Secularized Nourishment for Immortality:  
A Daoist Cookbook from Late Ming China  

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Abstract

This study explores the secularized nourishing thought for immortality in the late Ming by examining a popular Daoist cookbook, *Shenmi fushi fang* (神秘服食方, Secret Prescriptions and Recipes of Food and Drink for Immortality). This cooking work was written by an amateur Daoist adept, Gao Lian 高濂, and included in the *Yinzhuan fushi jian* (飲饌服食牋, Discourse on Food and Drink), part of his encyclopedic *Yashangzhai zunsheng ba jian* (雅尚齋遵生八牋, Eight Discourses on the Art of Honoring Life from the Studio where Elegance is Valued). Through examining the text of the 55 recipes in this immortal cookbook, it shows the traditionally Daoist secret and abstruse thought of immortality had been transformed from canonical documentation into a popular way of cooking matter. While alchemical elixirs made from heavy metals and minerals were traditionally prescribed for attaining immortality, only a few heavy substances were adopted in this cookbook and the majority of the immortal ingredients belonged to *bencao* (materia medica). To explore late Ming dietary nourishing thought for immortality, the major question regarding if Gao Lian’s inclusion of this cookbook signaled immortality was secularized in lines with social, religious and medical developments is

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discussed. An examination of late Ming literati and commoners’ secular ethos, political position of Daoism, traditional and contemporary immortal thoughts, associated with the contextual demonstration in Gao Lian’s *Secret Prescriptions and Recipes of Food and Drink for Immortality* is key to understand the secularized immortality by means of household cooking practices.

**Keywords:** Gao Lian, immortality, nourishing diets, secularization, materia medica
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1. Introduction

Late Ming was a time when works of *riyong leishu*  (encyclopedia for daily use) had earned an unprecedented recognition among all walks of life.¹ The pragmatism-oriented works were especially known for applied life knowledge. Most recognized among them included Li Shizhen’s 李時珍 (1518-1592) *Bencao gangmu* 本草綱目 (Compendium of Materia Medica) Song Yingxing’s 宋應星 (1587-1666) *Tiangong kaiwu* 天工開物 (The Exploitation of the Works of Nature) and Xu Guangqi’s 徐光啟 (1562-1633) *Nongzheng quanshu* 農政全書 (Complete Treatise on Agriculture).² In addition to the expertise references, an increasing number of culinary treatises catered to human desires for macrobiotics were published and prevailed at the same time due to a trend of secular ideology was remarkably proliferated. This social movement suggests the traditional doctrines of Confucianism had since mid Ming challenged by Wang Yangming’s 王陽明 (1472-1529) new teachings of *zhiliangzhi* 致良知 (innate moral knowledge). Wang’s ideas

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disregarded Confucian austere attitude on human desires and encouraged people, whether they were saints or populace, to experience the humble aspects of life. His advocacy had become a renaissance-like movement, attracting more and more literati, such as Li Zhi 李贄 (1527-1602), Yuan Hongdao’s 袁宏道 (1568-1610) and Chen Jiru 陳繼儒 (1558-1639), to devote themselves to refined and healthy diets for longevity.

With the liberal thought stimulating late Ming literati to elaborate on personal nourishment, the Hangzhou native Gao Lian’s (? - after 1591) *Discourse on Food and Drink,* a pamphlet included in his *Eight Discourses on the Art of Honoring Life from the Studio where Elegance is Valued,* was well accepted as a nourishing and home cooking reference.

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4 The *Discourse on Food and Drink* (the translated English name was found in Craig Clunas’ work) is the fifth pamphlet of the *Eight Discourses on the Art of Honoring Life from the Studio where Elegance is Valued* (19 juan or fascicles). This pamphlet consists of three fascicles (11-13). The first fascicle includes a preface by the author, 13 monographs for chaquan 茶泉 (tea and spring water), 32 recipes for tangpin 湯品 (soups for refreshment), 12 recipes for shoushui 熟水 (beverages with boiled water), 38 recipes for zhomi 粉麵 (flour of miscellaneous crops), 50 recipes for fuzha 脯鮓 (preserved meats and fish), and 18 notes on methods for zhishi youfa 治食有法 (tips for preparation of foodstuffs). The second fascicle contains 55 recipes for jiasu 家蔬 (cultivated vegetables), 91 recipes for yesu 野蔬 (wild vegetables), and 28 recipes for niangzao 酿造 (fermented beverages). Finally, the last fascicle consists of 58 recipes for tianshi 甜食 (sweets), 24 recipes for fazhi yaopin 法製藥品 (refined medicines), and 55 shenmi fushi 神秘服食 (secret prescriptions and recipes of food and drink for immortality).

5 Apart from the *Discourse on Food and Drink*, also included in the *Eight Discourses on the Art of Honoring Life from the Studio where Elegance is Valued* are *Qingxiu miaolun jian 清修妙論牋* (Discourse on Lofty Cultivation and Wonderful Speech, fascicles 1-2), *Sishi tiaoshe jian 四時調攝犧* (Discourse on Regulating and Nursing Health in the Four Seasons, fascicles 3-6), *Qiju anle jian 起居安樂犧* (Discourse on Peace and Happiness at Home and Away, fascicles 7-8), *Yannian quebing jian 延年卻病犧* (Discourse on Extending Life and Repelling Diseases, fascicles 9-10), *Yanxian qingshang jian 燕閒清賞犧* (Discourse on Appreciating Worthy Sights at Leisure, fascicles 14-16), *Lingmiao danyao jian 靈妙丹藥犧* (Discourse on Wonderful and Efficacious Elixirs, fascicles 17-18) and *Chenwai xiaju jian 塵外遐舉犧* (Discourse on the Reclusive Life Far From the Mortal World, fascicle 19). Refer this and footnote 3 to Gao Lian, “Yashangzhai zunsheng ba jian (YZBJ hereafter) 雅尚齋遵生八犧,” in *Beijing tushuguan guji 北京圖書館古籍* 162.
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From its consecutive reprints since published, it shows this work had evidently earned popular recognition among all walks of life. In view of its text, the 1591-published work represented a collection of a substantially wide range of recipes, covering twelve categories of food and drink and a total of 458 recipes. Classified by the *Siku quanshu* 全書 (Complete Library of the Four Treasures) as a miscellaneous work under the Philosophers category, the work was hailed as a profound work of scholarship on the culinary arts in the late Ming.\(^6\) Though Gao Lian was not recorded in the official *Ming History* or in local gazetteers, he was known an amateur Daoist adept with a considerable amount of wealth inherited from his father. Despite Gao Lian failed any official examinations, he held a sinecure post in the Court of State Ceremonial (*honglusi* 鴻臚寺) owing to his good social connections to government officials, which granted him this position.\(^7\)

Through examining Gao Lian’s *Discourse on Food and Drink*, it is found among the twelve categories, the category of *Secret Prescriptions and Recipes of Food and Drink for Immortality* is a unique section differing from any culinary works in Ming dynasty.\(^8\) It collected 55 Daoist-style recipes considerably emphasizing that immortality could be attained by taking a wide selection of medicinal prescriptions. These prescriptions, unlike traditional metallic elixirs prepared by Daoist adepts or magicians, were transformed as general household cooking recipes with

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\(^6\) Kong & Kwan, p. 29.

\(^7\) Clunas, pp. 14-20; Yi Yongwen 伊永文, *Ming-Qing yinshi yanjiu* 明清飲食研究 (Taipei: Hongye wenhua, 1997), pp. 359-60.

\(^8\) This category was shown in the table of content as *shenmi fushilei* 神秘服食類, but it was titled as *fushie fanglei* 服食方類 inside the recipe text.
adoption of a majority of *materia medica* ingredients. Traditionally, these kind of secret prescriptions belonged to Daoist nourishing means, chiefly aiming to attain longevity or even immortality. They were mostly found in related Daoist accounts and canons, especially in various biographies of the immortals. It emerges therefore questions in my mind. Was immortal thought a popular belief among late Ming populace? If yes, why the most religious realm of Daoist immortality could be accomplished by the collection of general household recipes, instead of traditionally alchemical preparations? Along with the two questions it follows then why *materia medica* ingredients were dominant in these recipes, rather than substances of metals and minerals, despite the fact that Gao Lian introduced relatively limited alchemical preparations in this category. By and large, did Gao Lian’s inclusion of the *Secret Prescriptions and Recipes of Food and Drink for Immortality* in his encyclopedic work signal immortality was secularized in lines with social, religious and medical developments?

Though Evelyn Rawski pointed out in 1990s that more research themes of popular culture could be done to link physical structures of social economy in the late imperial China, few studies focusing on non-elite or non-Confucian diets of this time were conducted. There were especially no studies covering the popular cookbook written by Gao Lian in the late Ming, despite Craig Clunas and Mao Wenfang 毛文芳 had published their research on this work. Their respected works were

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10 Refer to Clunas; Mao Wenfang 毛文芳, “Cultivation and Adornment: Concerning the Aesthetics of ‘Worldly Life’ among the Literati in the Late Ming,” *Chinese Studies* 漢學研究 Vol. 15:2 (1997); “Xianshang – Wan Ming meixue zhi fengge yihan xilun 閒賞—晚明美學之風格意涵析
however elaborated on Gao Lian’s aesthetic accomplishment in the non-culinary discourses of his *Eight Discourses on the Art of Honoring Life from the Studio where Elegance is Valued*. To answer the above-mentioned questions, I will adapt to include late Ming intellectual ethos and Daoist nourishing advocacies for immortality as a preliminary foundation, in an attempt to link culinary thoughts from Gao Lian’s *Secret Prescriptions and Recipes of Food and Drink for Immortality*. To help further understand the nourishing diets for immortality, major ingredients and preparations in this discourse are also demonstrated.

### 2. Intellectual Secularization and Religious Redemption on Diet

Gao Lian’s *Eight Discourses on the Art of Honoring Life from the Studio where Elegance is Valued* was a product of a special social ethos in the late Ming. This work was generally recognized the most complete and popular household cookbook then, and no work of this kind before Qing dynasty could equal it either in detail or scope.\(^{11}\) Its popularity echoed the pragmatism-oriented trend that works of encyclopedia for daily use had earned an extraordinary recognition among all strata of people.\(^{12}\) During this time, a number of great practical works were published to meet people’s needs on applied life knowledge. These works include Li Shizhen’s medicinal prescription collection: *Compendium of Materia Medica*💡 Song Yingxing’s technical references on agriculture and handicraft-making: *The Exploitation of the Works of Nature* and Xu

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\(^{11}\) Kong & Kwan, p. 29.

\(^{12}\) Wu Huifang, p.18.
Guangqi’s agricultural treatise on cultivation: *Complete Treatise on Agriculture*.

This practical movement could be traced back to the orthodox Neo-Confucian teachings of the Cheng brothers (Cheng Hao 程顥 [1032-1085] and Cheng Yi 程頤 [1033-1108]) and Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200), a school of thought which was supported by the government bureaucracy and which had dominated the examination system since the thirteenth century, was challenged from the mid-Ming onwards by Wang Yangming’s new teachings, exemplified by his theory of innate moral knowledge. The main ideas of Wang’s teachings emphasized humanism, and focused on human concerns. This was based on an assumption that the difference in moral knowledge and moral ability between a humble couple and a saint was essentially very slight.\(^\text{13}\) This ran counter to the austere Neo-Confucian doctrine enjoining contemplation of the coherence of Heaven and the elimination of human desires, a doctrine that was primarily descended from Zhu Xi’s core concepts of setting the heart right, making the will authentic, developing knowledge and investigating things.\(^\text{14}\) Long under the sway of the metaphysical teachings of the Cheng-Zhu school, intellectuals in the late Ming gradually turned to Wang Yangming’s new teachings. As Mou Zhongjian 牟鍾鑑 has described it, they initiated a movement that led to the third major renaissance in the history of Chinese thought.\(^\text{15}\) This development had a strong impact and resulted in an

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\(^\text{14}\) Ibid.

\(^\text{15}\) The first of these movements was described occurring in pre-Qin times when all schools of thoughts contended for attention, while the second in Wei and Jin times when Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism and other religious schools proliferated at the same time. See Mou Zhongjian,
unprecedented revolution in gentry’s culture, which further extended to the whole society during this period.

Secularism was the most prominent aspect of this movement among literati under the new social ideology. The traditional doctrines of Confucianism were looked down upon and came to be regarded as questionable grounds for adhering to the old ways. The literati in any case were looking for ways to justify going to the opposite extreme. Of various scholarly theories, Li Zhi’s 李贄 (1527-1602) tongxinshuo 童心說 (On the Childlike Mind) attracted considerable attention and had a profound impact on the literati, by encouraging them to explicitly abandon the Confucian injunctions to live a simple life like commoners. Following Daoist principles, Li also advocated naturalism and free and lively expression in literary works. More extensively than the advocacy of lay literature was Yuan Hongdao’s 袁宏道 (1568-1610) pursuit of extravagant hedonism by means of his Five True Happineses. He alleged that sensual pleasure should be the most favored form of happiness, which was as shown in his work as “one should experience all colors with one’s eyes, all sounds with one’s ears, all delicacies with one’s body, and interesting conversations with one’s mouth. This is the first happiness.” The necessary background to this is that sumptuary regulations against material enjoyments were imposed during the foundation reign of the

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16 Zhao Jingyun 趙景雲 & He Xianfeng 何贊鋒, Zhongguo mingdai wenxueshi 中國明代文學史 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1993), pp. 149-51.
17 The original passage is from Yuan Hongdao, Yuan Hongdaoji jianjiao 袁宏道集箋校 (Annotated Collection of Yuan Hongdao's Works), Qian Bocheng 鈞伯城 ann. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1979), pp. 205-06. The translation is quoted from Martin W. Huang, Desire and Fictional Narrative in Late Imperial China (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001), pp. 8-9.
emperor Hongwu 洪武 (r.1368-1398) at the beginning of the Ming. However, the force of these regulations gradually faded as society grew increasingly prosperous in subsequent reigns, and they eventually became slogans, nominally recalling the spirit of the State Father.\(^{18}\) It was in the late Ming that society developed into an uncontrollably extravagant state, which was probably stimulated by these new and challenging trends in scholarship and literary writing. The situation in Hangzhou, Gao Lian’s hometown, was described as being “so unconventional and unbridled as to neglect all bestowed commandments, and people are enthusiastic about building luxurious mansions, imitating and wearing royal or high officials’ dresses.”\(^{19}\)

The literati felt intellectually helpless as they tried to leave behind Confucian teachings to devote themselves to the secular pursuit of sensual pleasures. They gradually realized that they had to deal with their own consciences on their own, and could no longer base their public discussions on the wisdom of the ancient sages, which had been vehemently abandoned without repentance by the majority of prosperous urban folk. Martin Huang has offered a detailed account of the ambivalence and contradicting ideas of the literati in the late Ming, pointing out that “the acute awareness of the perils of desire is by no means a phenomenon unique to late Ming culture”. The literati’s pessimism could probably be considered an unexpected result of the loyal faith in “the innate moral knowing”.\(^{20}\)

\(^{18}\) Ibid.


\(^{20}\) Huang, pp. 20-21.
some literati to search for psychological solace and salvation. Of them, Yuan Hongdao was especially honored as the genuine literatus, as he from time to time showed repentance in his works. There were many examples in the works of the late Ming, such as Zhang Dai’s 張岱 (1599-1679) *Tao’an mengyi* 陶庵夢憶 (*Recollections of Past Dreams at Tao’an*) which showed the literati’s regret for their hedonistic life when they were young. In contrast with this self-conscious repentance, many literati turned to religion for solace and redemption. Most remarkable of these religious literati were Chen Jiru 陳繼儒 (1558-1639) and Li Zhi, of whom Chen identified himself as a Daoist recluse and Li was known a casual monk in the tradition of Zen Buddhism. Nevertheless, no matter how self-conscious or religious the literati became, they succumbed to the cultivation of the unconventional and the unorthodox, thereby continuing to pursue their sensual pleasures by rationalizing the moral doctrines from their mind. This may again explain the ambivalent contradiction as seen in Huang’s discussion.

So far, intellectual secularization inspired by Wang Yangming’s new teaching had thus attempted to search for religious redemption to relieve literati’s contradictory sentiments. As shown in some of the above-mentioned information, a considerable part of late Ming literati abandoned the orthodox Confucianism and turned to Buddhism and Daoism. Religious callings had also made these literati produce more intellectual advocacies on dietary refinement to correct the gastronomic indulgence. For example, Jiechun jushi 皆春居士 (?- Wanli reign), an ex-official

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21 Ibid.
Buddhist devotee, in his *yinshi shenyan* 飲食紳言 (*Admonition on Food and Drink*) maintained it was not worthwhile to kill live animals and thus suffer the wrath of Heaven; neither was it worthwhile desiring sex and thus losing one’s primordial origin, not to mention that killing live animals and desiring sex always interacted with one another. From the ancient sages’ teachings, he cited Su Shi’s 蘇軾 (1037-1101) examples to support his dietary advocacy of frugality and his prohibition on the killing of live animals. The former advocacy was considered necessary for a lucky and long life, while the latter prevented future retribution.²³ He also emphasized the sages’ admonitions on gluttony, citing a Zen monk who demonstrated that *zhishi* 智食 (wise eating) was to be strictly selective about what foods fitted one’s personal needs based on one’s physical condition, and that *shishi* 識食 (knowledgeable eating) consisted in avoiding careless and hasty eating, and in the mindful disposal of leftovers. In addition, gluttonous people were identified to be extreme in excrement, urine, sleep, body weight and indigestion.²⁴

For Daoist advocacies, He Lingjun’s 何良俊 (1506-1573) essay *zunsheng* 遵生 (*honoring life*) in his *Siyouzhai congshuo* 四友齋叢說 (*Collected Sayings from the Four Friends Studio*), for example, extensively quoted dietary concepts from Daoist discourses and applied the ritual mannerisms of eating from the Confucian *Analects* to reinforce the Daoism-oriented advocacy.²⁵ Probably due to its popularity, Gao Lian had

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²⁴ Ibid., pp. 194-95.
thus adopted the term of *zunsheng* to title his work. He also introduced part of He Liangjun’s dietary concepts in the preface of his *Discourse on Food and Drink*, which illustrated seven essential requirements for achieving the Daoists’ goal of “the Way of Security and Happiness”. These seven essentials are: “Keep taciturn in order to nourish inner vital breath, suppress sexual desires in order to nourish the essence, eliminate flavorings in order to nourish the blood, swallow saliva in order to nourish the viscera, avoid anger in order to nourish the liver, refine one’s diet in order to nourish the stomach, and eliminate anxieties in order to nourish the heart”. Gao Lian stressed that a refined diet was strongly preferred for those who devoted themselves to self-cultivation.

Though a growing number of literati had elaborated on Buddhist and Daoist dietary redemption in the late Ming, a dominant part of them is believed to prefer to Daoist pursuits. Reasons for this speculation are primarily based on the influences from Ming royal families. The political surroundings are to be examined as follows.

### 3. Daoist Proliferation and Immortal Thought

Daoism is a native religion in China, which was believed originated from late Han *Taipingdao* 太平道 (Supreme Peace Tradition) and *Wudoumidao* 五斗米道 (Five Pecks of Rice Tradition). The Supreme Peace Tradition was considered a product combined from magic arts among populace and the worship of Huangdi 黄帝 and Laozi 老子; The

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Five Pecks of Rice Tradition was said initiated from the tradition that people had to offer five pecks of rice to formally become believers.\(^{27}\) It was then that the believers honored Zhang Daoling 張道陵 (34-156) as the first Celestial Master 天師 and recognized Laozi as their religious patriarch, Taishang laojun 太上老君 (the Very High Old Lord). Daoism was during this time formally recognized as a religion in China.\(^{28}\)

Long perceived by the bureaucracy as a non-canonical religion, Daoists had since Tang dynasty absorbed and adopted some Confucian and Buddhist philosophy while the three Doctrines became more and more integrated. This integration had thus gradually transformed Daoism from a self-reliant sect into one of popular religions.\(^{29}\) It was especially evident when the bandit Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328-1398) established the Ming Empire when he assigned many Daoist adepts, such as Liu Bowen 劉伯溫 (1311-1375), Huang Chuwang 黃楚望 (?- early Ming), Zhang Zhong 張中 (?- early Ming) and Zhou Dianxian 周顛仙 (?- early Ming), important posts and widely built up altars to perform various religious services.\(^{30}\) Since Zhu Yuanzhang relied heavily on practicing occult magic as well as nourishing diets, divination and the arts of bedchamber, he particularly preferred zhengyi 正一 (Orthodox Oneness of Daoism) and

\(^{27}\) Ibid, pp. 32-4.  
\(^{28}\) Zhuang Hongyi, p. 2.  
\(^{29}\) Buddhism since imported in China had first resulted in serious friction, but had later integrated with local Confucianism and Daoism, in which the former was mainly abided by the literati and the other by most of the common people. In Chinese history, almost each dynasty had its own dominant religion and these three religions had thus formed a competitive relationship, but meanwhile gradually became homogeneous among them. Anna Seidel indicated that Daoism had until Ming dynasty absorbed and adopted a considerable part of teachings from Confucianism and Buddhism, and that had transformed Daoism into one of mainstream religions. See Anna Seidel (ed.), “Chronicle of Taoist Studies in the West 1950 – 1990,” in *Cahiers d’Extréme-Asie* Vol. 5 (1989 – 1990), p. 246.  
despised *quanzhen* 全真 (Complete Perfection of Daoism). The reason was because the former was characteristic of its magician arts that could likely be customized to one’s mundane desires and could possibly guarantee one’s pursuit for immortality while the latter was considered too lofty and egocentric to mind people’s material needs. The remarkable influences of Orthodox Oneness could be shown from clues that Emperor Zhu on the first year of Hongwu reign authorized Zhang Zhengchang 張正常 (1335-1377), the 42nd Celestial Master of Orthodox Oneness, to take in charge of all related religious services, such as assigning Daoist leaders, teaching talismans and representing him to offer sacrifices on Mount Songshan 嵩山. In addition, on the 15th year of the same reign, *daolusi* 道錄司, a specialized official division dealing with Daoist services, was established in the government. Moreover, the descendent successors after Emperor Zhu not only followed the State Father in this belief, but also awarded various honors and titles for Daoist adepts, and even chaired marriage ceremonies of those Celestial Masters. It is also worthwhile to note that the royal families was very keen to spend time on religious documentation of Orthodox Oneness; therefore, these successors from time to time assigned the Celestial Masters to write and complete *Daocang* 道藏 (Daoist Canon), *Zhengtong Daocng 正統道藏* (Orthodox Daoist

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31 Daoism had since late Han and early Wei, Jin dynasties been developed into various sects, such as Taipingdao 太平道 (Supreme Peace Tradition), Zhengyi 正一 (Orthodox Oneness), *Lingbao* 靈寶 (Numinous Treasure) and *Shangqing* 上清 (Supreme Purity). In Yuan dynasty, it formed more derivative sects from Orthodox Oneness and Complete Perfection and until Ming dynasty, Zhang Yuchu 張宇初, the 43rd Celestial Master, indicated that Orthodox Oneness, Jingming 淨明 (Clear Brightness), Numinous Treasure, Supreme Purity and Complete Perfection were the major sects of Daoism. Among them Orthodox Oneness was especially dominant. See Zhuang Hongyi, p. 1. Regarding detailed development of Daoism, refer to Ren Jiyu, pp. 610-26.
32 Ibid, pp. 628, 646.
34 Zhuang Hongyi, p. 3.
Encouraged by the royal religious preference, Ming literati and commoners were soon after their emperors enthusiastic about how to pursue the sect’s religious destination of longevity and immortality. It is noted since mid Ming that most government officials took royal families as models, devoting themselves to participating Daoist services, studying Daoist books and practicing magic arts. The prevailed social ethos among intellectuals had further influenced general populace. An increasing number of the commoners became Daoist adepts and lived on serving magic arts for others.36

Known as an amateur Daoist adept and a good acquaintance to the government, Gao Lian during his time was believed indulging himself in advocating this sect’s belief. There are clues to prove his advocacy because, for example, he invited a Daoist Perfect Man (žhenren 真人), called Li Shiyong 李時英 (?- after 1591), to write a preface for the Eight Discourses on the Art of Honoring Life from the Studio where Elegance is Valued. His preface in this partially talismanic book was full of Daoist admonition and that suggests he and Gao Lian shared similar religious preferences. In addition to that, it shows Gao Lian was a zealous Daoist on Orthodox Oneness, for he had related works advocating the magic arts, such as Jingsanshi fuzhou 經三尸符咒 (Charms and Mantras for Eliminating the Three Worms), Shougeng shenfa 守庚申法 (Keeping Watch during the Geng Hour and Performing Magic Arts during the Shen Hour), Xu

35 The complete collection of Daoist Canon was finalized in 1607 by the 50th Celestial Master Zhang Guoxiang 張國祥 under Emperor Zhu Yijun’s 朱翊鈞 (1563-1620) supervision. See preface of Daoang 道藏 (DC hereafter), reprint (Shanghai: Wenwu chubanshe, 1994).
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shenzhou lu 續神咒錄 (Supplement to the Register of Spirit Mantras) and Fuqi fa 服氣法 (The Methods of Ingesting Vital Breath). In his Eight Discourses on the Art of Honoring Life from the Studio where Elegance is Valued, there are also many evidences showing these kinds of arts. From the various discourses in this work, it is clear that his ambition was to cover a wide range of subjects on material culture, such as art appreciation, gardening, sight-seeing, nourishment and cuisine. These worldly concerns reflect an attitude that such subjects, along with medical, divinatory and aesthetic concerns, were all properly of interest to cultivated gentlemen and general populace, and hence became promising market niches for publishing traders in late Ming. The three consecutive editions of Gao Lian’s work are strong evidence for the great success of the work in his own lifetime. During the last reign of the Ming dynasty (Chongzhen 崇禎 r.1628-1644), the book circulated even more widely, and another edition selected the Discourse on Food and Drink and made its way into the popular Caigentan 菜根譚 (Discourse on Vegetables and Roots). All of these suggest Gao Lian’s work had undoubtedly played a significant role in conveying Daoist thoughts to meet the prevailed material needs for all strata of late Ming people. His inclusion of the 55-recipe collection of Secret Prescriptions and Recipes of Food and Drink for Immortality in the

37 Gao Lian is evidently recognized as a writer in the Daoist tradition; all these works of his are found listed on the Daoist Scholarly Resources website: www.ctcwi.idv.tw/godking.htm 道教學術資訊網站, accessed on 2004/2/11.
40 Y.C. Kong & P.S. Kwan, p. 29.
encyclopedic work also shows immortal diets, to some extent, could have been popularized and secularized in general household life.

It is thus worthwhile to examine what was an immortal and how immortality was attained by means of eating specific diets in traditional Daoist belief. To Daoists, attaining immortality in the mundane world was since antiquity what devout Daoists had most longed for. The deep-rooted belief of Daoism relied heavily on the implementation of dao 道 (the Way), which was by means of personal self - cultivation in the mundane world to return to the primordial state of Oneness of Heaven and Man, a realm like where the turbid universe was just born.⁴¹ Although the thought of attaining immortality had been since antiquity from time to time questioned and criticized, Ge Hong 葛洪 (283–363) was probably the first Daoist priest to systematically defend the ideology. His debate against those skeptics was as indicated in lunxian 論仙 (Comments on Immortality) from his Baopuzi neipian 抱朴子內篇 (Inner Book of Master Who Embraces Simplicity) as:

Those who are immortals use medicines to nourish themselves and depend on divinatory calculation for prolonging life. These endeavors prevent them from any sickness brought inside and outside their bodies. They are able to lead a very long life without appearing any senility and dotage of the aged, and the realm is definitely not difficult to attain if the Way were pursued. However, those who are short - sighted and shallow by behaving a way of conventions are all used to saying that no immortals can be found,

so there is no such immortality in the world. Alas, how can they conclude this thing only based on that immortality has not been seen yet?42

Accordingly, Ge Hong’s explanation did not only defend his beliefs but also turned to mock those shallow perceptions on Daoist immortality in his time. Provided that Daoist immortality was possibly attained, it still needs to be justified for how one was transformed to an immortal. To answer this question, he further quoted from ancient works alleging that “those who belong to the highest rank ascending to the heaven are called *tianxian* 天仙 (Heavenly Immortal); those who belong to the middle rank traveling over numinous mountains are called *dixian* 地仙 (Earthly Immortal); those who die first and then transform themselves are called *shijieexian* 戶解仙 (Delivered Immortal from the Corpse).” 43 To prove his point, he also provided examples from various biographies of real immortals from historical records.

By scrutinizing related biographies of immortals in *Daoist Canon*, there are numerous immortals documented, such as in Liu Xiang’s 劉向 (77-6 BC) *Liexian zhuan* 列仙傳 (*Biographies of Various Immortals*), Shen Fen’s 沈汾 (? , Southern Tang dynasty) *Xu xianzhuan* 續仙傳 (*Supplement to the Biographies of the Immortals*) and Zhao Daoyi 趙道一 (? , Yuan dynasty) *Lidai zhenxian tidao tongjian* 歷代真仙體道通鑑 (*Chronological

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42 Ge Hong 葛洪, “Baopuzi neipian (BPZNP hereafter) 抱朴子·内篇 (Inner Book of Master Who Embraces Simplicity),” in Zhonghua jingdian cangshu daojiao jingdian er 中華經典藏書·道教經典二 (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1999), p. 2887. The original Chinese text of this passage is as follows:

若夫仙人，以藥物養身，以術數延命，使內疾不生，外患不入，雖久視不死，而舊身不改，苟有其道，無以難也。而淺識之徒，拘俗守常，咸曰世間不見仙人，便云天下必無此事。目之所曾見，為何足言哉？

43 *BPZNP*, p. 2889.
History of Perfect Immortals’ Record in Successive Dynasties. The immortals recorded in these biographies were, as Ge Hong’s explanation, categorized into Heavenly Immortal, Earthly Immortal and Delivered Immortal from the Corpse, despite no details on how they were ranked into the different kinds of immortal. In addition to that, it is worthwhile to note that in Gao Lian’s time Wang Shizhen’s 王世貞 (1528-1590) Liexian quanzhuan 列仙全傳 (Complete Biographies of Immortals) was also a popular immortal account that collected a total of 497 immortals with sketched figures, outnumbering most of the predecessors’ works. This biography updated and included immortals’ entries from the time as late as Chenghua 成化 reign (r.1465-1487). From these accounts, it shows the thought of attaining immortality still enjoyed remarkable religious recognition in the late Ming.

As shown in these biographies of immortals, Daoists believed immortality could be attained by a variety of means. These means were de facto what Daoists most expected to rely on and they were generally known as yangsheng 養生 (nourishing life). In view of these means shown in these biographies, they included Cultivating Vital Breath by Meditation, Dirigation on Vital Breath and Gymnastics, Embryonic Breathing and Exhaling the Old and Inhaling the New, Abstinence from Cereals, Taking Prescriptions of Alchemical Elixirs, Arts of the Bedchamber and Taking Prescriptions of Materia Medica. Despite these means look different in nature, they in fact incorporated the qi 氣 (vital

44 See Liu Xiang, Liexian zhuan 列仙傳; Shen Fen, Xuxian zhuan 續仙傳 and Zhao Daoyi, Lidai zhenxian tidao tongjian 歷代真仙體道通鑑 in DC Vol. 5.
breath) formed inside one’s body to first accomplish intrinsic immortality and next, to reach the ultimate realms of Deliverance from the Corpse, Ascending to the Heaven or Disappearing in the Mountains. In Daoist medical philosophy, vital breath was an essential element that could motivate one’s essence and spirit when it was well-cultivated. Altogether, the so-called Three Energies, jing 精 (essence), qi 氣 (vital breath) and shen 神 (spirit), constituted the medical foundation of Daoism, which could generate an endless succession in one’s physical circulation to help reach the state of well-being. It was like an interactive relationship between the micro-cosmic movement in human body and the macro-cosmic movement in the universe. Only when one’s efforts were on the right track could the cultivator transcended the worldly restraints and attained the transformed immortality.

This kind of personal cultivation is as Henri Maspero’s observation that Daoists were generally used to first satisfying their physical cultivation by nourishing their body. This preliminary practice usually called for nourishing diets, and ingesting vital breath and gymnastics. By these prerequisites, a cultivator was thus guaranteed to dispel any potential diseases or other lethal threats, and furthermore qualified to pursue for immortality. It seems from

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46 Refer the interrelation of vital breath and immortalization to Li Qing 李慶, “Yangsheng yu feisheng – Weijin shiqi daojia he daojiao shengsiguan de yige cemian 罹生與飛升——魏晉時期道家和道教生死觀的一個側面”, in Daojia wenhua yanjiu 道家文化研究 Vol. 5 道家文化研究 第五輯 (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1990), pp. 396-401.
47 The Three Energies of essence, vital breath and spirit are first mentioned in the text of the early Daoist Taipingjing 太平經 (Book of Great Peace), which showed that in order to lead a long life one was required to love vital breath, respect spirit and care for essence 愛氣 尊神 重精. See Wang Ming 王明 (ann.), Taipingjing hejiao 太平經合校 (Annotated Book of Great Peace) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1960), p. 728; Jin Zhengyao 金正耀, Daojiao yu kexue 道教與科學 (Beijing: Zhongguo shenhu kexue chubanshe, 1990), pp. 142, 146.
evidences in the traditional accounts and Maspero’s speculation that nourishing diets, whether taking prescriptions of alchemical elixirs or materia medica, had been accepted a preconditioned direction for immortality.

In view of Gao Lian’s Secret Prescriptions and Recipes of Food and Drink for Immortality, it suggests he had elaborated on transforming the abstruse medical prescriptions of nourishing diets into acceptable cookbook for the general populace. In this collection, there are recipes revealing the balanced medical interaction between the human body and the universe, which could be led to the realm of immortality. One of them is shown as follows and an example with related concepts will be covered in the next section:

**Seven Essential Powered Medicines for Avoiding Ageing**

卻老七精散

Use 3 liang of poria 伏苓 (Heavenly Essence; *Pachyma cocos* Fr.), each 2 liang of *di huang* flower 地黃 (Earthly Essence; *Rehmannia glutinosa* Lib.) and mulberry epiphyte 桑寄生 (Water Essence; *Loranthus yadoriki* S. & Z.), 1 liang and 3 fen of chrysanthemum flower 菊花 (Moon Essence; *Chrysanthemum sinense* Sab.), bitter bamboo 竹實 (Sun Essence; *Phyllostachys*), and each 1 liang and 3 fen of broom plant seed 地膚子 (Star Essence; *Kochia scoparia* Schrad.) and plantain 車前子 (Thunder Essence; *Plantago major* L.).

The seven essences are used according to the movement of

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49 Refer the scientific names of plant species in this study to Bernard E. Read, *Chinese Medicinal Plants from the Pen Ts’ao Kang Mu A. D. 1596 of a Botanical, Chemical and Pharmacological Reference List*, reprint (Taipei: Southern Materials Center Inc., 1982).
sun, moon and stars in the sky, and appropriate ingesting time is required when they are used as medical prescriptions. Before ingesting them, fast for 9 days and not to burn incense in the quiet room. Grind and sieve these essences to make them powdered medicine. Face the sun and take each time 3 spoons of the powdered medicine with well water of the first bucket in the morning. Take 1 prescription in the sunny day and 2 prescriptions in the cloudy day. Continue to take it for 49 days, so that one can be full of vitality and enjoy longevity, avoid hundred kinds of disease and improve eyesight and hearing. It is very efficacious.

Pick *di huang* flower in April and bitter bamboo, looks like wheat, in the bamboo grove of Lantian 藍田.  

4. Gao Lian’s Thoughts of Nourishing Diets for Immortality

In Chinese history, methods of Daoist pursuits for immortality varied from time to time. The development was speculated first originated from Daoist oldest tradition of outer alchemy arts of yellow and white, followed by an integrated trend of outer alchemy and inner alchemy, as well as a

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50 The original Chinese text is quoted from Seven Essential Powered Medicines for Avoiding Ageing 却老七精散 in YZBJ (p. 382) as:

![Chinese text](image)

Note: Lantian 藍田 is nowadays Lantian prefecture, Shanxi.

The weight and capacity units hereafter used are based on Ming measurements. Their conversion is shown as follows:

1 liang (tael) 兩 = 37.3 grams = 10 qian 錢 = 100 fen 分; 1 jin (catty) 斤 = 596.8 grams = 16 liang
complicated application of outer alchemy and materia medica around Sui dynasty.\(^1\) Although the development of outer alchemy appeared popular in the beginning and gradually became declined, it was Daoist adepts’ favorite arts for immortality, however. This thought was as Ge Hong’s quotation from *Shennong sijing* 神農四經 (*Shennong Four Books*) in his *Inner Book of the Master Who Embraces Simplicity* as:

The superior medicines make one feel peaceful and enjoy longevity, ascend as heavenly spirits, travel in the heaven and on the earth, command ten thousands of spirits, grow feathers and cleverly prepare food in the kitchen. It is said that taking each of five kinds of fossilized mushroom, cinnabars, sanguisorba root, realgar, orpiment, mica, provisions of supreme oneness will help one fly in the heaven and enjoy longevity. It is also said that the middle levels of medicines aid in nourishing one’s disposition, and the inferior dispelling diseases. Both of the middle and inferior medicines are able to keep one away any intimidation of poisonous worms, fierce wild beasts, vicious breath and various demons. ……The best immortal medicine is cinnabar, followed in order by gold, mercury, various kinds of mushroom, five kinds of

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\(^1\) The outer alchemy arts of yellow and white indicates gold (yellow) and mercury (white), two metals symbolized as forever conserved matters, are refined and taken for a long time to help transform one’s corruptible body into a conserved form of immortality. On the other hand, inner alchemy symbols a metaphorical refining of outer alchemy that is returned to one’s internal cultivation by means of spiritual meditation and vital breath dirigation and gymnastics, and other cultivating practices. See Hu Fuchen 胡孚琛, “Zhongguo waidan huangbaishu xianxue shuyao 中國外丹黃白術仙學述要”, in Daojia wenhua yanjiu 道家文化研究 第七輯 (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1990), p. 56; Su Heng-an 蘇恆安, “Zhongguo daojia de pigu yangsheng zhexue 中國道家的辟穀養生哲學”, Shenghuo yingyong keji xuekan 生活應用科技學刊 Vol. 4 (2002), pp. 81-7.
Notwithstanding outer alchemy traditionally enjoyed the highest recognition in Daoist medicine, new medical concepts were however gradually sprouted. This development was basically due to frequent poisonings resulting from taking alchemical elixirs and in the meantime significantly growing influences of *materia medica* extensively advocated by Sun Simiao 孫思邈 (581-682), a famous Daoist doctor in Tang dynasty. Confronted by numerous hearsays of poisoning, outer alchemy was destined to decline in the long run while the schools of inner alchemy and *materia medica* earned more and more recognition. Nevertheless, inner alchemy, partly due to its abstruse and metaphysical theories, could not attract as many commoners as *materia medica*. Applying *materia medica* as major ingredients of nourishing diets therefore became popular. This approach had skillfully integrated and simplified essential thoughts of outer and inner alchemies into a practical sense for nourishing purposes. These examples could also be found in Sun Simiao’s *Sunzhenren beiji qianjin yaofang* 孫真人備急千金要方 (*True Man Sun’s Prescription Worth a Thousand Pieces of Gold for Emergency*), Song Chen Zhi’s 陳直 (?-after 1085) *Shouqin yanglao xinshu* 舊親養老新書 (*Treatises on Supporting Aged Parents and Nourishing*), late Yuan Hu Sihui’s 忽思慧 (?-after 1330) *Yinshan zhengyao* 飲膳正要 (*Principles of Correct Diet*) and late Yuan Jia Ming’s 賈銘 (?-after 1368) *Yinshi xuzhi* 飲食須知

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52 See the original text in *BPZNP* (p. 2921).

53 Su Heng-an, p. 84.
Essential Notes on Food and Drink. These works were all used as prescribed medical and nourishing references with a wide adoption of materia medica. It is evident to find that the thoughts of nourishing diets for immortality were as mentioned primarily recorded in Daoist scriptures and medical treatises. These sources indicate they were traditionally dominated by a small group of Daoist adepts and doctors, literati and royal families. It also seems that using nourishing diets for immortality was not discouraged by misuses of alchemical elixirs, and that was however to some extent made up by an increasing adoption of materia medica. It is probably thanks to the increasing secular ethos advocated by Wang Yangming since mid Ming that the privileged immortal thought of high and religious strata was thus extensively proliferated among late Ming populace. As an important means for attaining immortality, nourishing diets seem to be further secularized from Daoist and medical records to household cooking references. Gao Lian’s collection of Secret Prescriptions and Recipes of Food and Drink for Immortality was found an unprecedented work of household cooking for immortality. No similar records are found in his contemporary and predecessors’ cookbooks. It explains Gao Lian’s inclusion of this collection in his Discourse on Food and Drink was an innovative approach to successfully promote the encyclopedic value to general household families. The compilation of 55 recipes was said, as the author boasted, a magnificent collection to help one attain immortality. They were described treasured prescriptions handed on from generation to generation and proved efficacious. These recipes are also what Gao Lian had collected in tens of years during his pursuit for the Way. By Gao Lian’s ingenious elaboration on this culinary
work, it seems the long and clandestine thoughts for immortality by nourishing diets had hitherto been secularized in this household nourishing cookbook.

Unlike Gao Lian’s writing techniques in other categories of the *Discourse on Food and Drink*, he in this category seems to prefer the traditional style of Daoist long and furtive narration. A considerable part of recipes shows that their preparations and ingesting directions were all subtly correspondent with cosmic movement in the universe, as well as the twelve divisions of lunar time and terrestrial directions. Some recipes that Gao Lian adopted from his predecessors provided detailed ingesting examples from legendary immortals who elaborated on secret medication for longevity and immortality.

Ingredients adopted in this section are also worthy noting. It shows metals and minerals that were traditionally considered major ingredients for making elixirs were evidently reduced. However, there are still 14 recipes inherited these heavy substances made by the traditional techniques of outer alchemy. Of them realgar (雄黃, arsenic sulfite) and cinnabar (硃砂, mercuric sulfate) were dominant ingredients; others included sulfur and niter. In addition to them, most of the recipes used ingredients of *materia medica* as major source, such as pine rosin oil 松脂, shiny asparagus 天門冬 Asparagus lucidus Lindl.), largehead atractylodes 白朮 (*Atractylis ovata* De Candolle), swordlike atractylodes 蒼朮 (*Atractylis lancea* DC.), wolfberry 枸杞 (*Lycium chinense* Mill.) and deer bamboo 黃精 (*Polygonatum falcatum* A. Gr.).

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54 Refer the example to the Recipe of Purple-mushroom Cup of Mysterious Origin’s Life-guarding 玄元護命紫芝杯 in YZBJ, p. 373.
Though ingredients of *materia medica* were traditionally despised for use in prescriptions for immortality, it manifests in this collection that they were *de facto* equivalents for attaining the same realm. Fundamentally, the advocates of outer alchemy insisted that only when the human ingested elixirs refined by metals or minerals was one’s physical body able to resemble these substances, experiencing eternal conservation of matter. But frequent cases of poisonings due to misuses had gradually urged Daoist adepts to use *materia medica* as indispensable substitutes, or partial ingredients incorporated with other alchemical metals or minerals. This adaptation could be found in Sun Simiao, Chen Zhi and other Daoist medical treatises. There are concrete reasons to believe that using *materia medica* for immortality in Gao Lian’s time must have accumulated growing proofs of medicinal efficacies and it had thus obtained more and more recognition. It is especially noted that *jiuzhuan huaidan* 九轉還丹 (Nine-circle Reversion Elixir), the most superior and mysterious refining method in the Daoist school of outer alchemy, had been in this collection modified by replacing all metallic ingredients with *materia medica*.\(^{55}\) For example,

**Nine-circle Jade Paste of Longevity in Divinity Pot**

九轉長生神鼎玉液膏

Largehead atracylodes (its vital breath is soft, smooth and

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\(^{55}\) The Daoist Nine-circle Reversion refining was a typical method for producing elixirs by using metals and minerals. There were various scriptures recording these refining processes. In *DC* Vol. 19, it shows these processes are shown as: *The Essential Formula of Supreme Ultimate Perfected Man for Refining Nine-circle Reversion Elixirs* 大極真人九轉還丹經要訣, *The Great Elixir of Nine-circle Numinous Cinnabar* 九轉靈砂大丹, *The Elixir of Nine-circle Black-golden Numinous Cinnabar* 九轉青金靈砂丹, *The Refining Formula of Turning Yin-Yang Nine-circle to Black-golden Elixir* 陰陽九轉成紫金點化還丹訣 and *The Annotated Formula of Nine-circle Flowing-pearl Immortal Nine Elixirs* 九轉流珠神仙九丹注.
nourishing; use 2 jin of it harvested in autumn or fall; remove crude parts.)

Swordlike atractylodes (it is vigorous and masculine in nature; use 16 liang each time and apply the same preparation as largehead atractylodes.)

Mix and mash these two ingredients, and put them in a crock. Soak the mixture in thousand-mile water (or mountain springs) for one day. Move the mixture to a pot and twice decoct it. Filter with a piece of silk fabric and discard dregs. Slowly boil using firing mulberry firewood to refine the clear juice until pasty. Stuff the paste in a porcelain jar and seal. Bury the jar in the ground for one or two days to eliminate its internal heat. Use 3 qian of the paste with water each time, or hold this amount as a lozenge in mouth. Taking this prescription for a long time will help lighten one’s body, prolong life and nourish one’s complexion. When take it, avoid peach, plum, sparrow, clam and other seafood. This is the basic prescription and is called the First Circle 一轉. It can be multiplied by consecutively adding other eight ingredients, and the whole refining processes are called Nine Circles.

Second Circle 二轉: twice decoct 3 liang of ginseng 人蔘 (Panax ginseng C. A. Mey.) and add in the First-circle paste. This is called Divine-mushroom Paste of Longevity 長生神芝膏.

Third Circle 三轉: decoct 1 jin of polygonatum rhizome 黃精 (Polygonatum falcatum A. Gr.) and add in the Second - circle paste. This is called Life - prolonging Paste of the Three Platform 三台益算膏.

Fourth Circle 四轉: decoct 8 liang for each of poria 伏苓
(Pachyma cocos Fr.) and polygala 遠志 (Polygala tenuifolia Willd.), and add in the Third-circle paste. This is called Aspiration-seeking Paste of Four Immortals 四仙求志膏.

Fifth Circle 五轉: wash 8 liang of Chinese angelica root 當歸 (Angelica polymorpha Maxim.) with wine and decoct. Add in the Fourth-circle paste. This is called Returning - to - origin Paste of Five Venerable Sovereigns 五老朝元膏.

Sixth Circle 六轉: grind 3 liang for each of velvet deer antler 鹿茸 and elk antler 麋茸, and decoct. Add in the Fifth - circle paste. This is called Driving-heavenly-chariot Paste of Six Dragons 六龍御天膏.

Seventh Circle 七轉: steam amber 琥珀 on rice and grind 1 liang of it. Add in the Sixth - circle paste. This is called Returning - to - perfection Paste of Seven Origins 七元歸真膏.

Eighth Circle 八轉: core and decoct 8 liang of spiny jujube 酸棗 (Zizyphus vulgaris Lam.). Add in the Seventh-circle paste. This is called Guarding Paste of Eight Immortals 八神護衛膏.

Ninth Circle 九轉: core and mash 4 liang of biota 柏子仁 (Biota semen) until pasty. Add in the Eighth-circle paste. This is called Life - enhancing Paste of Nine Dragons 九龍扶壽膏.

The original text is quoted from YZBJ (pp. 371-72) as:

白朮（氣性柔順而補，每用二斤，秋冬采之，去粗皮）
赤朮（即蒼朮也，性剛雄而發，每用十六兩，同上製）
二藥用木石臼搗碎入缸中，用千里水浸一日夜，山泉亦好，次入砂鍋煎汁，一次收起，再煎一次，絹濾渣，淨去渣。將汁用桑柴火緩緩煉之熬成膏，磁罐盛貯，封好入土，埋一二日出火氣，用天德日服三錢，一次白湯調下或含化俱可。久服輕身，延年悅澤顏色。忌食桃李雀蛤海味等食，更有加法，名曰九轉。
Except those before-mentioned species of *materia medica* in this collection, others include:

- **Zanthoxylum fruit** 蜀椒 (*Zanthoxylum piperitum* DC.)
- **Siegesbeckiae rhizoma** 番薊 (*Siegesbeckia orientalis* L.)
- **Mulberry** 桑椹 (*Morus alba* L.)
- **Acorus rhizoma** 菖蒲 (*Acorus calamus* L.)
- **Dioscorea rhizoma** 山藥 (*Dioscorea batatas* Decne.)
- **Acanthopanax root bark** 五加皮 (*Acanthopanax spinosum* Miq.)
- **Pine nut** 松子 (*Pinus*)
- **Sophora fruit** 槐實 (*Sophora japonica* L.)
- **Lotus** 蓮花 (*Nelumbo nucifera* Gaertn.)
- **Sesame** 巨勝 (*Sesamum indicum* L.)
- **Tribulus fruit** 藜藜 (*Tribulus terrestris* L.)
- **Euryale seed** 茜實 (*Euryale ferox* Salisb.)
- **Lotus rhizome node** 藕實莖 (*Nelumbo nucifera*)

二轉加人參三兩（煎濃汁二次，熬膏入前膏內），名曰長生神芝膏。
三轉加黃精一斤（煎汁熬膏，加入前膏內），名曰三台益算膏。
四轉加茯苓遠志（去心，各八兩熬膏，加入前膏內），名曰四仙求志膏。
五轉加當歸八兩（酒洗熬膏，加前膏內），名曰五老朝元膏。
六轉加鹿糜茸（各三兩，研為末，熬膏和前膏內），名曰六龍御天膏。
七轉加琥珀（紅色如血者佳，飯上蒸一炊，為細末一兩和前膏內），名曰七元歸真膏。
八轉加酸棗仁（去核，淨肉八兩，熬膏和前膏內），名曰八神衛護膏。
九轉加柏子仁（淨仁四兩，研如泥，入前膏內），名曰九龍扶壽膏。丹用九法加入，因人之病而加損故耳。又恐一并煉膏有火候不到，藥味有即出者，有不易出者，故古聖立方，必有妙道。
Apricot kernel 杏仁 (Prunus armeniaca L.)

From Daoist canonical accounts it indicates that an immortal enjoyed not only longevity, but also physical advantages improved from aged body. As shown in this collection, Gao Lian adopted many kinds of efficacious terms to explain and advocate his immortal ideology. These terms and their using frequencies in this cookbook are categorized as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immortality-oriented term</th>
<th>Using frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Longevity/immortality</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthiness with light body</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No infection of hundred kinds of disease</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaceful and pleasant appearance</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No hungriness</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey hair turning black</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good eyesight</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stabilizing essence and nourishing kidneys</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killing sanshi jiuchong 三尸九蟲</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Three Corpses and Nine Worms)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-growing teeth</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

57 The Three Corpses 三尸 are all known vicious spirits, Pengju 彭琚, Pengzhi 彭質 and Pengjiao 彭矯, respectively inhabiting one’s head, chest and abdomen before one was born. These corpses could induce human desires for material addiction, and therefore resulted in diseases and died young. The Nine Worms are Hiding Worm 伏蟲, Roundworm 回蟲, White Worm 白蟲, Meat Worm 肉蟲, Lungs Worm 肺蟲, Stomach Worm 胃蟲, Diaphragm Worm 間蟲, Red Worm 赤蟲 and Dung Beetle Worm 蟹蟲. They were described “ten thousands of micro-worm growing all over human body” and would exhaust one’s essence of masculine spirit and vital breath. See “Taishang chu sanshi jiuchong baoshengjing 太上除三尸九蟲保生經,” in DC Vol. 5, p. 699.
As shown, there are more than half of the recipes tended to use the terms of longevity or immortality for achieving the Daoist realm of the Way. The second most frequently used term, healthiness with light body, was in Daoist belief aimed to support immortals’ wandering life over mountains and clouds that a well-executed and neat body was especially required. It also seems from the cookbook that one had to endure hungriness without showing unpleasant appearance and be free from any diseases before becoming an immortal. That is probably why some of Gao Lian’s recipes emphasized on avoiding thirstiness and hungriness. Other recipes aiming at restoring health, good appearance, black hair, teeth, eyesight and essence were mostly emphatic of their preliminary efficacies by implementing nourishing diets. These preconditions seem necessary before one’s attaining immortality.

5. Conclusion

Gao Lian’s Discourse on Food and Drink was, along with other brilliant works of encyclopedia for daily use, the most recognized culinary work in the late Ming, as it comprised a multiple number of categories and recipes, which no similar works could surpass or equal it. Through examining intellectual surroundings from mid Ming onward, this study shows the practical and encyclopedic approach was resulted from the unique secularized ethos prevailed in the then society. Secularism was the social product initiated from Wang Yangming’s new teaching of innate moral knowledge that constantly challenged the deep-rooted Confucianism. This challenge was described by Mou Zhongjian the third major renaissance in Chinese history because Wang Yangming’s advocacy
alleged human desires were not sinful and moreover, needed to be valued. Influenced by the growing advocates’ moral supports, secular pursuits became more and more popular, and literati indulged themselves in any kinds of material enjoyment. But extra indulgence turned out to be an ambivalent sentiment, gradually perplexing the advocates. The intellectual contradiction had thus driven them to pursue non-Confucian religious redemption provided that their material belief was still emphasized. Daoist redemption on dietary refinement, described as nourishing life or honoring life as advocated by He Liangjun and Gao Lian, had earned a remarkable recognition in the social atmosphere.

Gao Lian’s advocacy for dietary refinement under the growing secularized trend took much advantage of Daoist proliferation devoted to by the Ming royal families. Thanks to the State Father Zhu Yuanzhang’s religious preference, Daoism, especially the sect of Orthodox Oneness that devoted itself to immortal pursuits by mundane magician arts, was honored by the royal families with official approval. From the fact that the great Daoist Canon was finally completed by Wanli government it shows Daoism had earned a formal and official position at least in the late Ming. Though Gao Lian possessed no formal official titles, his good connection to the government and officials had certainly made his work reflect the callings from literati’s contradiction and the official Daoist preference.

Daoist immortality was a unique thought among popular religions in China. Though it was constantly questioned with numerous cases failing to attain immortality in history, consecutive publishing of biographies of immortals was never stopped. Wang Shizhen’s Complete Biographies of Immortals, with its large amount of immortals collected and updated
entries of immortals, explains the thought of immortality was popular in the late Ming. Meanwhile, since Gao Lian’s encyclopedic work enjoyed a remarkable recognition at the same time, it is believed, under the special intellectual and political surroundings, his inclusion of the category of *Secret Prescriptions and Recipes of Food and Drink for Immortality* in the household cooking reference *Discourse on Food and Drink* explained immortal thought was popular not only among literati, but also in the populace.

By detailed examination on Gao Lian’s *Secret Prescriptions and Recipes of Food and Drink for Immortality*, it is found he had transformed traditional philosophy of attaining immortality into a practical approach by the conveyance of household cooking matter. Influenced by failing alchemical elixirs and growing recognized *materia medica* for immortality, Gao Lian had largely adopted efficacious ingredients of *materia medica* in this category. His elaboration took substantial advantage of his predecessors’ propaganda on nourishing diets by *materia medica*. On the whole, this study shows Gao Lian’s *Secret Prescriptions and Recipes of Food and Drink for Immortality* had echoed the secularized immortality under the late Ming special intellectual and political ethos.
不死成仙的世俗化養生觀:
明末道教的服食食譜研究

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提要

本文旨在透過探究高濂《飲饌服食牋》中的「神秘服食方」，用以了解明末一股追求不死成仙的世俗化養生觀。《飲饌服食牋》是該作者《雅尚齋遵生八牋》中的一牋，實用烹飪食譜是其內容大要。經檢視「神秘服食方」內的55道成仙食譜，本文發現傳統道家神秘、深奧的成仙思想，卻可由正統經典記載中，傳輸在這本一般民間居家實用的烹飪食譜上。不同於傳統成仙過程，須服食以重金屬和礦物質為主的丹藥，本研究又發現此集方僅採用極為有限的傳統金、礦物質，卻大量地使用本草原料為食材。為了解明末這一特殊的養生成仙風潮，本文主要的論證問題是：高濂將此方納入他的《飲饌服食牋》中，是否意謂著成仙思想的世俗化，和明末社會、宗教環境，及民間醫學發展有著因果關係呢？因此，本文將由明末文人、常民的世俗化思潮，道教的政治地位，傳統和當時流行的成仙服食思想，鍊結、比對高濂「神秘服食方」中的飲食意涵，來尋求成仙世俗化追求發生質變的答案。

關鍵詞：高濂、不死成仙、服食、世俗化、本草

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