

**CHINESE MEDICAL HISTORY, FALL 2004**  
**Asian Institute of Medical Studies AS 121**

Instructor: Sabine Wilms, Ph.D.  
Day/Time: Tuesday 10:00-12:00  
Office hours: Before or after class or by appointment.  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of this class is to provide students with an introduction to traditional medicine in China in its historical and cultural context, in order to fully appreciate the achievements as well as contentious issues and general complexities of contemporary "Traditional Chinese Medicine", as practiced both in China and the West. After a brief introduction to issues of definition, translation, and other theoretical problems, the first half of the course will be devoted to constructing and exploring a historically accurate image of canonical Chinese medicine, taking into account the perspectives of both the early primary sources as well as modern secondary scholarship. We will investigate the historical development and basic theoretical concepts of the Yellow Emperor's body, their application in medical practice, and their relationship to other classics such as the pharmaceutical tradition.

In the second half of the course, we will challenge, refine, and potentially deconstruct this representation of traditional Chinese medicine as a uniform and static body of knowledge by studying the multi-dimensional realities of illness and healing throughout Chinese history. For this purpose, we will look at various aspects of medicine such as magical and exorcistic healing, medicine in the religious traditions of Daoism, Buddhism, and the Yijing, the development of orthopraxy and local traditions of knowledge, and the role of women, both as healers and patients. In the last two class periods, we will look at the interaction of Chinese medicine with modern Western medicine, both in China and the West, in order to arrive at a better understanding of so-called "Traditional Chinese Medicine", as practiced in contemporary contexts.

You will be faced with quite a bit of theoretical information, and I will try to make the material as accessible and entertaining as possible. I will provide you with readings which you will be required to study IN ADVANCE. In class, I will contextualize and explain that day's material in short lectures, but we will also spend a lot of time criticizing, digesting, and analyzing the information in class discussion. Emphasis will be placed on increasing your collaborative learning and critical thinking skills through extensive discussions, student presentations, and the composition of short outlines, summaries and reflections in class and at home. It is necessary that you prepare consistently for each class by reviewing the material of the last class, carefully studying the required reading, and completing any take-home assignments. You will have to spend at least 1 hour at home to prepare for each hour of class time, in addition to the time needed for the composition of a short paper, due at the end of the course, as well as your class presentation.

**COURSE MATERIALS**

\*Paul U. Unschuld, Medicine in China: A History of Ideas (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985)

\* Additional articles will be made available throughout the course.

## GRADING

The final grade for the course will be determined from a combination of the student's oral and written work in the following way:

Attendance and Participation	22 points	(2pts each x 11 days)
Take-home and In-class writings	38 points	(10 x 3pts and 4 x 2pts)
Student Presentation	20 points	
Final	20 points	
	----->	100 points total

### Attendance and Participation

Students are required to attend every class having read and considered carefully the assigned reading material so that they can participate meaningfully in the in-class discussion. The instructor will keep a daily record of attendance and participation, assigning one point each for each day of classes, to a possible total of 22 points.

### Take-home and In-class Writings

The take-home writings will consist of writing exercises of 1-2 pages as personal and critical responses to assigned readings, presentations, movies, discussions, or other class activities. Since the take-home writings are meant to prepare you for the following class session, they are always due on the designated day. You will therefore need to set aside a weekly time period of at least 2 hours in addition to class time during which to complete the assigned readings and take-home writing. These assignments will be worth a maximum of 3 points each and may not be made up without prior approval from the instructor. In-class writings will be considerably shorter and simply be a tool to focus your thoughts and jot down associations, ideas, relationships and personal reactions before we discuss them as a group.

### Presentation

You will give a 30-min. presentation which must include

- a 20-min. lecture (10 pts),
- appropriate discussion questions or other stimulating class activities (5 pts), and
- a hand-out for your classmates (5 pts).

Taking the themes of the weekly schedule as a guideline, I would like you to find a topic of personal interest to you that is related to and complements a certain week's class and/or readings. Please prepare a written proposal for the content and date of your oral presentation to hand in during the second class meeting. The date for your presentation will be firm, as it will be related to the theme of that day's session. You will also need to write a paper of a minimum of three typed page on a topic assigned by the instructor, due on the last day of class.

### Final

For your final exam, you will write a short paper (2 typed pp. min.) and discuss it in class during the last day. The assignment will be to create a lecture for advanced Western medical students on "The significance and practical implications of the historical roots of TCM in contemporary practice".

## CHINESE MEDICAL HISTORY CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING LIST

### Class 1 (Jan. 6): Introduction

- what are the basic issues and goals of this class?
- definition of TCM
- approach and sources

### A: CANONICAL MEDICINE

#### Class 2 (Jan. 13):

##### Origins and Historical Background

- determine class presentations
- Shang ancestral healing
- Zhou demonology

##### Readings:

\*Unschuld, Medicine in China: A History of Ideas (hereafter simply referred to as "MCHI"), 1-50.

##### Writing Assignment:

- What is the goal and methodology of Unschuld's study of the history of Chinese medicine? How does this relate to the goals of this course and your personal needs and interests?
- How was illness perceived during the Shang and Zhou/Chou periods in early China (hint: look at the four aspects of causation/etiology, nature/symptoms, prevention, and management/therapy)? Why should this information be important to you?
- any criticism of Unschuld's approach?

#### Class 3 (Jan. 20):

##### The Medicine of Systematic Correspondence

##### and the Huangdi neijing [Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor] 黄帝内经

- Correlative thinking and its influence on early Chinese medicine
- history and composition of the Huangdi neijing
- the Yellow Emperor's Body: organ and vessel physiology
- issues of translation and interpretation

##### Readings:

\*MCHI, 51-100 (you should be familiar with this information and might not need to read it closely)

\*Hsu, The Transmission of Chinese Medicine, 105-127 (Suwen 66)

\* MCHI 263-296.

\*Excerpts from The Yellow Emperor's Classic in Comic Version.

##### Writing Assignment:

- What is the primary etiology, method of diagnosis, and therapy in the HDNJ? Why?
- Match the comic images to the text of Suwen (see Unschuld translation, pp.276-296).

#### Class 4 (Jan. 27):

##### The Shennong bencao jing 神農本草經 and the Development of Pharmacology

- origins of herbal (and animal and mineral) knowledge
- development of pharmaceutical (*bencao* 本草) literature

##### Readings:

\*MCHI, 101-116

\*Farquhar, "Remanifesting the Syndrome and Qualifying the Therapy" in Knowing Practice, 175-200

\*Unschuld, Pharmaceutics, "Origins of Pharmaceutical Literature" 11-27 and "The *Pen-ts'ao kang mu*" 145-158.

##### Writing Assignment:

- In the previous class, you have received an envelope with the name of a Chinese medicinal substance. Bring a specimen to class. Gather **HISTORICAL** information about its attributed medicinal properties and usage. Put on the hat of an ancient TCM herbalist and give a 5-minute presentation to the class reflecting your knowledge about the earliest ideas about this substance. For information, you could check Bensky/Gamble, Materia Medica (but careful, this is MODERN!), Yang, The Divine Farmer's Materia Medica, and possibly Unschuld, Pharmaceutics (check the index!). If you want to get really fancy, you can think about how the herb might be used differently in modern times.

## **UNIT B: DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES**

### **Class 5 (Feb. 3):**

#### **Religious Healing 1: Demons and Exorcism**

##### **Readings:**

\* Moskowitz, Marc, "Illness, Healing, and the Limitations of Fetus-Ghost Appeasement, " in The Haunting Fetus, 115-130.

\*MCHI, 300-302, 303-304, 337-340

\*Ishimpo, "Borrowing Land Ritual for Childbirth" (my translation)

\*Harper, "Spellbinding", in Lopez, Chinese Religions in Practice, 241-250

##### **Writing Assignment:**

- Over the course of its long history, possession and exorcism constituted a major element in traditional Chinese medicine that has been ignored, neglected or denied by scholars and physicians both in China and the West. Why might it be important for you to understand it? Can you imagine any way in which this information might be helpful to you in the future? Or alternately, how can you justify eliminating this aspect from a representation of Chinese medicine (if that is what you want to do?)?

### **Class 6 (Feb. 10):**

#### **Religious Healing II: Daoism**

##### **Readings:**

\*MCHI, 117-153.

\*Schipper, The Taoist Body, 100-112

\*"Method for Collecting and Swallowing the Yin Flower.." in Bokenkamp, Early Daoist Scriptures, 318-321

##### **Writing Assignment:**

- How and why were Daoists involved in medicine? What kind of etiologies, therapies and legitimization did they employ? Why did/do people turn to religion for their medical treatment?  
- What are the boundaries between religion, medicine, spirituality and healing a) in traditional China and b) for yourself?

### **Class 7 (Feb. 17):**

#### **Developing and Contesting Orthopraxy**

- emergence of "scholar-physicians" in the Song Dynasty  
- local traditions, government patronage, individual innovation

##### **Readings:**

\*MCHI, 154-188, 321-324

\*Cullen, "Patients and Healers in Late Imperial China".

##### **Writing Assignment:**

- Prepare a list of the various categories of medical practitioners described by Cullen. Then describe their respective background, training, patients, as well as the etiologies and therapies they employ and any other characteristics.

### Class 8 (Feb. 24):

#### Gender in Late Imperial China

##### Readings:

\*Furth, "Ming Women as Healing Experts" in A Flourishing Yin, 266-300.

\*Bray, "A deathly Disorder: Understanding women's health in late imperial China" in Bates, Knowledge and the Scholarly Medical Traditions, 235-250

\*Primary sources: Furth, translation of two Ming case histories.

##### Writing Assignment:

- Describe the reality of women's healthcare in late imperial China. What was the role of male physicians in the treatment of women? What types of etiologies, diagnoses and treatment methods did they focus on? Why?
- How is the female body interpreted in Chinese medicine?

### Class 9 (March 2):

#### Modernization of Chinese Medicine in Contemporary China

- the arrival and influence of Western medicine
- political and economic realities in the People's Republic and Taiwan
- who practices and uses it, when and why and how?
- > is it "traditional"?

##### Readings:

\*Hsu, "Innovations in Acumoxa"

\*MCHI, 229-262, 340-366

##### Writing Assignment:

- What is modern about "traditional Chinese medicine" (*zhongyi* 中醫) as practiced in China. Identify and critically evaluate the major factors that influenced this innovation and transformation.
- Based on your own experiences, what are the major differences between *zhongyi* and TCM, i.e. between "traditional Chinese medicine" as practiced in China and the West? Consider such aspects as training/education, sources of knowledge, etiologies and treatments, patients' expectations, etc.

### Class 10 (March 9):

#### "Traditional Chinese Medicine" in the West

- issues of cross-cultural translation and sensitivity
- modernization vs. authenticity
- is TCM really "traditional Chinese medicine"?
- realities of practice?

##### Readings:

\*Barnes, "The psychologizing of Chinese healing practices in the United States" in Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry 22 (1998), 413-443.

\*Hsu, "The Polyglot Practitioner: Towards Acceptance of Different Approaches in Treatment Evaluation" in Studies in Alternative Therapy 3 (1996), 37-53.

##### Writing Assignment:

- How does Elizabeth Hsu define therapeutic quality, success, efficacy and results? Does this make sense to you personally? What do you see as the goal of a TCM treatment? In your discussion, use an example from your own experience (as practitioner or patient) to illustrate the differences.

### Class 11 (March 16):

#### Final: Presentation and Discussion of Papers