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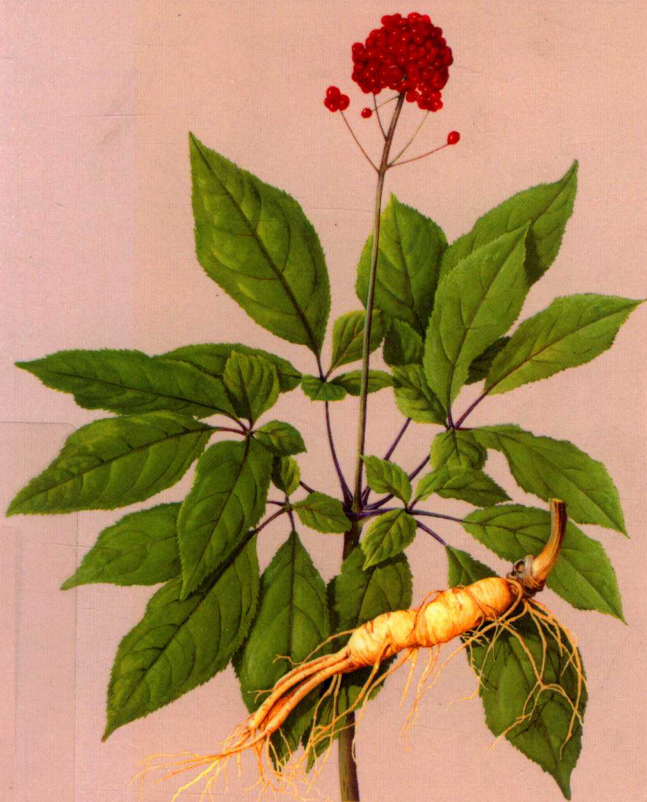
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# TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE




Liang Yongxuan  
Zhao Xin  
Zhen Xueyan

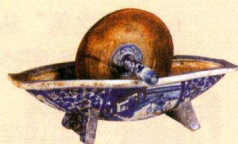
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 China Intercontinental Press

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# Contents

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## Foreword 1

## Evolution of Ancient TCM 5

- A Brief Introduction to TCM and Chinese Traditional Culture 6
- Spread of Ancient Medical Classics 14
- Skills and Virtues of Ancient Doctors 21
- Selections from Ancient TCM 29

## Basic TCM Theories 43

- The Foundation Works of TCM – *Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine* 44
- Sun, Moon and Yin, Yang – Yin-yang Theory of TCM 46
- Starting with Five-colored Soil – Five-Elements of TCM 50
- From the Theory that Man Is an Integral Part of Nature  
– The Holistic View of TCM 55
- Essence, Qi and Shen (Spirit) of Chinese People 57
- Blood and Body Fluids 66
- TCM on the Five Internal Organs (Viscera) 69
- Why Do We Get Sick 81
- Diagnostic Methods of the Traditional Chinese Medicine:  
Observation, Auscultation and Olfaction, Inquiry, and  
Pulse Examination 84
- Syndrome Differentiation for Determining Treatment of  
Traditional Chinese Medicine 97
- Traditional Chinese Medicine Treats Disease by  
Preventing Illness before It Begins 100



## **Knowledge about Traditional Chinese Medicine 103**

- Origin of Traditional Chinese Medicine 104
- Comprehensive Traditional Chinese Medicine 108
- Processing 112
- Natures and Flavors of Traditional Chinese Medicine 115
- The Forms of Traditional Chinese Drugs 119
- The Combination of Medicine 125
- Increasingly Developed TCM in History 127



## **Acupuncture, Moxibustion and External Treatment 131**

- Channels, Network Vessels and Acupoints 132
- Acupuncture and Moxa-moxibustion 142
- Multiple Methods to Treat Internal Illness by External Treatment 148

## **TCM Theories about Health Cultivation 157**

- Balance and Health 158
- Emotions and Diseases 160
- Homology of Medicine and Food 163
- Nourishing the Body with Five Grains 168
- Health Maintenance in the Four Seasons 172
- Moderate Movements and Rest 175

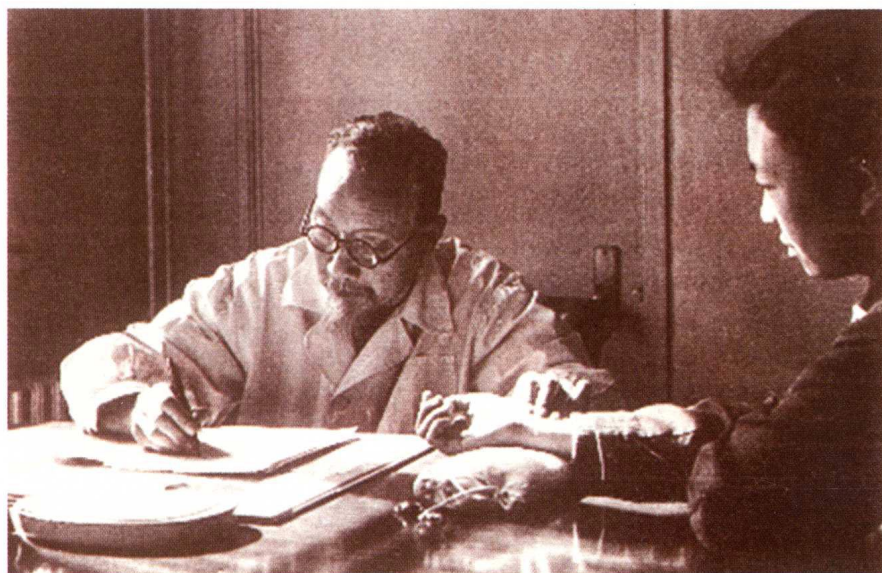


## **Development of TCM in Modern Times 179**

- Debate on TCM and Western Medicine in Modern Times 180
- Trial for Integration of Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine 182
- Exploration for Combination of Traditional Chinese and Western Medicine 186
- Modern TCM Education and Legacy 187
- Characteristics of Modern TCM Diagnosis and Treatment 190
- Overview of Medicine of Ethnic Groups 192

# Foreword

**T**raditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is a great and valuable treasure built by the Han people and other ethnic groups through long-term production and practice based on the experiences of their predecessors. Aiming to cure diseases and suffering, TCM focuses on the harmony between people and nature and forges its theoretical framework and forms unique diagnosis and treatment methodologies based on ancient philosophical concepts.



A TCM doctor feels the pulse of a patient. TCM forms its unique theories diagnosis and treatment methods.



A Traditional Chinese Medicine store



TCM is understood and accepted by more and more people with different cultural backgrounds. Many foreign doctors come to China to learn TCM.

TCM emphasizes the close ties between man and society, possesses native dialectic thoughts, stresses the unity of heaven and man and values holism. The most important concepts, such as *Chi*, *Yinyang* and *Wuxing* (five elements) depict the unique understanding of the ancient Chinese of the functions of the human body, including the complete understanding of the interrelationship and interactions among the visceras (*Zang and Fu*) in the human body. TCM features understanding of both nature and human beings. With understanding of nature, medical resources are refined from plants, animals and minerals, becoming basic means to treat diseases. With understanding of human beings, TCM may identify pathogenesis, clarify functions of the visceras, make analysis and diagnosis based on discomforts and then treat them with herbs and theories of the *Prescriptions of Herbs*.

TCM also explores disease prevention and regimen methods and

effectively extends life spans. Moreover, the magic of acupuncture and moxibustion has played an important role in TCM and won the recognition of people from many countries.

The brilliant history of TCM is closely linked with famous doctors through history. Lots of ancient medical books and effective treatment experiences have been passed on and are a wealth of knowledge for later generations.

The 2,000-year-old TCM has offered basic guarantees and enormous contribution to the reproduction, health and longevity of Chinese people. It still plays an irreplaceable role today. As a dazzling pearl in oriental medicine, TCM has also had great influence on Japan, Korea, southeastern Asian countries and other neighbors.

How does the brilliant TCM recognize the human body? What are the causes and effects? What about the major theories and thinking? What are the details of herbal treatments and acupuncture and moxibustion therapies? This book will usher readers into profound TCM with simple words.

# EVOLUTION OF ANCIENT TCM



## A Brief Introduction to TCM and Chinese Traditional Culture

Astronomy, mathematics, agriculture and medicine are four major scientific subjects of ancient China. Medicine has been deemed as the most humanistic. TCM has been deeply influenced by traditional Chinese culture.

### “Good Official” or “Good Physician ”

“If I cannot be a good official, I’ll be a good physician” is a slogan proposed by ancient Chinese scholars. Physician was the second career choice for ancient intellectuals. Why?

“Benevolence (*Ren*)”, the supreme principle of Confucianism, is the core of the Confucian theoretical system founded by Confucius (557-479BC). Originally, benevolence referred to the amity between human beings. The “benevolence” defined in Confucianism requires people to do things benefiting society or others. Medicine, as “a science that can save people” and relieve people from pain and diseases, is compliant with the Confucian thought on benevolence and thus called “Benevolent Science” in ancient China. Influenced by such thinking, Confucian scholars regarded medicine as their hobby and devoted themselves to it if they did not have opportunities in politics or government. They realized that medicine could bring as great benefits to people as “benevolent political measures” and they might achieve their life dreams of “benevolence” through medical practice.

*Zhongyong* (the golden mean) is an integral part of Confucianism which advocates that it is fundamental for development to maintain the balance of everything as two sides in opposite are often under the even-handed middle position. This thought has had a deep influence on the attitudes of Chinese people to questions and measures to problems, widely penetrated into all aspects of traditional medicine.

According to TCM theories, the human body consists of *yin* and *yang*. When the *yang* and *yin* are under dynamic balance, a man is healthy. In case the *yang* and *yin* are disordered, i.e. the balance is broken, man gets ill. Thus, all therapies aim at balancing *yin*, *yang*, *qi* (vital energy) and blood to “harmony”. Balance and stability are also emphasized in TCM prescriptions. Herbs in a prescription shall be arranged in strict accordance with the hierarchy principle similar to “emperor, minister, assistant and attendant”, intending to harmonize the properties of herbs, that is, restricting toxicities of some herbs and strengthening or changing functions of others, and enable herbs of various properties to form a new organic whole and display their functions more completely.

*Jingxue* refers to the study of Confucian Classics, interpreting the literal meaning and elaborating the philosophical connotations in ancient China. The evolution mode of *Jingxue* had great influence on TCM. Ancient Chinese doctors



The 300-year-long Tong Ren Tang is the most famous TCM store in China. Its name shows the profound influence of the Confucian culture on *Ren* (Benevolence).



The Hu Qingyu Tang, the TCM store in southern China comparable to the northern Tong Ren Tang, was founded in 1874. The four characters meaning “medicine means benevolence” created by the founder are still extant on the gate tower of the TCM store.

applied Jingxue research mode in medical principles. Most of them, centering on TCM classics like the *Yellow Emperor's Inner Classic and Treatise on Febrile and Miscellaneous Diseases*, released new views, established new schools, improved medical theories and promoted medical practices through explanations, elaborations and special researches on classics. Even today, these two books are deemed as classics of TCM. New study and interpretation are continuously carried out on these initial theories of TCM. The application of *Jingxue* research mode on TCM study makes the evolution course of TCM quite similar to that of Confucianism.

### Same Source for TCM and Taoism

“Man takes his law from the Earth; the Earth takes its law from Heaven; Heaven takes its law from the Tao. The law of the Tao is its *Ziran* (natural laws; being what it is)” is a famous saying by Laotse, founder of the Taoism.

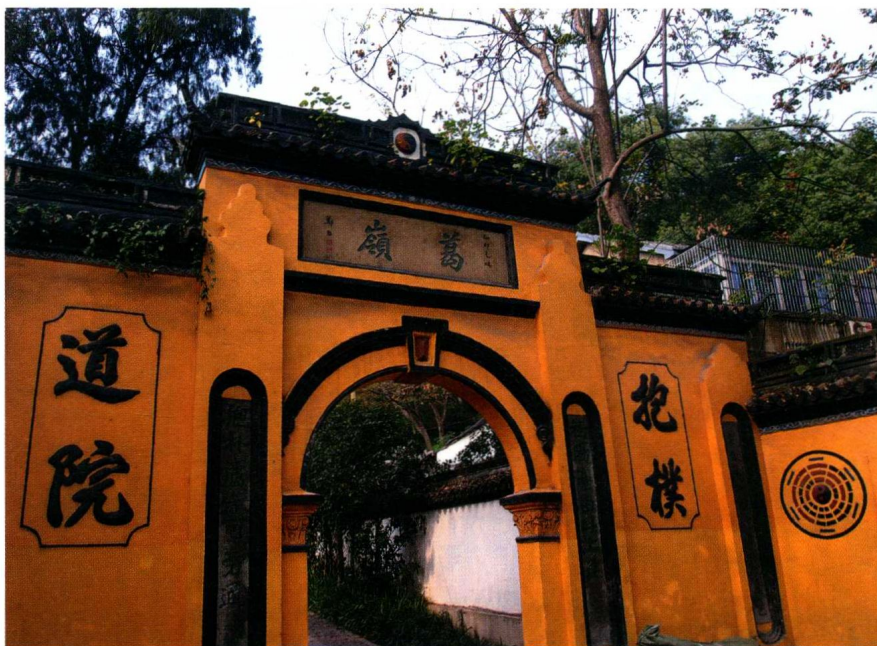
*Ziran* refers to various laws in nature. According to Laotse, men and the nature are an integral whole and should observe the same laws. No matter the regimen, prevention or treatment of disease, the observation and analysis should be made against the backdrop of the whole natural environment. For instance, ancient Chinese followed the simplest living mode of “starting work at sunrise and returning to rest at sunset”. If they stayed up at night and slept during the day they would be violating the natural law and get ill.

According to Taoism, “to be compliant with nature” is fundamental. While “complying with nature” and “returning to simplicity and nature”, men should attach the same importance to “nourishing the soul” and “nourishing the body.” Nourishing the soul aims to keep a peaceful, magnanimous and contented heart for an inner happiness.

Regimen, a hot topic of modern Chinese medicine, originates from the theory of another Taoism founder Chuang Tse (c. 369-286BC). According to Chuang Tse, the core of the regimen is to comply



A clinic and herbal medicine shop in a painting of Qing Dynasty.



The Baopu Taoist Temple, named after Taoist Gehong, is situated at the Ge Hill. It is said Ge Hong, also known as Baopuzi, made pills of immortality and cultivated himself according to Taoism in the hill. Thus the hill was named Ge, and the temple Baopu.

with nature, keep a pure heart and escape from the restrictions of the external. Relying on the Taoist thought, Chinese Taoism came into being. Taoists have pursued immortality and continuously studied alchemy to become immortal. Despite of the ridiculous goal for immortalization, their alchemic practice objectively initiated pharmaceutical chemistry.

As early as the Han, Wei and Jin dynasties, Taoists refined mineral medicines applicable for diseases, such as mercury ointment for acariasis treatment and mercury preparations for defecation, which are both direct products of alchemy.

From the Tang Dynasty, calomel, hydragyrum oxydatum crudum, hydragyrum chloratum compositum and other TCM surgical and dermatological specific medicines have been refined in addition to

elixirs for oral administration.

As the Chinese saying goes “medicine and Taoism share the same origin, and Taoists are often physicians,” Taoist theories, thoughts and practice are closely related with TCM: not only theories of ancient Taoists are often found in TCM classics, but also some Taoists themselves, such as Ge Hong (284-364) and Tao Hongjing (456-536), were also famous scientists of medicine and made outstanding contribution to the development of TCM.

### **Buddhist Views on “Medicine” and “Pharmacology”**

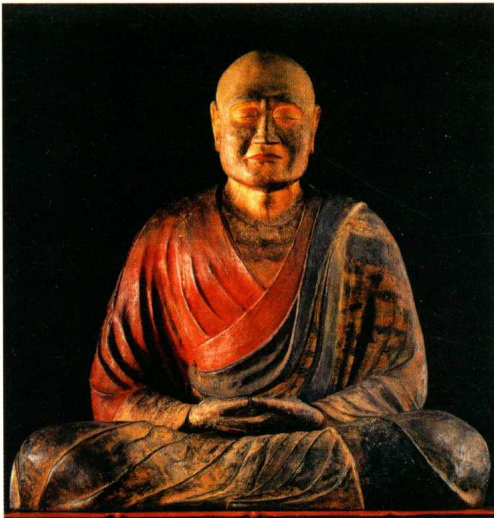
Originated from Ancient India, Buddhism was introduced to China via the Western regions in the Han Dynasty and started the local development. The religion reached its heyday in the Jin and Tang dynasties. As a religious ideological system for curing physical and mental traumata, Buddhism has countless ties with medicine.



Portrait of Tao Hongjing, a renowned Taoist. The *Variorum of Materia Medica Classic* compiled by him is an important materia medica work in TCM's history.

Buddhist medicine is an important part of ancient Indian medicine which spread to China along with Buddhism and influenced TCM, Tibetan medicine and Mongolian Medicine to some degree. Also, Buddhism attached importance to medicine and promoted religion through medicine, boosting exchanges and interactions between Buddhist medicine and TCM. It is said that the “gold needle couching” in TCM to cure cataract originates from ancient Indian medicine and is recorded in the Buddhist sutra translated in the Han Dynasty. In addition, the massage in Indian medicine was introduced to China in the Tang Dynasty and formed a branch of traditional Chinese massage skills favored by Chinese physicians of all dynasties. *A Thousand Gold Pieces Emergency Formulary* compiled by Sun Simiao (581-682) in the Tang Dynasty describes the 18 moves in Indian Massage, i.e. a set of self-massage exercise.

Buddhist viewpoint of “all things in the world can be elixirs” broadens TCM’s pharmaceutical vision. Buddhist sutras describe several thousand species of herbaceous plants, woody plants and animals, including about 320 kinds of routine medicines. Many exotic



The Statue of Jianzhen in the Toshodaiji, Nara, Japan. Jianzhen (688-763), a dignitary in the Tang Dynasty, was also a famous doctor. He travelled eastward to Japan to teach Buddhism as well as TCM. He treated the local patients with great enthusiasm.