



## ZHONGYI - Traditional Chinese Medicine

The term Traditional Chinese Medicine (*Zhōngyī* 中醫) refers to a system of theories and techniques deeply related to the classic philosophical tradition which were developed, tested and practised over the centuries, from the most ancient ages to the present.

A science whose roots are found in a complex and integrated vision of the cosmos, human beings, body, health and illness where everything existing in the universe forms a single organism, each part embodying the whole, and subject to the same rules in a continuous and dynamic interrelationship.

Taoism and Confucianism form the original core from which TCM developed, and define the key themes of the unity between man and nature, the representation of the universe as a dynamic and harmonious organism, the 'symbolic design of the world' based on the view of its 'way of functioning', the relationship between man and society based on ethical principles and a codified systems of interaction.

Human beings are part of a whole and their actions have to be in perfect harmony with 'nature organism' and the flowing of the *Dào* 道, origin and 'constant source' of all things.

In this perspective, health is understood as the full development of the individual's potential and not merely as the absence of illness.

Consequently, everyone must be responsible for their own health, healing their own body with the help of a physician, cultivating their own life (*Yǎngshēng* 養生) and taking care of it with awareness.

According to the traditional view, a 'physician' is someone who has reached the perfect balance, who has knowledge of 'nature', whose breath, in harmony with the breath of the universe, is measure for the flow of the patient's energy (*Qì* 氣).

Six 'external' factors *Liùyín* 六淫 (*Fēng* 風 wind, *Hán* 寒 cold, *Shī* 濕 dryness, *Shǔ* 暑 heat, *Zào* 燥 dryness, *Huǒ* 火 fire), and seven 'internal' emotions *Qīqíng* 七情 (*Xǐ* 喜 joy, *Nù* 怒 anger, *Sī* 思 reflection, *Yōu* 憂 sadness, *Bēi* 悲 sorrow, *Kǒng* 恐 fear, *Jīng* 驚 shock) may causes disharmony and lead to illness.

When such conditions arise, the first thing to do is activate the reaction capacity of the organism, trying to balance the patient's *qi* again.

Diagnosis methods include: observation of the patient, anamnesis, listening for the sounds produced within the body, use of the sense of smell, pulse taking, examination of the tongue, palpation of the body surface in order to determine the energy state of *Qì* 氣, *Jīng* 精, *Shén* 神, *Xuè* 血 and the body's organs.

The main rule is still prevention, but, if illness arises, different healing strategies and techniques can be adopted, according to the situation.

They can vary from the stimulation of nodal points (*Xué* 穴) through the insertion of needles or warming-up (acupuncture and moxibustion *Zhēnjiǔ* 針灸), to pharmacology (based on herbs, minerals and animal components), from dietetics to body techniques for *Qì* harmonization (*Qìgōng* 氣功) and therapeutic exercises (*Dǎoyǐn* 導引), from massages (*Tuīná* 推拿, *Ànmó* 按摩, *Diǎnxué* 點穴) to pneumatic stimulation with glass cups (*Báguàn* 拔罐).

Surgery is traditionally considered the last resort, used only when all therapeutic practices to generate an effective 'reaction' in the organism fail or in cases of severe structural trauma

«I encourage you to put in harmony nature, heaven and *Dào*» the *Huángdì Nèijīng* suggested; we need to harmonize *Yīn* and *Yáng* in order to «mirror things as they really are» it is written in *Zhuāngzǐ*.

When human beings live and 'breath' in a dynamic balance with the breath of the nature, illness and disharmony find no home.

# 中醫 1

黃帝內經



*Huángdì Nèijīng* 黃帝內經  
[ Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor ] II-I century BCE

黃帝



Cultural basis of  
Traditional Chinese Medicine.  
Structured as a dialogue between  
the mythical Emperor *Huángdì*  
(2698–2596 BCE) and his prime  
minister *Qíbó*, the text introduces  
the major philosophical themes  
of classical Chinese tradition:  
the symbolic vision of nature and  
the body, the dynamic relationship  
among elements for health harmony,  
the correspondence between  
the 'Five Movements' of nature  
and the theory of *Yīn* and *Yáng*,  
the path to bodily and mental integrity,  
the analysis of *Qì*, the main elements  
of physiology and basic models of  
diagnosis and treatment such as  
herbal medicine and acupuncture.  
[ China • XIX cent. ]



beginning of the first chapter  
of the *Huángdì Nèijīng* 黃帝內經  
[ Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor ]  
in classical Chinese



plate from *Shísìjīng fāhuī*  
十四經發揮  
[ Development of the  
fourteen meridians ]  
by Huá Shòu • XIV century  
( *Zú juéyīn gān jīng zhī tú*  
'diagram of the liver  
meridian *juéyīn* of the foot' )  
[ China • from 1716  
woodblock print • art rep ]



plate from *Shísìjīng fāhuī*  
十四經發揮  
[ Development of the  
fourteen meridians ]  
by Huá Shòu • XIV century  
( *Shǒu shǎoyáng sānjiāo  
jīng zhī tú*  
'diagram of the *sānjiāo*  
*shǎoyáng* meridian  
of the hand' )  
[ China • from 1716  
woodblock print • art rep ]



plate from *Shísìjīng fāhuī*  
十四經發揮  
[ Development of the  
fourteen meridians ]  
by Huá Shòu • XIV century  
( *Shǒu tàiyīn fèi jīng zhī tú*  
'diagram of the lung  
meridian *tàiyīn*  
of the hand' ).  
[ China • from 1716  
woodblock print • art rep ]

# 中醫

1



Calligraphic diagram of daoist origin,  
used with propitiatory and apotropaic  
function for the symbolic protection  
of bodily and mental health.  
The character *shēng* 生  
'to be born', 'to generate', 'life',  
rendered in semi-cursive *xingshū* style  
with multiplied strokes,  
'pierces' the character *shà* 煞  
'harmful influence', 'evil spirit'  
[ China • rubbing from  
stone stele of the XVII cent. ]



*Zú shǎoyáng dǎnjīng*  
足少陽膽經

'gall bladder meridian  
*shǎoyáng* of the foot'  
plate from *Shísìjīng fāhuī*  
十四經發揮

[ *Development of the fourteen  
meridians*] by Huá Shòu  
[ China • XIV cent. ]

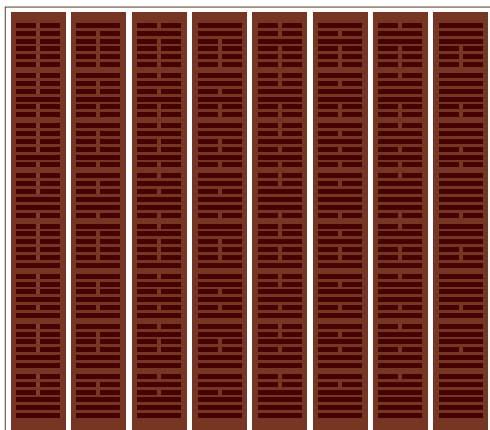


*Model of human body  
for the study and practice  
of acupuncture  
( zhēnjiǔ 針灸 )*  
[ China • early XX cent.  
• painted wood ]



*Shénnóng* 神農  
'the divine farmer'

One of the three 'sovereigns of origin',  
mythical emperors and cultural heroes,  
who marks the transition from the  
undifferentiated 'natural' dimension  
to the articulated 'cultural' dimension.  
He transmitted the knowledge  
of cultivation and use  
of medicinal plants to human beings.  
Traditionally depicted covered in leaves,  
with a transparent body  
(so he could observe  
the effects of herbs within himself).  
Is traditionally attributed to him  
the compilation of the  
*Shénnóng běncǎo jīng*  
神農本草經  
(first treatise on phytotherapy)



*Liùshísì guà* 六十四卦  
the system of 64 hexagrams  
from the *Yijing* 易經  
[ *Classic of Changes* ]



*Model of left ear  
for the study and practice  
of acupuncture  
( zhēnjiǔ 針灸 )*  
[ China • XX cent. • resin ]



*Shòu* 壽 'long life'

The character is drawn  
and reproduced in various forms  
as a wish for longevity.  
In the classical 'hundred styles'  
it expresses the wish for a life  
'as enduring as that  
of the southern mountains'

# 中醫

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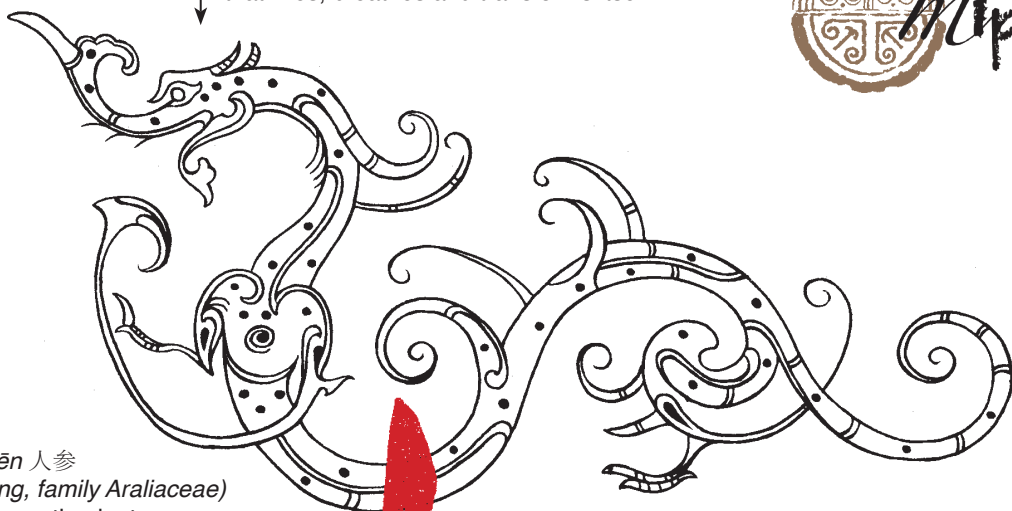
the five movements: Mù 木 'wood',  
Huǒ 火 'fire', Tǔ 土 'earth',  
Jīn 金 'metal', Shuǐ 水 'water'



黃帝內經

Huángdì nèijīng 黃帝內經  
[ Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor ]

Lóng 龍 'dragon'  
symbol of nature understood  
as a vast organism  
that lives, breathes and transforms itself



Rénshēn 人參  
(Ginseng, family Araliaceae)  
Used as a stimulant  
for the nervous system,  
blood circulation,  
to enhance physical  
and mental performance  
and strengthen  
immune defenses  
[ China ]



Zhōng 中 'center'  
Yī 醫 'medicine'  
[ the term Zhōngyī refers to  
'Traditional Chinese Medicine' ]  
Presented in two different calligraphic  
styles, one cursive and the other  
archaic seal script to stress  
the deep tangible and symbolic  
connection between  
tradition and modernity

Qì 氣  
'vivifying energy,  
'breath', 'life force',  
in five different  
calligraphic styles

氣氣氣氣氣

Bāguà 八卦  
the 'eight trigrams'  
according to  
the arrangement to  
the 'earlier heaven'



Tàijítú 太極圖  
simbolo della interrelazione  
dinamica e complementare  
dello Yīn 陰 e dello Yáng 陽



# 中醫

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Dào 道 'the way'  
presented in two  
distinct calligraphic styles

Fèi 肺 'lung'  
plate from Zhēnjiū dàchéng 針灸大成  
[ Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion ]  
by Yáng Jìzhōu  
[ China • 1601 ]

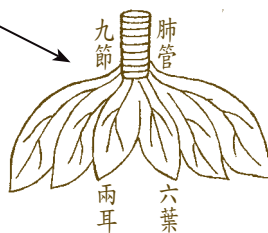


diagram of the hand area  
connecting thumb and index finger  
plate from Xiǎo'ér tuīná guāngyì  
小兒推拿廣意  
[ Pediatric Massage ]  
[ China • 1898 ]



cupping vessels  
for the therapeutic practice of  
Báguàn 拔罐  
(suction cupping therapy)  
[ China • XX cent. • glass ]

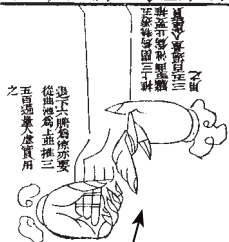


Dìzhī 地支  
the twelve 'earthly branches'  
diagram on the palm of the hand  
plate from Huánglì 黃曆  
[ Traditional lunisolar almanac ]  
[ China • early XX cent. ]

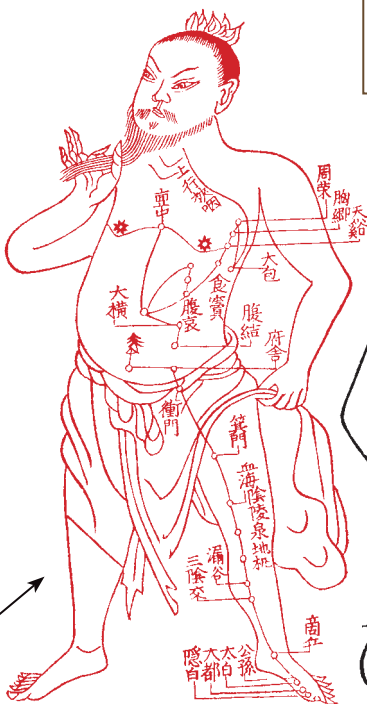


needles for the  
stimulation  
of sensitive points  
in the practice  
of acupuncture  
Zhēnjiū 針灸  
[ China • XX cent. ]

圖 腑六關三手左推男



how to take the pulse  
of the left wrist  
plate from  
Xiǎo'ér tuīná guāngyì  
小兒推拿廣意  
[ Pediatric Massage ]  
[ China • 1898 ]



Zú tàiyīn píjīng 足太陰脾經  
'spleen meridian  
tàiyīn of the foot'  
plate from Shísìjīng fāhuī  
十四經發揮  
[ Development of the  
fourteen meridians ]  
by Huá Shòu  
[ China • XIV cent. ]



Zú juéyīn gānjīng 足厥陰肝經  
'liver meridian juéyīn of the foot'  
plate from Shísìjīng fāhuī 十四經發揮  
[ Development of the fourteen meridians ]  
by Huá Shòu  
[ China • XIV cent. ]



Jīng 經 'meridian'  
in 3 different calligraphic styles



Xué 穴 'cavity'