



The History of Chinese Medicine (Part 1)

Ep. 337

PINYIN / TERM	CHINESE	ENGLISH / MEANING
Huáng Dì	黄帝	The Yellow Emperor, also known as the Yellow Thearch or by his Chinese name Huangdi was one of the legendary Chinese sovereigns and cultural heroes included among the mytho-historical Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors. Huangdi's traditional reign dates are 2697–2597 or 2698–2598 BC.
Shénnóng	神农	Shennong was a mythological Chinese ruler known as the first Yan Emperor who has become a deity in Chinese folk religion. He is venerated as a culture hero in China. Shennong was credited with various inventions: these include the hoe, plow, axe, digging wells, agricultural irrigation, preserving stored seeds by using boiled horse urine, trade, commerce, money, tea, the weekly farmers market, the Chinese calendar, and the therapeutic understanding of taking pulse measurements, acupuncture, and moxibustion
Huángdì Nèijīng	黄帝内经	Known as the "Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor" or "Esoteric Scripture of the Yellow Emperor", is an ancient Chinese medical text or group of texts that has been treated as a fundamental doctrinal source for Chinese medicine for more than two millennia. The work comprises two texts—each of eighty-one chapters or treatises in a question-and-answer format between the mythical Yellow Emperor and six of his equally legendary ministers. The first text, the Suwen (素問), also known as Basic Questions, covers the theoretical foundation of Chinese Medicine and its diagnostic methods. The second and generally less referred-to text, the Lingshu (靈樞; Spiritual Pivot), discusses acupuncture therapy in great detail. Collectively, these two texts are known as the Neijing or Huangdi Neijing. In practice, however, the title Neijing often refers only to the more influential Suwen.
Shénnóng Běncǎo Jīng	神农本草经	Shénnóng's Materia Medica, a Chinese book on agriculture and medicinal plants, traditionally attributed to Shennong. Researchers believe the text is a compilation of oral traditions, written between about 206 BC and 220 AD. The original text no longer exists, but is said to have been composed of three volumes containing 365 entries on medicaments and their description.
Sīmǎ Qiān	司马迁	c. 145 – c. 86 BC, was a Chinese historian of the early Han dynasty. He is considered the father of Chinese historiography for his Records of the Grand Historian (Shi Ji), a general history of China covering more than two thousand years beginning from the rise of the legendary Yellow Emperor and the formation of the first Chinese polity to the reigning sovereign of Sima Qian's time, Emperor Wu of Han
Yīn Yáng	阴阳	A philosophical concept in Ancient China that describes opposite but interconnected forces. Yin Yang is a concept that originated in Chinese philosophy, describing opposite but interconnected, mutually perpetuating forces. In Chinese cosmology, the universe creates itself out of a primary chaos of material energy, organized into the cycles of yin and yang and formed into objects and lives
The Five Elements	五行	A fivefold conceptual scheme used in many traditional Chinese fields of study to explain a wide array of phenomena, including cosmic cycles, the interactions between internal organs, the succession of political regimes, and the properties of herbal medicines. The agents are Fire, Water, Wood, Metal, and Earth. The wuxing system has been in use since it was formulated in the second or first century BC during the Han dynasty. It appears in many seemingly disparate fields of early Chinese thought, including music, feng shui, alchemy, astrology, martial arts, military strategy, I Ching divination, and traditional medicine, serving as a metaphysics based on cosmic analogy

Qì	气	Qì is believed to be a vital force forming part of any living entity. Literally meaning "vapor", "air", or "breath", the word qì is a polysemous word often translated as "vital energy", "vital force", "material energy", or simply as "energy". Qì is the central underlying principle in traditional Chinese medicine and in Chinese martial arts. The practice of cultivating and balancing qì is called qìgong.
Yǎngsháo	仰韶文化	A Neolithic culture that existed extensively along the middle reaches of the Yellow River in China from around 5000 BC to 3000 BC
Lóngshān	龙山文化	Longshan is also sometimes referred to as the Black Pottery Culture. It was a late Neolithic culture in the middle and lower Yellow River valley areas of northern China from about 3000 to 1900 BC
Èrlítóu	二里头文化	Erlitou was an early Bronze Age urban society and archaeological culture that existed in the Yellow River valley from approximately 1900 to 1500 BC. It is sometimes said to be one and the same as the mythical Xia Dynasty
Hàn Dynasty	汉朝	The Han was an imperial dynasty founded by Liu Bang in 202 BC. There was a brief interregnum that lasted 9 to 25 AD. The Dynasty then resumed and continued (as the Eastern Han Dynasty) until 220 AD.
Táng Dynasty	唐朝	The Tang was a dynasty that lasted from 618 to 907, with an interregnum between 690 and 705. It was preceded by the Sui dynasty and followed by the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period.
biānshí	砭石	Biān Stones, these are believed to be the oldest medical tools used in China. They were used to puncture the skin to expel disorders and maladies. Biān stones were considered a precursor to acupuncture
Guā Shā	刮痧	Gua Sha is a traditional Chinese medicine practice in which a tool is used to scrape people's skin in order to produce light petechiae. Practitioners believe that gua sha releases unhealthy bodily matter from blood stasis within sore, tired, stiff, or injured muscle areas to stimulate new oxygenated blood flow to the areas, thus promoting metabolic cell repair, regeneration, healing, and recovery
Hémǔdù Culture	河姆渡文化	A Neolithic culture in China that lasted around 5000 to 3000 BC, centered around present day Yúyáo 余姚 in Zhejiang Province 浙江省
Fúxī	伏羲	Fuxi was a cultural hero in Chinese mythology, credited along with his sister and wife Nǚwa with creating humanity and the invention of music, hunting, fishing, domestication, and cooking as well as the Cangjie system of writing Chinese characters around 2900 BC or 2000 BC. Fuxi was counted as the first mythical emperor of China, "a divine being with a serpent's body" who was miraculously born, a Taoist deity, and/or a member of the Three Sovereigns at the beginning of the Chinese dynastic period.
Jiǔzhēn	九针	The Nine Needles was the collective term for the needling instruments used in antiquity. They were the chan zhen (arrow-headed needle), yuan zhen (round needle), chi zhen (spoon needle), feng zhen (lance needle), pi zhen (stiletto needle), yuanli zhen (round sharp needle), hao zhen (filiform needle), chang zhen (long needle) and da zhen (big needle). Precise descriptions of the Nine Needles (but no visual representation) can be found in Huangdi Neijing
fāngshì	方士	Daoist practitioners of alchemy, astrology, divination, fēng shuǐ and a whole lot more
wū	巫	A shaman or witch
Yī	医	A doctor of medicine, medical science, to cure, treat. It was written in its complex form as 醫 and 醫
Yīshī	医师	a doctor or physician
Shāng Oracle Bones	甲骨文	The ancient Chinese writing found inscribed into the "Oracle bones"
Zhou Dynasty	周朝	Bronze Age dynasty that lasted from 1046-256 BC. The Western Zhou lasted 1046 to 771 BC. The Eastern Zhou lasted until 256 BC and was divided up into the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Periods
Guǐgǔzi	鬼谷子	The Sage of Ghost Valley who went by many names. He taught in a place called Guigu 鬼谷 or Ghost Valley. It was located in Henan around Yúnmèng Mountain 云梦山, today's Yúzhōu 禹州, just to the west of Xǔchāng 许昌
Shījīng	诗经	The Book of Odes
Zhōu Lǐ	周礼	The Rites of Zhou
Shānhǎijīng	山海经	The Classic of the Mountains and Seas

Zuǒ Zhuàn	左传	Chronicles of Zuǒ, written by Zuǒ Qiūmíng 左丘明
Qín Dynasty	秦朝	First a Warring State and later a short-lived but influential dynasty 221 - 206 BCE
Suí	隋朝	a short-lived imperial dynast that lasted from 581 to 618. The Sui unified the Northern and Southern dynasties, thus ending the long period of division following the fall of the Western Jin dynasty, and laying the foundations for the much longer lasting Tang dynasty
Sòng	宋朝	an imperial dynasty of China that ruled from 960 to 1279. The dynasty was founded by Emperor Taizu of Song
Yuán	元朝	a Mongol-led imperial dynasty of China and a successor state to the Mongol Empire after its division. It was established by Kublai, the fifth khagan-emperor of the Mongol Empire from the Borjigin clan, and lasted from 1271 to 1368
Míng	明朝	an imperial dynasty of China, ruling from 1368 to 1644 following the collapse of the Mongol-led Yuan dynasty
Yī Yǐn	伊尹	a Chinese politician who served as a minister of the early Shang dynasty, and one of the honoured officials of the era. He helped Tang of Shang, the founder of the Shang dynasty, to defeat King Jie of Xia. Oracle inscriptions of Yi have been found, evidence that his social status was high
Lǚshì Chūnqiū	吕氏春秋	The Records of Master Lǚ Bùwéi
Yī Hé	医和	Physician He
Lǎozǐ	老子	He was a semi-legendary ancient Chinese Taoist philosopher, credited with writing the Daodejing. The name "Laozi" is a Chinese honorific, generally translated as "the Old Master". Although modern scholarship generally regards him as a fictional person, traditional accounts say he was born as Li Er 李耳 in the state of Chu in the 6th century BC during China's Spring and Autumn Period
Duke Píng of Jin	晋平公	Ruler of Jin State from 557 to 532 BC
Sūn Sīmiǎo	孙思邈	a Chinese physician and writer of the Sui and Tang dynasty. He was called China's so-called King of Medicine
Qín Yuèrén	秦越人	407 to 310 BC, better known as Bian Que, he was a renowned physician of his time He was said to be the earliest known Chinese physician during the Warring States period. His real name is said to be Qin Yueren, but his medical skills were so amazing that people gave him the same name as the (original) legendary doctor Bian Que, from the time of the Yellow Emperor.
Biǎn Què	扁鹊	See above Qín Yuèrén
Lièzǐ	例子	a Taoist text attributed to Lie Yukou (a.k.a. Liezi), a 5th century BC Hundred Schools of Thought philosopher. Although there were references to Lie's Liezi from the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC, a number of Chinese and Western scholars believe that the content of the current text was compiled around the 4th century CE by Zhang Zhan
jiānghú	江湖	A world of traveling merchants, doctors, fortune tellers, etc. that often served as characters in wuxia novels
Lǚ Yǔ	陆羽	The Tea Saint, writer of The Classic of Tea during the Tang Dynasty. He lived 733-804
Qín State	秦国	One of the Seven Warring States. They were based in western China, Shaanxi and Gansu.
Duke Huán of Qí	齐桓公	The ruler of the State of Qi from 685 to 643 BC
Guó State	虢国	Guo was a kinship group that held at least five pieces of territory within the Zhou realm at various times
King Wǔ of Qín	秦武公	The tenth ruler of the state of Qin who ruled from 697 to 678 BC
Tài Yī	太医	The Palace or Royal Physician
Lǐ Xī	李醯	The palace physician of King Wu of Qin. It's said that he was responsible for the killing of Bian Que in 310 BC
Nàn Jīng	难经	The Classic of Difficult Problems
Chúnyú Yī	淳于意	a 3rd century BC physician and bureaucrat active during the Western Han dynasty. A minor official in charge of a granary in Qi, he became renowned as a healer. He is noted as an early source of case histories.
Zhēn Jí	诊籍	The Twenty-Five Case Histories, credited to Chunyu Yi
Zībó	淄博	City in Shandong Province that served as the center of the Qi State during the Warring States

Jiàn'ān Sān Shenyī	建安三神医	The Three Physicians of the Jiàn'ān Era
Eastern Hàn Emperor Xiàn	汉献帝	Final emepror of the Eastern Han
Cáo Cāo	曹操	Eastern Han statesman, warlord and poet. He became the effective head of the Han central government during the final years of the Eastern Han. He laid the foundation for what was to become the state of Cao Wei (220–265), established by his son and successor Cao Pi, who ended the Eastern Han dynasty and inaugurated the Three Kingdoms period (220–280). Beginning in his own lifetime, a corpus of legends developed around Cao Cao which built upon his talent, his cruelty, and his perceived eccentricities.
Huà Tuó	华佗	Hua Tuo lived c. 140 to 208. He was a Chinese physician who lived during the late Eastern Han dynasty. The historical texts Records of the Three Kingdoms and Book of the Later Han record Hua Tuo as the first person in China to use anaesthesia during surgery.
Zhāng Zhōngjǐng	张仲景	150-219 AD, formal name Zhang Ji (张机), was a Chinese pharmacologist, physician, inventor, and writer of the Eastern Han dynasty and one of the most eminent Chinese physicians during the later years of the Han dynasty. He established medication principles and summed up the medicinal experience until that time, thus making a considerable contribution to the development of Traditional Chinese Medicine
Huángfǔ Mì	皇甫谧	Physician, essayist, historian, poet, and writer who lived through the late Eastern Han dynasty, Three Kingdoms period and early Western Jin dynasty. Between 256 and 260, toward the end of the state of Cao Wei, he compiled the Canon of Acupuncture and Moxibustion
Guān Yǔ	关羽	Also known as Guān Gōng 关公, he was a military general serving under Liu Bei during the late Eastern Han dynasty. Along with Zhang Fei, he shared a brotherly relationship with Liu Bei and accompanied him on most of his early exploits. Guan Yu played a significant role in the events leading up to the end of the Han dynasty and the establishment of Liu Bei's state of Shu Han during the Three Kingdoms period
Zhāng Jī	张机	see Zhang Zhongjing above
Shāng Hán Zábìng Lùn	伤寒杂病论	The Treatise of Cold-Damaged Disorders, a discourse on how to treat epidemic infectious diseases causing fevers prevalent during his era. This original version was lost
Shāng Hán Lùn	伤寒论	See above, 伤寒杂病论. This version survived
jiǎozi	饺子	dumplings
Jiāo'ěr	娇耳	The name given to the "dumplings" produced by Zhang Zhongjing to treat frostbite of the ears
Zhēnjiǔ Jiǎ Yí Jīng	针灸甲乙经	the Canon of Acupuncture and Moxibustion, credited to Huangfu Mi
Sīmǎ Yán	司马炎	Also, Emperor Wu of Jin 晋武帝, who reigned 266-290. He was the grandson of Sima Yi, nephew of Sima Shi and son of Sima Zhao. He became the first emperor of the Jin dynasty after forcing Cao Huan, last emperor of the state of Cao Wei, to abdicate to him.
Jìn Dynasty	晋朝	Dynasty founded by Emperor Wu that lasted from 266 to 420
zàngfǔ	脏腑	The Five Zàng 五脏 were your liver, heart, spleen, lungs and kidneys. And your Six Fǔ 六腑 organs were your gall bladder, stomach, large intestine, small intestine, bladder and the so-called triple burner. This was the mechanics, that comprised the digestive, cardiorespiratory and urinary functions
àicǎo	艾草	a type of herb called mugwort, used in moxibustion
Liènǚ Zhuàn	列女传	Biographies of Exemplary Women
Niè Bì Zhuàn	孽嬖传	The seventh scroll of the Biographies of Exemplary Women. This chapter was called Biographies of depraved Favorites
Mòxǐ	妹喜	She was a notorious concubine of King Jie, the last ruler of the Xia dynasty
Dájǐ	妲己	She was the favourite consort of King Zhou of Shang, the last king of the Shang dynasty
Zhuāngzǐ	庄子	Daoist philosopher as well as the book that bears his name, also known as the Second Book of the Tao. He lived 369-286 BCE
Emperor Wǔ of Hàn	汉武帝	He was the seventh emperor of the Han dynasty, reigning from 141 to 87 BC

<p>Mǎwángduī</p>	<p>马王堆</p>	<p>an archaeological site located in Changsha, Hunan Province. The site consists of two saddle-shaped hills and contained the tombs of three people from the Changsha Kingdom during the western Han dynasty (206 BC – 9 AD): the Chancellor Li Cang, his wife Xin Zhui, and a male believed to have been their son. The site was excavated from 1972 to 1974. Most of the artifacts from Mawangdui are displayed at the Hunan Provincial Museum. It was called "King Ma's Mound" possibly because it was (erroneously) thought to be the tomb of Ma Yin (853–930), a ruler of the Chu kingdom during the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period</p>
<p>Zhāngjiāshān</p>	<p>张家山</p>	<p>Zhangjiashan Han bamboo texts are ancient Han dynasty texts dated 196–186 BC. They were discovered in 1983 by archaeologists excavating tomb no. 247 at Mount Zhangjia (張家山) of Jiangling County, Hubei Province (near modern Jingzhou). The tomb was built for an early Western Han era official who had died in 186 BC. The texts were written on traditional bamboo slips connected by cords into rolled scrolls. The written works included legal case precedents, literature on medicine including Book on Vessels, mathematics, military strategy, and a calendar with dates ranging from 202 BC to 186 BC.</p>