

清靜經

Qingjing Jing

Canon of Purity and Tranquility

Source: 三教同聲 *Sanjiao Tongsheng* (1592); reprinted in 琴曲集成 *Qinqu Jicheng*, Vol. VI, pp. 113-115

Lyrics: For recitation as a Daoist morning lesson; also published in 太上全貞早談功德經 *Taishang Quanzhen zao tan gongde jing* (Beijing, *Zhongguo Daojiao Xiehui*, Beijing, 1983, pp. 24-27). It is prefaced by 太上老君說常清靜妙經 (The great master Laozi spoke the permanent purity and tranquility beautiful canon), to be sung in declamatory style before the text is read; music for this canon is also in 武當山道教音樂 *Wudangshan Daojiao Yinyue*. (Information provided by Francois Picard)

Translation: Adapted from Livia Kohn, *The Taoist Experience*, pp.24-29 (1993)

Transcription: John Thompson (1999)

Mode: 碧玉 *Biyu* (main notes 6 and 3 (1a and mi))

Tuning: same as *manjiao* (cf. *Huo Lin*); from standard tuning lower 1st, 3rd and 6th strings, giving 3 5 6 1 2 3 5 (relative pitch: here c (1) is approx. f as played on a *qin*)

(1)

老君曰：大道無形，生育天地。
Lao Jun yue: says: Da Dao wu xing, sheng yu tian di.
Laozi says: The Great Dao has no form, it gives birth to and raises heaven and earth.

④ 勻 三 五 四 三 勻 六 勻 四 五 勻

4

大道無情，運行日月。大道無名，長養萬物。
Da Dao wu qing, yun xing ri yue. Da Dao wu ming, chang yang wan wu.
The Great Dao has no feelings, it regulates the course of the sun and moon. The Great Dao has no name, it raises and nourishes the myriad beings.

(外) 五 勻 五 勻 五 六 勻 六 勻 六 勻 五 四 勻 勻

8

吾不知其名，強名曰道。
Wu bu zhi qi ming, qiang ming yue dao.
I don't know its name, so I call it Dao.

(化) 勻 三 四 勻 五 勻 勻 勻 勻

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11 *a tempo*

夫道者，有清有濁，有動有靜；天清地濁，天動地靜；
 Fu Dao zhe, you qing you zhuo, you dong you jing; tian qing di zhuo, tian dong di jing;
 As for the Dao, it has clarity and turbidity; it has movement and tranquility; heaven is clear, earth is turbid; heaven moves, earth is tranquil;

外 二 大 九 外 一 大 九 章 外 二 大 九 外 三 大 九 外 四 大 九 外 五 大 九 外 六 大 九 外 七 大 九 外 八 大 九 外 九 大 九 外 十 大 九

17

男清女濁，男動女靜；降本流末。
 nan qing, nyu zhuo, nan dong, nyu jing; jiang4 ben liu mo4.
 male is clear, female is turbid; male moves, female is tranquil; / descends from the original and flows towards the end.

外 二 大 九 外 一 大 九 外 三 大 九 外 四 大 九 外 五 大 九 外 六 大 九 外 七 大 九 外 八 大 九 外 九 大 九 外 十 大 九

21

而生萬物，清者濁之源，靜者動之基；
 Er sheng wan wu, qing zhe zhuo zhi yuan, jing zhe dong zhi ji;
 But as this gives birth to the myriad beings, purity / the source of turbidity, tranquility / the root of movement;

外 二 大 九 外 一 大 九 外 三 大 九 外 四 大 九 外 五 大 九 外 六 大 九 外 七 大 九 外 八 大 九 外 九 大 九 外 十 大 九

25

人能常清靜，天地悉皆歸。
 ren neng chang qing jing, tian di xi jie gui.
 / if people could always be pure and tranquil, heaven and earth would completely return / (i.e., to the primordial)

外 二 大 九 外 一 大 九 外 三 大 九 外 四 大 九 外 五 大 九 外 六 大 九 外 七 大 九 外 八 大 九 外 九 大 九 外 十 大 九

49

能 Neng Those who can
 遣 qian abandon
 之 zhi these (desires),
 者 zhe,
 內 nei
 觀 guan through introspection observe the mind,
 其 qi
 心 xin,
 (於) (at)

6.4 5.6 6.2 5.6 6.2 6.4

52

心 xin
 無 wu
 其 qi
 心 xin.
 and see there is no mind;
 外 wai
 觀 guan
 其 qi
 形 xing,
 形 xing
 無 wu
 其 qi
 形 xing.
 from outside observe the body,
 and see there is no body.
 (於) (at)

6.4 5.6 5.6 4.8 4.4 4.8 4.4 4.8 5.6 4.4 4.4 4.0 3.2 4.0 4.0 3.2 2.6

56

遠 yuan
 觀 guan
 其 qi
 物 wu,
 物 wu
 無 wu
 其 qi
 無 wu.
 Glancing afar they observe others
 and see there are no beings.
 (於) (at)

rit.

2.6 3.2 2.6 4.0 4.4

58 freely and lightly

三 san
 者 zhe
 既 ji4
 悟 wu,
 唯 wei
 見 jian
 於 yu
 空 kong.
 These three having been realized,
 one only sees
 emptiness.
 rit.

4.4 4.4

(3)

63

觀空亦空，空無所空。所空既空，無無亦無。

Guan kong yi kong, kong wu suo kong. Suo kong ji kong, wu wu yi wu.

Observe emptiness using emptiness, and see there is no emptiness. When even emptiness is no more, there is no more nonbeing either.

(以) (無)

自 四 大 五 五 加 五 豆 七 作 大 五 六 五 三 五 三

67

無無既無，湛然常寂。寂無所寂，慾豈能生？

Wu wu ji wu, zhan4 ran chang ji. Ji wu suo ji, yu qi neng sheng?

Without the existence even of nonbeing, profound and everlasting all is serenity. When serenity dissolves to nothingness, how can desire arise?

rit.

大 五 四 五 三 五 三 五 三 五 四 五 五 大 五 五 大 五

71 freely a tempo

慾既不生，既是真靜。貞靜應物，貞常德性。

Yu ji bu sheng, ji shi zhen jing. Zhen jing ying wu, zhen chang de xing.

When no desire arises, there is true tranquility. True tranquility goes along / beings, with other true permanence realizes inner nature.

(得)

(大五) 三 五 三 五 三 五 三 五 上 大 五 上 五 七 然 五 七 九 九 六 七 外 五

77

常應常靜，常清靜矣。

Chang ying chang jing, qing jing yi.

Forever going along, forever tranquil: this is permanent purity and tranquility.

12.3 13.5 13.5 8.5 mm.36 & 39

外 五 外 五 上 外 下 外 中 上 六 律 下 十 引 上 七 五 外 五

(4)

79

如此清靜，漸(入)貞道。
 Ru ci qing jing, jian (ru) zhen dao.
 Like this in purity and tranquility gradually enter the true Dao.

7.9 7.0 6.4

81

既入貞道，名為得(道)；雖名得道，實無所得。
 Ji ru zhen dao, ming wei de (dao); sui ming de dao, shi wu suo de.
 When (one has) entered the true Dao one can say this is "realization"; though one speaks of attaining the Dao, actually there is nothing to attain.

rit

8.5 7.6 7.6

85

謂化衆生，名為得道。
 Wei hua zhong4 sheng1, ming wei de dao.
 The so-called transformation of the myriad beings is what is called attaining the Dao.

(為)

7.6 8.5

87

能悟之者，可傳聖道。
 Neng wu4 zhi zhe, ke chuan sheng dao.
 Only one who can properly understand this is worthy to transmit the sage's Dao.

7.6

(5)

91

老君曰：
Lao jun yue:
Laozi says,

上士無爭，
shang shi wu zheng1,
The highest gentleman does not fight,

下士好爭。
xia shi hao zheng.
the lesser gentleman loves to fight.

6.4 7.3 6.4 5.6 5.0

95

上德不德，
Shang De bu De,
Highest Virtue is free from Virtue,

下德執德。
xia De zhi2 De.
Lesser Virtue clings to Virtue.

執著之者，
Zhi zhuo zhi zhe,
All clinging and attachments

不名道德。
bu ming Dao De.
are not related to the Dao or the Virtue

5.6 6.4 6.4 6.4 6.2 5.6 6.4 6.2 5.6 6.2

99

衆生所以
Zhong sheng suo yi
The reason people

不得真道者，
bu de zhen dao zhe,
do not attain realization of the Dao

謂見妄心。
wei jian wang4 xin.
is because they have deviant minds.

(有)

6.4

102

既見妄心，
Ji4 jian wang4 xin,
Deviance in the mind

即矜其身。
* ji2 jin1 qi shen.
means pride in the body.

既矜其身，
Ji jin qi shen,
Pride in the body

即著萬物。
ji zhuo wan wu.
means there is clinging to things.

(有) (驚其神?)

mm.84-86 8.5 9.0 8.5 7.6 8.5

(* or 即驚其神 ji jing qi shen "means the spirit is alarmed")

106 *rit.*

既 (著) 萬 物， 即 生 (貪 求。 既 生 貪 求， 即 是) 煩 惱，
 Ji (zhuo) wan wu, ji sheng (tan qiu. Ji sheng tan qiu, ji sheng) fan nao,
 Clinging to things there is searching and coveting. Searching and coveting there are passions and afflictions.

110 *slow*

煩 惱 妄 想 憂 苦 身 心。
 fan nao wang xiang you ku shen xin.
 Passions, afflictions, deviance, imaginings trouble and pester body and mind.

(6)

113 *slow and free*

便 遭 濁 辱， 流 浪 死 生。 常 沉 苦 (海)， 永 失 貞 道。
 Bian zao zhuo ru, liu lang si sheng. Chang chen ku (hai), yong shi zhen dao.
 Then one falls into / shame, ups and downs, life and death. Forever immersed in the sea of misery, one is in eternity lost to realizing the Dao.

117

貞 常 之 道， 悟 者 自 得。 得 悟 道 者， 常 (清 靜 矣。)
 Zhen chang zhi Dao, wu zhe zi de. De wu Dao zhe, chang (qing jing yi.)
 The Dao of true permanence: / understand naturally achieve it. / achieve realization of the Dao, will rest forever in the pure / and tranquil