**Translated and explained by Richard Wilhelm
Translated into English by Cary F. Baynes**

Bird Publisher, 2015

A Lamaist Vajra-Mandala
(To be studied in preparation for meditation)



About this eBook

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Translated and explained by Richard Wilhelm; Translated into English by Cary F. Baynes

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THE SECRET OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER - A Chinese T'ai I Chin Hua Tsung Chih (Book of Life)

Translation of the T'AI I CHING HUA TSUNG CHIH

1. Heavenly Consciousness (The Heart)

Master Lu Tzu said: That which exists through itself is called Meaning (*Tao*). Meaning has neither name nor force. It is the one essence, the one primordial spirit. Essence and life cannot be seen. It is contained in the Light of Heaven. The Light of Heaven cannot be seen. It is contained in the two eyes. Today I will be your guide and will first reveal to you the secret of the Golden Flower of the Great *One*, and, starting from that, I will explain the rest in detail.

The Great *One* is the term given to that which has nothing above it. The secret of the magic of life consists in using action in order to achieve non-action. One must not wish to leave out the steps between and penetrate directly. The maxim handed down to us is to take in hand the work on the essence. In doing this it is important, not to follow the wrong road.

The Golden Flower is the Light. What colour has the Light? One uses the Golden Flower as an image. It is the true power of the transcendent Great *One*. The phrase, "The lead of the water-region has but one taste," refers to it.

In the Book of Changes it is said ⁽¹⁾: Heaven created water through the *One*. That is the true power of the Great *One*. If a man attains this *One* he becomes alive; if he misses it he dies. But even if a man lives in the power (air, *prana*) he does not see the power (air), just as fishes live in water but do not see the water. A man dies when he has no life-air, just as the fishes are destroyed when deprived of water. Therefore the adepts have taught the people to hold fast to the primal and to guard the *One*; it is the circular course of the Light and the protection of the centre. If one guards this true power, one can prolong the span of life, and can then apply the methods of creating an immortal body by "melting and mixing".

The work on the circulation of the Light depends entirely on the backward-flowing movement, so that the thoughts are gathered together (the place of Heavenly Consciousness, the Heavenly Heart). The Heavenly Heart lies between sun and moon (i.e. the two eyes).

The *Book of the Yellow Castle* says: In the field of the square inch of the house of the square foot, life can be regulated. The house of the square foot is the face. The field of the square inch in the face: what could that be other than the Heavenly Heart? In the middle of the square inch dwells the splendour. In the purple hall of the city of jade dwells the god of utmost emptiness and life. The Confucians call it the centre of emptiness; the Buddhists, the terrace of life; the Taoists, the ancestral land, or the yellow castle, or the dark pass, or the space of former Heaven. The Heavenly Heart is like the dwelling place, the Light is the master.

Therefore when the Light circulates, the powers of the whole body arrange themselves before its throne, just as when a holy king has taken possession of the capital and has laid down the fundamental rules of order, all the states approach with tribute; or, just as when the

¹ This commentary probably comes from the seventeenth or eighteenth century.

master is quiet and calm, men-servants and maids obey his orders of their own accord, and each does his work.

Therefore you only have to make the Light circulate: that is the deepest and most wonderful secret. The Light is easy to move, but difficult to fix. If it is allowed to go long enough in a circle, then it crystallizes itself: that is the natural spirit-body. This crystallized spirit is formed beyond the nine Heavens. It is the condition of which it is said in the Book of the Seal of the Heart: Silently in the morning thou fliest upward.

In carrying out this fundamental truth you need to seek for no other methods, but must only concentrate your thoughts on it. The book *Leng Yen*² says: By collecting the thoughts one can fly and will be born in Heaven. Heaven is not the wide blue sky, but the place where the body is made in the house of the creative. If one keeps this up for a long time, there develops quite naturally in addition to the body, yet another spirit-body.

The Golden Flower is the Elixir of Life (*Chin Tan*, literally, golden ball, golden pill). All changes of spiritual consciousness depend upon the Heart. Here is a secret charm, which, although it works very accurately, is yet so fluent that it needs extreme intelligence and clarity, and complete absorption and calm. People without this highest degree of intelligence and understanding do not find the way to apply the charm; people without this utmost capacity for concentration and calm cannot keep fast hold of it.

This section explains the origin of the Great Meaning of the world (*Tao*). The Heavenly Heart is the germinal root of the Great Meaning. If a man can be absolutely quiet then the Heavenly Heart will manifest itself. When the feeling springs up and flows-out in the natural course, the person is created as primordial creature. This creature abides between conception and birth in true space. When the One note of individuation enters into birth, essence and life are divided in two. From this time on, if the utmost peace is not achieved, essence and life never see each other again.

Therefore it is said in the plan of the Great Pole: The Great One includes within itself true power (*prana*), seed, spirit, animus, and anima. If the thoughts are absolutely quiet so that the Heavenly Heart can be seen, the spiritual intelligence reaches the source unaided. This essence lives indeed in true space, but the splendour of the Light dwells in the two eyes. Therefore the Master teaches the circulation of the Light so that the true essence may be reached. The true essence is the primordial spirit. The primordial spirit is precisely essence and life, and if one accepts what is real in it, it is the primordial power. And the Great Meaning is just this thing.

The Master is further concerned that the people should not miss the way that leads from conscious action to unconscious non-action. Therefore he says: The magic of the Elixir of Life makes use of conscious action in order that non-action may be attained. Conscious action consists in setting the Light in circulation by reflection in order to make manifest the setting free of Heaven. If then the true seed is born, and the right method applied in order to melt and mix it, and in that way to create the Elixir of Life, then one goes through the pass. The embryo, which must be developed by the work of warming, nourishing, bathing, and washing, is formed. That crosses over into the realm of unconscious non-action. A whole year of this fire-period is needed before the embryo is born, sheds the membranes, and passes out of the ordinary world into the holy world.

This method is quite simple and easy. But there are so many transforming and changing conditions connected with it that it is said: Not with one leap can a man suddenly get there. Whoever is seeking eternal life must search for the place whence essence and life originally spring.

² *Leng Yen* is the Buddhist *Lankavatarasutra*.