

# THE SCIENCE OF SYMBOLS EXPLORING A FORGOTTEN GATEWAY TO CHINESE MEDICINE<sup>1</sup> (PART ONE)

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In an earlier publication I tried to articulate the problems that may arise from a categorical imitation of the P.R.C. brand of hospital “TCM” in the West, by illuminating the historical context that spawned this system and reminding practitioners that the “T” in Traditional Chinese Medicine stands for an autonomous and sophisticated knowledge base that goes far beyond the limited confines of the P.R.C. model.<sup>2</sup> My co-author Deng Zhongjia, a well-known advocate for preserving the conceptual endowment of Chinese medicine in the Daoist classics, once summarized this argument in the following way: “The administrative forces of TCM have chosen to make the concept of science an equivalent to Western medicine, thus effectively renouncing the ‘traditional’ aspect of our craft. Our roots have been shoved into the museum; there they stand on a pedestal gathering dust.”<sup>3</sup> While the previous piece intended to raise the level of awareness about what Chinese medicine does not need to be limited to, this essay employs the positive thrust of this argument by offering a glimpse into the striking dimensions of information, both qualitatively and quantitatively, that remain hidden in the unexplored depths of the art and science of Chinese medicine.

## 1. Yi Zhe Yi Ye - *Medical Science is Symbol Science*

By using the symbols, Sage People saw all the spirit forces in the world we live in. The symbols determine forms and appearances and connect all things.

The *Great Treatise* section of the *Book of Change*<sup>4</sup>

Professor Deng’s statement echoes the age-old scholar-physician’s lament over the erosion of the cosmological sources of medical knowledge - the concept of the body as a microcosm, demanding that all bodily micro-sciences remain embedded in a macrocosmic frame of reference. The *Dao De Jing*, in this context best rendered as “The Classic of the Whole and Its Parts,”<sup>5</sup> most clearly defined this truly holistic view of the human body 2,500 years ago, which is since referred to as the concept of *tian ren he yi* (the state of

oneness of the universe and the human being): “Human beings follow the laws of the Earth, the Earth follows the laws of Heaven, Heaven follows the laws of the Dao, and the Dao just is.”<sup>6</sup> Since the original creators of Chinese medicine took the implications of this maxim further to produce a highly complex system of diagnostics and therapy, physicians of all ages have called for a return to this system’s view of the world. The part that remains veiled to most modern observers of the field is how such master physicians as the Tang Dynasty sage Sun Simiao, the Ming scholar Zhang Jingyue, or the early 20<sup>th</sup> century ideologue Zhang Xichun envisioned this return, and what, exactly, they thought was so worth while returning to.

Situated almost a millennium apart, Sun Simiao and Zhang Jingyue both formulated a programmatic answer to what they each perceived as the main cause for the debasement of Chinese medicine at their time. “Nobody qualifies to be a master physician without knowledge of the Science of Change,”<sup>7</sup> stated Master Sun during the 7<sup>th</sup> century, while Zhang Jingyue, the celebrated renaissance mind of Chinese medical science, coined the famous phrase that continues to fly as the banner of the renaissance vision of Chinese medicine even today - “*yi zhe yi ye*,” “real medicine is thoroughly based on *Yijing* science.”<sup>8</sup> Although mainland Chinese scholars have recently created *yiyixue*, a discipline investigating the medical significance of the *Yijing* (Classic of Change), the deeper meaning of these authoritative quotes has yet to be put into focus. Clearly, they represent the unconditional call for a return to the holistic foundation of Chinese medicine - alchemy - by striving to rekindle the symbol-based science first introduced in the *Classic of Change* or, more accurately translated in this context, the *Classic of Symbols*. At the dawn of Chinese civilisation, after all, the phenomenon of alchemy expressed itself as a process of blending a multitude of related natural phenomena and their associated functional data into a single symbol, rather than referring to the mere amalgamation of metals or the fusion of physical elixirs.<sup>9</sup>

The characteristic scholar’s lament thus fervently asserts that the essence of Chinese medicine is not the technical

details of diagnosis and therapy, but that it is the symbolist alchemy illustrating the holographic relationship between the planes of the cosmic, the earthly, and the physical.<sup>10</sup> In order to fully grasp the complexities of this system, it is necessary to go far beyond the modern concept of symbolic representation. Interestingly, it is the work of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century egyptologist that is best suited to illuminate the role and nature of symbolism in ancient China. R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, born in the Alsatian region of France, was a self-styled philosopher-mathematician-chemist who started his intellectual career as a student of the symbolist painter Matisse. During fifteen years of fieldwork in Egypt he formulated the concept of “*symbolique*.”<sup>11</sup> *Symbolique* defines all expressions of ancient culture (architecture, hieroglyphics, mythology) as the highly complex science of synthesising the manifold layers of reality into a single crystal of meaning. The theory of *symbolique* defines the primary task of the ancient scientist as the encoding of the relationships of space and time, function and matter, the above, the below, and the in-between in one carefully chosen signifier taken from the realm of nature, i.e. an animal, plant, or celestial object. Schwaller’s prolific work then, specifically his monumental *Le Temple de l’homme* (1957), details how ancient symbols contain very detailed information spanning from the thing layer (this is how it looks) to the functional layer (this is what it does) to the macrocosmic layers of space and time (these are the planets and seasons that it resonates with and is influenced by).<sup>12</sup>

Although *The Temple* is almost exclusively about Egypt, its conceptual thoughts can be applied aptly to the phenomenon of Chinese science and civilisation. When Schwaller first published his findings, his endeavour to interpret ancient artifacts seriously was met with contempt by the Egyptologist establishment of his time. A similar situation seems to exist in the field of Chinese medicine today. Although most contemporary scholars and practitioners maintain that Chinese medicine is a science in its own right, very few believe that the classics can be considered to be a major source of scientific detail about the twelve traditional organ networks. No more than 2-6 classical lines are generally quoted, museum-style and with minimal commentary, in TCM textbooks. Most contemporary data on the traditional organ networks and their external manifestations (*zangxiang*), therefore, is based on modern knowledge about the functions of the body’s anatomical organs. The ancient concept of the organ networks, however, is first and foremost functional - “energetic” - in nature, and thus cannot be adequately described in merely structural terms. Its multi-layered reality requires a scientific code that is able to express multiple layers of meaning. The foundational classics of Chinese medicine, especially the *Huangdi Neijing* (The Yellow Emperor’s Classic on Microcosmic Matters),<sup>13</sup> are the main vehicles for the transmission of this secret language. As in Egypt and other ancient high cultures, the natural scientists of Zhou and Han China created a system of symbolic references that spelled out the multi-layered

qualities of macrocosmic and microcosmic relationship in detail, including the “how,” “where,” “when,” and “why” of the connection between the Above and the Below.

In order to gain access to this wealth of information one must place the medical classics into the specific context of their time. During the formative period of Chinese medicine, approximately between 500 B.C.E. – 150 C.E., an essentially “Daoist” system of functional relationship utilising the symbolism of Yin and Yang (*yin yang*), the Five Phases (*wuxing*), the Six Confirmations (*liujing*), the Eight Trigrams (*bagua*), the Sixty-four Hexagrams (*liushisi gua*), the Ten Heavenly Stems (*tiangan*), and the Twelve Earthly Branches (*dizhi*) commanded all areas of intellectual activity in China.<sup>14</sup> This system formed the common frame of reference that did not need to be reiterated every time a new field of research was introduced. Since geology, astronomy and medicine were all probing into intricately related parts of the same whole, the basic parameters of their scientific discourse were essentially the same. Most contemporary TCM practitioners agree with this assessment, but the availability of traditional information on the lung network (*fei*), to name an example, remains severely limited. Modern textbooks generally state that the lung is associated with the phase element *jin* (metal) and the confirmation of *taiyin*. Little has been written about what these labels actually mean in terms of diagnostic and therapeutic information, and virtually no data is available on how the lung system relates to other symbolic markers such as hexagrams and stems/branches.

Inspired by the work of Schwaller de Lubicz, the emphatic lament of my mentors, and a general frustration with the state of foundational knowledge in modern TCM textbooks I established a research group to seriously probe into the complex system of symbolic markers surrounding the organ networks of Chinese medicine. When we followed the implicit instructions of the *Neijing* and aligned the twelve organ network sequence with the flow of the twelve earthly branches (*dizhi*), the twelve houses of the Chinese zodiac (*xingci*), and the twelve hexagrams that mark the progression of seasonal qi (*xiaoxi gua*), a host of detailed information about the function of each network and its intricate relationship to the spheres of Heaven, Man, and Earth revealed itself (*see illustration over*).

Furthermore, an investigation of the symbols associated with each channel network showed that the acupuncture point names are metaphorical variations and specifications of the general theme laid out by the macrocosmic compass of the channel. So far, the Western profession of TCM has for the most part disregarded the informational value of the acupuncture point names, to the degree that the point Zhongfu (Central Storehouse) is generally referred to as “Lung 1.” In general, the classical point names are recognised as crude mnemonic markers for a point’s location, such as “hillock” for a point next to a major joint, or “valley” or “pond” for points situated in obvious indentations. A thorough philological analysis of the point names, includ-

ing the process of checking each one of them against the backdrop of major Chinese classics from Han times and before, yielded further evidence of a codification system exhibiting an intricacy and attention to detail that textbook TCM has never dared to attribute to its own roots. Once this symbolic code was uncovered, a clearly patterned strategy of conveying information began to emerge, weaving the acupuncture point names together in twelve cohesive mythological stories that greatly elucidate the intricate functions and macrocosmic relationships of the related organ networks. In the most general terms, it can be said that almost every point name examined so far appears to include the following categories of symbolic content:

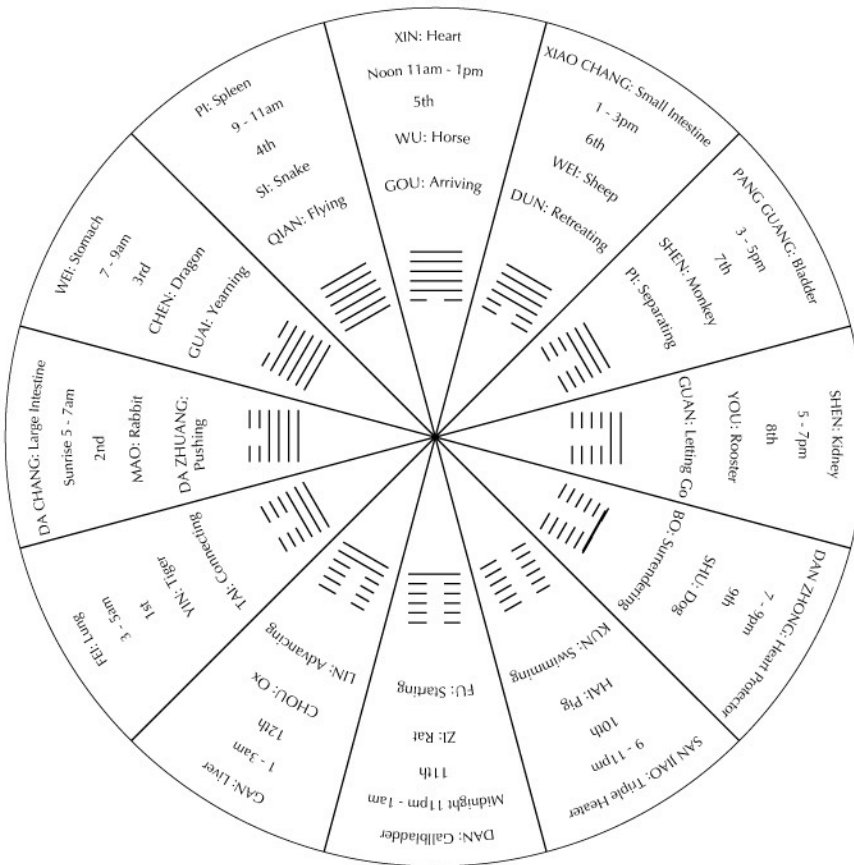
- General theme (abstract): reference to one of the twelve tidal hexagrams (*shier xiaoxi gua*) that serves as the functional title of the relevant organ network, or to one of the other four hexagrams that Han dynasty scholars associated with the respective tidal hexagram.
- General theme (concrete): reference to a cohesive mythological tale relating each channel to a legendary process or persona of pre-Han times, such as the Yellow Emperor (Huang Di), the divine Husbandman (Shen Nong), the Great Yu (Da Yu), or the Valley of the Suns (Tang Gu).
- Relationship to Heaven: association with specific stellar constellations.
- Relationship to Earth: association with specific localities in China's mythological landscape (rivers, mountains, etc.).
- Relationship to Man: association with specific positions at an idealised version of the imperial court as documented in the *Zhou Li* (Rites of the Zhou Dynasty).
- Relationship to body structure: reference to point location.
- Relationship to body function (state of balance): reference to point physiology.
- Relationship to body function (state of imbalance): reference to point pathology.

## 2. Applied Symbol Science: The Example of "Fei" (The Lung Network)

"If we are now really to understand the following - not just intellectually, but also spiritually and in body and soul, in a word, completely - our consciousness must risk a leap. In its profundity the metaphorical world of alchemy is simply not accessible to the contemporary abstract understanding. We must, for once, turn off the continual din of reason and listen with the "ear of the heart" if we want to have the symbols strike responsive chords in ourselves".

H.T. Hansen in his introduction to *The Hermetic Tradition* by Julius Evola

*Symbolique* is the process of acknowledging and then scrutinising every pictogram that describes the functions of the body as a multidimensional crystal of meaning. If we



Symbolist alchemy in Neijing times: Defining the organ networks by relating the functional movements of the microcosm to the twelve stages of macrocosmic development

apply this process to the Daoist classics, a wealth of medically relevant information emerges. Details of each of the organ networks could easily fill a voluminous book in this way. In the frame of this article I will limit myself to giving some basic examples, but hopefully they will be sufficient to illustrate the thrust of my argument.

Specifically, I would like to present the example of the first in the twelve-point sequence of the Chinese organ networks, namely *fei* (lung). My analysis begins with an examination of the pictograms that traditionally describe this network: *fei* ("lung"), *jin* ("metal"), and *taiyin* ("major yin"). This is augmented by a look at the associated macrocosmic context of the lung network, provided by the associated hexagram *tai* ("balance"), the zodiac position *Juzi* ("mouth"), and the river *He* (Yellow River).

### FEI 肺

Chinese characters generally consist of two parts: a radical (*bushou*) that indicates the broad category of meaning, such as 'water' or 'fire' or 'hand' or 'cart,' plus another component that designates the sound of the word as well as the

more specific meaning of the pictogram. The character *fei* features the radical for “physical matter” 月 on the left. The component on the right 市 contains multiple meanings. When pronounced *fu*, a concrete object evoked by this term is a ritual ornament worn on the outside of robes during sacrificial ceremonies. In the most general sense, this item represents the imperial and the sacred, ritual, communication between heaven and earth, as well as the concept of outside signification. Another aspect of this character, associated with the pronunciation *po* and emphasised by the 2<sup>nd</sup> century dictionary *Shuowen Jiezi*, is the image of exuberant vegetation luxuriating above ground. Finally, if written 市 and pronounced *shi*, this part of the pictogram stands for market, a place where the products of the earth accumulate and become distributed.

In sum, the network designated “*fei*” by the creators of Chinese medicine thus appears defined as “the functional network in the body that is in charge of ritual communication between heaven and earth; symbolic signification; surface exuberance; and distribution of the products and the essence of the earth.” On a macrocosmic level, this bodily system is associated with the Heavenly Market (Tianshi) constellation that mirrors the structure of the lung channel (eleven stars on each side relating to eleven points on each arm) and its function in a celestial sphere, namely accumulation and distribution.<sup>15</sup> On a social plane, it is associated with the Director of Markets (Sishi), a royal court official, who is described by the *Zhou Li* as the custodian of the earth and the distributor of its goods.<sup>16</sup>

## JIN 金

The most literal interpretation of the ancient pictogram for “metal” [金] yields the image of a mountain that develops and contains the crystallised essence of earth inside. Furthermore, the primary cultural contents that the Han associated with the phase element “metal” are complex, but can be generalised as follows: downward momentum (water flows down from mountains; killing effect of metal weapons); surface protection (metal armour and shielding); surface adornment (jewellery); immortality and physical vigour (metal lasts forever); righteousness, law, and judgement (the metal blade punishes and executes); refinement (metals, especially gold, are the end product of the alchemical process); symbolic representation and reflection (the first mirrors were made of metal); sensitivity, malleability, and adaptability (metal adapts immediately to external temperature changes; changes shape when heated; rusts when exposed to corroding influences); expression (metal sings); communication (metal conducts); purity (metal, crystals, and other precious minerals shine; metal sounds and cuts when pure); heaven (before the bronze age, metal was available only from meteorite pieces); ritual (similarly to jade, metal was initially reserved for the ceremonial purpose of communicating with Heaven).

By designating the combination of *fei* (lung) and *dachang*

(large intestine) as the “metal” network of the body, the creators of Chinese medicine clearly indicated that these systems are in charge of the downward distribution of earth (spleen and stomach) essences, righteousness, vitality, surface protection, surface expression, communication, purification, refinement, reverence toward spirit, and many other aspects of physical, emotional, and spiritual expression that can potentially be gleaned through the symbolist lens of “metal/crystal/gold” in a clinical context.

## TAIYIN 太陰

The full name of the lung network in Chinese medicine is *shou taiyin fei jing* - The Hand Taiyin Lung Metal Functional System. Because the symbolic content of *fei* and *jin* is more accessible, the term *taiyin* has remained largely unexplored by Chinese medicine practitioners. The general translation of “major yin” must be considered unsatisfactory, since it juxtaposes the *taiyin* pair (spleen and lung) with the *shaoyin* “minor yin” pair of heart and kidney - an organ system that is generally thought of as being more rather than less yin in nature. Once again, the method of scientific symbolism suggests a return to the original image layer of the pictograms involved. *Taiyin* is the original name of the moon, which, in turn, is a symbol for earth, matter and the essence of postnatal yin in general.<sup>17</sup> By itself, the term *tai* 太 is etymologically related to the characters *da* 大 (big), *ti* 天 (heaven), and *tai* 泰 (balance). The term *yin* originally signified a layer of clouds pregnant with rain.<sup>18</sup> An ancient version of the pictogram for rain [雨] (*yu*), moreover, relays the image of earth emanating downwards from the sky. *Taiyin* also refers to the stellar constellation Taiyuan (alternate name *taiyin*), which Han commentators specified as an indicator of the state of earth and water metabolism in nature.<sup>19</sup>

Viewed from the perspective of these associated terms, *taiyin* means clouds in the sky, or earth in the sky that is about to come down. The *taiyin* networks, therefore, are in charge of moisturising the other organ networks by utilising the upward momentum of the spleen and the downward momentum of the lung, to descend like rain upon a thirsty valley in regular intervals and thus provide the life-sustaining essence of earth. In the microcosmic environment of the human body this *taiyin* cloud / rain qi is referred to as post-natal qi, which is generally defined as an amalgam of the qi derived from (earth) food and (metal) air. The *taiyin* networks, moreover, are in charge of the communication between heaven and earth, since *taiyin* signifies both the concept of earth in heaven and the concept of heaven nourishing earth. This also makes them *tai-yin* - the *yin* essence that conducts itself like the hexagram *tai* (11), which represents intercourse between Heaven and Earth.

## TAI 泰 ䷊

*Tai*, or Hexagram 11, is the tidal hexagram (*xiaoxi gua*) that is directly associated with the 3-5 a.m. position of the lung in the cyclical flow of the twelve organ networks. *Tai* is the

main label for successful, life-spawning intercourse between heaven and earth in Chinese culture. It models the balance of yin and yang and the ensuing state of movement, with three yin lines in the yang position (heaven), bound to descend, and three yang lines in the yin position (earth), bound to ascend. Most notably, the original pictogram [ 泰 ] is an image of benevolent hands generously dispensing the gift of life-sustaining water in a downward direction.

If we recognise that the functions of the lung network are symbolically expressed by its title hexagram, *Tai*, we must consequently comprehend this network as the arbiter of communication, balance and physical vitality. The lung, once again, is thus likened to the macrocosmic realm of heavenly mountains/clouds that cyclically dispense the vitalising gift of freshwater to the “body” of the plains below.

### JUZI 媿訾

*Juzi* (fish mouth) is the name of one of the twelve celestial houses where the interaction and relationship between the sun, the moon and the stars was traditionally observed. The position of this house in the heavenly orb corresponds to the first lunar month - the 3-5 a.m. position of the annual clock - and the seasonal period of *Yushui* (rain water). The particular facts associated with this celestial lung all corroborate the main tasks of its microcosmic counterpart, namely the distribution of postnatal (earth/freshwater) *qi*, the protection from harmful external influences, the connection to spirit, and the refiner’s impulse of civilised man: The house *Juzi* hosts the stellar constellations *Shi* (Enclosure) and *Bi* (Wall), which correspond to the Western configuration of Pisces. The *Shi* constellation is also called *Dashui* (Great Moisture), *Shuixing* (Water Star), and *Tianmiao* (Celestial Temple). It contains, among others, the star formations *Tengshe* (Soaring Snake), said to regulate the movements of water insects, and *Tugongshi* (Earth Mover).<sup>20</sup> The *Bi* constellation, moreover, contains the star formations *Yunyu* (Clouds and Rain) and *Tugong* (Earth Master). Traditionally, this constellation was said to govern the patterned lines of nature and their symbolic reproduction in the form of script (*wen*) and graphs (*tu*).<sup>21</sup>

### HE 河

In chapter twelve of the *Lingshu* section of the *Huangdi Neijing*, entitled *Shier Jingshui* (On the Twelve Channels and the Twelve Streams), the lung network is directly associated with the *Huanghe* or Yellow River.<sup>22</sup> This is China’s archetypal river - originating in the Western mountains, distributing life-sustaining water throughout most of the northern and central plains, and finally flowing into the ocean in the East. It is called yellow because its stream carries large amounts of fertile loess from the Gobi desert, causing rhythmical floods that deposit this natural fertiliser in the valleys along the river’s path. The Yellow River used to also be called *Sishui* in ancient times. The character *si* refers to the number four, alluding to the classic line “Heaven

is round and Earth is square (has four corners),” indicating that this lengthy waterway consists of four rivers uniting into one, as well as the fact that this is the most earthy (material) among China’s rivers.<sup>23</sup>

Most significantly, the mythological geography of Han dynasty times defined the ultimate source of the Yellow River as Puchanghai Lake, located on China’s Western plateau and feeding the external source of the river via a subterranean connection.<sup>24</sup> This lake, it appears, is the body of water that the *Neijing* associates with the stomach network,<sup>25</sup> which, in a marvellous example of micro-macro alchemy, is defined as the “subterranean” source of the lung channel.<sup>26</sup>

The lung, in sum, is described as a microcosmic manifestation of the earth’s cyclical regeneration of freshwater. It should be noted in this context that the twelve organ networks are arranged around the macrocosmic clock in an order that categorises them not only in terms of five (the five organ networks) and six (the six confirmations), but also in terms of three (Tian-Heaven, Di-Earth, and Ren, the Between Realm of the human being). Not surprisingly, the lung, along with the large intestine, the spleen and the stomach, falls within the category of Di-Earth. An ancient version of the character *di* [ 壘 ] features *shan* 山 (mountain) at the top, *tu* 土 (earth) at the bottom, and *shui* 水 (water) in between - a picture of freshwater movement between the mountains and the soil of the lower lying valleys where the gift of moisture brings about the myriad manifestations of life.

The names of the acupuncture points along the lung channel continue and further elaborate on this general theme. The sequence of eleven points tells the consistent story of the distribution of postnatal earth essences by identifying the different states of water during its journey from the realm of sky/mountain toward earth. At the beginning of this process, the earthly wares are still represented in the state of “internal storage” (Zhongfu, LU-1), until they “emerge into the open as clouds” (Yunmen, LU-2), condense into an “external storage house” by forming a “heavenly cloud cover” (Tianfu, LU-3), precipitate as fog and rain to the “nebulous sphere of the outlaws” (Xiabai, LU-4), and finally, at the dividing line of the elbow crease, materialise fully as “three-dimensional water pools” (Chize, LU-5) that go on to form “brooks” (Jingqu, LU-7), “lakes” (Taiyuan, LU-9) and major “fish streams” (Yuji, LU-10).

This multifaceted symbolic tableau enables us to gain a vision of the lung network that far exceeds the understanding of *fei* as the anatomical organ that is involved in breathing and coughing. It opens the door for the art of identifying traces of lung *taiyin* metal function and dysfunction in the physical, emotional and spiritual pictures that every patient exhibits.

By utilising the symbolist approach and unveiling some of the classical subtexts related to the lung system, our understanding of the isolated *Neijing* sentences that TCM textbooks generally quote, museum-style, becomes now

reatly enhanced: “The lung channel begins in the middle burner;” “The lung is in charge of qi;” “The lung is the upper source of water”; “The lung is the prime minister of the organ networks, and out of it comes rhythmic regulation”; “The lung governs the skin and body hair;” “The lung is the sensitive organ network”; and “The lung contains the *po* (lunar/material) spirits.”<sup>27</sup>

## Notes

This article summarizes the initial results of an ongoing research project conducted by the Acupuncture Point Research Group of the Classical Chinese Medicine Department at National College of Naturopathic Medicine in Portland, Oregon. The author is the principal investigator of the project. Core members of the research team are Jim Cleaver, William Frazier, and Cindy Reuter. Other team members who were involved in the discussions leading to this article were Chihiro Aber, Elizabeth Cox, Samantha Gray, Brenda Harris, Steve Marsden, and Edward Neal.

1 See Heiner Fruehauf, “The Crisis of Chinese Medicine: Science, Politics, and the Making of ‘TCM,’” in *The Journal of Chinese Medicine*, 61 (1999), p. 6-14.

2 From an interview with the author in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, P.R. China in 1993.

3 See Stephen Karcher, *Ta Chuan, The Great Treatise: The Key to Understanding the I Ching and its Place in Your Life* (London: Carroll & Brown, 2000), p. 110.

4 The *Dao De Jing* is one of the most translated books in the world. Due to the highly symbolic nature of this work, many English renditions of both the text and the title have been produced, each focusing on yet another aspect of the complex range of meaning contained in the original characters. The translation above is the interpretation of choice of my mentor, Prof. Zhongjia Deng (expert on the medical classics and the philosophical foundations of Chinese medicine).

5 From chapter 25 of the *Dao De Jing*; see *Dao De Zhen Jing Zhu* (Annotations to the True Classic of the Whole and Its Parts), in Li Min, ed., *Dao Zang* (Collection of Daoist Texts), vol. 12 (Shanghai: Shanghai Shudian, 1994), p.8.

6 Sun Simiao as quoted by Zhang Jingyue in his own essay on the merits of *Yijing* study; see Zhang Jiebing, “Yi yi yi” (The Significance of *Yijing* Science in Medicine), in *Lei Jing Fu Yi* (Associated Commentaries To ‘Categorization of the Medical Classic’); reprinted in Zhang Qicheng, *Yixue yu zhongyi* (*Yijing Science and Chinese Medicine*), (Beijing: Zhongguo Shudian, 1999), p. 303.

7 Ibid.

8 On the original relationship of alchemy and symbolism see, for instance, the work of the Italian scholar Julius Evola, who was one of the first Western publishers of the *Dao De Jing* (1923). See Julius Evola, *The Hermetic Tradition: Symbols and Teachings of the Royal Art* (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 1995).

9 Sun Simiao and Zhang Jingyue are but the most prominent examples in a long line of Chinese scholar physicians who believe that effective medicine needs to be rooted in the Daoist cosmology expressed in the *Yijing* and *Neijing*. Among contemporary Western researchers of Chinese medicine, Prof. Frank Fiedeler of Berlin University has worked most extensively on the symbolic nature of Chinese medicine concepts and terminology; see Frank Fiedeler, *Die Monde des I Ging: Symbolschöpfung und Evolution* (Munich: Diederichs, 1988).

10 See R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, *Symbol and the Symbolic: Ancient Egypt, Science, and the Evolution of Consciousness*, translated by Deborah Lawlor (Inner Traditions, 1978).

11 See R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, *The Temple of Man: Apet of the South at Luxor*, 2 volumes, translated by Robert and Deborah Lawlor (Inner Traditions, 1998).

12 The title of this work is generally translated as “The Yellow Lord’s Classic of Internal Medicine,” or “The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Medicine;” see, for instance, Maoshing Ni, *The Yellow Emperor’s Classic*

*of Medicine* (Boston: Shambhala, 1995). The above translation is a suggestive interpretation by my Daoist mentor, Prof. Qingyu Wang of the Sichuan Academy of Sciences, intended to bring out a deeper layer of meaning that he and many of his colleagues see contained in the title of the *Neijing*.

13 There presently exists a lively debate on the appropriate usage of the term “Daoist,” including the question of which aspects of Chinese thought are Daoist and which ones are Confucian in origin. See, for instance, Nathan Sivin, “On the Word ‘Taoist’ as a Source of Perplexity: With Special Reference to the Relations of Science and Religion in Ancient China,” in *Medicine, Philosophy and Religion in Ancient China: Researches and Reflections* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1996), pp. 303-30. In the context of this paper, the term “Daoist” is used in the most general sense preferred by my own “Daoist” mentors, referring to the repository of native thought that defined the direction of all of Chinese philosophy and science well before any -isms came into being.

14 According to the *Jin Shu* (History of the Jin Dynasty), the Tianshi constellation is in charge of “gathering the masses.” See Hua Fu, ed., *Zhongguo Gudai Mingwu Dadian* (The Great Encyclopedia of Chinese Material Culture), 2 vols. (Jinan: Jinan Chubanshe, 1993), vol.1, p.50.

15 “The Director of Markets ... are members of the Ministry of Education [diguan; literally the Earth Ministry] who supervised the marketplace and all mercantile transactions in the royal capital, establishing the physical layout of the marketplace, fixing rules governing transactions there, punishing violators of the rules, adjudicating disputes between merchants, fixing fair prices for commodities, issuing trading permits, even supervising coinage.” See Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), p. 455.

16 See “Taiyin Tu” (A Graph of Taiyin), in *Gu Jin Tushu Jicheng* (An Encyclopedic Collection of Graphs and Texts From Ancient and Modern Times), 80 vols. (Chengdu: Bashu Shushe, 1994), vol.61, p.73085.

17 “Yin means clouds covering up the sun.” See the first dictionary of Chinese characters from the 2nd century A.D., *Shuowen Jiezi*; see Xu Zhen, and Duan Yuzai, annotator, *Shuowen Jiezi Zhu* (An Annotated Edition of ‘Explaining Lines and Analyzing Complex Characters’), (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 1988), p. 575.

18 The astronomical annals of the *Han Shu* (History of the Han Dynasty) note that “if any star traps the Three Sources (Sanyuan), there will be flooding, earthquakes, and commotion among ocean fish.” See *Zhongguo Gudai Mingwu Dadian*, vol. 1, p.77.

19 Ibid., p.70.

20 Ibid., p.71.

21 “The Hand Taiyin System is linked with the Yellow River on the outside, and belongs to the lung on the inside.” See Guo Xiechun, ed., *Huangdi Neijing Lingshu* (The Lingshu Section of the Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Medicine), (Tianjin: Tianjin Kexue Jishu Chubanshe, 1989), p.144.

22 The phrase “Heaven is round and Earth is square” is a *terminus technicus* in Han and pre-Han Daoist writings such as the *Huainanzi* (The Huainan Masters).

23 This lake was mentioned already by the *Shan Hai Jing* (The Classic of Mountains and Seas) under the name Youze. It used to be known for its even water level throughout all seasons. Until today, it is surrounded by extended marsh land. Located in the Southeastern corner of modern day Xinjiang, it is now called Lop Nur.

24 “The Foot Yangming System is linked with the Hai on the outside, and belongs to the stomach on the inside.” See *Huangdi Neijing Lingshu*, p.144.

25 “The hand Taiyin Lung Channel begins in the middle burner, loops down to connect with the large intestine, and comes back up circling around the opening of the stomach.” See chapter 10 of the *Lingshu*, in *Huangdi Neijing Lingshu*, p.103.

26 See Zhang Dengben and Wu Changchun, eds., *Neijing Cidian* (A *Neijing* Dictionary), (Beijing: Renmin Weisheng Chubanshe, 1990), p. 426-27.

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